

**TEFL METHODOLOGY AND PRE-SERVICE  
TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ**

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**Abstract.** *The paper outlines the development of the TEFL Methodology courses in the English Department curriculum over the past fifty years, from the foundation of the Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš in 1971 to date, as well as the many curricular and extracurricular aspects of work related to the pre-service education of prospective EFL teachers.*

**Key words:** *TEFL Methodology, Niš English Department, pre-service teacher education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Each academic year, one of the first things new students learn when they enroll the English Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš is that there are four main ‘pillars’ of their curriculum: English language, English linguistics, Anglophone literature and English-speaking cultures. These four ‘lines’ or ‘paths’ of development, which constitute the core knowledge-base of ‘Anglistics’, are traced out in the curriculum by the obligatory courses in each semester, such as *Contemporary English*, *Phonetics*, *American Drama* or *Australian Studies*, as well as by the many elective courses at both the BA and the MA levels of study.

However, ever since the foundation of the English Language and Literature Department in 1971, the curriculum has had an important fifth component, the one which focuses on providing pre-service education for prospective teachers of English as a foreign language (TEFL) as one of the principal outcomes of the English language and literature study programs. Reflecting the understanding that foreign language teaching is an essentially skills-based profession (Tsui 2011), and that, as pointed out by Grant and Gillette (2006, 296), “[t]he science of teaching may lie in the content, but the art of teaching is in the

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delivery of the content”, pre-service teacher education at the English Department has, in addition to the ‘content’ courses in English, linguistics, literature, and culture, always included both a theoretical teaching-methodology component and a practical skill-developing component. They have been realized through TEFL Methodology courses which have varied in form over time, but have invariably been dedicated to keeping pace with the new developments in applied linguistics, education, and teaching methodology, so as to provide prospective EFL teachers with up-to-date knowledge and skills, and “dispositions that will allow them to succeed” (Darling-Hammond *et al.* 2005).

This paper outlines the development of the TEFL Methodology component in the English Department curriculum over the past fifty years, from the foundation of the Department in 1971 to date, as well as other curricular and extracurricular aspects of work related to the pre-service education of prospective EFL teachers. After a brief chronological overview of the course forms, their position in the curriculum, and the teaching staff in the courses, the paper discusses the course content, aims and objectives. Lastly, it presents the broader outcomes of these courses – the networks, projects and extracurricular activities which have developed as extensions closely related to TEFL Methodology and pre-service teacher education at the English Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš.

## 2. TEFL METHODOLOGY IN THE CURRICULUM

Even in the earliest versions of the curriculum, where TEFL Methodology was a two-semester obligatory course, it had a clear modular structure, comprising the theoretical and practical components, i.e. the knowledge and the skills. Up to the late 1980s, the first part of the course covered only the theoretical component through two contact hours (lectures) in the spring semester of the third year of studies, and the second part, in the fourth year of study, covered both theory and practice, through two lecture classes and four practice classes. The exam, too, consisted in the practical teaching part, and the final written exam. In the 1988 curriculum, the practical component of the course was expanded to include practicals in the spring semester, while in the 1990 curricular changes the course was re-positioned to be realized in the autumn and spring semesters of the third year of study, with two lecture and two practical exercise classes in either semester.

In the early 2000s, the curriculum of the English Department was gradually reformed to incorporate the Bologna convention principles and the European Credit Transfer System, so the two-semester TEFL Methodology course was re-designed into three components: two one-semester courses and a stand-alone teaching practicum component, carrying 6 ECTS credits each. This design was first introduced by the 2006 curriculum, and remained the same through three accreditation cycles, in 2008, 2014, and 2021, with some adaptations of the credits carried by the three components, which currently amount to 6 ECTS for the first course, 4 ECTS for the second one, and 3 ECTS for the teaching practicum. In the latest curriculum reform, however, in 2021, the position of the TEFL Methodology courses was changed once again, actually turning back to the original design – starting with the Methodology 1 course in the spring semester of the third year and continuing with Methodology 2 and the teaching practicum in the fourth year of study. This change was (re-)introduced to provide an even better match between the organization of the academic work at the Faculty and the organization of school-years in the primary and secondary schools where students realize their teaching practice. This full cycle of re-designing the organization of the TEFL Methodology courses indicates that from

the earliest period the pre-service teacher education component was firmly grounded in the close cooperation with schools and teaching practice.

