

SLD Matters: From the Administrator

Nora Seligman Favorov

Since my name and contact information are posted on the SLD website, I frequently receive calls from people entering, or exploring the possibility of entering, the field of translation. Occasionally they shower me with thanks for all the great tips I give them on how to get started, but quite often I can tell that my caller is disappointed. This type of caller seems to be under the impression that the Slavic Languages Division of ATA is more than it is—that its administrator ought to be able to make a few well-placed calls and bingo! lots of work for any of our members who need it. How I wish it were so! Then, I, for one, would not be sitting here at the moment virtually workless.

The SLD is just *us*. If we are more than the sum of our parts, it's only because we, ourselves, have decided to have this wonderful newsletter, have sent in presentation proposals for the ATA conference, have gone out and searched for the best place for our annual banquet, have undertaken to sponsor an annual lecture in honor of our founder, Susana Greiss, have gotten the ball rolling on adding ATA accreditation in new language pairs. Our annual

division dues basically maintains our means of communicating within the division—in the case of the SLD, mostly supporting the *SlavFile*. Our annual ATA dues maintain the broader communication infrastructure, including the website, the *Chronicle*, and, most important, the annual conference, as well as the translation services directory and accreditation program—which simplify our communication with the outside world.

At the time I was working on the 2002 SLD budget, I feared that the sinking economy would result in fewer SLD members in 2002, so I proposed a budget that postulated only 400 members (considerably below our numbers at the end of 2001). I am delighted to report that we have already (as of August) reached 461 members (a number not attained until November last year). Perhaps finally this year we will launch the long-overdue membership survey we've talked about at the last two annual meetings to find out exactly who we all are.

In case you haven't heard, ATA is having its annual conference in Atlanta this year, November 6-9. I hope the description of planned SLD activities below will help persuade a few fence sitters to come join us there.

The Annual SLD Banquet

By the time this issue reaches you, I hope many will already have signed up for our annual banquet—members should have received an e-mail notice about it in early September. Again this year we will have an entire Russian restaurant to ourselves. For

Continued on page 15

Plunging into a social mob scene when you don't know anyone is no fun in any language...

So Nora Favorov, SLD administrator, and Lydia Stone, *SlavFile* editor invite all first time conference attendees and relative newcomers, to meet with us at the door of the ATA Welcome Reception on Wednesday November 6, 15 minutes before the reception starts (i.e. at 5:45 p.m.) to meet each other and us. We will have a sign for identification. Oldcomers (???) interested in welcoming new arrivals are enthusiastically invited as well.

Looking for a roommate for ATA 2002?

Once again the SLD is offering a roommate-matching service. Send your dates, whether or not you're already holding a reservation, preferences (whether or not you smoke, are an adherent of Ben Franklin's Early-to-Bed proverb or a late-night party animal, etc.) to:
norafavorov@earthlink.net
407-679-8151

Inside:

New South Slavic column	2
Ethical dilemmas for beginners	3
Georgian translator reminisces	4
SlavFile Lite	8
Harry Potter po polsku	10
The Slovist	13
MultiLex installation problems	14

SLAVIC LANGUAGES DIVISION

Officers

Administrator: Nora Seligman Favorov
8364 Amber Oak Drive
Orlando, FL 32817
Tel. & Fax: 407-679-8151
norafavorov@earthlink.net

Asst. Administrator: Alex Lane
Tel.: 832-444-4555 Fax: 209-391-9931
words@galexi.com www.galexi.com/alex

Membership

\$15 addition to ATA membership fee and designation of Slavic Languages Division membership on application or renewal form provides full membership.

Write to ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane
Alexandria, VA 22314

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Editor: Lydia Razran Stone
1111 Westmoreland Road
Alexandria, VA 22308

Tel.: 703-768-5441 Fax: 703-768-1017
lydiastone@compuserve.com

Associate Editor (Russian and Technical Material, Layout and Typesetting): Galina Raff
1140 Ashley Creek Drive
Matthews, NC 28105
Tel.: 704-849-8200 Fax: 704-841-2797
galina_raff@att.net

Contributing Editor (Ukrainian): Vadim I. Khazin
44 Federal Key
Colts Neck, NJ 07722
Tel.: 212-650-8094 Fax: 732-866-4372
vadkhazin@cs.com

Contributing Editor (Polish): Ursula Klingenberg
822 Clayland St.
St. Paul, MN 55104
Tel.: 651-649-0277
vaukling@msn.com

Contributing editor (South Slavic Languages):
Paula Gordon
106 Dakota Ave.
Wilmington, DE 19803-3216
Tel. & Fax: 836-236-7591

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Write to Nora Seligman Favorov
at above address.

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Galina Raff
at above address

Dobro došli, y'all!

Paula Gordon
Wilmington, DE

Welcome to a new column, tentatively called *JEZIK U TOKU*, (*Language in Progress*) featuring articles concerning the South Slavic languages — Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian and the Eastern Southern Slavic languages — Bulgarian and Macedonian. Although primarily intended to address translators and interpreters who work in these languages the column, I hope, will interest other *SlavFile* readers as well.

The seeds for this column seem to have been sown in March, when I started looking into the possibility of establishing new language pairs for accreditation: English < > Serbo-Croatian, or Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. I contacted Nora Favorov, who was very supportive of the effort. (She continues to advise on strategies and how to navigate ATA protocol.) When I asked Nora about revising the announcement for the Fall *SlavFile* and possibly including some information about our efforts so far, she put me in touch with Lydia Stone, who pounced (yes, pounced), encouraging me to write that article about the new language pairs and perhaps combine it with some information about myself (“we love publishing translator profiles, but no one contributes them anymore”) and a description of my experience with peer review and, by the way, would I consider becoming the South Slavic Editor for the newsletter? (I’m paraphrasing, but I think you can feel the whoosh of the whirlwind!)

Caught off guard, I agreed to write an article about Membership Review (see below). And it soon became clear that Lydia was not going to let me submit that article without some sort of profile included (ditto). But I remained undecided about accepting the editor invitation — until I started getting to know my fellow new-language-pair committee members. I was really impressed (even intimidated!) by the scope of their education, experience and achievements, and I realized that incredible resources lay untapped among our South Slavic colleagues. So I decided to accept Lydia’s offer to be South Slavic Editor. However, I want to serve as an *editor*; I don’t want to write these columns myself. So I hereby invite (read: implore!) you — colleagues working in these languages — to provide the material. So far you’ve shown yourselves to be generous and enthusiastic in your response to the new language pair initiative. Let’s stake out our territory in the Slavic Languages Division for this distinguished and dynamic group of languages!

But enough about you, let’s talk about ME...

From the profiles of other translators and interpreters I’ve read, I have concluded that my experience is fairly typical: I never studied translation, but fell into it over a period of many years. Looking back from this vantage point, however, it seems that everything I’ve done up until now has led me to a career in translation, even though many actions were undertaken on a whim or inspired by events out of my control.

My background is in the production and technical side of performing arts and media. I graduated from college in 1983 (B.A., Brown, Semiotics) and moved to New York City, where I worked as a stage manager, lighting designer, production manager and technical director for experimental theater, dance, multimedia and performance art; I also hosted a weekly free-form radio show on New Jersey station WFMU from 1989 to 1996.

Continued on page 6

OFFERS OF WORK FROM EMPLOYERS AND CLIENTS ARE PUBLISHED FREE

BEGINNER'S LUCK

Liv Bliss
Lakeside, Arizona

Since this second excursion into the land of Beginner's Luck is being prepared prior to the arrival of the e-sacks of e-mail carrying reactions and responses to the first column, I'm left once again—but, I hope, for the last time—to my own devices.

I've been thinking quite a lot recently about ethics. It's not exactly that I spend hours each day musing abstractly on such matters; there wouldn't be much food on the table at the end of the day if I did. Besides, in my mostly black and white reality, ethics are pretty much a no-brainer: if I have no problem looking myself in the eye in the bathroom mirror the next morning, then I must have done the right thing. So there.

But two experiences I have had this year—my first back in the weird and wonderful world of freelance translation after a lengthy hiatus, as you may recall — showed me that all might not be quite that simple.

Finding myself knee-deep in two situations not of my own making, I talked to some of my translation colleagues about them, as much out of curiosity as anything. Living proof of John Steinbeck's maxim that "no one wants advice—only corroboration," I was pretty sure of what I was going to do before I bugged anyone else. Still, I was struck by the variety of advice I was offered. I hadn't realized that there were so many ways of looking at my two predicaments.

