

FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS

Elena Bogdanovich

Jen Guernsey

As is often said, we have good news, and we have bad news. The bad news is that Joe Bayerl unfortunately was unable to complete his two-year term as administrator (see the minutes of the division meeting, page 5). The good news (at least, we hope you will view it as such) is that Assistant Administrator Elena Bogdanovich has volunteered to serve out the remainder of his term, and Jen Guernsey has volunteered to serve out Elena's term as assistant administrator. We both appreciate this opportunity and will do our best to serve you well throughout the coming year.

The conference in New Orleans was enjoyable and successful, and we hope that you all will enjoy reading reviews of the various SLD sessions in this and future editions of the *SlavFile*. In addition to our usual varied conference sessions, this year the SLD also offered a pre-conference seminar, "Torture the Translator," given by our Greiss lecturer, Mickey Berdy. Regretfully, a couple of the SLD's presentation slots went unfilled, stemming largely from confusion about how to categorize presentations that could fall under the SLD as well as another division. Therefore, one of our areas of focus in the coming months will be ensuring that we have sufficient presentation proposals to fill all of our slots and coordinating with ATA throughout the submission and review process to ensure that no proposals are miscategorized or rejected. To this end, Lydia Stone has volunteered to coordinate with Jiri Stejskal, who as ATA president-elect will be coordinating next year's conference. Elena will serve as point of contact for SLD members who wish to submit presentation proposals.

Of course, to have SLD sessions at the conference, we must have presenters, and that is where you all come in. Presentation proposals are due by March 9, 2007. To propose a presentation, go to atanet.org, click on the Conferences & Seminars tab and follow the link to a downloadable proposal form (choice of PDF or Word). New presenters, and presentations involving Slavic languages other than Russian (SLOTR), are especially encouraged. If you are considering presenting but are not sure, or if you would like more guidance in putting together your proposal and/or your presentation, please contact Elena, and she will help you.

Bear in mind that presentations need not be made solo. We have had numerous "presentation duets" lately—the

combinations of Tatiana Bystrova-McIntyre/Brian Baer and Lydia Stone/Vladimir Kovner come to mind. In addition, we have received some suggestions for future panel presentations. One suggestion was for a comparative linguistics session analyzing certain aspects across various Slavic languages. These aspects could be pretty much anything the panelists wish to tackle—renderings of specific phrases, troublesome terms, grammatical structure, to name just a few possibilities. A second proposed panel session concerns software—computer-assisted translation tools, OCR software, Cyrillic keyboard software, and the like. Panelists would discuss their experiences using various types of software, with emphasis on the software's competency with Cyrillic. If you might be able to contribute information and/or participate in either of these panels, please contact Elena or Jen at the coordinates on the masthead.

Also being planned for next year's conference in San Francisco are the Greiss speaker, the SLD dinner, and extracurricular activities. We invite suggestions for next year's Greiss lecturer. Concerning the SLD dinner, we are soliciting suggestions for a suitable venue. And regarding extra-

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curricular activities, we have received suggestions for field trips to one or more of the several large Russian bookstores in the area and to Defense Language Institute/Monterey Institute of International Studies. We are open to other ideas and would like to hear from anyone interested in helping to coordinate such activities.

In New Orleans, the discussion that had begun in previous years concerning organizing a mid-year SLD conference continued. This year, however, there was a new twist. Our Greiss lecturer, Mickey Berdy, suggested that both we and her Moscow translator colleagues would benefit from a joint conference in Moscow and offered to help coordinate such a venture. Our first step in pursuing either type of mid-year conference (stateside or in Russia) will be to gauge the level of interest among SLD members and to solicit input on timeframe, cost and so on.

To that end, we are preparing to launch another survey of the Division membership, similar to the one conducted by Nora Favorov several years ago, to which we received an impressive response. In addition to posing questions about possible mid-year conferences, we will solicit input on conference sessions and related activities for next year in San Francisco, as well as suggestions regarding *SlavFile* and the SLD in general. So stay tuned; it will be coming soon to an e-mail inbox near you.

