

Pogledi učitelja i nastavnika književnosti na ekokritičku pedagogiju: preliminarno istraživanje u Srbiji

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Apstrakt

U radu se istražuju pogledi učitelja i nastavnika književnosti na zastupljenost ekokritičke pedagogije i njenu relevantnost u kontekstu osnovnih i srednjih škola u Srbiji. Obrazovni potencijal ekokritike, koja se definiše kao interdisciplinarno proučavanje veze između književnosti i životne sredine, prepoznat je širom sveta, ali je njena primena u srpskim programima ograničena i nedovoljno proučena. Cilj istraživanja je da se utvrde potencijalne razlike između prvog i drugog ciklusa osnovnog obrazovanja i srednje škole, nastavnog iskustva ispitanika, kao i percepcije vezane za mogućnosti i izazove integracije ekokritičke pedagogije. Analiza je izvršena kombinacijom metoda, korišćenjem kvantitativnih i kvalitativnih podataka prikupljenih anketiranjem 213 učitelja i nastavnika književnosti u osnovnim i srednjim školama u Srbiji. Rezultati ukazuju na generalno nizak stepen upoznatosti sa ekokritikom, kao i na to da ispitanici ekokritičku pedagogiju ne smatraju zastupljenom, ali je percipiraju kao relevantnu. Statistički značajne razlike uočene su prilikom poređenja prvog i drugog ciklusa osnovnog i srednjoškolskog obrazovanja: učitelji, naime, više smatraju da je ekokritička pedagogija zastupljena i relevantna nego što to smatraju nastavnici književnosti. Ipak, većina ispitanika prepoznaje razvoj kritičkog mišljenja kao ključni ishod ekokritičke pedagogije i izrazila je volju za primenom ekokritičkog pristupa. Nisu uočene značajne razlike vezane za radni staž, odnosno, nastavno iskustvo ispitanika. Takođe, moguće je izvesti zaključak da postoji potreba za većom podrškom učiteljima i nastavnicima radi premošćivanja jaza između teorijskog potencijala i praktične implementacije u učionici, budući da prepoznaju kapacitet nastave književnosti da doprinese holističkom, interdisciplinarnom ekološkom obrazovanju i podstakne učenike na kritičko mišljenje, empatiju i bavljenje realnim problemima današnjice.

Ključne reči: ekokritička pedagogija, ekokritika, ekološko obrazovanje, nastava književnosti, percepcije nastavnika.

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Uvod

Iako se u sve većoj meri prepoznaje da humanističke nauke moraju biti deo ekološkog obrazovanja i vaspitanja, te da pristup utemeljen isključivo na predmetima tradicionalno povezanim s ekološkim znanjem više nije dovoljan, fokus je i dalje na razgovorima o ekologiji u okvirima prirodnih nauka – a povremeno i na časovima filozofije/etike ili građanskog vaspitanja – usled čega potencijal književnih i kulturoloških pristupa nije dovoljno istražen (Siperstein et al., 2017). Različiti načini komunikacije o klimatskim promenama, uključujući kreativne oblike komunikacije kao što su umetnost, film ili pozorište (Holmes, 2020: 16; Martinez, 2024), kao i književnost u kojoj su zastupljene ekološke teme, mogu doprineti socijalizaciji mladih ljudi: na taj način bi postali odgovorni i empatični odrasli, što bi ih pozicioniralo kao „ekološki osvešćene građane“ posvećene održivom razvoju kako na lokalnom tako i na globalnom nivou – poduhvat obeležen strategijama koje su „složene, nestabilne i kontradiktorne“ (Massey & Bradford, 2011: 1090-110). Ipak, iako čitanje samo po sebi ne može „spasiti svet“ (Hoydis et al., 2023: 1), ono može doprineti povećanoj svesti o ekološkoj krizi. Mladi ljudi neretko su isključeni iz ozbiljnih diskusija zbog kompleksnosti krize, iako je ponajviše *njihova* budućnost dovedena u pitanje, a u poslednje vreme postoje naponi da se stvore književni tekstovi za decu koji podstiču dijalog o ekološkim temama (Van der Beek & Lehmann, 2024). Takva književnost se, na primer, ciljano uključuje u školske programe u Nemačkoj, što se može primetiti po preporuci lektire za Saksoniju-Anhalt, gde su istaknuti književni tekstovi s interdisciplinarnim temama kao što su održivi razvoj ili digitalni svet (Preporuka lektira..., 2022). Slično tome, u Norveškoj se od 2020. godine održivi razvoj tretira kao jedna od tri interdisciplinarne teme koje se moraju obraditi u okvirima *svih* školskih predmeta (Myren-Svelstad, 2020). U Srbiji je jedan od ciljeva osnovnog i srednjeg obrazovanja definisan kao „razvijanje svesti o značaju održivog razvoja, zaštite i očuvanja prirode i životne sredine i ekološke etike“, što se u osnovnoj školi odnosi i na uviđanje značaja „zaštite i dobrobiti životinja“ (Pravilnik o planu nastave i učenja za prvi ciklus osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja..., 2017; Pravilnik o planu i programu nastave i učenja za gimnaziju, 2020; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja opšteobrazovnih predmeta u stručnim školama, 2023), ali ne postoje strogi zahtevi da se cilj mora postići kroz nastavu svih predmeta. Stoga se istraživanja o integrisanju ekoloških tema u nastavu književnosti, koja bi identifikovala mogućnosti za ekokritički pedagoški pristup ili ispitala percepcije nastavnika koje su od značaja za uspešnu implementaciju, do sada nisu sprovodila u osnovnim i srednjim školama u Srbiji.

Teorijski okvir

Ekokritika je, prema definiciji koja se najčešće citira, „proučavanje odnosa između književnosti i fizičke stvarnosti“ (Glottfelty, 1996: 18). Greg Gerard (Garrard, 2012; 2010) smatra da se ekokritika bavi pedagogijom od svojih začetaka, te naglašava da je inherentna obrazovna vrednost kontakta s prirodom već prisutna u tradiciji takozvanog pisanja o prirodi – *Nature Writing*. Dok se termin *ekopedagogija* ne odnosi isključivo na književnost, te zauzima stav koji je u većoj meri usmeren društvenokritički (Gaard, 2008; Misiaszek,

2015), *ekokritička pedagogija* se definiše kao pristup nastavi književnosti koji integriše principe ekokritike u obrazovnu praksu, naglašavajući ekološku osvešćenost, kritičko promišljanje odnosa čoveka i prirode, kao i etičku odgovornost prema životnoj sredini interpretacijom književnih tekstova. Drugi srodni termini, kao što su *pismenost o klimatskim promenama* (engl. *climate change literacy*) (Hoydis et al., 2023) i *književna kompetencija za održivost* (engl. *sustainable literary competence*) (Myren-Svelstad, 2020), takođe su posvećeni uključivanju ekoloških tema u podučavanje književnosti.

