

EXTRACURRICULAR EXPRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ

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Abstract. *During the fifty years of the Niš English Department (1971-2021) a great number of extracurricular activities (ECAs) have been organized. These planned, systematic activities resulting from regular coursework usually present volunteering students with authentic, real-life tasks where they should integrate the knowledge acquired in academic work with other aspects of their personality for the sake of 'deeper learning'. This engagement, which often requires the investment of additional time and energy, has been an opportunity for students to express their creativity and imagination as well as develop problem-solving, communication skills, job-related and transferrable general skills.*

This paper presents a review of ECAs organized at the Niš English Department over the fifty years, their range, forms and the influence they may have had on the development of participating students.

Key words: *extracurricular activities (ECAs), Niš English Department, student engagement*

Since the Niš English Department was founded in 1971, its staff has devoted a lot of energy and time in the teaching/learning process, believing that only “passive learning, or the consumption of knowledge, is [not] at all possible within the arts and humanities” (Martin 2009, 300). This can be evidenced in regular classes but even more in extracurricular activities¹ (ECAs) which offer ‘learning spaces’ (Barnett 2010, 1) different from traditional ones, and include creativity and various talents. Research shows that students who participate in ECAs value the benefits of the participation regardless of “[whether] they directly or indirectly affect academic performance” (Buckley and Lee 2021, 45). Participating in ECAs provides “a host of opportunities for mutually beneficial engagement with other communal

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¹ Though in literature a variety of terms is used (project-based learning, experiential learning, practice-based learning), we have decided to use ‘extracurricular activities’ as the umbrella term, although some of the ‘extra-curricular work is done in regular classes, either complementary or compensatory to academic work.

and societal stakeholders and [offers] new challenges and opportunities for personal growth” (Buckley and Lee 2021, 45).

In this paper ECAs done at our Department will be defined as systematic, planned activities, optional and voluntary for students², “which are sometimes defined as co-curricular, as they are closely related to but are not part of academic study” (Thompson et al. 2013, 136). These are authentic tasks relying on the academic work (translation, literature, writing courses), done for real audience and with a real purpose. They are process-oriented since they are to provoke participating students’ emotional, social and cognitive development – particularly building confidence, autonomy, independence; cooperation with other participants; (self)reflection (Clark et al. 2015; Thompson et al. 2013) and creativity and imagination as an essential addition to learning (Freeman 2006). In most cases there is a final product which evidences students’ achievement and presents it to the public (a theater performance, a publication and the like). The fact that foreign lecturers have initiated many of the ECAs has greatly contributed to the range and quality of ECAs. Another indirect benefit of organizing ECAs is that the students who participated in the ECAs have themselves initiated ECAs once they have joined the Department as instructors.

What follows is a brief description and analysis of the ECAs organized by the Niš English Department. They are grouped according to the field of activities: theater performances, creative writing, translation projects, newspaper clubs, etc. while a separate section is dedicated to the projects conducted in cooperation of our Department with the US Embassy in Belgrade and other US institutions. The review finishes with a project where students could directly test and develop their job-related competences. Unfortunately, there is scarce and mostly anecdotal evidence of ECAs up to 2000 so only a few will be mentioned here, while those organized since 2000 will be presented in greater detail.

1. THEATER PERFORMANCES

Drama clubs and theater performances in arts and humanities help students connect ‘knowledge’ and ‘experience, personal intervention and wisdom’ (Anderson 2010), achieving in that way “an alternative view of imaginative intelligence which would enable students to benefit from a more meaningful intellectual engagement with their material and from a fuller participation in the disciplinary field” (Anderson 2010, 206). Anderson (2010) stresses that by engaging students’ emotions, individual experience and judgement, “the link between learner and knowledge can be strengthened in the desired direction” (210) and thinks that these should be encouraged in arts and humanities programs.