We have a few last bits of information for you that we gleaned at the conference's Division Administrators Meeting. First, at the suggestion of our fellow division administrators, ATA Headquarters will be arranging for welcome letters to go out to new division members ("Hi, welcome to the SLD, here are the benefits of SLD membership..."). This does not affect most of you since you already are SLD members, but we thought you would like to know that this gap in our communications will in the future be filled.

Second, ATA Headquarters is planning to start a monthly e-mail that constitutes a compilation of brief updates regarding the goings-on in each division. Because of anti-spam regulations, ATA Headquarters is severely restricted in the number of broadcast e-mails it can send to its membership within a given time, hence the desire to combine the brief updates from all of the divisions into a single monthly e-mail.

That's all the news for now. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very happy and prosperous New Year!

**OFFERS OF WORK FROM EMPLOYERS
AND CLIENTS ARE PUBLISHED FREE**

БУРИМЕ

на ужине Славянской Дивизии АТА
New Orleans, November 3, 2006

Editors' note: We proudly present the latest annual burime (bouts rimés) composed by Vadim Khazin while the rest of us enjoyed ourselves at the Slavic Banquet during the most recent ATA Conference. As most of you know, Vadim composes in real time using rhymed pairs of words submitted by the assembled revelers. His works usually feature the theme of how happy we all are to be once again together and relaxing from the stresses and rigors of our shared passion and trade—translation and interpreting.

Приехали мы в Новый Орлеан,
И переводчиков немалый караван,
A very friendly Slavic ring,
Has come in here to eat and drink.
Здесь не висит над нами молоток,
Так что едим спокойно артишок,
We are not bothered here by prostitutes or pimps,
Instead we've met some tasty shrimps.
Или, по-русски, золотистые креветки,
Каких не нюхивали наши предки.
Ни одного здесь нет преступного квартета,
Вора в законе иль авторитета.
Не смотрим друг на друга мы здесь криво,
И с удовольствием здесь попиваем пиво,
А то и водочку, коньяк или вино –
Такое нынче получается кино.
И здесь никто не чинит нам помехи,
Чтоб вечер этот полон был потехи.
We will remember this city and parish
Where none of us was doomed to perish,
И не пролилась ничья здесь слеза,
И не разразилась над нами гроза,
And nobody managed to break or to rip
His or her colleague's arm, leg, skull or hip.
Всё потому, что мы ломаем шпаги
Только по поводу того, что на бумаге
Изобразим мы в результате перевода,
А в остальном мы просто пешеходы.
Nie mamy, mam nadzieję, mózgi ośle,
Klientom nie mówimy, by się poszli;
We love translating from language to language
And may survive on just a daily sandwich.

Часто приходится, увы, скакать по кочкам,
И доллары приходят к нам не в бочках,
And only when we feel at last
That on our brain there grows a crust,
We fall asleep and dream about a tree
To sit beneath and from translation flee.
Потом покажется тебе, что ты полковник,
Красавицы божественной любовник...
Но с неба станут сыпаться лягушки,
И ты поймёшь: закончились игрушки,
Пора вставать, садиться вновь на стул,
And keep translating if you're not a fool.
Тебе ведь не найдётся заменитель,
Слуга, помощник или заместитель.
But what if on the shore of a bayou
Захочешь сказать нежное «Люблю»?
I mean what if for someone you have hots,
Forgetting dishes, plates or humble pots?
You'll have to choose between professional devotion
And sudden, maybe genuine emotion...
But let us be, according to our trends,
Devoted colleagues and, I hope, close friends.
And if I something accidentally forgot,
That was because some beauties rendered me distraught.
I also hope that master poet Лида Stone
Will not have something heavy at me thrown.
На этом кончил буриме ваш друг Вадим;
Ну что, аплодисменты мне дадим?
Vadim Khazin

SUBMITTING PROPOSALS FOR NEXT YEAR'S CONFERENCE

Feeling some concern that, in 2006, there were a number of conference slots without an SLD presentation, we wrote to 2007 Conference Organizer Jiri Stejskal. He assured us that this was fortuitous and not the result of a policy to limit the number of slots available to smaller divisions. So, keep the proposals coming, and to ensure against being scheduled against other Slavists, please ask that your presentation be categorized as "Slavic." Jiri provided the following information: "Please note that in all likelihood we will not be offering 45-minute sessions, but will encourage panels with more presenters." If you would like to find someone to team up with in a panel presentation, the Yahoo Russian Translator's Club would be a good place to do so.