Polaznu tačku predstavlja ideja da književnost sa ekološkim temama može pozitivno uticati na čitaoce i doprineti razvoju ekološke svesti, iako to još uvek nije dokazano. Trenutno postoje teorijska razmatranja, kao i manji broj empirijskih studija na ovu temu (Malecki & Schneider-Mayerson, 2024; Martinez, 2024; Schneider-Mayerson, 2018), uglavnom sprovedenih među odraslim čitaocima van obrazovnog konteksta. Per Esben Miren-Svelstad (Myren-Svelstad, 2020) navodi da je, iz pedagoške perspektive, čest argument da nastava književnosti pomaže deci da postanu ekološki osvešćeni građani, ali da je potrebna detaljnija diskusija o odnosu podučavanja književnosti, etike i održivog razvoja. Autor izražava potencijalni problem vezan za takozvanu „altruističku paradigmu ekokritičke pedagogije“ (Myren-Svelstad, 2020: 3), jer altruistički stavovi, prema ekološkim izazovima, nisu sami po sebi dovoljni, a ukoliko književnost uspe da unapredi znanje ili pozitivne stavove, i dalje je neizvesno da li će se to odraziti na promene ponašanja u budućnosti. On dalje pojašnjava da indirektna iskustva sa životnom sredinom, uključujući obrazovni kontekst u učionici, značajno manje utiču na ljude u odnosu na direktna iskustva; on dalje navodi i da polisemija književnosti igra ključnu ulogu jer su reakcije čitalaca nepredvidive, te da kompetencije i dalje nisu definisane, tako da je pitanje šta književnost *može* da učini (Myren-Svelstad, 2020). Njegovo mišljenje je da se moć teksta ne nalazi u tome što bi čitaoci došli do konkretnih i konačnih zaključaka, već u tome što bi bili motivisani na konstantni proces postavljanja pitanja, razmišljanja i interpretacije (Myren-Svelstad, 2020). Roman Bartoš (Bartosch, 2019) na sličan način argumentuje da čitaoci ne uče *od* književnih tekstova, već bavljenjem njima. U monografiji *Pismenost o klimatskim promenama* (*Climate Change Literacy*, 2023) pojašnjava se da nije dovoljno komunicirati samo činjenicama, kao ni samo emocijama, kako bi se premostio jaz između uma (onoga što znamo) i ponašanja (onoga što praktično činimo), ali da primarna uloga ovakvog pristupa jeste razvoj kritičkog mišljenja putem čitanja različitih tipova književnih tekstova o klimatskim promenama (Hoydis et al., 2023). Greg Gerard (Garrard, 2017; 2010) takođe naglašava da, s obzirom na to da je održivost sama po sebi složena i kontradiktorna, obrazovanje za održivi razvoj u kontekstu proučavanja književnosti ne treba da propisuje striktno utvrđene ideje, već da pruži prioritet kritičkom mišljenju, te da fokus ne treba da bude na rupama u znanju ekologije, već na percepcijama, sistemima značenja i diskurzivnim pozicijama. U slučaju mlađe čitalačke publike, zbornik *Ekološka književnost za decu i mlade* (*Ökologische Kinder- und Jugendliteratur*, 2024) na nemačkom jeziku pruža slične smernice, naime, da cilj nije činjenična preciznost, već otvaranje pitanja i stvaranje perspektiva o zaštiti prirode, pošto je priroda sastavni deo dečje i omladinske književnosti, pa utiče na formiranje ideja o njoj bez obzira na to da li su eksplicitno prisutne ekološke teme (Goga et al., 2023; Goga et al., 2018; Mikota & Sippl, 2024).

Metodologija

Ciljevi istraživanja

Opšti cilj istraživanja bio je ispitivanje pogleda nastavnika književnosti na *zastupljenost* i *relevantnost* ekokritičke pedagogije u nastavi književnosti, kao temi koja se obrađuje u okvirima srpskog školskog sistema. Specifični ciljevi bili su da se istraže potencijalne razlike (1) prema obrazovnim nivoima (1–4. razred osnovne škole; 5–8. razred osnovne škole i srednja škola); (2) prema profesionalnom iskustvu nastavnika, kao i da se (3) analiziraju pogledi predavača na iskustva sa dosadašnjom implementacijom putem tematske obrade kvalitativnih podataka, a zatim i njihove percepcije mogućnosti i izazova vezanih za primenu ekokritičke pedagogije. Hipoteza istraživanja, izvedena na osnovu ciljeva, bila je da ekokritička pedagogija još uvek nije značajno zastupljena u srpskoj školskoj nastavi književnosti, ali da nastavnici ipak prepoznaju njen značaj.

Uzorak

Istraživanje je sprovedeno na uzorku od 213 nastavnika iz svih okruga Republike Srbije, a struktura uzorka predstavljena je u Tabeli 1. Sedamdeset i devet nastavnika (37.1%) zaposleno je u razrednoj nastavi u nižim razredima osnovne škole, 69 nastavnika (32.4%) predavalo je predmet Srpski jezik u višim razredima osnovne škole i 65 nastavnika (30.5%) bilo je angažovano u predmetnoj nastavi Srpskog jezika i književnosti u srednjoj školi (gimnazijama i stručnim školama). Na osnovu vrednosti statističke značajnosti za hi-kvadrat ($\chi^2 = 1.47$; $df = 2$; $p = .48$) zaključuje se da je uzorak ujednačen u odnosu na varijablu nivoa obrazovanja. Kad je reč o radnom stažu, 101 ispitanik (47.4%) radio je u trenutku istraživanja manje od 20 godina u nastavi, dok je 112 ispitanika (52.6%) imalo 20 ili više godina nastavnog iskustva. Ni u ovom slučaju hi-kvadrat nije statistički značajan ($\chi^2 = .57$; $df = 1$; $p = .45$), što ukazuje na to da je uzorak ujednačen i u odnosu na varijablu radnog iskustva.

Tabela 1
Struktura uzorka

Nivo obrazovanja		Frekvencija	Procenat
$\chi^2 = 1.47$ $df = 2$ $p = .48$	Osnovna škola – niži razredi	79	37.1
	Osnovna škola – viši razredi	69	32.4
	Srednja škola	65	30.5
	Ukupno	213	100.0
Radno iskustvo			
$\chi^2 = .57$ $df = 1$ $p = .45$	Manje od 20 godina iskustva u nastavi	101	47.4
	20 ili više godina iskustva u nastavi	112	52.6
	Ukupno	213	100.0

Napomena: χ^2 – hi-kvadrat, p – koeficijent statističke značajnosti.

Tehnike prikupljanja podataka

Ispitanici su odgovorili na opšta pitanja o okrugu u kome se nalazi škola u kojoj rade, obrazovnom nivou na kome su angažovani, razredima u kojima predaju književnost, kao i o radnom iskustvu u nastavi, a potom i na 16 pitanja kvantitativnog i kvalitativnog karaktera. Šest pitanja bilo je zasnovano na petostepenoj Likertovoj skali (od odgovora 1 – *uopšte ne* do 5 – *veoma*), osam pitanja podrazumevalo je višestruki izbor uz ponuđeni prostor za dodatne komentare, dok su 2 pitanja bila otvorenog tipa.

Na prikupljenom uzorku proverene su psihometrijske karakteristike instrumenta, pa su eksplorativnom faktorskom analizom (EFA) izdvojene 2 supskale: (1) *Zastupljenost* i (2) *Relevantnost ekokritičke pedagogije u srpskom školskom sistemu*, čime je objašnjeno 65.96% varijanse. Konfirmatorna faktorska analiza potvrdila je takvu strukturu ($CFI > 0.95$; $TLI > 0.9$; $RMSEA < 0.06$; $SRMR < 0.05$; i $NFI > 0.8$). Rezultati testa predstavljeni su kao prosečni, kako bi se stekla predstava o rasponu skale (1–5). Pouzdanost cele skale i subdimenzija bila je na zadovoljavajućem nivou za supskalu *Zastupljenost*, a pouzdanost je bila visoka za ukupan rezultat i za supskalu *Relevantnost* (ukupno $\alpha = .95$; *Zastupljenost* $\alpha = .70$; *Relevantnost* $\alpha = .97$).

Postupak istraživanja

Instrument istraživanja bio je upitnik napravljen ciljano za ispitivanje sprovedeno u jesen 2024. i leto 2025. godine. Podaci su prikupljeni onlajn, putem Gugl formulara, dok je upitnik podeljen mejlom i uz pomoć profesionalnih mreža nastavnika. Etički standardi su ispoštovani informisanjem ispitanika da je njihovo učešće dobrovoljno i anonimno, kao i da će se rezultati koristiti isključivo u naučne svrhe – konkretno, za preliminarno istraživanje zarad izrade predloga projekta o ekologiji u nastavi književnosti, za šta su dobijene saglasnosti etičkih komisija vezane za prikupljanje, analizu i skladištenje podataka.

U istraživanju je primenjen kombinovani pristup. Prvo su predstavljeni kvantitativni rezultati, a potom kvalitativna, tematska analiza. Tokom kvantitativne obrade podataka korišćena je aplikacija *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*, verzija 26.0. Primenjene su deskriptivne (minimum, maksimum, aritmetička sredina i standardna devijacija) i inferencijalne statističke metode (neparametrijske tehnike, odnosno testovi Man-Vitni i Kruskal-Volis). Normalnost distribucije bila je proverena pomoću vrednosti skjunisa i kurtozisa i statističke značajnosti Kolmogorov-Smirnov testa. Pouzdanost skala merena je Kronbahovim alfa koeficijentom interne konzistencije, a validnost eksplorativnom i konfirmatornom faktorskom analizom.