At our department this line of ECAs has been inevitably related to the academic work in Anglophone Literature courses and performed both in regular classes (for example, poetry reading with Prof. Dragana Mašović; performance of *Hercules and Antaeus* with Prof. Lena Petrović; literary workshop marking St Patrick’s Day with Nataša Tučev in 1995-96) and as extracurricular activities. The earliest example is connected with the first generation of students enrolled in 1971, who did the dramatization of Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*.

² Students who do not want to participate in these non-traditional activities are always offered alternate assignments.

Most theatre performances are connected with the work of Prof. Dragana Mašović. In the mid-1990s, Prof. Mašović and our students in collaboration with Tatjana Paunović put on two productions: *Much Ado About Nothing* by W. Shakespeare and *Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot. These productions drew attention of a wider community and were performed at the Niš National Theatre and the Niš Puppet Theatre respectively, the Priština National Theatre, Students' Cultural Center in Belgrade, and "Filozofijada"³ in Budva (Montenegro).

Another line of Prof. Mašović's theater work was related to the literature and cultural studies courses newly-introduced in the reformed curriculum accredited in 2008. Prof. Mašović and forth-year students attending the elective course *Irish studies* organized public events which varied in content and activities on St Patrick's Day - March 17th. The biggest event was organized in 2010 and consisted of a theater performance and rock concert of our students' band "The people who stare at goats". Within the third-year obligatory course *American Literature: American Drama*, Prof. Mašović, Ana Kocić Stanković and third-year students would prepare a production of a play by an American playwright (for example, *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams in 2011-12).

In recent years, the theatre performances were connected with *NELTA Theatre Fest*. This is a festival of theater performances in English and other foreign languages prepared by primary school, secondary school and English Department students and instructors. The festival is organized annually in May by the Niš English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) and the Faculty of Philosophy. In 2016, to mark the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, instructors Milena Kaličanin, Danijela Petković and Sanja Ignjatović and first- and second-year students prepared *Shakespeare and Love*, recital consisting of Shakespeare's sonnets, while in 2017 a group of fourth-year students and Danijela Petković prepared a scene from *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde.

Engaging students in acting and drama was also part of English Language courses. In 2008, as one of three student projects within the third-year two-semester course *English Language 3*, our British lecturer Sonja Stojanović and a group of students prepared *That Amateur Show*, a production consisting of three episodes: a scene from the film *Pride and Prejudice* based on the Jane Austin novel; a scene from the Serbian comedy *Tesna koža* presenting a humorous account from a high-school English class; and a sketch from our students' life.

These theater performances show that there are students at the Niš English Department with great talents who are ready to step outside of the expected and merge into new creative experiences. Recognizing their talents and willingness to experiment, our instructors have gladly created opportunities where these students can show their talents but also enrich their learning process.

2. CREATIVE WRITING AND TRANSLATION PROJECTS

Another line of ECAs related to Anglophone Literature courses is creative writing. The interest of students and instructors for this kind of activity witnesses that philology studies can make a connection between literary theoretical considerations and students' creativity, thus integrating their knowledge into a more personal learning experience. Our instructors seem to agree with Freeman (2006) that "[c]reative, project-driven and tutor-supported investigations are as well suited to the ideals of higher education as they are to subject-

³ This is the annual meeting of students of faculties of philology and philosophy.

specific enquiry” (Freeman 2006, 101). For Freeman (2006), “creative activity is not antithetical to analytical engagement, and neither is it necessarily mystical” (93); it is a crucial part of studying: studying is

at its strongest when it includes intuitive, subjective and creative enquiry, alongside dedicated space for reflective evaluation. And through acknowledging that students learn best when they address knowledge in ways that they can trust, and realizing that we trust best what we have tested most thoroughly and personally. (Freeman 2006, 101)

Creative writing activities at our Department have become particularly prominent since the introduction of elective courses in 2008. Our foreign lecturers have also been helpful in organizing students and compiling students’ works of creative writing.

Some of creative writing pieces were written within the course Shakespeare taught by Prof. Ljiljana Bogoeva: for their final project, students could write a modern version of a Shakespeare play. Former student Milan Jovanović informed us of his play *The War is Over* based on Shakespeare’s *Othello*.

