

Words in the Pursuit of Pavol Štekauer

From the very beginning of its existence, since 2005, the name of the Department of British and American Studies in Košice has been quoted together with the name of professor Pavol Štekauer. The department under professor Štekauer's guidance was one of the constituting departments that laid the foundations for the newly re-established Faculty of Arts. Built on the traditions of the Department of Languages and the Department of British and American Studies, it soon grew into such a dynamic and energetic body that long-term friends who know about the great variety of its activities abroad have called it an "octopus." The devoted hard work, numerous contacts and inner drive of professor Štekauer have placed the Department of British and American Studies and the Faculty of Arts in Košice on the map of Europe.

The name of professor Štekauer has been resonating with a powerful presence of a lecturer, researcher, supervisor, and manager – the scholar who is respected far beyond Slovak English studies academic territory. Those who did not know him were always overwhelmed by his pace of work and by his talent to produce books, textbooks, and articles of top academic quality. His young team soon realized that "the professor" as we started to call him, keeps opening to us the doors of the academic world, always sharing his own contacts with those of us who could benefit from them immensely. Soon the young and to the European academia unknown department in the eastern Slovakia became frequented by foreign visitors – guest lecturers and prestigious scholars – from all corners of Europe, all eager to contribute to the success of the department. Staff and students of the department got used to meeting researchers whose books they were using in their classes. What is more, thanks to professor Štekauer's support, our lecturers and doctoral students have started to travel abroad always using professor Štekauer's name as a password to login into the English studies academic realms at conferences and universities.

We are grateful to professor Štekauer that he has always demanded hard work and has always been ready to reward us for our small successes by inviting us to cooperate in his projects, present at seminars and conferences with him, or publish in his books. The Word-Formation Theories Conferences professor Štekauer organizes every three years not only give the staff and doctoral students an opportunity to meet authors who inspire their own academic effort and to learn the latest state-of-art of research, but they also give undergraduate students the chance to listen to presentations of authors of their textbooks. None of the degrees of full professors and associate professors would have ever been awarded to us without his guidance, not to mention dozens of PhD graduates who have obtained their degrees thanks to his perpetual motivation.

Professor Štekauer's life is devoted to words yet he is not a man of many. He is not the type of scholar who boast about their success but is a quiet and modest man whose deeds speak louder than any words. He will probably refuse and deny this tribute to him, not because he does not like his staff but because he does not like to show off. Hard work and modesty are probably the best words to describe "our professor Štekauer". He has managed to create and maintain an atmosphere of respect and we are all thankful and proud to be part of this.

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