Rezultati

Prikaz deskriptivnih podataka prikupljenih u sprovedenom istraživanju predstavljen je u Tabeli 2. Na osnovu vrednosti dobijenih iz empirijskih aritmetičkih sredina, uočava se da nastavnici smatraju da su pojmovi vezani za ekokritičku pedagogiju srednje visoko prisutni i relevantni u nastavi ($M = 3.68$; $SD = .84$). Prosečne vrednosti na supskalama

pokazuju da su nominalne vrednosti proseka više na supskali *Relevantnost* ($M = 3.89$; $SD = .98$) od vrednosti proseka na supskali *Zastupljenost* ($M = 2.60$; $SD = .93$). Takođe, nominalne vrednosti standardne devijacije su postavljene nešto više za *Relevantnost* u odnosu na *Zastupljenost*, što može ukazivati na veću varijaciju odgovora među nastavnicima u vezi sa percepcijama relevantnosti. Predočeno razmatranje biće dodatno obrazloženo u narednim postupcima provere razlika u odnosu na nivo obrazovanja na kojem nastavnici rade i u odnosu na njihovo nastavno iskustvo.

Tabela takođe sadrži podatke o proveru normalnosti odgovora ispitanika na ispitivanim supskalama. Iako vrednosti skjunisa i kurtozisa variraju u granicama prihvatljivog raspona za normalnu distribuciju, vrednosti statističke značajnosti Kolmogorov-Smirnov testa ($p < .01$) ukazuju da se distribucije statistički značajno razlikuju od normalne, pa su zato izabrani neparametrijski testovi za računanje razlike.

Tabela 2

Prikaz deskriptivnih rezultata istraživanja

	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sk</i>	<i>Ku</i>	<i>p</i> K-S Test
Zastupljenost	1.00	4.67	2.60	.93	-.13	-.77	0.00
Relevantnost	1.00	5.00	3.89	.98	-.62	-.64	0.00

Napomena: *Min* – minimum, *Max* – maksimum, *M* – aritmetička sredina, *SD* – standardna devijacija, *Sk* – skjunis, *Ku* – kurtozis, *p* K-S – statistička značajnost Kolmogorov-Smirnov testa.

Na osnovu podataka iz Tabele 3 uočava se da postoji statistički značajna razlika između ispitanika koji rade na različitim nivoima obrazovanja – u nižim razredima osnovne škole, u višim razredima osnovne škole i u srednjoj školi – na varijabli *Zastupljenost* (27.61, $df = 2$, $p < .01$) i na varijabli *Relevantnost* (9.18, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). Kako bi se utvrdilo koji se tačno nivoi obrazovanja međusobno razlikuju, sprovedena je analiza predstavljena u narednoj tabeli.

Tabela 3

Varijacije u nivou izraženosti ispitivanih koncepata u odnosu na nivo obrazovanja

	Nivo obrazovanja	Prosečni rang	K-W Test	<i>p</i>
Zastupljenost	Osnovna škola – niži razredi	133.45	27.61	.00
	Osnovna škola – viši razredi	101.96		
	Srednja škola	80.20		
Relevantnost	Osnovna škola – niži razredi	120.04	9.18	.01
	Osnovna škola – viši razredi	109.03		
	Srednja škola	88.99		

Napomena: K-W – Kruskal-Voliss, *p* – koeficijent statističke značajnosti.

Analiza prikazana u Tabeli 4 pokazuje da je zabeležena statistički značajna razlika na supskali *Zastupljenost* između nastavnika razredne nastave u odnosu na razliku među nastavnicima starijih razreda osnovne škole (31.49, $p < 0.05$) i nastavnike srednjih škola (53.25, $p < .01$). Nastavnici razredne nastave, odnosno učitelji, izveštavaju da je sadržaj ekokritičke pedagogije zastupljeniji u nižim razredima osnovne škole nego što o tome izveštavaju nastavnici viših razreda osnovne škole i nastavnici srednjih škola. Takođe, učitelji smatraju da je sadržaj ekokritičke pedagogije u nastavi bitniji nego što to smatraju nastavnici srednjih škola.

Tabela 4

Uporedna analiza razlika po nivou obrazovanja na ispitivanim varijablama supskala Zastupljenost i Relevantnost

Nivo obrazovanja	Test statistik	p
Supskala 1 – Zastupljenost		
Srednja škola-Osnovna škola (viši razredi)	21.76	.12
Srednja škola-Osnovna škola (niži razredi)	53.25	.00
Osnovna škola (viši razredi)-Osnovna škola (niži razredi)	31.49	.01
Supskala 2 – Relevantnost		
Srednja škola-Osnovna škola (viši razredi)	20.04	.18
Srednja škola-Osnovna škola (niži razredi)	31.05	.01
Osnovna škola (viši razredi)-Osnovna škola (niži razredi)	11.02	.83

Napomena: p – koeficijent statističke značajnosti.

Upoređena su mišljenja nastavnika o relevantnosti ishoda učenja o ekološkim temama prema nivou obrazovanja. Uočene su statistički značajne razlike kod ishoda: *razvoj ekološke svesti* (9.17, $p < .05$), *prepoznavanje ekoloških izazova današnjice* (7.19, $p < .05$) i *razumevanje čovekovog uticaja na prirodni svet* (6.28, $p < .05$). U svim navedenim slučajevima, nastavnici srednjih škola smatraju ove ishode manje relevantnim u odnosu na nastavnike osnovne škole, a pre svega u odnosu na učitelje. Posebna pažnja posvećena je ishodu *razvoj kritičkog mišljenja*, gde nije uočena razlika, što znači da svi nastavnici podjednako vrednuju ovaj ishod. U proseku su označili ishod kao vrlo relevantan ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.12$).

Na osnovu vrednosti statističke značajnosti za Man-Vitni test, prikazan u Tabeli 5, uočava se da ne postoje statistički značajne razlike između nastavnika koji rade kraće od 20 godina i nastavnika koji u nastavi rade 20 godina ili duže.

Tabela 5

Uporedna analiza razlika po nastavnom iskustvu ispitanika

	Radno iskustvo u nastavi	Prosečni rang	Man–Vitni U	<i>p</i>
Zastupljenost	Manje od 20 godina	102.14	5165.50	.27
	20 ili više godina	111.38		
Relevantnost	Manje od 20 godina	100.88	5037.50	.17
	20 ili više godina	112.52		

Napomena: p – koeficijent statističke značajnosti.

U kvalitativnom delu studije su analizirani tekstualni odgovori nastavnika, kako bi se stekli detaljniji uvidi u njihove poglede na zastupljenost i relevantnost ekokritičke pedagogije u srpskom školskom sistemu.

Iskustva nastavnika sa ekokritičkom pedagogijom

Samo 5.63% nastavnika navelo je da je pohađalo stručno usavršavanje o ekokritici, a 1.88% istraživao je samostalno na ovu temu, dok većina (92.49%) nije pohađala nikakva usavršavanja. Mali broj nastavnika izveštava da je primenjivao ekokritičku pedagogiju, najčešće u okviru projekata (npr. *Ugasi svetlo*), vannastavnih aktivnosti ili analize likova koji su ekološki osvešćeni (npr. Astrov u Čehovljevoj drami *Ujka Vanja* ili Ljevin u Tolstojevom romanu *Ana Karenjina*). Kao primerene metode najčešće su izdvajali ambijentalnu nastavu (78.9%), korišćenje multimedijalnih sadržaja (61%) i projektno učenje (55.9%), a dodatno su predložili i glumu, takmičenja, ekološke akcije i pisanje izveštaja.

Odabir tekstova za ekokritičku pedagogiju

Nastavnicima je postavljeno pitanje da li bi mogli da identifikuju tekstove iz programa koji bi bili adekvatni za ekokritička čitanja u nastavi. Dvadeset i četiri nastavnika odgovorilo je da ne može, dok je jedan nastavnik srednje škole naveo da se u romantičarskim i modernističkim tekstovima opisuje priroda, ali da nisu ekološki. Potvrдно je odgovorilo 84 nastavnika, koji su izdvojili 70 različitih tekstova, pri čemu su u Tabeli 6 predstavljeni književni tekstovi koje su najčešće predlagani. Prilikom analize, korišćeni su zvanični programi za osnovne i srednje škole u Srbiji (Pravilnik o planu nastave i učenja za prvi ciklus osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja..., 2017; Pravilnik o planu nastave i učenja za peti i šesti razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja..., 2018; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za drugi razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2018; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za treći razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2019; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za sedmi razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2019; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za četvrti razred osnovnog

obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2019; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja za osmi razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2019, Pravilnik o planu i programu nastave i učenja za gimnaziju, 2020; Pravilnik o programu nastave i učenja opšteobrazovnih predmeta u stručnim školama, 2023). Relevantno je napomenuti da su u programima za osnovnu

