

MULTIMEDIA DOCUMENT AS A STUDENT'S PROJECT  
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION  
SCIENCE AT FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY IN BELGRADE

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**Abstract:** Multimedia document is a new course for the students of fourth year of undergraduate studies at Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, the Department of Library and Information Science. The course is designed as a project during which students find, select and digitise materials on a particular subject, using previously acquired knowledge. Work on the project results in creation of multimedia document. Through a description of the student's project and work analysis on the first of the multimedia documents, we will show the stages in the development of this document and the qualitative indicators considering the needs and motivation of students to apply practically the knowledge they learned in theory. We will present one of possible models of cooperation among students of different faculties. The first multimedia document which students of the Department of Library and Information Science made is dedicated to Aleksandar Popović, a playwright.

**Keywords:** multimedia document, Aleksandar Popović, digitalization, multimedia, library and information science, cooperation.

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## 1. Multimedia

Multimedia is presenting text, audio, graphics, animation or video in an integrated form using computer technology. It refers to the combination of these techniques by which, through modern technology, it could manufacture products for various needs. Late last century, restrictions which were imposed by under-developed computer technology, have been outbalanced, so we could say that today we are living in a time of multimedia contents. These facilities are being met in every aspect of social life. It has primarily emerged in the entertainment and leisure and the analysis shows that the Internet is still the most common area where multimedia is the most represented.

The field of communication is yet another important point of contact with multimedia. Communicating by computer with remote user, by cameras and microphones, replaces the classical model of communication by telephone. The sound is complemented by a picture, which is also multimedia content.

One of the significant features of multimedia is interactivity. User of multimedia content can influence on the performance mode. He chooses the parts of multimedia documents that will be reviewed as well as the order of the content presented.

Since computer technology is now well developed and information on the Internet is available in a short time, and that there are more programs for creating multimedia content, the contents presented in this way are entering more and more in the process of education, from preschool to university level.

## 2. Multimedia in Education

Whether we are talking about the multimedia documents that are linear or nonlinear (interactive), multimedia has a significant place in the contemporary systems of education. Great im-

portance of multimedia documents is especially evident in distance learning where students can, by online or offline multimedia content, get all the necessary information and lectures, no matter that they are not physically located at the university.

Learning with multimedia is more interesting for many students, and the information transmitted in this way are easier to learn. Most students have found the new technology is more challenging, and that the visual content helps them to overcome their curriculum on easier way, while multimedia content motivates them to learn, and make concepts clear enough to understand. It turns out that new technologies are giving very good results in comparison with traditional processes of learning. It is crucial that the material presented to students is also available on the Internet.

## 3. Multimedia in Librarianship

Since the middle 90's multimedia documents are an integral part of library funds worldwide. In the beginning of the 21st century, more and more of such documents are also present in Serbian libraries. Multimedia documents typically occur in the form of accompanying materials and supplements to the monographic publications about important institutions and individuals from the Serbian science, art and history, although they appear as separate editions as well. Being the part of library funds, multimedia documents and work with them should be an integral part of the education of future librarians.

IFLA guidelines from 2003 relate to the audiovisual and multimedia materials for all types of libraries and other related institutions because this type of material has become a significant part of the library funds. As it is stated in the guidelines "audiovisual media are part of our cultural heritage, carrying a huge amount of information that needs to be preserved for future use. The rich variety of media expressions in society should be

reflected in the services offered to users by the libraries. Librarians, as information providers, should be concerned with the provision of information in the formats most suited to the differing needs of various types of user, each of which must be clearly differentiated. A library exists to serve its community and consequently the needs of all members of that community must be accommodated – the old and the young, the able and the disabled, the gifted and the backward members of the society.”(IFLA 2004)

Based on the above shown, the multimedia documents are relevant information carriers in contemporary librarianship. In order to make these materials available to the end user the libraries have to provide computers with fast flow, install the necessary computer programs, and educate librarians and users, and to present them all the possibilities of multimedia documents.

#### **4. Why the course Multimedia Documents?**

Taking all this into consideration, in the Department of Library and Information Science at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade, during the school year 2009/2010, the course Multimedia documents has been included in the curriculum on the fourth year of undergraduate studies<sup>1</sup>.

During the study at this Department, students learn about the ways of collecting, publishing and storage of materials in libraries, museums and archives, the ways of processing, cataloging and classification of materials, its preservation and access to use. They also learn about computer technologies, Internet, structure of informations, programming, databases. Bearing in mind that they are the undergraduate students of final year, degree program and exams which they passed, the subject teacher, Prof. Cvetana Krstev, believed that students would be able to show most appropriately what they have learned during their studies through practical production of a multimedia document.