So I decided to present the two scenarios to you and ask your opinion.

One thing you need to know at the outset: in *neither* case had I signed an agency agreement promising not to work directly with the agency's clients.

Scenario 1

I had recently completed a translation project for Agency A. The author of the source text had insisted as a condition of the job that she be able to contact me directly, to make sure that I was seeing the assignment through her eyes and in her creative spirit. We had had several instructive and friendly telephone conversations and e-mail exchanges during the course of the project, and I had made a point of copying the agency every time I responded to her e-mails or reported to her on my progress.

Now, after the project was delivered, the author's take on it changed, at least partly in response to seeing her work in English for the first time. She wanted to make substantial revisions. Although this additional work was complex, I agreed to do it, because I wanted to see the job through to a happy conclusion. But, unable to come to a satisfactory agreement with the agency on this supplementary work, she eventually contacted me. What she had in mind was a direct contract between the two of us—with quite generous conditions, as it happened—which meant that the agency would no longer be involved in the project.

So, should I have:

- a) contracted with the author, on the conditions she was offering?
- b) contracted with the author only if I could negotiate even better conditions?
- c) not responded to the author at all?
- d) refused the author and let Agency A know about her offer?
- e) refused the author without letting Agency A know what had happened?
- f) done something other than options a — e?

Scenario 2

I submitted a sample translation for a pop-culture book project via Agency B, but did not hear back one way or the other. I thought no more about it, although the subject matter was appealing to me and I would have loved to have won the project.

Some months later, I was contacted by a lady who needed a translator for a book-length series of cultural articles. As I learned more about the project over the next few days, though, it began to sound increasingly familiar, and eventually the prospective client confirmed my gradually dawning apprehensions, by telling me that she already knew my work from the sample that I had done for Agency B (remember Agency B?). But she had decided not to work with the agency after all. And she wanted me to do a longer sample, a whole article this time. Although she was now being straight with me, which put me on firmer ground than before, she could only have obtained my contact information from something that the agency had supplied.

Should I have:

- a) agreed to do the second sample without charge and taken the job if I passed this second-stage selection process?
- b) agreed to do the second sample only if paid a fee for that sample?
- c) refused to do a second sample but expressed my willingness to do the job?
- d) expressed my willingness to do the job only if the work came to me via Agency B?
- e) refused any further involvement?
- f) refused any further involvement and discussed the matter with Agency B?
- g) done something other than options a — f?

The two scenarios are more different than they may appear at first sight: extra credit for those who can identify the major distinction. And, in case anyone should be thinking of cheating on the test, I do believe that the ATA Code of Professional Conduct (http://www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl?object_id=13653) explicitly covers only one of my situations.

Continued on page 9

Translator Profile

My Life in Languages: A Translator's Odyssey

Kim Braithwaite
San Diego, CA

I've been a translator for over 30 years and a full-time home-based freelancer since 1973. These days more than 95 percent of my work is Russian to English. At other times in my life, though, I have worked mostly with Georgian. It is a labor of love that I will explain further below.

Languages and linguistics fascinated me from an early age, and although I kept getting sidetracked after high school, I always had a hunch that languages were my destiny.

Let's go back a ways. I was born in Ogden, Utah, and spent my earliest boyhood in the pretty little mountain town of Huntsville, which my great-grandfather helped settle in the 1860s. Our forebears were English and Danish. My father was a school teacher and musician, and my other main passion, still, is music. I even compose a little.

The occurrence that launched my odyssey came in the summer I turned 11. One day in church I heard a man who had served a mission in Mexico talking to someone in Spanish, and it sounded so outlandish and pretty I resolved to learn it myself. But they didn't teach Spanish at my level in school, and grammars from the library only confused me. Then my cousin told me about her high school Spanish teacher, who she said was really good. I called him up, and he kindly agreed to give me a weekly lesson, in his home, for a dollar.

My cousin was right about the teacher, and soon I could converse with Spanish speakers in the Ogden area. Equally important, suddenly I had a feel for how languages work, what grammar is about. It was like finding out that water holds you up so you can swim, and it kindled my interest in other languages.

Along the way I ran across a chart of the numbers 1-10 in a couple of dozen languages that illustrated the concept of language families. I started collecting number sets everywhere, scouring the library, seeking out former missionaries, interviewing Indians who took part in Ogden's Pioneer Days. I even asked some Gypsies who were camped out by the carnival grounds. It was fun to compare languages that way, and it was my first taste of linguistics.

Russian was next, after I saw two pages of Soviet anti-Nazi posters in *Life Magazine*. I loved the alphabet and devoured the noun declensions in the library's grammar. Through my dad's music activities I met an aging Russian violinist, who was happy to give me a weekly lesson in his home for a dollar. But there was no Russian-speaking community in Ogden. All I could do was talk with my teacher, read his newspapers and books, and learn little poems and songs.

By the time I turned 12, languages were like bread and jam to me. I explored the familiar ones and started looking for new ones, the more exotic the better. A few army phrase books fell into my hands. Burmese, with its pretty round letters, was my favorite. I saved up my pitiful allowance to buy language books from Schoenhof's book store, some whose names I'd barely heard of, like Zulu, Malay, Tibetan, and Urdu. I dipped into Eskimo and Navajo.

But there was one that kept eluding me. It was Georgian, the mysterious language that was Stalin's mother tongue. For some reason the simple, graceful shapes of the Georgian alphabet in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* tugged at me like no other. I wanted to know more, but there were no grammars or dictionaries to be found anywhere, not even a sketch. It was frustrating.

Then a wonderful little book came my way, called *Anything Can Happen*. It was Georgian immigrant George Papashvily's story of his adventures in America, with memories of his native land and people, portrayals of customs kept alive here by the Georgian community, which was tiny and scattered. And, not least, a few samples of the language. It was this book that clinched my resolve.

Finally, Schoenhof's 1946 catalogue listed a Georgian grammar. It turned out to be a wretchedly typed and mimeographed booklet, and the Georgian letters in it were crudely drawn and the grammar full of flaws. Years later I discovered it was a clumsy adaptation of an old German treatise. Still, it taught me my first few hundred precious words and basic grammar. But it wasn't enough. What I really wanted was to find a Georgian to talk with or at least write to. I inquired everywhere, talked to linguists at local colleges, quizzed Russians I met, and even corresponded in Esperanto with people in several countries and asked them for leads. If there were ways to contact Soviet Georgia, or Georgian immigrants in the U.S. and Europe, I didn't know about them. The possibility of foreign travel never occurred to me, and in fact to this day I've never traveled much, or especially wanted to. I guess you could call me an armchair linguist, a homebody with a funny hobby.

My first foreign travel was with the army in Germany, where I spent a year, mostly in Berlin. My year of college German served me very well and made my sojourn most enjoyable. In addition, Berlin had bookstores and connections that led me to a few Georgian books and dictionaries (but no actual Georgians). I got hold of newspapers and magazines and was soon able to read them, thanks to a Rosetta Stone of sorts—Georgian and Russian versions of the same three-page article.

Back home again, I majored in German for a while, but it was not to be. I goofed off a lot, got bored and dropped out of college for a couple of years to pursue other things, none of which turned out well, and wound up unemployed and at loose ends, with no degree or prospects, hanging out in Salt Lake City's premier beatnik espresso joint. Which, as fate would have it, was where I met my first Georgian.

He was new in town, a recent addition to the university's history faculty who was being given a tour of the city's night life. By chance I overheard him regaling his hosts with what "we Georgians" are all about, and when I greeted him with the traditional "Gamarjobat, Batono," meaning "Victory to you, Sir," we became instant friends for a lifetime. He said my rudimentary

Georgian was not bad at all, and it might pay me to apply to the Voice of America (VOA) in Washington DC, where he used to work.

So I cleaned up my act, got a part-time clerking job and went back to school, finally finished the B.A. (English), fell in love and got married, and moved to Washington to work for the VOA.

After a period of internship I joined VOA's Georgian Service and its staff of native speakers. I helped out with odd jobs at first, then started translating items into Georgian for the daily newscast, took over studio production, edited the other staffers' translations for fidelity to the English, did music programming, and wrote original features, which I recorded myself for broadcast, as it was felt that listeners in Georgia would be pleased with my American accent.