Tabela 6

Književni tekstovi iz zvaničnih programa koje je navelo 3 ili više nastavnika

Razred	Književni tekst(ovi) (Broj nastavnika)	Vrsta	Teme
1. (OŠ)	Tode Nikoletić, <i>Šuma život znači</i> (18)	Drama	Očuvanje šuma kao prirodnog staništa životinja
4. (OŠ)	Desanka Maksimović, <i>Paukovo delo</i> (3)	Poezija	Poštovanje prirode i empatija prema ahumanim bićima i njihovom radu
5. (OŠ)	Grozdana Olujić, <i>Mesečev cvet</i> (4)	Umetnička bajka	Magija i tajnovitost prirode i otuđenje dece od nje tokom odrastanja u urbanom okruženju
5. (OŠ)	Desanka Maksimović, <i>Srebrne plesačice i Pokošena livada</i> (3)	Poezija	Vitalnost biljaka tokom zime i čovekov uticaj na prirodu
6. (OŠ)	Anđela Naneti, <i>Moj deka je bio trešnja</i> (<i>Mio nonno era un ciliegio</i>) (12)	Roman	Povezanost prirode (drveća) i različitih generacija ljudi, kao i njihovih sećanja
6. (OŠ)	Stevan Raičković, <i>Hvala suncu, zemlji, travi</i> (7)	Poezija	Zahvalnost na prirodi i svest o (našem mestu u) njoj
6. (OŠ)	Italo Kalvino, <i>Šuma na auto-putu</i> (<i>Il bosco sull' autostrada</i>) (3)	Kratka priča	Otuđenje savremenih ljudi od prirode u urbanom okruženju
7. (OŠ)	Petar Kočić, <i>Kroz mećavu</i> (5)	Pripovetka	Nemilosrdnost prirode i ljudska borba protiv surovih uslova u prirodi
2. (SŠ)	Lav Nikolajevič Tolstoj, <i>Ana Karenjina</i> (<i>Anna Karenina</i>) (3)	Roman	Povezanost lika Ljevina sa prirodom (npr. kroz poljoprivredu), kao i tenzija između ruralnog i urbanog života
3. (SŠ)	Anton Čehov, <i>Ujka Vanja</i> (<i>Дядя Ваня</i>) (6)	Drama	Zaštita prirode u kojoj lik doktora Astrova vidi smisao
3. (SŠ)	Ivo Andrić, <i>Na Drini ćuprija</i> (3)	Roman	Interakcija između konstrukcija koje je stvorio čovek (most) i dinamike prirode (reka Drina), nemilosrdnost prirodnih fenomena (npr. poplava), kao i (ekološke) vremenske skale koje prevazilaze individualne ljudske živote

Napomena: OŠ – osnovna škola, SŠ – srednja škola.

školu zastupljeniji tekstovi nacionalne književnosti, dok tekstovi inostranih autora predstavljaju manje od jedne desetine tekstova, a u srednjim školama je lektira organizovana hronološki, prema književnoistorijskim principima, i obuhvata kanonske tekstove nacionalne i svetske književnosti (Varnica i Tokin, 2024).

Potrebno je napomenuti i da je šest nastavnika izdvojilo i pripovetku *Jabuka na drumu* Veljka Petrovića, koja je ranije bila deo programa za 7. razred osnovne škole i obrađuje temu ljudske (ne)zahvalnosti prema drvetu jabuke koje nesebično pruža plodove.

Tabela 7

Tematska analiza komentara nastavnika vezanih za uvođenje većeg broja književnih tekstova s ekološkim temama u programe

Teme	Kategorije	Kodovi
Pozitivna mišljenja i podrška;	Jasna podrška (38);	Da; Naravno;
	Ekološko obrazovanje i osvešćenost (28);	Razvijanje ekološke svesti; Razvijanje osećaja odgovornosti;
	Nastavni, odnosno programski aspekti (10);	Osavremenjivanje nastave i nastavnih programa; Povezivanje s drugim predmetima; Povezivanje sa svakodnevnim iskustvima van učionice;
	Motivacija i razvijanje kompetencija učenika (8);	Motivisanje učenika; Praćenje interesovanja učenika; Razvijanje kritičkog mišljenja; Prevenција skepticizma o klimatskim promenama; Ohrabrivanje ekološkog aktivizma;
Uslovna podrška;	Umetnički i didaktički kriterijumi (2);	Novi književni tekstovi moraju imati izraženu umetničku vrednost; Novi književni tekstovi moraju biti prilagođeni uzrastu;
Negativna mišljenja;	Ograničenost planova i programa (9);	Nastavni programi su preopterećeni; Učenici su preopterećeni;
Neodlučnost	Nedovoljno informacija (4)	Nedovoljna upoznatost sa ekokritičkom pedagogijom

Nastavnicima je postavljeno pitanje da li bi podržali uvođenje većeg broja književnih tekstova sa ekološkim temama, te je analiza njihovih dodatnih komentara prikazana u Tabeli 7.

Pozitivne promene uočene kod učenika

Komentare o promenama uočenim kod učenika nakon razmatranja ekoloških aspekata književnih tekstova imalo je 87 nastavnika, budući da je pitanje bilo neobavezno.

Većina nastavnika istakla je veću *ekološku osvešćenost* (31.03%), *motivaciju i angažovanost* (21.84%), *empatiju prema prirodi* (13.79%), *proekološko ponašanje* (13.79) i *kritičko mišljenje* (9.20%). Devet nastavnika izvestilo je da nije uočilo značajne promene, čemu su kao razloge naveli nedostatak predznanja (1.15%), nedostatak praktične primene (5.75%), ili nedovoljnu zastupljenost u programima (3.45%). Ipak, ovi rezultati nisu odraz sistemske uključenosti ekokritičke pedagogije, već percepcija nastavnika nakon sporadičnih razgovora o ekološkim temama u okvirima nastave književnosti.

Izazovi ekološki osvešćene nastave književnosti

Većina nastavnika (61.98%) navela je da je glavni izazov nedostatak upoznatosti sa temom i oblašću ekokritičke pedagogije. Drugi značajni izazovi uključivali su to što tekstovi nisu primereni uzrastu ili interesovanjima učenika (18.9% i 18.3%). U dodatnim komentarima istakli su nedostatak adekvatnih tekstova u programima (5.16%), manji broj pokušaja da se ekokritika primeni u nastavi (6.57%), problem složenosti usaglašavanja ekoloških ishoda učenja s književnom interpretacijom (0.47%), kao i neophodnost integrativnog, interdisciplinarnog pristupa, koji zahteva puno vremena (0.47%).

Podrška neophodna za implementaciju ekokritičke pedagogije

Nastavnicima je postavljeno pitanje šta bi im bilo od pomoći za primenu ekokritičke pedagogije u nastavi književnosti. Najčešće su navodili veći izbor književnih tekstova (61%), zatim posete autora i prevodilaca književnih tekstova s ekološkim temama (54.5%), posete stručnjaka za ekologiju (49.8%), mogućnosti za izlete u prirodi i ambijentalnu nastavu (49.8%), stručno usavršavanje (32.9%) i metodički priručnik (29.1%). Troje nastavnika (1.41%) izrazilo je stav da nisu zainteresovani za ekokritičku pedagogiju, te da ekologiji nije mesto u nastavi književnosti.

Diskusija

Deskriptivna analiza razotkrila je razlike u percepcijama nastavnika o zastupljenosti i relevantnosti ekokritičkog pristupa u srpskom obrazovnom sistemu. Prosečno mišljenje nastavnika jeste da je sam pristup relevantniji nego što je trenutno prisutan u nastavi. Njihove perspektive ukazuju na jaz između obrazovne prakse i potencijala ekokritičke pedagogije, budući da su svesni pedagoške vrednosti integrativnog, interdisciplinarnog pristupa ekologiji, koji još uvek nije sistematično integrisan u nastavu književnosti, te su se postojeća istraživanja primarno fokusirala na povezivanje obrazovanja za održivi razvoj s prirodnim naukama – biologijom, geografijom, hemijom, fizikom – i matematikom (Niklanović, 2015; Stanišić, 2015). Mišljenja nastavnika književnosti bila su ohrabrujuća i oslikavaju nastavnike kao aktivne i kritički nastrojene tumače nastavnih programa. Ipak, 6 nastavnika navelo je i tekst koji više nije u programu, premda bi uistinu bio primeren za ekokritičko čitanje, što ukazuje na potencijal za buduća

istraživanja; to uključuje i ispitivanje upoznatosti nastavnika sa programima i njihove spremnosti da ih modifikuju kako bi uključili savremene teme kao što je ekološka svest, prateći primere dobre prakse iz drugih evropskih zemalja navedene ukratko u teorijskom okviru.