#### **5. The Criteria for Selection of Subject**

As noted earlier, the Internet offers a multitude of multimedia content and a wealth of information on various topics. In order to provide the best demonstration of skills and knowledge of students in finding materials to create multimedia documents, it was necessary to establish the criteria for the selection of subject for a multimedia document:

- subject should be a person, institution or social phenomenon which is a part of cultural heritage of Serbia;
- Internet does not provide enough information about this subject or Internet can serve only as a starting point for further research about this subject;
- students can find materials about this subject on the various carriers of information (text, sound, images, video)

The goal was that students recognize in which institutions they can find the relevant materials, that they digitize those materials and to incorporate those materials in the multimedia document. Considering the issue of subject, it was concluded that this should be a playwright Aleksandar Popović. Aleksandar Popović is not just a person with very interesting biography and a very extensive work, but he is also insufficiently represented on the Internet and thus, in addition, an appropriate subject for this multimedia document. As his work has contributed significantly in the theater, on the radio, television, and film, it was thought that students would be able to find and collect enough text, but also audio, video, photographic and film materials from which the multimedia document could be created.

#### **6. Aleksandar Popović's Short Biography**

Aleksandar Popović was born on 20 November 1929 in Ub as the second child in a prominent family. His mother and aunts have influenced the formation of his personality from his early childhood, and this is perhaps the reason why Aleksan-

dar Popović held that women are more important than men and that women were the protagonists of his works.

Popović family moved to Belgrade where Aleksandar gave high school degree in The Third Grammar School. He married for the first time when he was only 17 years old. He and his wife Danica had four daughters – Milica, Sofia, Tatjana and Persida. During this period he devoted himself to writing poetry and became a candidate for the Association of Writers of Serbia.

In the late forties he was arrested on charges of being a member of Information Bureau, and the years he spent on Goli Otok left a deep sign on his life. He came back to Belgrade in age of 24 years as a complete wreck and grey. His father broke off all contact with him which was the hardest thing for him. He had to work odd jobs to survive. He was in the 50's bricklayer, house painter, glazier, asphalt paver... Although, in its own words, he lived "like a dog", this is the period of his meeting with the Serbian people, especially in markets where, in talks with the villagers, he studied their habits and language. In these places, he encountered heroes of his future works.

In early 50's he met Duško Radović and accepted his invitation to write radio plays for children for Radio Belgrade. Next six years he has cooperated extensively with editorial office of children's drama of most of our radio stations.

He published the first literary texts in 1959, and in 1961 he became a member of the Association of Writers of Serbia. He began his literary life on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1964 with the premiere of theatre play "Ljubinko and Desanka" in Atelier 212. The following year it was performed his play "A Hundred Loops Stocking". Both theatrical performances had bad reviews, but Aleksandar Popović did not give up. He continued to write, and his career went the way upward.

Television Belgrade filmed "Furnished Room," according to his text. The play had very

good reviews of domestic experts, and international recognition at the Festival Prix Italia. In Sterija Theatre Festival (1966) two of his plays were performed – The National Theatre in Belgrade performed the "Sabre of Damascus", and Atelier 212 played "Pig's Trot." On that occasion, he won a special prize for the dramatic text.

His next drama, "Jelena Četković" performed by theatres in Subotica, Niš, Kragujevac, was also popular play in Moscow, Warsaw and Berlin. Finally, he became a recognized writer and he got the place he deserved. In the Atelier 212, on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1967, his play "The Development of the Bora Šnajder's Way" had premiere. At that time, in the Belgrade Drama Theatre his play "Deadly Motorcycle Ride" was on the stage. The same play had tremendous success in Frankfurt at the festival of avant-garde theaters in Europe. On television it TV Primer was being shown, which was part of the action of promotion of literacy. That TV series and the heroine Kika Babić, a character played by Mira Stupica, were so popular that they were watched both by the literate and illiterate.

Early 70's Aleksandar Popović and his family went to the U.S. because he got a one-year Ford's scholarship. They lived in New York, in Greenwich Village, in that time the center of hippie culture.

After returning from America, Aleksandar Popović wrote tirelessly and had many premieres. Although he had great success, he had disagreements with the milieu. In mid-70s at Barutana, under Kalemegdan, he formed an informal theater group.