The work, day in and day out, was hectic but satisfying. My co-workers and I made a good team, and I might have stayed at VOA, rising through the ranks as time went on. Three things, however, made me rethink. One, I never liked living in Washington and pined for the west. Two, civil service, even our colorful corner of it, felt increasingly drab. Three, my family was growing faster than my puny salary.

Meanwhile, to make ends meet I had taken a part-time job teaching office skills in a local night school. To my surprise, teaching was fun. How come I never knew that before? Maybe I could get a college job somewhere in the west. I found out the U.S. Office of Education had generous grants for graduate students specializing in "critical languages." I applied and was eventually accepted by the U of Texas. Visions of stimulating lectures and leisurely homework on the patio danced in my head. My colleagues gave me a truly moving farewell, but my family sang as we drove westward. Academia, here I came.

But first, another meaningful "meanwhile." Besides teaching night school I had started doing regular little Russian translation jobs for JPRS, a government bureau across the street from VOA. They liked my work, I could do it whenever I had a few minutes of spare time (?!), and even at low piecework rates it paid more per hour than the night school job. These benefits of freelancing remained vivid in my mind in the years to come, especially at certain scary turning points.

The delights of academia turned out to be a bit different from the vision. After three years my dissertation was lagging, the grants were running out, and it was time to find a job. But that was the year the academic market for linguists dried up. The replies to my applications were courteous and sympathetic. We could only hang tight and try again next season. By this time the kids were in school and my wife had a job. I taught ESL classes, conducted teacher institutes in nearby towns, translated Russian articles for a professor of historical linguistics, and sent out applications to dozens of colleges.

Well is there a God or what? The U of Arizona's English Department hired me, still ABD, to teach linguistics and ESL training courses. It was an amazing new era of my life in languages. Everything was challenging and enjoyable—even the Freshman English they made me teach.

Of course there was still the matter of the dissertation, which was taking longer than I planned. And there was committee work, which I was no good at. Plus, the new department head kept pushing for more faculty publications. My teaching was effective, but what if the school should drop me? I'd seen it happen to colleagues, but unlike them I was not going to search frantically for a position elsewhere, uproot my family and leave this place we'd come to love. Also, by this time my wife had a good start teaching ESL. As for me—hey, I might just stay at home and do freelance translating for a living.

Which is exactly what happened. Shortly after I finished my dissertation on Georgian's puzzling verb structure, the department head told me affably it was time to go. I replied affably it was just as well, no hard feelings, thanks for the memories, see you around. I started contacting potential clients in anticipation of the fateful day the paychecks stopped. In Washington I had dipped my toe into freelancing. Now it was time to jump in the deep end.

A scary turning point? Maybe I was naive, but I knew it would work out if JPRS and other agencies would send enough stuff for me to produce a certain quota per day and thus—grind out the daily bread. JPRS was slow signing me back on, but another outfit sent me two jobs as quick as I hung up the phone.

For me, clean typing was painfully slow and tiring, so I found a freelance typist to turn my drafts into camera-ready copy. That helped, but my output and earnings (and comfort) really climbed after I gave up typing and started dictating all my work, and I have never looked back.

Despite occasional dry spells and the need to hunt for new work sources when old ones fade away, this is a pretty good way to make a living. Being able to live wherever I want, work at home in shorts and sandals, set my own days and hours (as long as clients stay happy), be on hand to take care of kids and grandkids when they're little, and take my sweet time commuting from the breakfast table to the office in the other end of the house—these are perks that help make up for many lacks, such as unpredictable earnings, no paid vacations or sick leave, no profit-sharing or company retirement, no gossiping with co-workers around the water cooler (sigh). I do not regret any part of this odyssey of mine.

Some final notes about Georgian, my lifelong labor of love. After leaving the VOA I wrote and taped a dozen or so radio scripts for my old outfit, recounting my adventures as a grad student in Texas to listeners in Georgia. I also corresponded with colleagues there, making friends and valuable contacts. After I went into full-time translating, hardly any Georgian assignments ever came, but I did keep in close touch with all things Georgian. Several times, Radio Liberty in Munich had me evaluate its Georgian broadcasting, and once I spent a month there as a consultant. One year, also, I taught a semester of Georgian at the U of Arizona.

A government bureau offered me an interesting assignment: scanning Georgian periodicals to find useful articles on economics, politics, science, and society, which I would translate or

Continued on page 12

Dobro došli, y'all! *Continued from page 2*

I started learning Serbo-Croatian, for fun, in 1988. I was touring Europe with a dance company that summer and we met some Yugoslavs at a theater festival in Spain. With two weeks between our final gig in Budapest and my scheduled flight home, I took a train to Sarajevo on a lark. Many people ask if I have 'roots' in the region. No — it just happened that I visited the country at an impressionable age and fell in love with the people and the place, and decided I'd learn the language so I could go back and hang out with my friends.

Now, fourteen years later, I have just returned to the U.S. after 'hanging out' in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) since 1996. I did a number of different things there: I managed an emergency medical supply project and supervised a field office for the humanitarian aid organization American Refugee Committee (1996-1997); I hosted a weekly radio show, "Pola-pola," on an independent Zenica station (Nov. 1996-July 1997); I started and operated (and dissolved) a private company, Plan B d.o.o. Zenica (1998-1999), which offered business and production services to international agencies and foreign professionals; and I was Hospitality Service Manager (1998-2000) and Festival Manager (2000-2002) for the Sarajevo International Film Festival (founded by the remaining members of that theater group I met in Spain that fateful summer).

I started translating professionally in 1998 (I had been reviewing and correcting translations in English for many years already), and thanks to a few loyal and committed clients, my work has steadily improved, as has my enjoyment of the craft. Most of my translations relate to the visual and performing arts, but I also work on documents dealing with health and social policy, small business contracts and procedures, project proposals, reports and promotional material; I'm even dabbling in literary translation.

Back in the U.S. due to family obligations, I have decided to pursue translation and copyediting as a career, for one reason because it seems to be something I can do part time and from home (much of my time is taken up by my new role as 'house-daughter'), but mainly because I really enjoy it.

I'm lucky that I was able to bring most of my clients back home with me — we did everything by e-mail anyway. Unfortunately, they still pay according to the BH economy. Self-esteem and the cost of living dictate that I establish a client base here in the U.S.

When accreditation isn't available in your languages... (warning, segue approaching!)

And this is one reason I felt the need for some kind of document or accreditation to attest to the fact that I am serious about translation and that I possess the necessary skills and experience. It would be so much easier to have that piece of paper than to have to tell this story over and over.

I know I'm not alone. Some of the responses to my notice about establishing accreditation for Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian have come from young (career-wise) translators who also feel a need for proof of some sort. Many of us have no formal training in translation or interpretation, and we want to be able to show our potential clients third-party verification that we are qualified.

And it would be nice to inform our colleagues — at a glance, in our e-mail signatures or ATA profiles — that we're serious about the profession. And while we're at it, we'd like to be able to participate in ATA on equal footing with accredited members.

But with accreditation not offered in our language pairs (not yet, that is!), is it even possible to become an Active member of ATA?

It is, and for those of us working in less common languages or as interpreters, it's worth considering ATA's alternative routes to active membership. (OK, segue's over, you can relax now.)

Achieving Active Membership status through Membership Review

Alternative routes to Active Membership (or, for those not U.S. citizens, to Corresponding Membership) are pursued through the process of MEMBERSHIP REVIEW. While Active Membership achieved through Membership Review does not certify language proficiency, it does acknowledge an active engagement in translation and interpretation as a profession, and it also allows for more involvement in ATA as an organization.

What's the difference?

For detailed information about ATA membership categories, go to the main site (www.atanet.org) and follow the "Membership" link on the menu at the left, or go directly to the membership pages (www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl/13410.html).

The first section under Membership, "Welcome to the American Translators Association," enumerates membership benefits in detail and defines each membership category.

Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Serbo-Croatian < > English translators and interpreters

ATTENTION

An effort is underway to establish accreditation for these language pairs. A "volunteer committee" has been formed and we are now collecting information about criteria in use by other organizations to grant accreditation and certification in these languages. We also intend to survey ATA members who have listed any of these languages in their profiles about their thoughts on the subject. Just two examples: How should we handle the accreditation of these languages into English — will this be one language pair or many? What standards should be used for the "from English" direction — will command of Cyrillic be required?