Some Thoughts on the Ukrainian Language: How Two People Can Speak Ukrainian, Yet Not Understand Each Other

Olga Collin, SlavFile Editor for Ukrainian

When I had just started to get involved with medical interpretation from/into Ukrainian, one of my colleagues tactfully inquired about my knowledge and understanding of the Polish language. Being new to the Ukrainian community in the Chicago area, I was somewhat surprised by this question. After all, my interpretation assignments were all from/into Ukrainian and not Polish. Soon enough I understood my well-meaning colleague.

Those of you who interpret at hospitals know that the majority of our clients are older, left Ukraine (or what was then the Soviet Union) many years ago and reside in Slavic language communities in the U.S. Naturally these people speak the language they brought with them from the areas where they lived in Ukraine. Their children grow up bilingual, using both the Ukrainian they learned from their parents and at local Ukrainian schools and English.

One of my first assignments happened to be for a woman who had left Ukraine 28 years ago. We greeted each other and exchanged some pleasantries. That was about the time I realized that this assignment would be rather difficult as I spoke literary Ukrainian (which she has difficulty understanding), while she addressed me in the language spoken by the Ukrainian diaspora, which is based primarily on the Galician dialect. Here I should mention that I am from the south of Ukraine, and the Ukrainian I grew up speaking is quite different from the language this patient used.

There is a historical as well as a geographical explanation of the phenomenon. Over the years various countries have called Ukrainian lands their own. Ukraine was divided into territories, which found themselves under the influence of different cultures and languages. Thus the western territories were very much affected by the Polish language. Some of the first documented contacts and language exchanges date as far back as the times of Kyivan Rus. Cultural exchange was bi-directional, and there are numerous Polish borrowings in the Ukrainian language, as well as many Ukrainian words that have entered Polish. As a result, the Ukrainian language gradually grew apart from other East Slavic languages, Russian in particular. Below are some examples of the Ukrainian language peculiarities typical for some Western parts of the country:

-usage of the word “правда” at the end of a sentence

Ця людина – твій знайомий, правда? (typical of Polish sentence structure, similar to the English isn't he/she?);

-reflexive “ся” in front of the verb

Щоби ся / сі не бояв (instead of “не боявся”) (from the song “Ой заграй ми, музиченьку”)

- words “газда” vs. “хазяїн” (typical for the South), greeting “Слава Ісусу!” vs. “Добрий день!”, “Як ся маєте? А як Ваш нецьо?”

Let's look at the southern and eastern parts of today's Ukraine. These are the areas where people want Russian to have the status of a second official language. Historically the Ukrainian and Russian languages coexisted here in close proximity. After 1654, the year Ukraine united with Russia, the two languages started to interact with even greater frequency. And while, during the 6th-7th centuries, both languages and cultures benefited from this exchange, starting in the 8th century, the process became predominantly one-sided, with Russian being the dominant language. Later this dominance intensified when a new “historical entity”—the Soviet people—was being created. Ukrainian, along with all the other national languages, impeded this grand creation. In the interest of Soviet national unity it was slated to be replaced with Russian. This plan was rather successful, as today thousands of people question their identity, culture and language.

It's said that the population of the southern and eastern regions uses a mix of the Ukrainian and Russian languages know as “surzhyk”. Such language pearls as “конечно” pronounced with a Ukrainian accent instead of “звичайно”; or “я рахую” instead of “я вважаю” (Russian “я считаю”) and many others are commonly used phrases. For more examples please listen to any of the earlier Verka Serdiuchka dialogs (can be found online).