In early 80's he broke up with his wife and she accepted this with difficulties. Her death in 1984 strongly influenced Aleksandar Popović. He found consolation in writing. His health deteriorated, but he turned to theater as a sense of his life. On early 90's premiere in Pirot, his play "White Coffee" was performed, and later in Sterija Theatre Festival in Novi Sad, where he

received an award for comedy. The play of Kult Theatre "The Night is Dark" was performed in Switzerland, but also on Broadway. The premiere performance of "Still Point" followed, as well as new performance of play "The Development of Bora Šnajder's Way".

Early 1996, his health was in very poor condition. He was suffering, but he was still writing. At that time he wrote his new play "Draw Well" that he wanted to direct by himself. On Wednesday on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 1996, Aleksandar Popović died. It is interesting that night before was the new performance of his drama "Ljubinko and Desanka" in Atelier 212. With the same drama, 32 years earlier, he began his career of theater writer on the scene of the same theater. He was buried in the Alley of deserving citizens in the New Cemetery in Belgrade.

It is impossible to determine exactly how many plays Aleksandar Popović wrote. Forty plays, fifty radio plays, twelve television dramas, five hundred TV shows and a dozen children's novels are preserved.

He won many literary and theatrical awards. In 1996 he was chosen for the person of the year. He left behind a lot of interviews in the week and daily newspapers, in radio and television shows. The movie "The Night is Dark" was recorded according to his text.

This extensive biography and bibliography were definitely the reason that the personality and opus of Aleksandar Popović was subject of the first in a series of multimedia documents in which students of the Department of Library and Information Science will work on.

## 7. Work on the Project

Students of the Department of Library and Information Science, thanks to the knowledge that they adopted during their studies, had the necessary competence to collect material for multimedia document and digitize this, but they were not able to perform independently the technical pro-

duction of the multimedia document. The solution appeared in the fact that students of masters degree at the Faculty of Mathematics in Belgrade had the course of the same name. By combining of knowledge of students of both faculties, there has been cooperation between the Faculty of Philology and the Faculty of Mathematics and team work in creating of multimedia document about Aleksandar Popović.

Thanks to joint efforts of the initiator of the project, professor PhD Cvetana Krstev, Head of the Department of Library and Information Science, then coordinator and teaching associate in course Multimedia Document at the same Department, and professors of the Faculty of Mathematics, PhD Gordana Pavlović-Lažetić and MSc Jelena Hadži Purić, students accessed to project activities.

The teachers made the working meetings with students of Faculty of Philology in which it was agreed to divide students into groups, to let students become more familiar with the biography and bibliography of Aleksandar Popović and that they inform their professor and coordinator which institutions they would visit in order to find the necessary materials.

At the next meeting, students had already formed groups of 2-7 members depending on the scope of planned activities and amounts of relevant material at individual institutions. Students have chosen to visit The Theatre Museum of Serbia, the Yugoslav Film Archive, Radio Belgrade, Radio Television Serbia, and theaters and libraries in Belgrade and Novi Sad, as well as theaters, cultural centers and libraries in their hometowns and try to find appropriate materials in these institutions.

Two students received the task to write a biography and a selective bibliography of Aleksandar Popović based on printed sources.

Students are advised that the texts of Aleksandar Popović, as well as photos or videos of his performances, radio and television broad-

casts may not be downloaded from the Internet, and that, during the digitization of the collected material, the copyright regulations ought to be respected. Material recording, photographing, scanning could be done only in consultation with competent persons in institutions in which students explored research materials.

### 8. Cooperation with Institutions

For the sake of better cooperation with institutions and a more precise definition of needs, to all of institutions that the students selected letters were sent, which contained a brief description of the project and request to assist students in searching catalogs, viewing documents and digitizing of found materials. The letter was signed by the deans of the Faculty of Philology and the Faculty of Mathematics and the students delivered the letters to the administrations of the institutions that they selected. In the letter it was emphasized that this would be a student project and that the result of this project would be a non-commercial DVD, and that each institution, which would help the project with their materials, would be listed as a sponsor of this project.

Since the Museum of Theatrical Arts of Serbia is a place where materials on theatrical productions, reviews and interviews related to the theater are kept, and since the Museum has organized an exhibition in 1998 and published a catalog on the opus of Aleksandar Popović, the subject teacher and the coordinator met with the director of The Theatre Museum of Serbia, MSc Ksenija Radulović, to inform her more closely about the project. This institution enabled the students to collect most of the materials that were later incorporated into the multimedia document.