Of the English Department teaching staff, professors Ratomir Ristić and then Đorđe Vidanović were in charge of the TEFL Methodology courses up to the late 1990s, while the teaching assistant was Slobodanka Kitić, from 1989 to 1998. For the next decade, from 1998 to 2008, it was professor Slobodanka Kitić who taught and developed the obligatory TEFL Methodology courses, and introduced the changes leading to the Bologna reform and today's structure and design of these courses. In this period, the teaching assistants in the courses were Marija Stojković Grujić, and later on Milica Savić and Nina Lazarević, as well as, from 2013 onwards, Ljiljana Marković, senior lector at the Department. From 2008 to 2014, professor Tatjana Paunović was in charge of the TEFL Methodology courses, which were taken over by professor Nina Lazarević in 2014. In 2018, Ema Živković joined the TEFL Methodology team, first as a Junior Researcher and then as an English Department lector. Currently, the obligatory TEFL Methodology courses and the teaching practicum are realized by Tatjana Paunović, Ljiljana Marković and Ema Živković.

From the first Bologna-based curriculum of 2006 onwards, the obligatory TEFL Methodology component of the curriculum has been supported and strengthened by introducing several elective courses expanding on specific areas related to TEFL Methodology. The first electives of this kind, introduced in the 2008 curriculum, were *Phonology in TEFL*, renamed *Pronunciation in TEFL* in the 2014 curriculum, focusing on the theoretical understanding and practical application of the approaches and techniques used for teaching the micro-skill of pronunciation, as well as the course titled *English Language in the British Culture*, renamed *Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)* in the 2014 curriculum, aimed at raising prospective teachers' awareness about developing ICC as an important component of EFL students' communicative competence. Namely, beside grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies (Canale 1983, 5; Richards 2006), the notion of communicative competence (Hymes 1971) has grown to encompass the intercultural component as well (Byram 1997), including a critical understanding of global communication and its impact on L2 teaching (Cameron 2002). Both these electives were taught by professor Tatjana Paunović in this period, with the assistance of Milica Savić and later Ema Živković in the *Pronunciation* course, and, from the introduction of the *ICC* course to date, of Ljiljana Marković, senior lector. From 2014 onwards, the *ICC* course was taken over and further developed by professor Nina Lazarević.

Another TEFL-related elective course introduced by the 2008 curriculum and still active is *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, focusing on the use of information and communication technology in teaching foreign languages. This course is taught by professor Biljana Mišić Ilić and Ljiljana Mihajlović, senior lector in the English Department. In this elective, students get an opportunity to learn about and practice using platforms, applications, and tools for distance learning and online teaching, which have all proved particularly valuable for contemporary EFL teachers, not only due to the recent pandemic, but also to the changes in the global circumstances of EFL learning and teaching.

Two more Methodology-related electives were introduced by professor Lazarević in the 2014 curriculum: *Elements of culture in TEFL*, focusing on designing and implementing activities and materials for integrating teaching culture in the EFL classes, as well as *Testing in TEFL*, offering students broader theoretical foundations and the practical application of techniques used for creating tests, as well as alternative assessment techniques. Moreover, an elective was introduced in the 2014 MA-level curriculum – *Material design in TEFL*, taught by

professor Lazarević, Ljiljana Marković and later Ema Živković, aiming to offer students practical experience in creating teaching materials and activities based on the national curriculum for English as a foreign language in state-funded schools. The course focuses on adapting authentic materials for students of different levels of proficiency and different age, on connecting the content of EFL materials horizontally with the content of other school subjects, on adapting materials for the purpose of individualization and differentiation in TEFL classes, as well as on materials for integrated-skill teaching.