Linguists distinguish between three different dialects of the Ukrainian language: northern, southwestern and south-eastern (see the map in Ukrainian: <http://litopys.org.ua/ukrmova/umi184.htm>). Today the majority of people across Ukraine understand the literary Ukrainian language (closest to the dialect spoken in central Ukraine, particularly in the Poltava area), the language of such prominent Ukrainian authors as Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, and Ivan Franko (although some of the words the latter used may have to be explained). On the everyday level, however, understanding may often be hampered by the vocabulary and pronunciation peculiar to one particular area.

The cultural and linguistic gap between the western and eastern parts of Ukraine has proved difficult to bridge. Those in western Ukraine accuse the easterners of having lost their language, assimilated Russian culture, and adopted a primitive mixture of Ukrainian and Russian (surzhyk). The other side returns the favor by making pretty much the same accusations regarding Polish. The language question has become a divisive political issue discussed in heated

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SLD MEETING MINUTES

New Orleans, LA
November 3, 2006

Assistant Administrator Elena Bogdanovich called the meeting to order. The agenda was distributed. Nora Favorov moved to approve the agenda, Nancy Luetzow seconded, and the motion to approve the agenda was passed.

Elena informed everyone that Joe Bayerl unfortunately had to resign from his position as administrator for personal reasons, and thus she was running the meeting in his stead. Nora announced that Elena has volunteered to serve as administrator for the rest of Joe's term until next year's elections, and that the SLD was seeking a volunteer to take Elena's place as assistant administrator. A call was issued for volunteers to take on the position of assistant administrator. Elena thanked Nora for her continued participation in and support of the Division. Boris Silverstein moved to thank Elena for stepping up to serve as administrator.

SlavFile Report – Lydia Stone

Lydia reported that four issues of *SlavFile* were published this year within a ten-month period, and thanked Christina Sever, Jen Guernsey, and Nora for their assistance. This year, the *SlavFile* was published only electronically, and there were difficulties getting ATA Headquarters to send out notices of the electronic publication in a timely manner.

Lydia requested more participation in *SlavFile* on the part of those who speak Slavic languages other than Russian (SLOTR). She noted that we have a Polish editor and a Ukrainian editor, and recently Stephen Dickey and his wife Janja Pavetić-Dickey have volunteered to serve as Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian editor. Lydia also mentioned that Division members and others can send SLOTR-related contributions directly to Lydia if there is no *SlavFile* editor for their particular language.

Lydia noted that she hopes to receive an article rebutting the tongue-in-cheek "Modest Proposal" article that appeared in the most recent issue of *SlavFile*. Additionally, she requested feedback on electronic vs. hard copy publication, as ATA headquarters may return to offering hard copy, but with a limited number of pages. Several of the members present spoke in favor of electronic copy over a limited-size hard copy. Lydia and Nora also reminded everyone that authors can earn continuing education points for submitting articles, even short ones.

Irina Knizhnik requested that Lydia continue her series of "funky, feisty" articles on adjectives; several other attendees agreed.

Lastly, Lydia requested feedback on *SlavFile* from the membership. She noted that she always responds to comments, but has been having some issues with her e-mail lately, so if a member contacts her but does not receive a response, s/he should contact Nora.

South Slavic Certification – Paula Gordon

Paula stated that certification for Croatian<>English is fully established, and members have taken exams in both directions (two have passed Croatian>English, while none has passed English>Croatian). While the Serbian workgroup to establish Serbian<>English certification has been formed, there has been no further movement forward. No Bosnian workgroup has yet been formed. A member in attendance inquired about Macedonian; Paula said she would help them start the process if they desired.

Ukrainian Certification – Vadim Khazin

Vadim noted that certification for English>Ukrainian has been fully established, and thanked Boris Silverstein, Irina Knizhnik, and Igor Vesler for their role in accomplishing this. Regarding Ukrainian>English, Vadim stated that there are a sufficient number of interested people, but potential graders are needed to move the process along. Members interested in serving as Ukrainian>English graders are asked to contact Vadim.

Web Site and Listserv – Nora Favorov

Nora noted that while there is an SLD forum available on the ATA website, no one uses it. Instead, Division members can associate through the Yahoo group established for that purpose. It was set up as invitation-only, which cannot be modified. Simply e-mail Nora to request an invitation.