In 2014-2015 editors Sonja Stojanović, British lecturer, and Cleyera Martin, English language fellow, with the help of students Đorđe Stojanović, Aleksandra Miladinović and Sanja Ignjatović compiled the anthology *The Brevity, A Collection of Stories, Essays and Poems* (2015). As the editors say in the introduction, their aim of this publication was “to publicly recognize the ability and hard work of our students and [offer them] one of the essential features of writing – that of having an audience” (Stojanović and Martin 2015, 9).

In 2020 instructor Danijela Petković and forth-year students attending the elective course *Modern Anglophone Literature for Children and Young Adults* prepared and published the collection *The Harper and Other Tales: English Students’ Short Stories for Children and Young Adults* (Petković 2020). As the editor herself says, this student project was “an experiment, an exercise, and a didactic instrument [which resulted in] the outpouring of creativity, imagination, sentimentality” (Petković 2020, 4).

Student translation projects at the Niš English Department are conducted as a step beyond regular work in translation classes. Their aim is to put students into the professional translator’s shoes and confront them with the challenges and issues that one faces in an authentic translation task. These projects should show that, contrary to the general belief, a translation task is not solitary work, but rather that it is “always undertaken within a particular physical and social setting and interactional framework, with the translator working together with other actors, and with cultural, technical, documentary and linguistic tools and resources to design and create a text” (Király 2005, 1102). Viewed in this way, translation is seen as a ‘dynamic’ and ‘situationally embedded’ activity “focusing on social, physical and emotional phenomena that extend far beyond the macro- and micro- strategies of the individual mind” (Király 2005, 1101).

The translation student projects at our department seem to have achieved that aim: the student-translators worked for an audience other than their instructors with the purpose of presenting a new artwork to the general public, doing research into the artist’s life and work and into the socio-cultural circumstances, searching for linguistic and socio-cultural equivalents to the author’s style, dialect, humor, puns in order to precisely render the message(s) of the original.

One of the first student translation projects after 2000 was the translation of ten newspaper short stories by J. D. Selinger, previously never translated in Serbia. The publication

*Studentski prevod 10 novinskih priča Selindžera*⁴ (2008) (*Student translation of 10 newspaper stories by Selinger*) was financially supported by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, USA, and the American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS. The project coordinators were: Nina Lazarević, Milica Savić, Slobodanka Kitić, Tatjana Paunović and Ljiljana Marković. As students themselves say, this translation task significantly changed students' perspective on translation. During the project they focused more on 'success' than on grades (Nataša, *Studentski prevod* 2008, 9); they realized that it takes 'a lot of will and determination' to do a translation "accurate and faithful to the writer's style and the Serbian language" (Aleksandar, *Studentski prevod* 2008, 11); and that translating is a never-ending process (Marija, *Studentski prevod* 2008, 12).

Individual students have also taken up some important translation tasks which they performed under the supervision of their instructors. Thus, in 2013 the MA student Vesna Savanović with the help of Nataša Tučev translated the play *Seven Lears* by Howard Barker: *Sedam Lirova (Potraga za dobrim)* (Barker 2013), which was published in the theater arts review *Scena*.

In 2017-18, a group of BA and MA students under the supervision of Nina Lazarević, Nikola Tatar and Ljiljana Marković translated a collection of short stories for young adults *Prostor za mokrog psa* (Spasić et al. 2012) and published it as *The Place for the Wet Dog, A Collection of Stories for Young Adults - Student Translation* (2018). This task was particularly challenging because the students not only faced a real-life translation task for the first time but also had to do it by translating from Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin and their respective dialects (as the authors of the short stories come from the region) (Marković and Lazarević 2020). Luckily, their first proofreading audience were former American lecturers and students of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa (USA), then visiting our Faculty, who helped our student-translators with their comments.