We hope to organize a meeting at the ATA annual conference (Atlanta, 6-9 November) to report on our findings and discuss these issues in person. Meanwhile, feel free to write to us c/o Paula Gordon (dbaPlanB@aol.com) with your comments. A message stating your language pairs and interest in accreditation will reinforce our efforts and would be greatly appreciated.

Briefly, the main difference between Associate (the basic category) and Active membership is the level of participation allowed. Active members may vote and hold office, and serve on Association committees and on the Board of Directors. Nonresidents of the U.S. are not eligible for Active membership; they become Corresponding Members upon passing accreditation exams or Membership Review. There is a difference: Corresponding Members may vote, but may not hold any Association office or serve on Association committees or the ATA Board of Directors.

Is Membership Review for you?

The nuts and bolts of Membership Review can be found under “Alternative Routes to Active or Corresponding Membership” (www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl/41489.html). There you will find a list of documentation required to support your application (summarized below), a description of the procedure, a short list of frequently asked questions and the Membership Review Submission Form. (By the way, there’s an application fee of \$50.00.)

Membership Review is handled administratively at ATA Headquarters. Any applications that do not clearly match the criteria for “Alternative Routes to Active and Corresponding Membership” are forwarded by Headquarters to the Active Membership Review Committee for its recommendation.

Membership Review is an alternative to accreditation for members who would like to take a more active role in the organization, and also for those who would like ‘official’ recognition of their demonstrable professional activities as a translator or interpreter.

The word “demonstrable” is key here — you must document your application. ATA Bylaws state that voting members must be “professionally engaged in translating, interpreting, or closely related work.” You may be eligible for Active Membership if your qualifications match any ONE of the following:

1. Translators and interpreters currently accredited or certified by a member association of the *Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs*

Documentation required: Proof of such accreditation or certification.

2. Translators

Documentation required:

- a. Proof of a degree or certificate in translation* ; and
- b. One letter of reference from a client or supervisor.

3. Interpreters

Documentation required:

- a. Proof of a degree or certificate in interpretation* ; and
- b. One letter of reference from a client or supervisor.

4. Translators or interpreters

Documentation required: Evidence of at least three years’ work as a translator or interpreter, which may include either of the following:

- a. Three letters of reference from clients or supervisors; or

- b. Copies of records of business activity such as Schedule C, corporate tax returns, 1099s, invoices, or work orders.

5. Persons professionally engaged in work closely related to translation and/or interpretation

Documentation required: Evidence of at least three years’ work in a closely related field, which may include either of the following:

- a. Teaching appointment letters; or
- b. Terminology/lexicography research studies

Finally!

I’ll end with another call for collaboration on this new column — here are some ideas for topics:

Publications and resources for translators and interpreters: recommendations or review

general dictionaries
special terminology dictionaries
language-learning books
online resources (glossaries, corpuses, booksellers...)
printed and online publications featuring translations
reviews of translations or books in translation,
or books about translation

Schools and accreditation programs

in the U.S. or abroad

Translation and interpretation ‘na d(j)elu’

false cognates
terminology
case studies

Sample translations — with discussion of problems and solutions

(For articles incorporating work that is not your own, please be sure to secure from the author or copyright holder permission to publish the work, and also permission to create and publish a translation.)

Theory

Southern Slavic languages compared to each other,
or to English or other Slavic languages
etymology, orthography, historical sources
teaching these languages
socio-linguistics, language planning and education
what people from the region are speaking in the U.S. or other countries, linguistic adaptation and mutation

The profession

translator profiles
professional opportunities and marketing ideas for these languages
anecdotes about work experiences
software and computer tools (CAT, DTP, fonts, spell-checkers, regional options within common software packages)

Sounds fascinating, doesn’t it? Now all we need are the articles!

Please contact me at dbaplanb@aol.com with your ideas or articles. Send submissions attached as Word or RTF files and note “*SlavFile* submission” in the subject line of your message. I look forward to hearing from you!

* The Education & Training Committee is authorized to establish a list of programs or examinations, successful completion of which is sufficient to achieve active or corresponding membership.

SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

I have a sad tale to tell. It's about something that happened to one of my ESL students, Lena, originally from Russia. In order to get some medical tests, Lena had to go to a clinic unfortunately located amidst a tangle of limited access highways outside of Washington DC, an area known affectionately to radio traffic reporters as "The Mixing Bowl" (although to a reluctant driver like myself this area is a great deal closer to Hell than any bucolic scene Hieronymus Bosch could dream up). Lena drove round and round for more than an hour trying to get to her appointment; unable to find anyone who could tell her how to do so. She told me that frequently she could see the building perfectly well in the near distance but could not figure out which exit or lane to take to get to it.

Becoming more and more distressed, Lena finally spotted a police car with a couple of cops loitering beside it. It was parked a little off the highway on a side road marked "For Emergency Use Only." (Actually, I suspect it was more likely to have said "official use" but this makes no difference to the story.) Rejoicing that the local government was provident enough to station public servants right where their advice was so likely to be needed, Lena parked her car at the side of this road and approached her presumptive saviors. Now, I am as opposed as the next knee-jerk liberal to racial profiling, but I find it relevant to mention that my student, a small, attractive, fair woman in her 40's with a pleasant diffident manner, is about as little like commonly identified terrorist types as anyone you can imagine. This, however, did not prevent one of the policemen from putting his hand on his gun and barking at her to state her emergency business. After making her thrice repeat that her emergency involved having to go to the doctor but being unable to do so because she couldn't find an exit that led to anything other than another highway (her English is quite good but by this time she was in tears), he grudgingly drew her a map which he pocketed rather than giving to her AND issued her a pricey traffic ticket! Печально, господа, печально!

Clearly the source of this grievous incident was some kind of cross-cultural misunderstanding. But precisely what? Although I offered to go to traffic court with Lena to testify that the source of her confusion was a differences in connotation between the word for emergency in English and Russian, I do not believe this is the correct explanation. It is also emphatically not the case that in Lena's native land sympathetic men in uniform are routinely stationed by the side of the road to aid law-abiding citizens in distress or dilemma. No, I believe the explanation is that Lena was a victim of rumors about, and to some extent actual experience of, the polar contrast between the Soviet Union and the United States. She truly believed that in this new land it would not be unlikely for public servants to be willing, if not to serve, at least to advise the public. If you believe that the modern United States is as unlike the old Soviet Union (and perhaps the RF) as it could possibly be, you are prone to this kind of mistake.

Almost certainly, if she had caught this policeman on a better day or encountered another, more understanding individual, there would have been no ticket. If this had only happened virtually anywhere else in the U.S. at any other time but the year of Our Lord 2002 (at least to a fair skinned, well-spoken lady like Lena), the encounter would likely have had a less unpleasant result. (Indeed, when I was growing up in the wilds of New York City, schoolchildren were taught a song that went: "Go up to a kindly policemen the very first one you meet/ And simply say I've lost my way and cannot find my street.") But somehow, living in this particular place and imprisoned in this particular time, I find this fact small consolation.

In spite of the sadness this kind of thing causes, I do not believe that our country is going to Hell in a handbasket (one of my favorite English expressions that is, sadly, rarely used nowadays) in all respects. Take the increase in ethnic diversity (the phrase itself is a PC cliché but the phenomenon is very real throughout the country)! When I was a child, the only place you could be sure of finding a Chinese restaurant was a large city, preferably on one of the coasts. I had a friend in graduate school, from a smallish town in Tennessee, who gauged the cosmopolitan character of any area by how far it was to the closest Chinese restaurant. Superficial though it may seem this is not an inaccurate metric at all. I remember our delight in the mid-1970s when the first such eatery opened in Boulder, Colorado, the restaurant section of whose phone book currently reads like an exhaustive list of UN members. In Arlington VA, there is now a Bolivian restaurant that is also a Chinese take-out, which got started when the new Bolivian owners were too kindhearted and/or profit-minded to turn away the previously established clientele. Some time in the last two decades I was very amused to discover the existence of Kosher Chinese restaurants, of which there are one or two in the Washington area, but evidently many more in New York. Well, friends, the restaurant-indexed ethnic diversity of our nation has risen to new heights, starting in the very neighborhood where I myself was born. The parents of a friend and SLD member recently moved to Forest Hills, in Queens, New York, and discovered to their delight, that the neighborhood boasted a Kosher Tadjik restaurant!!!