This short overview shows that although TEFL methodology has been an important part of the English language and literature curriculum from the very beginning, it has also grown and developed over the past fifty years. The common thread connecting all the TEFL Methodology work realized through the different course forms and designs over the past decades is its orientation towards teaching practice firmly grounded in up-to-date theoretical understanding of language learning and teaching.

### 3. TEFL METHODOLOGY – THE FRAMEWORK AND THE CONTENT

The analysis of the TEFL Methodology course syllabuses over the past decades reveals that the content of the course was occasionally updated and upgraded, rather than changed: new developments in the field were added to the course topics and outdated elements left out, but, essentially, these courses have always had one and the same objective – for students to develop *their own* effective and modern teaching methodology. Rather than handing down ready-made solutions, i.e. a number of teaching methods as a ‘book of recipes’, TEFL Methodology courses have always aimed to place the focus on the student as a pre-service teacher, and to raise the student’s awareness of the teacher’s responsibility for making well-informed, well-grounded and well thought-out choices in their teaching practice, and to motivate students to commit to life-long professional development. It can, therefore, be said that from the earliest versions of the TEFL Methodology syllabus, it has always aimed to enable students to practise *principled or ‘informed’ eclecticism* in their future teaching (Richards and Rodgers 1986, 158).

In order to adopt such an approach, a teacher must have a good grounding in various approaches, an understanding of the history and evolution of teaching, a good grasp of the principles and techniques of a variety of teaching methods, and a good understanding of the influential factors in the teaching and learning contexts (Kumaravadivelu 2001). That is why the TEFL Methodology courses have always had a sort of modular structure, focusing not only on teaching, the teacher’s role and the teaching methods and techniques, but also on learning, the nature of the learning process and learner characteristics, as well as on the learning context and the factors that influence the teaching/ learning process.

The central module in the course has always presented the current methods of EFL teaching, and their principles and techniques (Brown 2000, 2001; Celce-Murcia *et al.* 2014; Larsen-Freeman, 1986/2000; Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011; Rivers 1987; Rivers and Temperley 1978). This module has closely followed the developments in the discipline, for instance, to include Task-Based Learning and teaching (Willis 1996, Nunan 2005), Cooperative Learning (Johnson and Johnson 1987, 1991; Zhang 2010), or integrated-skills teaching (Oxford 2001) as these gained ground in TEFL worldwide.

Another module has focused on planning and organizing lessons, introducing, in addition to a principled theoretical framework for defining lesson aims, objectives and outcomes, and

for designing appropriate lesson activities, an array of practical techniques for lesson design and classroom management (Harmer 2005; Scrivener 1998/ 2005; Scrivener 2012; Shrum and Glisan 2010; Ur and Wright 1992; Ur 1996). In this module, too, over the years new elements were added, such as strategies for designing group work in heterogeneous classrooms (Cohen and Lotan 2014), useful scaffolding and differentiation techniques (Vygotsky 1978; Johnson 2009; Kitić 2007), the use of language games (Lee 1979; Wright *et al.* 2006), or student projects, portfolios and other alternative techniques (Richards 2002).

The third module in the TEFL Methodology courses has covered other related topics relevant for teacher's choices in lesson planning and classroom work, pertaining to the learning process and the learning contexts, such as Krashen's hypotheses, particularly the language acquisition vs. language learning hypothesis (Krashen 1981), as well as learner differences (Ellis 2004; Dornyei and Skehan 2003), teaching young learners (Cameron 2001), learning styles and learning strategies (Oxford 1990, 2014), motivation (Harmer 2007; Cohen 2010), or multiple intelligences (Gardner 1993/2006; Armstrong 2009).

The developments in the TEFL Methodology course content over the decades indeed reflect Hinkel's (2006, 110) observation that contemporary views on teaching L2 skills are characterized by the decline of methods – towards the eclectic approach, the significance of the bottom-up as well as top-down skills practice, and the teaching of integrated and multiple skills in context. Most importantly, although it has not always been formulated explicitly in the syllabus, the tradition of the pre-service EFL teacher education at the English Department has always aimed at enabling prospective teachers to become *reflective practitioners* (Richards and Lockhart 1996/2007).