The employees in all institutions in which the students went out to ask for help, indicated the materials that they had, gave the materials to digitize, provide technical assistance and referred the students to other relevant institutions.

### 9. Collection and Preparation of Materials for Multimedia Document

Students from the Faculty of Philology, in the period of about two months, visited the selected institutions, reviewed the funds and collected materials. Reports on the collected materials were sent by e-mail to their coordinator who made the lists of institutions, collected documents and document types (text, images, audio, video).

Students of library and information science collected 293 photographs of theatrical performances, portraits and posters, 91 articles from newspapers and magazines, from interviews and reviews to after death notices, 130 minutes of audio recordings from interviews and radio plays, 8 hours of video productions, trailers from the movies, TV shows and TV dramas.

After collection of items, during April and May 2010, students of the Faculty of Philology and the Faculty of Mathematics held several joint meetings with their professors and coordinators. Master degree students of mathematics **indicated** to their colleagues from the Faculty of Philology in which formats they have to put the materials for multimedia document. Each of the documents had to be digitized. The texts had to be transferred to .doc format, photos scanned in .jpg format, VHS recordings to be transferred to DVD format, and audio files in .avi format.

The students of the Faculty of Mathematics scanned a large part of the texts with reviews and interviews, and then converted by the OCR. Students of the Faculty of Philology then repaired processed texts – spelling errors, incorrect division of words by hyphen at the end of line, irregularly transmitted characters.

At the joint meeting the students had agreed that the selected photos should be scanned, and provided with the XML tags. The XML tags contained the name of the play to which the photos relate, the theater where the play was performed, year, names of actors and characters from the play. With the help of master degree students of

the Faculty of Mathematics, the Faculty of Philology students have successfully completed the task. They consulted employees in the archives of the theatres where the plays were performed, and they found the information in the programs of theatrical performances.

At the next joint meeting, the students of the Faculty of Philology, presented the collected material classified by the institutions where they searched, in form of presentations in Power Point. They decided to make sound track of Aleksandar Popović's biography.

### **10. Preparation and Presentation of Multimedia Document**

The students of Faculty of Philology collected, delivered selected and prepared materials to the Faculty of Mathematics students who have started the technical making of the multimedia document Aleksandar Aca Popović.

They used SMIL computer program to create a multimedia document because it was appropriate way to display smultimedia content, and easy to use. At a joint meeting students of the Faculty of Mathematics presented this program and its features. They also pointed out other advanced technologies that were suitable for the process of manipulating of multimedia content – Flash, XML, MySQL, PHP. This allowed students of library and information science to give suggestions for visual solution, data content and organization of data in the multimedia document. The first version of the multimedia document Aleksandar Popović made in middle of May 2010.

By creating multimedia documents, students of library and information science fulfilled their obligations according to the curriculum of this course. All students who participated in the work of the project passed this exam. Exam grades were formed by:

- Involvement of students
- Motivation for the collection of materials

- Autonomy in the research
- Readiness for team work
- The active application of previous knowledge
- Regularity in the performance of tasks and attendance
- Respect of deadlines for submission and finishing materials.

The first version of the multimedia document master students of the Faculty of Mathematics – Ana Vukadinović, Bojana Mitrović, Miloš Đurić, Igor Valjević, Miloš Vojinović with their professors – PhD Gordana Pavlović-Lažetić and MSc Jelena Hadži Purić presented on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at 5<sup>th</sup> SEEDI International Conference “Digitization of Cultural and Scientific Heritage” in Sarajevo.

Multimedia document Aleksandar Aca Popović, as the product of the educational process at the Department of Library and Information Science, in the form of paper, was presented by Jelena Andonovski, Biljana Đorđević and Marija Lukić on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010 at the International Conference “Book and Language in the Development of the Contemporary Society”, organized by the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade.

### **11. The Content of Multimedia Document**

The final version of the multimedia document was finished at the end of October 2010. This version is attached to this issue of “Infoteka” and it will be sent to all institutions that participated in this project, in any way.

The final version includes several groups of documents:

1. biography
2. theater
3. audio records
4. videos
5. interviews
6. critiques
7. multimedia database.

Biography is presented as an interesting text that contains numerous quotes of Aleksandar Popović and it is followed by audio record.

The theater is illustrated with photos from the play performances at the National Theatre in Belgrade, Atelier 212, the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad, the National Theatre in Zrenjanin, Terazije Theatre, Drama Theatre in Banja Luka, the Little Theatre in Belgrade and other. Each photo contains the most complete description possible.