Does anyone else get a kick out of the photograph that adorns the home page of the invaluable website that decodes Russian abbreviations and acronyms, www.sokr.ru? Here we see a handsome middle-aged couple, dressed in what looks to be very respectable 1960's Soviet finery, gazing with misty-eyed *умиление* not at a brand new grandchild (which to my mind is probably the only object in the world that would legitimately rate such an expression) but at the expansion of a Russian acronym. Is it remotely possible that whoever included this photo in the website meant it to be taken seriously?

I was listening to *Prairie Home Companion* on the radio the other day when one of the characters in a skit announced he had a Russian doctor — Dr. Lupinskaya. The next second it became clear that this physician was meant to be a man. It didn't appear

that a male had been given a female name for comic effect and I began to wonder how this linguistic error could have happened. After all, no Russian males in this country or elsewhere use the feminine form of their surname, while many females who have emigrated use the male form of their own or husband's names. It occurred to me that this fact was indeed the explanation: since most "assimilated" Russians do not have names ending in *aya*, but these surnames are heard fairly often in connection with unassimilated individuals or those on their home ground, names with this ending must be perceived as *really* Russian. The error made on the radio show then was essentially the equivalent of adding an inappropriate umlaut to a name in order to emphasize that a character is German.

Some of you may have read in the preliminary ATA conference program that Nora Favorov, Alex Lane, and I, Lydia Stone, are planning on presenting a poetry workshop. The format will be somewhat different than in past years. All panel members will have produced a draft English translation of a familiar Russian poem. At the workshop we will combine our efforts and, taking account of audience suggestions and ideas, attempt to produce a consensus version. We would love to have another panel member, particularly a native speaker of Russian. If you are planning on attending the conference and would like to participate in this way, please send a draft translation to one of the panel members. All of our addresses are on the masthead. Readers not planning to attend are encouraged to send us their efforts and ideas. You need not send a complete translation — felicitous renderings of a single line or even word will be most welcome. You will be given full credit for your contribution. Note: we plan to produce a rhymed, metric translation, but free verse contributions are also acceptable. Please, please do not be intimidated by the fact that the poem we have selected is by Pushkin. We had a difficult time finding one that met all our criteria, and this was our unanimous choice. We do not expect a brilliant English poem or even brilliant translation and the workshop will be focused much more on process than on product. I myself have had a fair amount of experience translating Pushkin and have found his works easier to render in English than those of most other, inferior poets.

Here is our selected poem.

**СТИХИ,
СОЧИНЕННЫЕ НОЧЬЮ
ВО ВРЕМЯ БЕССОННИЦЫ**

Мне не спится, нет огня;
Всюду мрак и сон докучный.
Ход часов лишь однозвучный
Раздается близ меня.
Парки бабье лепетанье,
Спящей ночи трепетанье,
Жизни мышья беготня...
Что тревожишь ты меня?
Что ты значишь, скучный шепот?
Укоризна или ропот
Мной утраченного дня?
От меня чего ты хочешь?
Ты зовешь или пророчишь?
Я понять тебя хочу,
Смысла я в тебе ищу...
1830

Finally, we are having some difficulty finding a slot for a Russian-English game show and at this writing do not know if one will be held at the 2002 ATA Conference. However, we will have a Burime contest come Hell or highwater. The idea is to compose a poem containing all or most of the pairs listed below as end rhymes (though not necessarily in couplets). If you are coming to the conference, bring your poem with you for reading aloud; if you cannot attend send it to lydiastone@compuserve.com before the conference. Winning entries in last year's contest can be found on page 2, 8 and 9 of the Winter 2002 issue of SlavFile.

1. рассудок-желудок
2. брачный-смачный
3. прикосновение-вдохновение
4. застой-холостой
5. помеха-прореха
6. перевод-анекдот
7. роман-самообман

- 1.lechery-treachery
- 2.bubonic - platonic
- 3.sinecure - insecure
- 4.SLD - messily
- 5.Chardonnay - hard to pay
- 6.lexicon-hexagon
- 7.expedite- way too tight

1. плут - cute
2. пустяков - lose track of
3. проект - erect
4. мороз - no clothes
5. АТА -не болей
6. чужак-got stuck
7. a big deal -забыл

See y'all in Atlanta.

BEGINNER'S LUCK *Continued from page 3*

No, seriously—I do want to know what you think, what you would have done, what I should have done, the alternative avenues of conduct that you can see and I couldn't. If you e-mail me, you'll probably risk blowing your anonymity, but I promise that no one but yours truly will ever know who you are, unless you tell me that you especially want to see your name associated with your comments. In all cases, I'll extract the message and delete the e-mail from my inbox immediately. (So, as you will have gathered by now, this is also a test of *your* faith in *my* ethics.)

And maybe you've encountered similar puzzlers, or choices yet more thorny and a lot more interesting. Tell me the tale, so we can share them with your fellow-translators.

You can contact me at bliss@wmonline.com

Harry Potter and the Changing Trends in the Translation of Children's Literature in Post-communist Poland

Anna Chilewska
Edmonton, Canada

One issue of great interest to me nowadays is the transformation taking place in the translation of children's literature in post-communist Poland. This transformation has been prompted by changes in governmental, economic and social institutions, and has also been heavily influenced by the opening up of borders and the "Westernization" that has been taking place in Poland for the last decade or so. It is rather difficult to discuss the present situation without saying a bit about the state of translation for children before 1989, when the communist regime fell. Therefore, I shall begin with a very brief overview of the last three decades.

Before 1989, Poland had roughly 50 publishing houses. Each operated under "a tangled, bloated bureaucracy¹," and the most inconsequential actions were closely monitored by government ministries and party committees. Most editorial decisions were imposed by the censor to ensure that none of the so-called "undesirable" elements reached the Polish market. These included, but were not limited to: attacks on the political system, revealing state secrets, violation of laws and decency, and misleading public opinion by giving untrue information.

The Communist Party played a role in manipulating language and information, and it also had "ideological supervisors" at universities, publishing houses and editorial offices. And since the criteria for what was undesirable in texts were so broad, the authorities were able to find as many troublesome issues as they wanted. Books for children deemed safe, and thus translatable, generally included fairy tales and nursery rhymes or stories embodying ideologies similar to those propagated by the government. Naturally, Soviet literature, which promoted collectivism and anti-individualism, thrived in Polish publishing houses. On the other hand, books and stories that strayed from acceptable social and ideological norms were either heavily edited or not published at all. One book that was highly modified by censorship was Astrid Lindgren's 1945 novel *Pippi Langstrump*. This story had to be edited for content because its nine-year old heroine was critical towards adults, poked fun at educational establishments and defied authority – three elements that were not in accordance with the Polish political, social or pedagogical models.

Governmental agencies not only controlled what was being published but also the size of printings and the availability of the translated works. In addition, availability was limited by restrictions on paper. However, with the lifting of centralization, the children's market entered the proverbial "boom," both for domestic and foreign literature. Within a short period of time, nearly a thousand major and minor publishing houses emerged. Some were short-lived, some based on scams and gimmicks, but some survived and are doing well. These include: Muza, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wydawnictwo Zielona Sowa and Siedmoróg, to name just a few. Under these conditions of newfound freedom, the world of translation began to change, al-

though not necessarily for the better in every respect. As has been true of all recent politically re-directed nations, the good must come with the bad.

I will discuss only a handful of the most important changes that are taking place in the translation of children's literature. First, ideas about the purpose and function of children's literature are finally beginning to shift in what most Westerners would consider the right direction. In the recent past, translation for children frequently reflected the idea of the child as a potential representative of society's future.² Under communism, books for young readers were required to play a significant role in the development of socialist national culture, humanist traditions and values, and the creation of a collective-oriented society. Many translators had to be painfully aware of the awesome responsibility. Further, they knew that the rendition could have an effect on the longevity of their translation, and indeed their career. After all, texts read especially by children had to reflect standards of behavior and collective concerns. Today, this issue is being viewed differently and contemporary translators have more power to decide in which direction they want to proceed.