#### 4. TEFL METHODOLOGY-RELATED PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Since the teaching practicum has always been such an important component of the TEFL Methodology courses, the most essential broader outcome of this aspect of work is the creation of and fruitful cooperation with networks of English teachers in the Niš region and beyond. One such network is that of teacher-mentors who guide and advise students' teaching practice in the state-funded primary and secondary schools during their obligatory practicum. An equally important teacher network, largely overlapping with the mentor network, is *NELTA - Niš Association of English Language Teachers*, which has been active for almost a quarter of a century now. The NELTA association was founded in 1997 as a result of a close cooperation between EFL teachers in schools and the TEFL Methodology teachers at the English Department. Since August 1997, the association has held regular monthly meetings at the Faculty of Philosophy, which also houses many of NELTA's projects and activities, such as seminars, conferences and professional gatherings in the field of English language teaching and pre-service and in-service teacher training.

For instance, in July 1997, thirty EFL teachers and NELTA members attended a two-week ELT methodology seminar on Task-Based Learning (TBL) at the Faculty of Philosophy, facilitated by John Rogers and Philip Glover in cooperation with the Open Society Fund. Similarly, in July 1998, NELTA and Faculty of Philosophy organized two one-week ELT methodology seminars in cooperation with the Open Society Fund, Belgrade, and about forty NELTA members attended the seminar "Integrated Skills" facilitated by Kathy Koop, Fulbright Scholar. The following year, 1999, the Faculty supported NELTA's project *Methodology for the XXI Century*. As part of the project, the seminar "Basic Computing

Course” was realized by Trevor Shanklin at the Faculty of Philosophy, attended by over thirty NELTA members. Within this project, English Department professors delivered a series of lectures and workshops for EFL teachers, on TEFL methodology, translation and literature studies. Another cycle of NELTA’s project for EFL teachers’ self-development was realized in 2001, supported by the Open Society Fund. Workshops for English teachers were organized in several towns in the Nišava district, where NELTA members Radmila Miltenović, Gordana Ignjatović, Sanja Kolarević, Makedonka Konstantinova, and Marija Kostić-Trivunac, NELTA president at the time, held a series of one-day seminars titled “Teaching Grammar, Pronunciation and Integrated Skills” in Niš, Leskovac, Pirot, Aleksinac, Zaječar and Prokuplje. In 2001 and 2002, NELTA members Marija Stojković-Grujić, Radmila Miltenović, and Gordana Ignjatović attended teacher-training programs (TOT, TESOL/CELTA, Mentor Course) abroad, and then organized a series of mini-seminars for fellow EFL teachers to share and disseminate their experiences.

More recently, in December 2015, the TEFL Methodology team from the English Department, and NELTA organized the EFL teacher-training seminar titled “Developing the skills of oral and written presentations of individual and group projects” accredited with the Ministry of Education (ZUOV project No 712, K2), and realized by Nina Lazarević, Ljiljana Marković, Tatjana Paunović, and Milica Savić. Another self-development activity for EFL teachers was the *Round table* jointly organized by NELTA and the TEFL team of the English Department in May 2014, titled “Accredited English language course-books in state schools: towards a continuous development of students’ competencies”. The teachers exchanged their experiences and views regarding the course-books currently in use, and the criteria for the evaluation, selection and use of EFL course-books. The *Round table* was followed by a brochure published by the Faculty of Philosophy.

To enhance and support the cooperation between the university and teaching practitioners in schools, in 2013 the Faculty of Philosophy founded the *Centre for teacher education and professional development*, currently re-designed as the *Centre for professional development*. The English Department TEFL Methodology teaching staff actively participates in the activities organized by the Centre, too. For instance, professor Nina Lazarević delivered a lecture on *Cooperative learning* in January 2018, for all primary- and secondary-school teachers, while in December 2020, Ljiljana Marković, senior lector, delivered an online public lecture for teachers titled *Mass open online courses (MOOC) as a form of teachers’ professional development*. Also, Nina Lazarević, Ljiljana Marković, and Ema Živković have participated as evaluators in the Centre’s Competition for the best methodological preparation (lesson plan) in foreign languages.