A recently conducted student project combined two kinds of student work: creative writing and translation performed in two elective courses. It started with the Gothic stories written in English by third-year students within the elective course *Gothic Imagination* taught by Milica Živković. Then, students attending the fourth-year course *Language Exercises: Translation from English to Serbian* taught by Ljiljana Janković (some of whom were the authors of the originals) translated these stories into Serbian. The publication which resulted from this work *Društvo živih prevodilaca/ Living Translators' Society* (forthcoming) contains both the originals in English and their Serbian translations.

Niš English Department students have also been engaged in translating more 'applied' genres of writing. Thus, in 2007-08 third-year students and their instructor Nina Lazarević compiled and translated into English and Serbian respectively *The Survival Guide for Freshmen*. This was one of three extracurricular activities conducted within the two-semester course *English Language 3* (Marković and Lazarević 2010). *The Survival Guide* is an interesting project because its aim was to compile a brochure to introduce newly enrolled students (freshmen) to studying and university life. A particularly valuable section of the brochure was "A Glossary of Newer Academic Terms" (English-Serbian translation), defining the terms (credit transfer, elective course, diploma supplement) newly introduced into our academic life as part of a major curriculum reform. The brochure was ready for the 2008 class enrolment, and was available on the then official site of the Faculty of Philosophy <http://www.filfak.ni.ac.yu>.

⁴ The publication title will be shortened to *Studentski prevod* (2008) in the text.

Another project of the more ‘applied’ kind was conducted by forth-year students and instructor Dušan Stamenković at the elective course *Consecutive Interpreting* in 2018-19. These students translated a selection of material on the Faculty of Philosophy web site into English, thus significantly contributing to the international visibility of our institution. The project team also included Nikola Jović and Saša Trenčić. The translations are available at <https://intl.filfak.ni.ac.rs/en>.

The ECAs presented in this section start from the belief that creativity should not be expelled from university, especially not from philological departments, and that it is instructors’ task to recognize and encourage students’ talents and creativity. The success of the regular and extracurricular activities evidence that it is possible to achieve “implementing an appropriate balance of knowledge, imagination and evaluative reflection” (Freeman 2006, 101) - at least at philological departments, thus “produc[ing] graduates who can go on to become the creative and imaginative mainstay of our future” (Freeman 2006, 101).

3. NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER PROJECTS

Newspaper projects are quite popular in English courses at all levels because students are familiar with the genre and they can write about any topic of interest while stepping outside the classroom, writing for an audience other than the instructor, and at the same time learning to set their style and tone to that audience (Marković and Lazarević 2010).

The earliest newspaper project that could be tracked comes from the mid-1980s: it is the unnamed magazine initiated and completely compiled by the students (Snežana Milošević, Kaća i Bilja S. with Suzana Ilijev and Mlađan Živković) and supported by the instructors Mladen Jovanović, David A. Hill and Ivona Ilić. The magazine consisted of: a news flash for English students; an anecdote from the Faculty halls; a talk with an American lecturer; information for students who wanted to spend a summer in the UK as au pairs; the lyrics of the song “Sacrifice” by our students’ band “Jugendstil”; “English by Wolf” and the invitation to classmates to send their contributions.

Another newspaper project was ENGZINE, one of three projects within the two-semester *English Language 3* courses in 2007-08. It covered a range of topics: from a section about studying (the ‘Bologne-oriented’ reform; top US universities; interviews with instructors who spent a semester at US universities) through the (then) new possibilities of the Internet (e-learning, e-shopping, e-cheating in the exam) to the recommendations of the latest books, films, sports events, cars and fashion (Marković and Lazarević 2010). ENGZINE was presented on the then official web site of the Faculty of Philosophy <http://www.filfak.ni.ac.yu>.

A unique writing endeavor was the project of third-year students and their instructor Sonja Stojanović within third-year *Essay Writing* courses done in 2011-12. They compiled a tourist brochure of Niš, which presented important historical and cultural sites of Niš and other places to visit. The guide was published and used as intended: as help to the visitors of the Faculty of Philosophy, such as participants of the biannual international conference *Teaching Languages and Cultures*.