For many years adaptation, partial adaptation or almost complete naturalization of a text were frequently preferred alternatives to straight translation. This was especially true in books for younger children whose contact with the outside world was minimal or non-existent. By naturalizing a foreign text, a translator or editor created the illusion that there was no world beyond that of the child reader. In addition, adaptation also smoothed out the theme of *us* versus *them*, in other words, the East versus the West. Translations of stories such as *Pelle Svanslös pa äventyr*³ by Gösta Knutsson and translated by Zygmunt Lanowski, or *Periwinkle* by Holly Bourne and translated by Stefania Wortman replaced many, if not all, of the names and places with Polish, but not necessarily close, equivalents. Some of the most dramatic examples of this phenomenon can be found in translating first names. *Winnie the Pooh* has existed in Poland for many years as *Kubuś Puchatek*, although there was an attempt at making Winnie a definite gender-female by renaming Winnie *Fredzia Phi Phi*. Pippi Langstrump was known to at least two generations of Polish readers as *Fizia Pończoszanka*.

This particular strategy has increasingly been rejected in Poland in the last ten years or so, and the original names or calques are being used instead. J. K. Rowling's books *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* are some of the more recent examples of texts that contain non-translated names and a large number of foreign terms.

Although names, such as *Hogwarts* or *Dumbledore* can be successfully rendered into the Polish language, Andrzej Polkowski chose to leave them as they are to remind his readers that "the action of the book takes place in England"⁴. For coined

terms he either chose lexical calques or simply borrowed English expressions and terms. Muggle (non-magic humans) for example, is rendered *mugol*.

This trend can also be seen in new translations of previously translated works. There are several translations of *Anne of Green Gables* in Poland, from the oldest by Rozalia Bernsteinowa, which was published in 1911, to the more recent ones by Przemysław Piekarski or Rafał Dawidowicz. The most striking differences are between the oldest and the most recent rendition translated by Katarzyna Jakubiak and published in 1997 by *Zielona Sowa*.

Table 1. *Anne of Green Gables* – translation of names

L. M. Montgomery's original	R. Bernsteinowa's 1911 translation	K. Jakubiak's 1997 translation
Anne Shirley	Ania Shirley	Ania Shirley
Rachel Lynde	Małgorzata Linde	Rachela Lynde
Charlie	Karol	Charlie
Josie	Józia	Josie
Susan	Zuzia	Susan
Jane	Janka	Jane
Emily	Emilia	Emily

I once conducted a test with several of my high school students while I was teaching English in Poland. I asked them what country *Anne of Green Gables* lived in. Most told me that she was from Poland! At first I was surprised because the book makes several references to Canadian settings, but afterwards I came to the conclusion that the children's answer was not that unusual. After all Anne had a Polish name; most of her friends had Polish names. Why would Anne be anything but Polish?

If I were optimistic, I would conclude this section by claiming that Poland is finally beginning to embrace the foreign. *Foreignization* of texts is indeed closely linked with the opening up of borders, with greater access to original texts, and with more and more people being able to speak and read more than one language. However, translators' current willingness to emphasize that a work of literature takes place in a foreign culture may be just a passing phase, a reaction against years of homogenous society with minimal contact with Western cultures

Some of the most interesting new developments can be seen particularly clearly in translations of the *Harry Potter* books. Apart from the books' great popularity in Poland, the English original was given to a very capable translator, Andrzej Polkowski, whose efforts undoubtedly will be looked upon as a model for future translations of children's literature. Freed to a large extent from the shackles of previous restrictions, Polkowski was certainly handed a challenge when he was asked to translate a piece of work in which the names of characters, the names of places and the language itself carry significant meaning. Polkowski had no choice but to try to expand the possibilities of the language and in many cases he succeeded. Two non-Polish, non-standard words from his translations, the noun *mugol* and the verb *zmuglować* (to become a muggle) have been appearing in newspapers and magazines across the country. Magdalena Walusiak called a portion of her program on Empik TV last year "Wywiad z niemugolem" (An interview with a non-muggle). Polkowski himself is often asked by the media whether he meets *muggles* in his private life, and avid readers, in their web-pages

dedicated to *Harry Potter*, claim that Polkowski "jest zbyt super aby dać się zmuglować," (*Polkowski is just too cool to become a muggle*). Moreover, he is one of very few contemporary translators who is eager to share his experiences in translation with readers. He included a note to his readers informing them of possible problems they may encounter with terminology in his 2000 rendition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*:

The book about *Harry Potter* was translated from the English language ... [T]hat is why there are words in it, which will mean little or nothing to those who have preferred to memorize hoaxes and spells instead of learning English.⁵

Previously there was little or no information provided about those who translated children's books. Although their names always appeared just below the name of the author or the illustrator, children had no awareness of the process that went into a translation of their favorite story or novel. Today, some translators, such as Andrzej Polkowski, Elżbieta Tabakowska or Katarzyna Jakubiak, are well known and their pictures can be seen in magazines, newspapers or on television from time to time. Readers can finally put a face to a name and I consider this a great step forward. Polkowski, for example, has given numerous interviews about his translations of the *Narnia Chronicles*, *Harry Potter* series and other works. He often talks about the problems and the challenges that face him when given an assignment, and most important, he shares some of his personal translation techniques with the general public. For example, Polkowski once said during an interview⁶:

I never read a book before translating it. Once I finish, I wait about two weeks before correcting additional mistakes. Then I send it to the editors, after which comes the most crucial phase, that is, to give a translation its final form.

Polkowski also discusses pressure from the publishers and the editors and more important, talks about the pressure that comes from the readers themselves. Because of the World Wide Web, the Internet and the presence of computers in many households in Poland, the availability of works in their original languages is staggering. The data I collected from various libraries, publishing houses, individual scholars and children suggest that juvenile readers often take it upon themselves to offer advice or even correct translators if they feel their beloved stories are being – for the lack of a better word – altered. Polkowski had said that he was under a tremendous amount of pressure when translating a third installment of *Harry Potter* because:

Apprehension and a horrific pressure appeared after the second book was published when it became clear that many readers took it upon themselves to dissect the book. They would find numerous errors, some real, others imagined. No other translator, I believe, has worked under such pressure due to the Internet. (Empik TV, 25 January 2001)

Although this additional source of pressure in a profession filled with many might seem threatening, Polkowski and other Polish translators apparently embrace it. They see it as a sign

that a direct relationship is being created between the reader and the translator, one that has never truly been present before. Polkowski, for one, is very excited about the close contact with his audience. He says, "It is an amazing phenomenon. Readers begin to edit the books. They do this without apologies, their theory is: our books have to be the way we want them to be!" (Empik TV, 25 January 2001)

Despite all the new and exciting changes, Poland is also experiencing its share of the bad. Not unexpectedly, as a result of the recent political and social changes, loopholes in the system of law and in the business world exist in large numbers and allow for many forms of misconduct. Renowned translators, well established in their careers, can rest assured that their works will be credited and compensated. But what about young translators who are just starting out? Well, the situation certainly could use some improvement. I learned that new publishing houses sometimes advertise for translators and when an individual appears, he or she is asked to translate a chapter in order to prove his or her capabilities. The chapter then, is kept and the translator never hears from the publisher again. The next step is easy to imagine: more individuals come to apply for a job and a book is completed without anyone receiving credit or being paid. Thus we have the alarming growth of a mass-translation market where literary works are of extremely poor quality due to the many different styles and competence levels of individual translators.

Piracy is also a problem in the post-Communist publishing economy in Poland, and certainly a deficient legal system has made this possible. Editions of bestsellers are distributed without any credit given to their authors, illustrators and certainly not to their translators. Some books are simply copied and sold by pavement vendors and small bookshops in return for their promise not to tell the authorities. The most serious threat of piracy looms over poetry, popular novels and children's books. Phenomena such as soaring prices and shrinking networks of serious bookstores do not help to ease the transition from long-repressed demand to a market economy. This situation provides stronger incentives for illegal book-selling and book-copying activities. Since the market is so disorderly at the moment, translation contracts for the younger generation of translators are hard to come by and often involve a one-time payment, without the inclusion of royalties or any real control. On the one hand, established translators are doing well and can negotiate with their publishers or publishing houses, but on the other, there is little more than a single paycheck for those who are just starting out.

Despite the elimination of state control, the production and consumption of books in Poland have more or less remained at the same level. But the patterns and practices of translation have indeed changed. Not only is translation moving forward with the avalanche of new, foreign language books being published, but the interest in the field of translation studies is beginning to grow. One can only hope that the good will outweigh the bad, and Poland will manage to create positions, which can only be filled by competent translators.

Continued on page 13

Translator Profile *Continued from page 5*

summarize. The work taught me more about the country and people than I'd ever known before, good and bad. For a few years the project took more of my time than Russian translation did. Eventually it was phased out.