The English Department has also supported NELTA in organizing seminars and lectures by the world-renowned experts, thus bringing the latest developments in TEFL methodology research and practice to local EFL teachers. For instance, in June 2001, in cooperation with Longman ELT and YELTA (The Yugoslav English Language Teachers’ Association, founded in Belgrade in 2001), a seminar for NELTA teachers was realized at the Faculty of Philosophy, titled “Self Observation and Task-Based Teaching and Learning”, facilitated by Douglas Allan. In November 2001, the English Department and NELTA hosted the famous TEFL Methodology expert, Diane Larsen-Freeman (School for International Training, Battleboro, Vermont, USA), whose lecture “Chaos/Complexity Theory and Language Acquisition” expounded on her latest theoretical contributions. In February 2002, a seminar on English for Specific Purposes was organized at the Faculty of Philosophy, in cooperation with the US Embassy in Belgrade, facilitated by Kathy Koop (Fulbright Fellow). In April

2003, in cooperation with the national YELTA association, Thomas Santos (SIT, Battleboro, Vermont) held a three-day workshop at the Faculty of Philosophy, titled “The Theater Techniques in language Classroom”, “Communicative Grammar Activities”, and “Academic Writing and Communicative Classroom”. From September 2002 to July 2003, nine workshops were organized at the English Department for NELTA members, led by David Read, then a lecturer in English language and TEFL Methodology in the English Department. The workshops covered a range of important topics, such as: Warm-up activities, Communicative grammar activities; The Lexical Approach to Grammar; Teaching Vocabulary: word combinations and collocations; Pronunciation; Revision and Recycling activities; Teaching Listening; Dictation; Teaching mixed ability classes; and Writing: The Survival Kit. In cooperation with Lisa Brown of the English Book in Belgrade, Jim Scrivener visited the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš in 2006 and delivered a public lecture, titled “Learning Teaching”.

As NELTA has always been the cornerstone of the TEFL Methodology teacher-mentor network, the English Department and NELTA jointly organized a series of mentor-training seminars and courses at the Faculty. These seminars aimed to prepare primary- and secondary-school teachers for the process of mentoring students during the practicum, but also to contribute to the teachers’ own professional development. In 2002, twenty NELTA members attended the *Mentor Development Workshops* facilitated by professor Slobodanka Kitić, TEFL Methodology teacher, Marija Stojković-Grujić, TEFL Methodology teaching assistant, and Mollie Heckel, SPELT Teacher trainer, OSI, then a lecturer in the English Department, followed by a series of mini-workshops for in-service teacher training (*NELTA Teacher Training Workshops*) led by Mollie Heckel in 2002. These mini-workshops covered a range of topics important for mentor training, such as: EFL teaching without resources, Communicative activities, and Adapting textbooks. The latest cycle of mentor-training seminars was organized at the Faculty of Philosophy in 2017, in cooperation with NELTA and the Faculty Centre for teacher education and professional development. The seminar covered four topics: Teaching Grammar, Task-Based Learning, Developing Intercultural competence, and Pronunciation Teaching, and was realized by the TEFL Methodology teachers of the English Department, Nina Lazarević, Ljiljana Marković, and Tatjana Paunović.

The fruitful cooperation of the TEFL Methodology teaching teams and the EFL teacher networks contributes to the popularization of EFL teaching as a professional opportunity for prospective students, as well as of learning English as a foreign language. Of the most recent joint activities of this kind, the ones that proved to be the most popular among primary and secondary school pupils and teachers were the regional Competitions in English for the pupils of the 7th grade of primary school and the 3rd grade of secondary school, as such competitions are not organized by the Ministry of Education. Starting from 2016, NELTA members from the Niš region, together with the TEFL teachers from the English Department, have volunteered to prepare the tests and realize the yearly competitions hosted by the Faculty of Philosophy. Another regular event aimed at popularizing EFL learning and teaching is the *NELTA Theatre Fest*, organized yearly from 2016 onwards, except, unfortunately, during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a showcase performance event in which drama activities or plays prepared by various groups of pupils and EFL teachers as extracurricular school activities are presented to peer groups from other schools. In 2016 and 2017, English Department students took part in the events, as well, supported and prepared by the Department teachers Milena Kaličanin, Danijela Petković and Sanja Ignjatović. The NELTA theatre fest in 2016 was also conceived as a fund-raiser to help a student of the Faculty of Philosophy get medical treatment, and the Kupina Cinema