Kako bi se stekao detaljniji uvid u razlike dobijene deskriptivnom analizom, odgovori nastavnika upoređeni su prema obrazovnim nivoima na kojima su angažovani, kao i prema godinama nastavnog iskustva. Analiza po nivoima obrazovanja pokazala je da postoji statistički značajna razlika u poimanju zastupljenosti i relevantnosti ekokritičke pedagogije, što je u skladu sa prvim specifičnim ciljem istraživanja i potvrđuje postavljenu hipotezu. Rezultati ukazuju na to da se učitelji izdvajaju prema percepcijama oba koncepta, što se može povezati s činjenicom da u nastavi predaju sve predmete, uključujući i one o očuvanju životne sredine – Svet oko nas, Priroda i društvo, kao i izborni predmet Čuvari prirode, stoga, stalno uspostavljaju korelacije između različitih predmeta i vannastavnih aktivnosti (Minić & Jovanović, 2019). U skladu s time, učitelji su takođe smatrali da su opšti ekološki ishodi učenja značajniji u nastavi književnosti u odnosu na to kako su ih percipirali predmetni nastavnici književnosti u višim razredima osnovne škole i u srednjim školama. Međutim, svi nastavnici su identifikovali razvoj kritičkog mišljenja kao značajan ishod, a to je primetno ukoliko sagledamo visoku prosečnu ocenu na skali, što se podudara s teorijskim perspektivama koje postavljaju kritičko mišljenje kao centralno za ekokritičku pedagogiju (Garrard, 2017; 2010; Hoydis et al., 2023; Myren-Svelstad, 2020).

Drugi specifični cilj koji se odnosio na uporednu analizu mišljenja prema godinama iskustva u nastavi nije potvrđen, budući da nisu uočene značajne razlike, što ukazuje na to da nastavno iskustvo samo po sebi nije u korelaciji sa percepcijama nastavnika, niti predstavlja ograničenje za (buduću) primenu.

Analiza kvalitativnih podataka pokazala je da je glavno ograničenje to što nastavnici nisu u dovoljnoj meri upoznati s ekokritičkom pedagogijom, s obzirom na to da ne postoje mogućnosti za stručno usavršavanje, niti smernice u programima, a to je u skladu sa postojećim tendencijama da se svet i životna sredina interpretiraju na redukcionistički način, podeljeno na odvojene predmete i izolovane fenomene, umesto kroz prizmu međupovezanosti, odnosno korelacija i problemske nastave (Andevski, 2016). Štaviše, neophodno je napomenuti da ni studije namenjene obrazovanju nastavnika (do sada) nisu ponudile pripremu za integrisanje ekoloških sadržaja u nastavu književnosti, što je zapravo slučaj i u Norveškoj, gde je istraživanje takođe pokazalo da su nastavnici-pripravnici tek nakon učestvovanja u projektu vezanom za ekokritiku počeli da osećaju veću samouverenost po pitanju primene ekološkog obrazovanja i vaspitanja u nastavi književnosti (Guanio-Uluru, 2019). Svakako, 84 nastavnika u preliminarnoj studiji u Srbiji identifikovalo je mogućnosti za integraciju ekoloških tema na osnovu književnih tekstova iz postojećih programa (npr. *Šuma život znači* ili *Moj deka je bio trešnja*), iako to ne znači nužno da poseduju temeljnije znanje o ekokritičkoj pedagogiji. Isti broj nastavnika izrazio je pozitivne stavove prema uvođenju dodatnih tekstova s ekološkim temama, što je bilo u skladu s njihovim odgovorima da bi glavna neophodna podrška bila širi izbor ponuđenih tekstova naznačenih u programima.

Naposletku, nastavnici su izvestili o potencijalnim promenama koje su uočili kod učenika nakon razgovora o ekološkim temama u nastavi književnosti, što bi se moralo tumačiti sa izvesnom merom opreza, jer se radilo o sporadičnim pominjanjima u nastavi. Ovi ishodi bili su uglavnom vezani za povećanu ekološku svest, veće interesovanje za ekološke teme, izražavanje empatije prema prirodi (često pominjanjem kućnih ljubimaca učenika) i proekološko ponašanje, koje uključuje reciklažu, izbegavanje bacanja otpada po učionici i dvorištu ili organizovanje ekoloških akcija u školi. Kao što je spomenuto u teorijskom okviru, većina empirijskih studija o posledicama čitanja ekološke književnosti sprovedena je s odraslim ispitanicima van školskog konteksta. Ipak, postoje manja pojedinačna istraživanja o eksperimentalnim lekcijama, projektima i inicijativama za obrazovanje nastavnika, koja ukazuju na slične ishode u vidu povećanog interesovanja i angažmana učenika (Lima et al., 2021), proekološkog ponašanja kao što je sadnja drveća (Carballal Miñán, 2023), te i na potencijal da se podstaknu ekološka svest i empatija (Campagnaro & Ferrari, 2024).

Zaključak

Preliminarno istraživanje o ekokritičkoj pedagogiji u srpskim osnovnim i srednjim školama ukazuje na to da nastavnici poseduju osnovne ideje o ekološki osvešćenoj nastavi književnosti i želju da je primene, premda je potrebno više podrške. Iako mnogi nastavnici smatraju da je obrada ekoloških tema u književnosti relevantna, ekokritički pristup retko je centralan u standardnim književnim interpretacijama i uglavnom je primenjivan u vannastavnim kontekstima, što je zahtevalo da nastavnici ulože dodatan trud i vreme. Svest i primena bili su najviši među nastavnicima razredne nastave, a najniži među nastavnicima srednjih škola, što ukazuje na potencijal za dalja istraživanja, a naročito u srednjim školama stručnih usmerenja (uključujući poljoprivredne, šumarske itd). Naredni koraci koje treba preduzeti moraju imati fokus na upoznavanju većeg broja nastavnika sa ekokritičkom pedagogijom, kao i na istraživanju dugoročnih posledica obrada ekoloških tema u školskoj nastavi književnosti.

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Literature Teachers' Views on Ecocritical Pedagogy: A Preliminary Study in Serbia

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Abstract

The paper explores teachers' perspectives on the presence and relevance of ecocritical pedagogy in literature education within Serbian elementary and secondary schools. Despite the growing global recognition of the educational potential of ecocriticism – defined as an interdisciplinary study of the relationship between literature and the environment – its application in Serbian curricula remains limited and underexamined. The study aimed to investigate potential differences across different education levels (lower and upper grades of elementary school and secondary school), teaching experience, and teachers' perceptions of the possibilities and challenges regarding the integration of ecocritical pedagogy. A mixed-methods approach was employed using both quantitative and qualitative survey data from 213 teachers. Findings indicated that teachers generally lack familiarity with ecocriticism and with the average perception of ecocritical pedagogy as a more relevant approach to education than it is currently represented and utilised. Statistically significant differences emerged by education levels: teachers of lower elementary grades scored highest on both presence and relevance subscales. Most teachers, however, valued the development of critical thinking as a central outcome of ecocritical pedagogy and expressed willingness to integrate it into practice. No significant differences were observed by teaching experience. The results highlight the need for structured support to bridge the gap between theoretical potential and classroom implementation, as teachers recognize literature's capacity to contribute to holistic, interdisciplinary environmental education, encouraging critical thinking, empathy and student engagement with contemporary, real-world issues.

Keywords: Ecocritical Pedagogy, Ecocriticism, Environmental Education, Literature Education, Teachers' Perceptions.