Except photos, content of multimedia document consists of audio and video records of interviews, plays, television shows, children's shows and radio plays and interviews in the textual form from various newspapers and magazines such as *Fight*, *Express Weekly Magazine*, *NIN*, *Politics*, *Radio Journal*, *The World*, *Evening News (Zagreb)*, *News (Užice)*.

The content of multimedia document is accompanied by the following reviews of plays published in various newspapers and magazines: *Ljiljak Affair*, *White Coffee*, *A Hundred Loops Stocking*, *Goodbye Joke*, *Cap Off*, *Communitistic Paradise*, *Pig's Trot*, *Ljubinko and Desanka*, *Ant Crowd*, *Cinderella*, *The Development of Bora Šnajder's Way*, *Saber of Damascus*, *Deadly Motorcycle Ride*, *Holy Devil Rasputin* and *Ruddy Shelduck*.

Since all the material collected could not be placed on the multimedia document, the students of the Faculty of Mathematics made a multimedia database in which they included many photographs, posters, clippings, various critical texts, parts of the interviews, which is available on the Internet (<http://multimedia.math.rs/index.html>).

## 12. Conclusions

Multimedia document, as a student's project, is the innovation in the educational process at the Department of Library and Information Science. We monitored the student's activity in process of the development of multimedia docu-

ment through various records, during the semester, but we also paid attention to other qualitative indicators:

1. Students approved of the fact that they had not the classic exam in this course.

2. During the work on the multimedia document Aleksandar Aca Popović students demonstrated high motivation and strong initiative to work.

3. Students had the opportunity to apply their previous knowledge, and it turned out that they well recognized institutions in whose funds they could find the necessary materials. During the research, we noticed that students were familiar

with searching of collections, working on materials, processing materials, methodologies and techniques of information retrieval.

4. Students showed good skills in negotiating with responsible persons in institutions, so the professor and the coordinator did not have to go personally and seek for help from managers of institutions.

5. We observed the persistence of students to obtain materials that were not easily accessible and for which it was supposed to wait for a long time.

6. Students shown a willingness to become more familiar with the operation procedure in some institutions. One student began volunteering at the processing and digitization of the materials in the Museum of Theatrical Arts of Serbia, encouraged by the work on this project.

7. Students were very successful in team work, hence the concluding impression that this model of work could be applied in teaching other courses in the Department of Library and Information Science.

8. The cooperation and collaboration of students of the Faculty of Mathematics and the Faculty of Philology is especially significant. They mutually exchanged completely new knowledge and contributed to resolving the problem of making multimedia documents. The only problem

was that the exam terms between these two faculties were not synchronized, so the future librarians had no opportunity to significantly influence the graphic design of the multimedia document.

9. Information between teachers, coordinators and students were sent by email and it proved to be a fast and efficient tool. Materials for processing, repair and finishing were distributed mostly in the same way.

In next projects the final version of the multimedia document should be completed in May, before the June exam period begins. Also, the students who have the talent and interest in graphic design, should be actively involved in creating of multimedia document.

It is necessary to emphasize that the project could not have been realized and that this multimedia document would not contain important information and plenty of data without kindness and courtesy in providing technical assistance of employees in institutions where students did their research. Special thanks to the Theatre Museum of Serbia, Library of the Yugoslav Film Archive, Radio Belgrade, Radio Television Serbia, Zvezdara Theatre, Bitef Theatre, Atelier 212, the Yugoslav Drama Theatre, National Theatre in Belgrade, Library of the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad, Sterija Theatre Festival in Novi Sad, the Cultural Center and Library, “Jovan Tomić” in Nova Varoš, The Šabac Theatre.

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\* Students of Department of Library and Information Science who participated in the making of the multimedia document Aleksandar Aca Popović during the school year 2009/2010: Jelena Andonovski, Jelena Bojić, Ana Glišić, Boris Đenadić, Kristina Đermanović, Biljana Đorđević, Marko Đurić, Ivana Đurka, Dragana Isaković, Tamara Janković, Marija Lukić, Marijana Milovanović, Miloš Orlović, Sandra Petrović, Slobodan Stamatov, Katarina Stanišić, Tamara Stančić, Jasmina Stojanović, Olja Stojanović, Zvezdana Stojkanović, Tijana Stojković, Bojana Trebinjac, Tanja Ćirić, Spomenka Čelebić.

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