supported the event by providing the venue. In 2019, the NELTA mini-fest was hosted by the Sveti Sava primary school in Niš.

Last but not least, yet another important outcome of the activities related to TEFL Methodology at the English Department is the new series of international scientific conferences organized at the Department, titled *Teaching Languages and Cultures in the Post-Method Era*. These conferences focus on applied linguistics and TEFL methodology, and aim to bring together researchers in applied linguistics and teaching methodology, language-teacher educators, as well as teaching practitioners from a variety of teaching contexts, thus building a bridge between scientific research, theory, and classroom practices in foreign language teaching. That is why the conference is open for all NELTA members to attend, while non-member foreign language teachers and students are invited to attend at a reduced fee, as the conference is accredited with the Ministry of Science, Education and Technological Development (ZUOV) as an in-service teacher-development event. That is also why, in addition to panels, plenary lectures and round tables, the conference includes practice-oriented workshops for teachers, as well.

The first conference, sub-titled *Issues and Developments*, was held in 2014, with the intention to be organised bi-annually. The plenary speaker was professor Kenneth Cushner, from the School of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Studies, Kent State University, USA, and the Proceedings were published by the Faculty of Philosophy (Lazarević *et al.* 2015). The Second International TLC conference, sub-titled *Developing Competencies, Rethinking Practices*, was held in 2016, with the plenary speakers professor Freiderikos Valetopoulos, of the Linguistics Department of the University of Poitiers, France, and professor Christian Voß, of the Institute for the South Slavic Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany. The proceedings were published as an international edited volume by Cambridge Scholars Publishing (Lazarević *et al.* 2018). The Third International Conference *Teaching Languages and Cultures in the Post-Method Era: Challenges and Perspectives* was organized in 2018, with two plenary speakers: professor Marshall Toman, of the English Department, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and professor Slobodanka Dimova, of the Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the proceedings of the third conference did not come out, and the Fourth TLC conference, sub-titled *New Insights and Innovations*, with plenary speakers Thor Sawin, of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS), USA and professor Milica Savić, of the Faculty of Arts and Education, University of Stavanger, Norway, had to be postponed.

In addition to conference presenters from all over the world, and to EFL teachers and NELTA members attending the conference panels and workshops, a valuable contribution to the outcomes of the TLC conferences were round-table sessions in which teachers, teacher educators and administrators raised and discussed important current questions. In the 2016 TLC conference, the Round table session was titled *The Missing Link: From research findings to classroom practices*, and was chaired by professors Mira Bekar, Deborah Larssen, Radmila Bodrić, and Freiderikos Valetopoulos, as well as Mirjana Kostadinov, EFL teacher and NELTA president. In the 2018 TLC conference, the Round table, chaired by professors Mira Bekar and Deborah Larssen, NELTA president Mirjana Kostadinov, and Dušica Mladenović, Pedagogical counsellor for EFL teachers, focused on three topics: The status of foreign languages (L2, L3) in the curriculum; Legislative vs. the classroom: Challenges and perspectives; and Building L2 professional identities: What is

‘initial’ in L2 professionals’ university education? In the 2018 TLC conference, Mirjana Kostadinov, NELTA president, presented in one of the panels, too, on the topic: *Why do we need teachers’ associations?*

Lastly, an important element of all the TLC conferences, contributing to the promotion of teacher education among the youngest members of the TEFL community, were the sessions in which selected English Department students were invited to present the results of their curricular projects, such as MA theses in TEFL Methodology or other topics related to EFL learning and teaching, or their extracurricular projects, such as student translations or inter-university cooperation. Students participating in these sessions over the years included: MA graduates Jovana Trajković, Tatjana Timić, Emilija Živković, Katarina Milenković, and Marko Živković, as well as MA and BA students Nikola Vučević, Marija Žižić, Bogdan Stanković Milan Stanojić, and Dimitrije Ristić.