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Introduction

While it is increasingly recognized that the humanities must be included in environmental education, because an approach rooted exclusively in subjects traditionally associated with ecological knowledge is no longer sufficient, the focus remains largely on teaching ecology through the natural sciences – and occasionally through philosophy/ethics or citizenship education – leaving the potential of literary and cultural approaches underexplored (Siperstein et al., 2017). Using various means of communicating about climate change, including creative forms, such as the arts, films, or theatre (Holmes, 2020; Martinez, 2024), as well as literature with prominent ecological themes, is what can help socialize young people into becoming responsible and empathetic adults by positioning them as environmentally aware citizens (ecocitizens) committed to sustainable development at both local and global levels – all of which is an endeavor characterized by strategies that are “complex, unstable, and contradictory” (Massey & Bradford, 2011, pp. 109–110). Reading, by itself, certainly cannot “save the world” (Hoydis et al., 2023, p. 1), but it can contribute to an increased awareness of the ecological crisis. Young people are often excluded from serious discussions due to the complexity of the crisis, even though it’s their future which is at stake, but recently there has been an effort to create literary works for children that encourage dialogue on ecological themes (Van der Beek & Lehmann, 2024). Such literature has, for instance, been purposefully integrated into the school curricula in Germany e.g. the reading recommendations for Saxony-Anhalt, where literary texts with interdisciplinary themes such as sustainable development or the digital world are highlighted (Reading Recommendations..., 2022). Similarly, in Norway, beginning in 2020, sustainable development has been one of the three interdisciplinary topics that must be addressed across *all* school subjects (Myren-Svelstad, 2020, p. 2). In Serbia, one of the goals of elementary and secondary education is defined as “developing awareness of the importance of sustainable development, the protection and conservation of nature and the environment, as well as ecological ethics” and in elementary schools, this also includes “the protection and wellbeing of animals” (Regulation on the Curriculum Framework..., 2017; Regulation on the Curriculum Framework..., 2020; Regulation on the Teaching and Learning Program..., 2023), but there is no strict requirement to address this goal across all subjects. Therefore, there is currently no available research on the integration of ecological themes into the elementary and secondary school literature education in Serbia that identifies the possibilities for an ecocritical pedagogical approach or examines teachers’ perceptions, which are a key factor for successful implementation.

Theoretical Framework

Ecocriticism is, according to the most cited definition, “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (Glotfelty, 1996, p. 18). Greg Garrard (Garrard, 2012; 2010) argues that ecocriticism has engaged with pedagogy since its inception, emphasizing that the inherent educational value of contact with nature is already present in the foundational texts of ecocriticism, particularly in the tradition of nature writing.

While *ecopedagogy* is a term that does not exclusively pertain to literature and adopts a more socially critical approach (Gaard, 2008; Misiaszek, 2015), *ecocritical pedagogy* can be defined as an approach to teaching literature that integrates the principles of ecocriticism into educational practice, emphasizing ecological awareness, critical reflection on human-nature relations, as well as ethical responsibility towards the environment through the interpretation of literary texts. Other related terms, such as *climate change literacy* (Hoydis et al., 2023) and *sustainable literary competence* (Myren-Svelstad, 2020), also share a commitment to integrating ecological themes into literature education.

The starting point is the idea that literature with ecological themes can positively influence readers and contribute to the development of ecological consciousness, although this has yet to be conclusively proven. Currently, there is a theoretical research and few empirical studies on the topic (Malecki & Schneider-Mayerson, 2024; Martinez, 2024; Schneider-Mayerson, 2018). Myren-Svelstad (2020), notes that, from a pedagogical perspective, a common argument is that literature education can help children become ecocitizens, but that a more comprehensive discussion of the relationship between literature, ethics, and sustainable development education is still needed. He highlights a concern with the so-called “altruistic paradigm of ecocritical pedagogy” (Myren-Svelstad, 2020, p. 3), suggesting that altruistic attitudes toward ecological issues alone are insufficient to drive sustainable development, furthermore, even if literature improves knowledge or positive attitudes, it remains uncertain whether these will translate into behavioral change in the future. He elaborates further that indirect experiences with the environment, including the educational context, cannot influence people as much as direct experiences; he also claims that polysemy of literature plays a crucial role because the reactions of readers are unpredictable and that these competences remain undefined, so the question arises of what literature *can* do (Myren-Svelstad, 2020, pp. 3–4). His opinion is that the power of the text is not in readers’ arriving to specific final conclusions, but in being motivated to a constant process of posing questions, thinking and interpreting (Myren-Svelstad, 2020). Bartosch (2019) similarly argues that the readers do not learn *from* literary texts, but rather *through* engaging with them. In the monograph *Climate Change Literacy*, the explanation is that it is neither enough to communicate through facts, nor through emotions, in order to bridge the gap between the mind (what we know) and the behavior (what we practically do), but that the primary role of such an approach is the development of critical thinking through reading different types of literary texts about climate change (Hoydis et al., 2023). Greg Garrard (Garrard, 2017; 2010) also emphasizes that, since sustainability itself is complex and contradictory, the education for sustainability should not prescribe fixed ideas, but instead prioritize critical thinking and that, in the context of literary studies, the focus should not be on students’ gaps in ecological knowledge, but rather on the perceptions, systems of meaning, and discursive positions. When applied to a younger audience, the edited volume *Ecology in Children’s and Young Adult Literature* in German provides similar guidelines, namely, that the goal is not factual precision, but rather the opening up of questions and the creation of perspectives on the protection of nature – since nature is a vital part of children’s and young adult literature, and it influences the formation of ideas about nature regardless of whether explicitly ecological themes are present (Goga et al., 2018; Goga et al., 2023; Mikota & Sippl, 2024: pp. 15–16).

Methodology

Research Goals

The aim of the research was to examine teachers' perceptions of the *presence* and *relevance* of ecocritical pedagogy in literature education within the Serbian school system. More specifically, the study sought to: (1) explore potential differences across education levels (grades 1–4 of elementary school; grades 5–8 of elementary school; and all grades of secondary school); (2) investigate differences based on teachers' years of professional experience; and (3) analyze teachers' views on their experiences with implementation, as well as the perceived possibilities and challenges of applying ecocritical pedagogy through thematic examination of qualitative data. The hypothesis, derived from the objectives, was that while ecocritical pedagogy is not yet significantly represented in Serbian literature education; teachers nonetheless recognize its importance.

Sample

The study included 213 teachers from across all districts of Serbia, with the sample structure presented in Table 1. Seventy-nine teachers (37.1%) were employed in lower grades of elementary school, where one teacher covers all subjects, including literature; 69 teachers (32.4%) taught Serbian language and literature in upper grades of elementary school; and 65 teachers (30.5%) worked as Serbian language and literature teachers in secondary schools (both grammar schools and vocational schools). The chi-square test indicated no significant differences in sample distribution by education level ($\chi^2 = 1.47$; $df = 2$; $p = .48$). In terms of employment length, 101 participants (47.4%) had less than 20 years of teaching experience, while 112 participants (52.6%) had 20 or more years of experience. The chi-square test showed no statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = .57$; $df = 1$; $p = .45$), indicating a balanced sample with respect to professional experience as well.

Table 1
Sample Size Structure

Education Level		Frequency	Percent
$\chi^2 = 1.47$ $df = 2$ $p = .48$	Elementary School – Lower Grades	79	37.1
	Elementary School – Upper Grades	69	32.4
	Secondary School	65	30.5
	Total	213	100.0
Work Experience			
$\chi^2 = .57$ $df = 1$ $p = .45$	Less than 20 Years of Teaching Experience	101	47.4
	20 or More Years of Teaching Experience	112	52.6
	Total	213	100.0

Note: χ^2 – Chi-Square, p – Statistical Significance.

Methods of Data Collection

In addition to general questions about the district, education level, grade taught, and teaching experience, respondents answered 16 questions of both quantitative and qualitative character. Six were based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – *not at all*, to 5 – *very*), eight were multiple-choice questions with space for additional comments, and two were open-ended questions.

On the collected sample, the psychometric properties of the instrument were examined. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) identified two subscales: (1) *Presence* and (2) *Relevance of Ecocritical Pedagogy in the Serbian school system*, which together explained 65.96% of the variance. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed this structure ($CFI > 0.95$; $TLI > 0.9$; $RMSEA < 0.06$; $SRMR < 0.05$; and $NFI > 0.8$). Test scores were presented as means to illustrate the range of the scale (1–5). Reliability analysis showed satisfactory internal consistency for the *Presence* subscale, and high reliability for both the overall scale and the *Relevance* subscale (overall scale $\alpha = .95$; *Presence* $\alpha = .70$; *Relevance* $\alpha = .97$).

Research Procedure

The research instrument was a survey created specifically for the study conducted during the fall of 2024 and the summer of 2025. Data was collected online using Google Forms and the survey was distributed via email and through professional teacher networks. Ethical standards were maintained by informing respondents that their participation was voluntary and anonymous, as well as that the results would be used solely for scientific purposes – specifically, for preliminary research in support of a project proposal on ecology in literature education, for which ethical committee approvals were obtained regarding the collection, analysis, and storage of data.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative results are presented first, followed by a qualitative analysis conducted using thematic analysis. The program used for quantitative data processing was the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*, Version 26.0. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied. Descriptive statistical methods included minimum, maximum, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation, while inferential analyses employed non-parametric techniques, specifically the Mann–Whitney and Kruskal–Wallis tests. The distribution normality was tested using skewness and kurtosis values, as well as the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Scale reliability was assessed with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency, while validity was examined through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses.