The introduction of elective courses in the reformed curriculum accredited in 2008, as shown above, created new opportunities for instructors and students to present students’ work. One of the ways was compiling students’ coursework into publications with two purposes in mind: first, to recognize and acknowledge the work of students who achieved high proficiency and present it to the public, thus providing personal satisfaction to the

students; second, to provide useful, practical guidelines to future students of the course requirements and possible ways to meet them.

One of these publications contains the work of students in the third-year elective course on writing an academic paper. The collection *FORM & CONTENT: Writing an Academic Paper, Student essays* (Paunović et al. 2014) consists of ten students' papers. While the essays make Part I of the publication, the other part "Bric-a-brac" is intended for future students. It presents the students' view of this often painstaking but also gratifying process (*Through student-writers' eyes*), Power Point outlines of the essays (*What do you think? Essay outlines and presentations*) and guidelines for writing an academic essay (*Asking the right questions: A guide to critical thinking*).

Another publication *TRY IT! Using Information and Communication Technology in an English Classroom* (Mišić Ilić and Mihajlović 2012) consists of students' final projects done in the fourth-year elective course *Computer-Assisted Language Learning*. Section I presents the theoretical and practical issues of using digital technologies in the EFL classroom, while Section II contains three samples of final projects provided by the editors and the final projects of eleven students 'show[ing] mastery of utilizing IT in class preparation' (Mišić Ilić and Mihajlović 2012: 8).

The Niš English Department staff have also engaged students as contributors in their own research. One such project was *Translating Canada* (2010-2012) conducted by Milena Kaličanin and supported by the Central European Association for Canadian Studies (CEACS). A group of BA and MA students helped their instructor in making a database of Serbian translations of the works by Canadian authors.

4. US-SERBIA STUDENT PROJECTS

The Faculty of Philosophy in Niš and the US Embassy in Belgrade have had a successful cooperation since the foundation of the English Department. Since 2000, their cooperation has resulted in a number of successful student projects.

One of the regular activities of these partner institutions is that the State Department through its programs sends a young US scholar to the Niš English Department. As an English Language Fellow (ELF) or English Teaching Assistant (ETA), this scholar helps in teaching different courses and conducts programs for students and citizens of Niš. Part of their activities is directed at organizing student extracurricular work which enables our students to have a more personal and immediate contact with the US culture, and work on developing intercultural competences. Some of these will be presented here.

4.1. *Spelling Bee*

The first ELF/ETA at our Department was Brooke Ricker in 2011-12. Among other projects and workshops, she initiated the annual competition of Niš English Department students *Spelling Bee*, based on *SCRIPPS National Spelling Bee* (www.spellingbee.com). The purpose behind the project was two-fold: to introduce and popularize this aspect of US academic life, and to contribute to developing our students' vocabulary acquisition. Thanks to the support of the US Embassy and enthusiasm of other ELFs/ETAs: Cleyera Martin, Kelsey Montzka, Jessica Collins, Jasmine Passa and Danbi Lee, as well as our junior staff and exceptional English Department spellers, this project turned into a traditional event which ran until 2018.

There was another project related to Spelling Bee that Brooke Ricker and Ljiljana Marković conducted. It was making a film about the 2011 competition, inspired by the documentary *Spellbound* (2002) directed by Jeffrey Blitz, “follow[ing] eight teenagers on their quest to win the 1999 National Spelling Bee” (*Spellbound* n.d.). Vlastimir Stevanović, English Department student with great experience in film-making, was the director, while the participants of the First Spelling Bee were its main characters. The film was supported by the US Embassy in Belgrade and Faculty of Philosophy. It premiered in 2012.