All this time I had never been to Georgia and wondered if I ever would, although penpals and colleagues there kept hinting at the possibility. It's true that, being an armchair linguist, I'd never tried very hard. On four occasions my family hosted Georgian members of Soviet groups visiting Tucson, and they too promised to bring me to Georgia "ert mshvenier dghes"—one fine day.

That day finally came. The year 1987 marked the 150th birthday of Ilia Chavchavadze, the writer and political leader revered as the father of modern Georgia, and his people threw a huge 10-day celebration. Numerous Russian celebrities and a dozen foreign Georgianists were invited, including me.

At the Tbilisi airport, friends from the Tucson visits welcomed me with hugs and kisses, and a TV reporter grabbed me for an interview before they whisked me away. Amid all the near-compulsory hospitality that dominated so much of my visit there, my friends offered welcome interludes of respite, and I even had a few clumps of hours to roam the town on my own.

As it turned out, a lot of people in Georgia already knew about me, and after reporters accosted me a couple more times the word spread. I was a kind of novelty. Not very many non-Georgians in the world know the language even now; back then a Georgian-speaking American was almost unheard-of. I confess it was great fun to be famous for a while. But the high point was yet to come.

So far my public remarks were casual and off-the-cuff sound bites, as my hosts had assured me I need not prepare a formal speech. Then, on the afternoon of the closing day, they asked me to prepare some remarks for the televised finale in the grand auditorium of the Philharmonic that evening. It wasn't hard to write, thanks to my VOA experience, and I finished polishing it on the bus to the Philharmonic.

So I was perfectly calm when the emcee announced me as the next speaker. What I hadn't expected was the crowd's thunderous welcome as I stepped up to the podium, their emotional reactions to my simple sentiments, and more thunder at the end. And the lionizing kept on going, the last few days of my visit. I reflected later that more people knew me in Georgia than will ever know me here at home.

That was my first and so far only visit to Georgia, despite several invitations to take part in conferences and the fact that dealings with the country are vastly easier now. In recent years the Georgian people have suffered terrible turmoil, civil strife and even warfare. Yet I can't help believing that they will one day surely find their way to the bright destiny that is their birthright.

Kim may be reached at kbtrans@cox.net

A longer version of this article may be found in the SlavFile area of the SLD website: www.americantranslators.org/divisions/SLD/slavfile.html

Highly recommended!

The Slovist

Raphy Alden

Hi all:

About four times a year I interpret at a board meeting. Aside from the eight board members, there are invitees, but sometimes people show up uninvited. This is what happened on one such occasion.

"You are not welcome here," was said to someone who was not supposed to attend Board meetings for some (unknown to me) sins of the past. Olga (not her real name) was interpreting; I was listening. She said: **Вы здесь не желанный визитер.**

Later she asked me how I would interpret this phrase. I suggested: Ваше **присутствие здесь не желательно.** Probably, this is not the best possible interpretation, and I am hoping you can suggest something better.

I must admit that during my last interpreting assignment, I was at a loss for an acceptable interpretation more than once. Perhaps, I was just having one of those days...

Here are some examples from my notes and suggested interpretations:

Мы решили не рубить с плеча, вначале проанализировать ситуацию.

My suggestion: **Rather than shooting from the hip, we decided to analyze the situation first.**

It's just an idle remark — Это я так по между прочим.

Как бы то ни было, мы должны принять решение.

Be that as it may....

"Sorry, I was out of line" said an engineer after being reprimanded by the chairman for making a rather rude remark during the meeting. I very much wanted to interpret this phrase using the exact Russian equivalent of *I was out of line*. But, as you all well know, there is never enough time to think during interpretation (duh), so I just said: **Извините, виноват.**

The meeting lasted for three days and after it was over, there was a closing banquet at which I, a very tired interpreter, didn't have a chance to get a bite to eat (what else is new!), but I did take some more notes. Here are some of them:

Toast: *We walk the walk and talk the talk.* I was a bit taken aback at first then said: **У нас слово не расходится с делом.** I think it's a correct translation and I can use it in the future.

Дорог не подарок - дорого внимание. I know the English equivalent of this expression, and I want to mention it here:

It's not the gift — it's the thought that counts.

The proof is in the pudding. My suggestion:
Все проверяется на практике.

Two days later I arrived home, tired and sleepy. The next day I got a short translation job (some marketing brochure). I opened it and started reading. One of the paragraphs began as

follows: "Our company is a lead dog providing a customer-centric proactive solution to your problems." I said to myself: Who do they (writers) think we (translators) are? Magicians? They expect us to translate everything they write so that it makes sense no matter how badly it is written. Well, sometimes it does take magic, doesn't it?

Suggestions from our colleagues:

Dov Lederman wrote:

Вскоре все благополучно забыли про скандал. The благополучно here simply means fortunately, meaning that the scandal was fortunately forgotten.

Поломали все что можно.

They broke everything they could lay their hands on.

Siân Freck suggested the following translation for:

Гуляй пока гуляется.

Make hay while the sun shines.

Cheers,

РА

Slovist, Raphy Alden, can be reached at raffialden@aol.com.

Harry Potter *Continued from page 12*

¹ Lewandowicz, Grażyna and Michał Zając (1994). "Those Who Sow and Those Who Harvest." *Bookbird*, Vol. 32, No. 1.

² Bussewitz, Wolfgang (1978). "The Role of Soviet Children's Literature in the GDR." In *Children's Books in Translation*. Gote Klingberg, Mary Orvig, Stuart Amor eds. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

³ *The Adventures of Pelle with no Tail.*

⁴ Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter i kamień filozoficzny*. A. Polkowski trans. Poznań: Media Rodzina

⁵ Unless otherwise indicated all of Polkowski's quotes are my own translations.

⁶ This interview was conducted by *Prorok Sieciowy* and is available on the Web at <http://prorok.civ.pl>

⁷ Empik TV, January 25, 2001

Anna Chilewska, is a Ph. D. candidate at the University of Alberta in Edmonton at the department of Slavic socio-linguistics and Translation Studies. Her current research focuses on translation of children's literature in Poland and Russia, censorship and propaganda in the translation of children's literature, and women in horror films.

She can be reached by e-mail at annac@ualberta.ca or aniachile@yahoo.com

Software Review

MultiLex 3.5 Fails to Live up to Expectations

Galina Raff

Several years ago, I bought the previous version of the MultiLex dictionaries (version 2) after reading about it in *SlavFile* and since then have used it almost daily. The one serious drawback of the previous version involved the CD-ROM: it was awkward having to take the MultiLex CD out of the CD-ROM drive when the drive was needed for another purpose. I bought an additional CD-ROM drive for my latest PC just to have access to MultiLex 2 at all times.

I purchased the latest MultiLex edition, version 3.5, on a recent trip to Moscow in June. Unlike previous versions, this latest edition can be installed on a hard drive. Otherwise, the program has the same intuitive and well-developed interface, which allows global searches in any or all installed dictionaries for a Russian or English word or a combination of words.

MultiLex 3.5 comes on several CDs, and the subject dictionaries can now be purchased separately and added on as needed. I paid about \$80 for four dictionaries: *Новый Большой англо-русский словарь* под редакцией Апресяна, *Вычислительная техника*, 10,000 words (Англо-русский толковый словарь терминов и сокращений по вычислительной технике, Интернету и программированию. Э.М. Пройдаков, Л.А. Теплицкий), *Экономика и право*, 150,000 words (Англо-русский словарь по экономике и финансам, А.В. Аникин; Англо-русский юридический словарь, «Руссо»; Русско-английский юридический словарь, И.И. Борисенко, В.В. Саенко), Б.Г. Федоров *Новый англо-русский банковский и экономический словарь*, 15,000 терминов.

The most valuable of the newly added dictionaries is the New English-Russian Banking and Economic Dictionary by Boris Fedorov. Dr. Fedorov (www.fedorov.ru) is a former Finance Minister who has held several important positions in the Russian government. His latest dictionary is also available as a book: Б. Г. Федоров *Новый англо-русский банковский и экономический словарь*, СПб.: Лимбус Пресс, ISBN 5-8370-0225-1. According to the introduction, «словарь призван задать определенный стандарт в области терминологии валютных и кредитных отношений», and I found it valuable in translating a brochure for Russian-speaking bank customers. Some of the difficult terms found were *to cash* (обналичить), *check bouncing* («рикошет») and *reconciliation* (приведение клиентом учета своих операций в соответствие с учетом банка).