Results

The descriptive overview of the quantitative data obtained in the conducted study is presented in Table 2. Based on the values of the empirical arithmetic means, it can be observed that teachers consider concepts related to ecocritical pedagogy to be moderately to highly present and relevant in education ($M = 3.68$; $SD = .84$). The average values

on the subscales show that the mean values are higher on the *Relevance* subscale ($M = 3.89$; $SD = .98$) than on the *Presence* subscale ($M = 2.60$; $SD = .93$). Furthermore, the standard deviations are slightly higher for *Relevance*, which may indicate greater variability in teachers' perceptions of relevance. This observation will be further examined in subsequent analyses considering education level and teaching experience.

The table also includes data on the assessment of the normality of respondents' answers on the examined subscales. Although skewness and kurtosis values fall within an acceptable range for a normal distribution, the significance values of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p < .01$) indicate that the distributions differ significantly from normal. Therefore, non-parametric tests were chosen to examine the differences.

Table 2
Descriptive Overview of Research Results

	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sk</i>	<i>Ku</i>	<i>p</i> K-S Test
Presence	1.00	4.67	2.60	.93	-.13	-.77	0.00
Relevance	1.00	5.00	3.89	.98	-.62	-.64	0.00

Note: *Min* – Minimum, *Max* – Maximum, *M* – Mean, *SD* – Standard Deviation, *Sk* – Skewness, *Ku* – Kurtosis, *p* K-S – Statistical Significance of Kolmogorov-Smirnov.

Based on the data in Table 3, a statistically significant difference was observed among respondents who taught at different education levels – lower elementary, upper elementary, and secondary school – on the *Presence* variable (27.61, $df = 2$, $p < .01$) and the *Relevance* variable (9.18, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). To determine which educational levels differ from each other, a further analysis was conducted, presented in Table 4.

Table 3
Variation in the Expression of Examined Concepts across Education Levels

	Educational Level	Mean Rank	K-W Test	<i>p</i>
Presence	Elementary School – Lower Grades	133.45	27.61	.00
	Elementary School – Upper Grades	101.96		
	Secondary School	80.20		
Relevance	Elementary School – Lower Grades	120.04	9.18	.01
	Elementary School – Upper Grades	109.03		
	Secondary School	88.99		

Note: K-W – Kruskal-Wallis, *p* – Statistical Significance.

The analysis presented in Table 4 indicates a statistically significant difference on the *Presence* subscale between elementary school teachers of lower grades and teachers of upper elementary grades (31.49, $p < 0.05$), as well as secondary school teachers (53.25, $p < .01$). Lower-grade elementary school teachers report that ecocritical pedagogy content is more present in their teaching than it is reported by upper-grade primary and

secondary school teachers. Additionally, the lower-grade elementary school teachers perceive ecocritical pedagogy content in teaching as more important than secondary school teachers do.

Table 4

Comparison of Subscale Scores (Presence and Relevance) across Education Levels

Education Levels	Test Statistic	<i>p</i>
Subscale 1 – Presence		
Secondary School-Elementary School – Upper Grades	21.76	.12
Secondary School-Elementary School – Lower Grades	53.25	.00
Elementary School – Upper Grades-Elementary School – Lower Grades	31.49	.01
Subscale 2 – Relevance		
Secondary School-Elementary School – Upper Grades	20.04	.18
Secondary School-Elementary School – Lower Grades	31.05	.01
Elementary School – Upper Grades-Elementary School – Lower Grades	11.02	.83

Note: *p* – Statistical Significance.

Teachers' views were also compared across education levels with respect to the perceived relevance of learning outcomes related to ecological topics. Statistically significant differences were observed for the outcomes: *the development of ecological awareness* (9.17, $p < .05$), *the recognition of contemporary ecological challenges* (7.19, $p < .05$), and *the understanding of human impact on the natural world* (6.28, $p < .05$). In all cases, secondary school teachers considered these outcomes less relevant compared to primary school teachers, particularly lower-grade teachers. Special attention was dedicated to the outcome *the development of critical thinking*, where no significant differences were found, indicating that all teachers value this outcome equally. On average, teachers rated its significance highly ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.12$).

Based on the significance values from the Mann-Whitney test presented in Table 5, no statistically significant differences were found between teachers with less than 20 years and those with 20 or more years of work experience.

Table 5

Comparison of Examined Concepts in Relation to Teaching Experience

	Teaching Experience	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
Presence	Less than 20 Years	102.14	5165.50	.27
	20 or More Years	111.38		
Relevance	Less than 20 Years	100.88	5037.50	.17
	20 or More Years	112.52		

Note: *p* – Statistical Significance.

In the qualitative part of the study, teachers' textual responses were analyzed to provide deeper insight into their views on the presence and relevance of ecocritical pedagogy in the Serbian school system.

Teachers' Experiences and Practices in Ecocritical Pedagogy

Only 5.63% of teachers reported attending professional development related to ecocriticism, and 1.88% engaged in independent research, while the vast majority (92.49%) had no prior training in this area. Few teachers had applied the ecocritical approach in literature teaching, most often through projects (e.g., *Turn Off the Light*), extracurricular activities, or the analysis of texts and characters with ecological awareness (e.g., Astrof in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* or Levin in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*). Teachers most frequently identified outdoor/environmental teaching (78.9%), multimedia use (61%), and project-based learning (55.9%) as effective methods, while additional suggestions included theater forms, competitions, ecological actions and report writing.

Teachers' Selection of Literary Texts for Ecocritical Teaching

Teachers were asked if they could identify curricular texts suitable for ecocritical teaching. Twenty-four teachers could not recall any, with one secondary school teacher noting that Romantic and Modernist texts describe nature, but are not ecological per se. Among the 84 teachers who responded positively, a total of 70 different texts were suggested. Table 6 presents the most frequently mentioned texts. The analysis referenced the official curricula for elementary and secondary schools in Serbia (Regulation on the Curriculum Framework..., 2017; Regulation on the Curriculum Framework..., 2018; Regulation on the Teaching and Learning Program..., 2018; Regulation on the Teaching and Learning Program for the Seventh Grade of Primary Education, 2019; Regulation on the Teaching and Learning Program for the Eighth Grade of Primary Education, 2019; Regulation on the Curriculum Framework, 2020; Regulation on the Teaching and Learning Program..., 2023). In the elementary school curricula, national literature predominates, while works by foreign authors constitute less than one-tenth of the texts, whereas in secondary schools, reading materials are structured chronologically according to literary-historical principles, encompassing canonical texts of both national and world literature (Varnica & Tokin, 2024, pp. 277–278).

Notably, six teachers also mentioned the short story *The Apple Tree by the Road (Jabuka na drumu)* by Veljko Petrović, formerly taught in the seventh grade, but no longer included in the curriculum, which explores the theme of human (in)gratitude toward an apple tree that selflessly provides its fruit.

Table 6

Literary Texts from the Official Curricula Mentioned by Three or More Teachers

Grade	Literary Text(s) (Number of Teachers)	Type	Themes
1 (E)	Tode Nikoletić, <i>The Forest Means Life</i> (<i>Šuma život znači</i>) (18)	Play	The conservation of forests as natural habitats for animals
4 (E)	Desanka Maksimović, <i>The Spider's Work</i> (<i>Paukovo delo</i>) (3)	Poetry	The respect for nature and empathy towards nonhuman beings and their work
5 (E)	Grozdana Olujić, <i>Moonflower</i> (<i>Mesečev cvet</i>) (4)	Literary fairy tale	The magic and mystery of nature and the disconnect of children from nature as they grow up in an urban environment
5 (E)	Desanka Maksimović, <i>Silver Dancers</i> (<i>Srebrne plesačice</i>) and <i>Mowed Meadow</i> (<i>Pokošena livada</i>) (3)	Poetry	The vitality of plants during winter and human impact on nature
6 (E)	Angela Nanetti, <i>My Grandfather was a Cherry Tree</i> (<i>Mio nonno era un ciliegio</i>) (12)	Novel	The connection between nature (trees) and different generations of humans as well as their memories
6 (E)	Stevan Raičković, <i>Thanks to the Sun, the Earth, and the Grass</i> (<i>Hvala suncu, zemlji, travi</i>) (7)	Poetry	Gratitude for nature and the awareness of the natural world as well as our place in it
6 (E)	Italo Calvino, <i>The Forest on the Highway</i> (<i>Il bosco sull'autostrada</i>) (3)	Short Story	The alienation of modern humans from nature in urban settings
7 (E)	Petar Kočić, <i>Through the Blizzard</i> (<i>Kroz mećavu</i>) (5)	Short story	The ruthlessness of nature and the human struggle against its harsh conditions
2 (S)	Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> (<i>Anna Karenina</i>) (3)	Novel	The character Levin's connection to the environment (e.g. agricultural work and farming) as well as tension between rural and urban life
3 (S)	Anton Chekhov, <i>Uncle Vanya</i> (<i>Дядя Ваня</i>) (6)	Play	The protection of nature in which the character of doctor Astrov finds meaning
3 (S)	Ivo Andrić, <i>The Bridge on the Drina</i> (<i>Na Drini ćuprija</i>) (3)	Novel	The interaction between human constructions (the bridge) and natural dynamics (the Drina river), the ruthlessness of natural phenomena (e.g. floods), and the environmental time scales that extend beyond individual human lives

Note: E – Elementary School, S – Secondary School.