This overview presents but a selection of a broad spectrum of activities that resulted from the development of the TEFL Methodology component in the English Department curriculum, but they offer ample illustration of the remarkable role this component has played in the education of English Department graduates.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Language teachers have always been faced with great expectations, and pre-service L2 teacher education has always been a complex and difficult undertaking. However, today more than ever, the “new and varied leadership roles teachers are expected to fill” (Hinkel 2011, ii) pose new challenges for pre-service teacher educators. As pointed out by Canagarajah (2006, 30) reflecting on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TESOL fifteen years ago, the “shifting sands” have brought about “the metaphorical shift behind the notions that it is not the comfort of *solutions* that matters but the vigilance of the *search*, not the neat *product* but the messy *practice* of crossing boundaries, mixing identities, and negotiating epistemologies”. Indeed, in “How teacher education matters”, Darling-Hammond (2000, 171) also concludes that “[a] commitment to open inquiry, the enlargement of perspectives, and the crossing of boundaries are critical features of the ideal of university education”, and that in the education of teachers “they need to pursue these ideals of knowledge building and truth finding by creating a genuine praxis between ideas and experiences, by honoring practice in conjunction with reflection and research, and by helping teachers reach beyond their personal boundaries to appreciate the perspectives of those whom they would teach.” Moreover, discussing the principles of teacher education, Korthagen and colleagues (2006, 1025) state that learning to teach “involves continuously conflicting and competing demands [...] and cannot fully prepare teachers for their entire careers”. That is why it is crucial that pre-service teacher education should focus on enabling prospective teachers to learn “how to learn from experience” and “how to build professional knowledge”, which also requires building “meaningful relationships between schools, universities and student teachers”. The overview of the development of the TEFL Methodology component in the English Department curriculum in Niš shows that the courses and the many methodology-related curricular and extracurricular activities have always been grounded precisely in this kind of philosophy, teaching prospective teachers not *how to teach*, but *how to be* mindful and fruitful teachers.

The weakness of the university education pointed out as the main motivation for the Bologna reform fifteen years ago was the lack of practical skills in graduated students, and

their lack of readiness to meet the professional demands in the workplace. However, when it comes to EFL teacher education at the English Department in Niš, we can say without undue modesty that over the past fifty years this has never been true of our graduated students. From the earliest periods of the 1970s and 1980s, through the many challenges of the 1990s and the winding, demanding and often confused government reforms of the Serbian educational system throughout the first two decades of the 2000s, we can proudly say that the graduated students leaving the English Department after their four-year BA studies have always been excellently equipped with both the theoretical and practical tools that enabled them to take on and successfully overcome the challenges of various teaching contexts. This they have proved over and over again, gladly keeping in touch with their *alma mater* for many years after graduation, not only from the EFL classrooms in Zrenjanin, Kruševac or Zaječar, but also from Zurich, Thailand, China, New York and many other places around the world.

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## **METODIKA NASTAVE ENGLESKOG (KAO STRANOG) JEZIKA I OBRAZOVANJE BUDUĆIH NASTAVNIKA NA DEPARTMANU ZA ANGLISTIKU**

*U ovom radu predstavljen je razvoj Metodike nastave engleskog jezika u studijskom programu Anglistike u proteklih pedeset godina, od osnivanja Departmana na Filozofskom fakultetu u Nišu 1971. godine do danas, a isto tako i mnogih aktivnosti od značaja za obrazovanje budućih nastavnika engleskog kao stranog jezika, od koji su neke bile deo studijskog programa a neke vanastavne.*

*Ključne reči: Metodika nastave engleskog jezika, Departman za Anglistiku u Nišu, obrazovanje nastavnika engleskog jezika*