Special offer for translators

The Smartlink Corp. (1-800-256-4814) offers a 50% discount for ATA members. The discount applies to the purchase of *ParaWin*, *Context* and *Orfo* software. Upgrade versions are not discounted.

Unfortunately, I cannot recommend the MultiLex 3.5 electronic dictionaries because installation is extremely difficult and because technical support is not available. Most programs published in Russia, including this one, have several levels of protection to deter software piracy. So, to install MultiLex, a user needs to know a serial number and a key word for each CD installed. As an additional precaution, another key word must be entered on first use. As I was installing four CDs, I had to locate a grand total of four serial numbers and eight keywords in four little booklets and reboot my computer eight times. One of the serial numbers listed on the product registration card was not valid, but, luckily, I learned this from the sales clerk in the *Dom Knigi* store who advised me to use a serial number from another dictionary. The key words are Russian and located at certain specified locations on certain pages of the small user manuals that are included with the software. Some of these pages had a header, title and three lines of additional heading material, so, for example, in the instruction “to find 3rd word on the 10th line from the top,” it was not clear how to count the lines. One is forced to experiment—counting with and without the header and title. One manual, apparently, had a text re-flow during typesetting, so I had to try at least 20 key words to continue the installation. Overall, it took about 3 hours and a lot of perseverance to complete the installation.

My only hope is that MultiLex publisher *MediaLingua* will simplify installation, so that all users can benefit from this program. When I complained to the publisher in the past, however, I was told that I was “mistaken to think MultiLex software is difficult to install.”

As far as I know, the latest version of the MultiLex dictionaries is not sold in the US. The publisher's web site www.multilex.ru lists stores that carry the MultiLex products in Moscow.

Galina Raff can be reached at galina_raff@att.net

ATTENTION UKRAINIAN TRANSLATORS! –

Do you believe the Ukrainian language deserves consideration and respect no less than Russian or Polish, not to mention Hungarian or Finnish?

Well, there is one thing our Division can do— set up the ATA accreditation (soon to become certification) for English-Ukrainian and/or Ukrainian-English translators.

This idea has been around for several years already, but that is no reason to procrastinate!

However, to proclaim is much easier than to accomplish. And the first step should be to make up a list of those wishing to be accredited and those further willing to work to set up a program.

We are thus asking all those interested to send an e-mail to Vadim Khazin, our Contributing Editor (Ukrainian), at vadkhazin@cs.com stating your willingness to start the accreditation process.

We need 50 people signed up to even start. Please do not forget to mention the accreditation direction (E-U, U-E, or maybe both) that you would like to pursue.

this we have Rita McGrath and Elena Goldis to thank. The SLD's two point people in Atlanta worked tirelessly until they found the perfect spot for our gathering. They are also arranging transportation. Whether you have lots of friends in the SLD or are a total newcomer, if you'll be in Atlanta, I hope you'll join us. Please sign up soon, as an early headcount is important to planning both the dinner and the transportation. If you're uncertain whether or not to sign up, please contact me. See the ad on the back cover of this issue for details.

The SLD in Atlanta

There is still some uncertainty in the schedule of SLD presentations in Atlanta. To view the most up-to-date program, please go to: www.atanet.org/conf2002.

SL-1 Slavic Languages Division Annual Meeting: Thursday 1:45 This is your chance to hear what's happening in the division, to ask questions and to make suggestions for change. This is where—in odd-numbered years—new division administration is elected. This year we have something special planned. We will devote part of the session to a *Brief History of the SLD* and hope also to have an informal discussion about the market in freelance SL<>E translation.

SL-2 Getting Down to Business: Translating Russian Financial and Economic Terminology (Loren Tretyakov) I, personally, was looking forward to this session. Alas, Loren developed an irresolvable conflict and was forced to cancel. Maybe next year. The only positive thing to come out of this cancellation is that it eliminates one of our two scheduling conflicts (see SL-6 and MED-4 below for the second).

SL-3 U.S. Legal Terms: How to Say It in Russian and Ukrainian (Vadim Khazin and Boris Silversteyn): Friday 10:15 We all know how little help dictionaries are when it comes to trying to transport concepts of law across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Vadim and Boris will discuss some of the pitfalls and solutions. We're expecting an animated discussion!

SL-4 Annual Susana Greiss Lecture, "Thirty Years before the Slavic Mast: The Personal Narrative of a Literary Translator" (Michael Henry Heim): Friday 1:45. This year's Susana Greiss speaker is an accomplished literary translator and professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at UCLA. Although the Heim translation you will see prominently displayed in book stores these days (*My Century* by Gunter Grass) is from the German, most of our speaker's literary translations have been from Slavic Languages. His published translations are too numerous to list here, but include works by Kundera, Ki, Aksyonov, Sokolov and Jan Neruda. For a complete listing see his web site: www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/slavic/html/f-heim.htm.

SL-5 Transplanting Toads, Constructing Camels (Stone, Lane, Favorov, ???): Friday 3:30 Lydia Stone, Alex Lane and yours truly will, without consulting one another, translate the same poem—which may be found in this issue SlavFile Lite column on page 9—and subject our work to the mercy of the crowd. Collectively we will try to come up with the *ideal* (wink) translation of said poem. We await your gentle criti-

cism. We would like to add one more member to our panel, preferably one whose native language is Russian. If you are interested please see the *SlavFile Lite* column in this issue.

SL-6 Navigating the Cyrillic "Swamp": Understanding Encodings (Alex Lane): Saturday 1:45 Last year Alex gave a marvelous talk entitled "Recent Issues in Russian and English Translation: Avoiding the Pitfalls and Overcoming Business and Technical Challenges." When he got to the part about encoding, a certain spike in audience interest was palpable. The thought raced through the minds of many of us, "This is it, this is where I finally come to understand this issue that has cost me so many hours and deprived me of many a needed file." Unfortunately, last year there wasn't enough time to deal with this topic thoroughly. This year Alex will walk us slowly and carefully through this quagmire.

MED-4 (in the preliminary program, but soon to be re-designated as SL-? and rescheduled, we hope, to avoid conflict with SL-6) A Crash Course in Inferential Statistics and Experimental Design for Translators (Lydia Stone): currently scheduled at Saturday 1:45 This talk is based on Lydia's presentation at ATA's Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar back in May, but has been tailored to be more specific to Russian. Using examples from Russian scientific writing, Lydia will help the uninitiated make sense of the terminology associated with experimental design and inferential statistics, a frequent stumbling block for translators, especially those working in the biological and social sciences.

SL-7 The Influence of English Syntax on Nominal and Adjectival Word-Formation Models in Technical Russian (Michael K. Launer): Saturday 3:30 Here's an opportunity to roll up your sleeves and get down to the linguistic nitty-gritty of Russian technical writing. Launer will examine changes in word formation patterns in Russian technical writing.

SL-8 Son of False Cognates: More Russian>English "Relatives" That Go Their Own Way (Steve Shabad): Saturday 4:15 Last year Steve gave the father (or was it the mother?) of this talk. It generated lively discussion, came with a very useful handout, and explored false cognates that even experienced translators are in constant danger of tripping over. This topic turned out to be too huge to be covered adequately in one session. Thank goodness we get to continue it this year.

SL-? It is our hope that we will be able to add one more session to the SLD lineup. Please check the ATA site for updates.

SLD Administrator Nora Favorov can be reached at norafavorov@earthlink.net or 407-679-8151.

SLAVFILE

Newsletter of the Slavic Languages Division
of the American Translators Association
225 Reinke's Lane
Alexandria, VA 22314



Get Ready for
SLD Banquet 2002

Restaurant Amore

*Atlanta, Georgia
7 PM, Friday, November 8th
Featuring Music, Dancing
and a *праздничный стол*
With all the Frimmings*

\$40 price includes live entertainment, zakuski, entrée,
dessert, soft drinks, tea and coffee.

(A cash bar will be available.)

We'll have the place to ourselves and
transportation will be provided for approximately
\$10/person. Please send (ASAP!—we need a headcount)
a check for \$40 (made out Nora) to:

Nora Favorov
8364 Amber Oak Drive
Orlando, FL 32817

Questions? Contact her at norafavorov@earthlink.net or 407-679-8151.