Teachers were asked whether they would support the inclusion of more texts with ecological themes and an analysis of their additional comments is presented in Table 7.

Table 7***Classification of Teachers' Comments on Introducing More Literary Texts with Ecological Themes into Curricula***

Themes	Categories	Codes
Positive Views and Support	Clear Support (38)	Yes Of course
	Environmental Education and Awareness (28)	Raising Ecological Awareness Developing a Sense of Responsibility
	Instructional and Curricular Aspects (10)	Modernization of Teaching and Curricula Integration with Other Subjects Connections with Real-Life Experiences
	Student Motivation and Competencies (8)	Encouraging Students' Motivation Monitoring Students' Interests Developing Critical Thinking Prevention of Climate Change Skepticism Encouraging Ecological Activism
Conditional Support	Artistic and Didactic Criteria (2)	New Literary Texts Must Have Literary Value New Literary Texts Must be Age-Appropriate
Negative Attitudes	Curricular Constraints (9)	The Curricula Are Overloaded Students Are Overburdened
Undecided	Insufficient Information (4)	Lack of Familiarity with Ecocritical Pedagogy

Positive Changes Observed in Students

Comments on changes observed in students after discussing ecological aspects in literary works were provided by 87 teachers, as the question was optional. Most teachers highlighted *ecological awareness* (31.03%), *motivation and engagement* (21.84%), *empathy towards nature* (13.79%), *pro-ecological behavior* (13.79), and *critical thinking* (9.20%). Nine teachers reported no significant changes, citing limited prior knowledge (1.15%), lack of practical application (5.75%), or insufficient coverage in the curricula (3.45%). However, these results do not reflect the systematic inclusion of ecocritical pedagogy, but rather teachers' perceptions after sporadic discussions of ecological themes within literature classes.

Challenges in Ecocritically Oriented Literature Teaching

The majority of teachers (61.98%) reported that a primary challenge is their lack of familiarity with ecocritical pedagogy. Other significant challenges included texts being unsuitable for students' age or interests (18.9% and 18.3%, respectively). Additional comments highlighted a lack of such texts in the curricula (5.16%), limited attempts to apply ecocritical approaches (6.57%), difficulty aligning ecological learning outcomes with literary interpretation (0.47%), and the need for an integrative, interdisciplinary approach that requires substantial time (0.47%).

Support Needed for Implementation

Teachers were asked what would help them more effectively apply an ecocritical approach to literature teaching. The most frequently selected support was a wider selection of texts (61%), followed by visits from authors and translators of ecologically themed literature (54.5%), visits from ecology experts (49.8%), opportunities for field trips or outdoor literature lessons (49.8%), professional development (32.9%), and a methodological handbook (29.1%). Three teachers (1.41%) indicated that they were not interested in ecocritical pedagogy and did not see a place for ecology in literature teaching.

Discussion

The descriptive analysis revealed differences in teachers' views on the presence and relevance of the ecocritical approach in the Serbian school system. On average, teachers perceived it to be more relevant than it is currently represented in teaching. Their perspectives pointed to a gap between educational practice and the potential of ecocritical pedagogy, as they were aware of the pedagogical value of an integrative, interdisciplinary approach to ecology, but it has not yet been systematically integrated into literature teaching; therefore, existing research has primarily concentrated on linking environmental education with the natural sciences – biology, geography, chemistry, physics – and mathematics (Niklanović, 2015; Stanišić, 2015). Literature teachers' views were encouraging, portraying them as active and critical interpreters of the curricula. Nonetheless, six teachers cited a text that is no longer in the curriculum, although it would indeed be appropriate for an ecocritical approach, which shows potential for future research – namely, an investigation into teachers' familiarity with the curriculum and their readiness to modify it in order to incorporate contemporary topics such as ecological awareness, following the example of practices in other European countries and cases referenced in the theoretical framework.

In order to gain a more detailed insight into the differences that emerged from the descriptive analysis, teachers' responses were compared according to education levels at which they taught and years of professional experience. The analysis with respect to education levels showed that there was a statistically significant difference in both the presence and relevance of ecocritical pedagogy, which was in line with the first specific research objective and thus confirmed the guiding hypothesis. The results indicated that elementary school teachers in lower grades stood out in their perceptions of both the presence and the relevance of ecocritical pedagogy in literature teaching. This can be linked to the fact that one teacher covers all subjects in lower grades, including those related to environmental protection – *The World around Us* and *Nature and Society*, as well as the elective subject *The Guardians of Nature*, therefore, they constantly establish correlations across the subjects they teach and through extracurricular activities (Minić & Jovanović, 2019). Correspondingly, elementary school teachers in lower grades considered general ecological learning outcomes more important than literature teachers in upper elementary and secondary schools. However, all teachers identified

the development of critical thinking as a significant outcome, as reflected in the high average ratings on the scale, which aligned with theoretical perspectives that position critical thinking as central to ecocritical pedagogy (Garrard, 2017; 2010; Hoydis et al., 2023; Myren-Svelstad, 2020).

The second specific objective concerning professional experience was not confirmed, as no significant differences were observed, which indicated that teaching experience per se was not correlated with teachers' perceptions and did not constitute a limitation.

The analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the main limitation was teachers' insufficient knowledge of the concept, as there were no professional development opportunities or guidelines in the curricula, which aligned with the still existing tendency to interpret the world and the environment in a reductionist manner, divided into separate subjects and isolated phenomena rather than through interconnected, problem- and context-focused learning (Andevski, 2016). Furthermore, it should be noted that teacher education programs did not provide preparation for integrating ecological perspectives into literature teaching either, which actually corresponds to findings from Norway: this research demonstrated that pre-service teachers only began to feel more confident in applying principles of environmental education within literary classes after they participated in a specifically designed project on tailored literature circles (Guanio-Uluru, 2019). However, there were 84 teachers in the preliminary study in Serbia who were able to identify the possibilities for the integration of environmental education into literary education, by using texts from the existing curricula (e.g., *The Forest Means Life* or *My Grandfather was a Cherry Tree*), although this did not necessarily indicate a more thorough understanding of ecocritical pedagogy. The same number of teachers expressed a positive view towards introducing additional ecologically-themed texts, which was in accordance with the responses on necessary support being a broader selection of texts.

Finally, teachers reported observing changes in students after discussing ecological themes in literature classes, which should be interpreted with caution, as they stemmed from sporadic classroom discussions. Reported outcomes were primarily related to heightened ecological awareness, greater interest in environmental topics, expressions of empathy towards nature (often illustrated through references to students' pets) and pro-ecological behaviors, such as recycling, avoiding pollution, and organizing eco-actions. As highlighted in the theoretical framework, most empirical studies on the effects of reading environmental literature have been conducted with adults outside formal schooling. Nevertheless, research on experimental lessons, projects, and teacher education initiatives similarly points to increased student engagement (Lima et al., 2021), pro-ecological behaviors such as tree planting (Carballal Miñán, 2023), and the general potential for encouraging environmental awareness and empathy (Campagnaro & Ferrari, 2024).

Conclusion

Preliminary research on ecocritical pedagogy in Serbian elementary and secondary literature education suggests that teachers have a basic awareness of ecocriticism

and a general willingness to implement it, though more support is needed. While many consider ecological themes in literature relevant, the ecologically conscious approach is rarely central in standard literary interpretations and has mostly been applied in extracurricular contexts, requiring teachers to go beyond their usual workload. Awareness and application were highest among elementary school teachers in lower grades, and lowest among secondary school teachers, highlighting the potential for further exploration in secondary schools, particularly in vocational schools (of agriculture etc.). Future steps could focus on expanding ecocritical pedagogy to a broader teacher base and investigating the long-term effects of engaging students with ecological themes in the literature taught in classes.

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