4.2. Academic Writing Project

Another academic writing project was conducted by Jessica Collins, graduate of Clemson University, in 2016-17. It was a project consisting of writing academic papers on important issues in both the US and Serbia. It included students from our department and from Clemson University in South Carolina who attended a semester at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade at the time. An interesting twist in the project was that the US students researched and wrote about the situation in Serbia, while our students wrote essays on the US situation. Thus, the aim of the project was not only to lead students through researching a topic and writing an academic paper on a social issue but also to ‘decenter’ students by taking a critical stance toward the issue from the perspective of the other country. While most of the activities were conducted online under Jessica Collins’ supervision, the students also spent two weekends together (one in Belgrade and one in Niš), doing workshops but also spending more personal time together and getting to know one another.

4.3. The Serbia Fellowship Experience

The project between the Niš English Department and the University of Alabama was not one directly supported by the US Embassy; yet, it also illustrates good cooperation between our and US institutions. The project *The Serbia Fellowship Experience* (SFE) of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa was an entirely student-led international student project consisting of a visit of a group of Alabama students and instructors to Serbia. The aim of the project was “[to] build bridges between US American youth and Balkan youth through cultural immersion, fulfilling service, mutual respect, and active research with hopes to foster sustained dialogue on political, social, and economic issues” (*The Serbia Fellowship Experience*).

Although the project was originally conducted with the Municipality of Blace, thanks to our alumna Sanja Smiljković Savić, English teacher in Blace, the Niš English Department staff Tatjana Paunović, Ljiljana Marković and Nina Lazarević and project coordinators Aaron Brazelton, Al Gilani and Prof. Mary Mears made contact in 2013 and agreed to extend the project activities to the two universities.

The special value of the project was that US guests were accommodated in our students’ families, gaining first-hand experience of the everyday life of Niš students. At university, Alabama and Niš students participated in a number of academic activities: debates, presentations on important social issues, workshops (Serbian national dance workshop; peer review of the English translation of *The Space for the Wet Dog*), public lectures (of Prof. Mary Mears and Prof. Emily Wittman), as well as visits to Niš high schools (the First Grammar School “Stevan Sremac”), sports events (basketball match between the joint team of university students and the team of “Stevan Sremac”, then the high-school world vice-champion), guided sightseeing tours (Niš, Blace, Resavska pećina, Đavolja varoš, Piroć and monasteries Temska and Poganovo).

It was the coordinators' wish to develop the project further and turn it into 'S/AFE' – "The Serbia/Alabama Fellowship Experience", including a return visit of Niš University students to the University of Alabama and extending cooperation to student and staff exchange and research projects. However, primarily due to a lack of funding on the Niš partner's side, this idea was never realized.

5. TOWARD MORE JOB-MARKET-ORIENTED ECAS

The ECAs presented so far have been organized with the aim of enriching students' learning process by enabling the integration of the knowledge acquired in regular academic work with the students' personality (imagination, creativity) and experience. However, in recent years universities have become pressured by employers and funders to focus primarily on developing students' job-related and transferrable skills so that employers hire ready-made professionals. Universities are struggling to find a balance between these demands and their mission – to create well-educated, well-trained, well-rounded professionals and citizens. One of the ways in which the two can be reconciled may be through 'work-integrated learning' (WIL). This is a form of collaboration of universities and industry combining "on-campus and workplace learning activities and experiences which integrate theory with practice in academic learning programs" (Jackson 2013, 99), organized as work placements, internships, practicum, project-based learning, service learning.

One project of this kind is *Supporting the education of refugee and migrants children in Serbia - E-learning response to COVID 19 crisis*, conducted by UNICEF Serbia, "Indigo" Group for Children and Youth, Niš, and the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš in 2020-21. The project coordinators were Gordana Đigić, Ljiljana Marković, Biljana Mišić Ilić, Violeta Stojičić and Ljiljana Mihajlović, while the participants were MA and senior-year BA students.

The aim of the project was to provide immigrant children with online education while they are with their families in Serbia (in migrant camps in Vranje, Šid and Krnjača). Our student-volunteers taught tailor-made online English language courses at the A1 and A2 levels of the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR) respectively, helping migrant children to upgrade their English language competences.

The value of the project for the participating students was that they went through all the stages of teaching an English course: from doing the placement test, through designing lesson plans and class materials, through teaching and reporting on the progress at staff meetings, to final assessment. In addition, this was an opportunity for the students to work on their communication and leadership skills as well as personal confidence and stamina. Finally, this was an opportunity for them to explore online teaching first-hand.

For their engagement, the students received compliments from the project partners and supervising institutions. Students themselves say that the project significantly contributed to developing their professional selves. Being a success, the project will continue in 2021-22 with a new group of student-volunteers.

As it can be seen, this project succeeded in providing students with a real-life teaching experience through an ECA. It might serve as a model for future WIL activities: by making room in the curriculum for practicum or volunteer work with partner organizations and companies, university can meet the demands of companies for more job-market-oriented competences, yet stay true to the ideal of "producing creative and imaginative mainstay of our future" (Freeman 2006, 101).

6. CONCLUSION

Extracurricular activities (ECAs), here defined as systematic, planned and for students voluntary ‘co-curricular activities’ (Thompson et al. 2013, 136) have been a constant in the engagement of Niš English Department instructors and students during the last fifty years. They have ranged from theater performances through creative writing and translation to student newspapers, compiling publications and competitions, and have varied in form: from non-traditional regular class activities through student projects to volunteering. In recent years, the focus of the ECAs has slightly shifted to developing job-specific and transferrable skills more closely. However, what all these activities have in common is that, though they frequently require additional engagement of both instructors and students, they are organized because it has been felt that the knowledge acquired in the classroom is just a springboard for students’ development of talents, interests and professional skills. The instructors organizing these ECAs seem to believe that only when our students’ knowledge is connected with their personality, emotions, behavior, critical reflection can it be complete, deeper and more productive. The list of ECAs presented in this paper offers evidence to that. Our hope is that future generations of instructors and students will follow the lead of their predecessors.

Acknowledgement: *The author wishes to thank the teaching staff of the English Department, Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, and former students for their help in compiling a more accurate list of extracurricular activities. Unfortunately, due to the limited space, these activities could not get a more detailed account, for which the author apologizes. Hopefully, there will be other opportunities to talk about these and many other ECAs.*

We are also grateful to the Niš English Department alumni who have submitted reports on other forms of students’ engagement: Nevenka Hosonaka, née Nikolić, for the newspaper article about first-generation students’ internship in the early 1970s; Sanja Tasić for the student conference at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad in 2002; Natalija Nenadović for doing interpreting for the OEBS election observers in the historic elections in 2000 and many others.

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IZRAŽAVANJE I RAZVOJ STUDENATA DEPARTMANA ZA ANGLISTIKU U NIŠU KROZ VANNASTAVNE AKTIVNOSTI

Za pedeset godina koliko postoji Departman za anglistiku Filozofskog fakulteta u Nišu (1971-2021) organizovan je veliki broj vannastavnih aktivnosti. To su dobro planirane i organizovane aktivnosti koje se nadovezuju na rad na redovnim časovima. Studentima koji se dobrovoljno javljaju da učestvuju u njima obično se pruža mogućnost da obave autentične zadatke i da tom prilikom povežu znanje stečeno u toku redovnog studiranja sa drugim aspektima svoje ličnosti kako bi dostigli 'dublje nivoe učenja'. Iako često zahteva dodatno vreme i energiju, ovaj angažman pruža studentima priliku da izraze svoju kreativnost i maštu i da razviju razne veštine (rešavanje problema, komunikacija, profesionalne i opšte veštine). Ovaj rad daje prikaz vannastavnih aktivnosti organizovanih na Departmanu za anglistiku Filozofskog fakulteta u Nišu u toku ovih pedeset godina, njihov opseg, oblike i uticaj na razvoj studenata koji su učestvovali u njima.

Ključne reči: vannastavne aktivnosti, Departman za anglistiku u Nišu, angažovanje studenata