Nora reported that Dina Tchikounova volunteered to rework the SLD website, and has recently done a lot of work on it, with much of the website being redesigned. She stated that Dina (dina@broadreach.biz) requests pictures to post on the site, and that she hopes to make the site more useful, with glossaries, links and so on.

Continuing Education – Boris Silversteyn

Elena Bogdanovich noted that soliciting volunteers for a continuing education program to create inexpensive opportunities to earn continuing education points was on the agenda. Boris Silversteyn, an SLD member who is an ATA board member, noted that now this sort of committee—called the Certification Maintenance Committee—exists at the ATA level. Boris noted that the committee has

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ATA Conference in New Orleans

SLD MEETING MINUTES

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been looking for ways to expand opportunities to earn points with minimal expense. Suggestions for continuing education opportunities should be sent to Corinne McKay (corinne@translatewrite.com). Lydia requested that members send ideas for creative and inexpensive ways to earn credit to her for publication in the SlavFile. If enough material is contributed, continuing education ideas could become a regular SlavFile feature. (It would be best if innovations were first checked with Terry Hanlen at ATA Headquarters to make sure that they are acceptable.) Elena referred the membership to the ATA Chronicle's regularly published information on the continuing education program.

Future Conferences – Elena Bogdanovich

Elena renewed discussion of a mid-year SLD conference. Mickey Berdy, our Greiss lecturer, had earlier suggested holding such a conference in Moscow to promote interaction with our Russian colleagues and offered to help coordinate such an activity. Nancy Luetzow suggested Chicago, which has a sizable Polish population, or other central location. Paula Gordon suggested collecting the e-mail addresses of those interested in a mid-year conference to promote communication on this topic, and a list was passed around and provided to Jen Guernsey.

Regarding next year's conference in San Francisco, Elena solicited suggestions for activities and the SLD dinner. Christina Sever suggested that the SLD organize a bookstore field trip to one of the large Russian/Slavic bookstores in the area (she noted that Globus, Znaniya, and Szwede's are in the area), as was done successfully at the last San Francisco conference. Elena Pick and Nancy Luetzow suggested a visit to the Monterey Institute and DLI the day before or the day after the conference. Lydia mentioned that SLD is seeking a newcomer coordinator for next year's conference, and requested that anyone interested in serving in that capacity contact Nora, Elena, or Lydia.

Christina Sever noted that there were fewer Slavic sessions this year and that it appeared that not as many were approved by ATA. She suggested that we find out why any sessions had been denied, and encourage more sessions.

Elena Bogdanovich adjourned the meeting.

[Subsequent to the meeting, Jen Guernsey volunteered to serve as assistant administrator.]

SLAVFILE RETURNS TO HARD COPY

After one year of permitting division newsletters to be published and distributed only electronically, ATA has decided to return to providing hard (paper) copies to those who so request on their registration forms. The rub is that this year no issue may be longer than 20 pages. Since over the years many of our issues have exceeded this limit, we may have to start a publication queue and hold anything we receive after our 20-page limit has been filled for the next issue. In addition, to save space we will begin publishing glossaries of substantial length in downloadable electronic form on our website, so they can be added to a terminology data base and searched in both directions on a translator's own computer. In addition, we have taken steps toward providing the glossaries published in past *SlavFile* issues in this form on the website. We are grateful to SLD member Howard Clark for suggesting this practice, which we hope will be useful to many of our readers.

Some Thoughts on the Ukrainian Language

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debates across the country. Today, this issue is still very much unresolved. But let us end on a hopeful note. Just a few days ago, I read about a civil movement in Ukraine called «Не будь байдужим» (“Don't be indifferent”). This movement was started by several prominent Ukrainian musicians who have asked every person in Kyiv to give a New Year's present to their country and learn/start to speak Ukrainian. They published a booklet with some success stories, resources and practical tips on how to switch to Ukrainian or how to become an active promoter of the Ukrainian language. Volunteers will distribute 5,000 free copies among the population of Kyiv in order to help those “who do not speak Ukrainian because nobody else around them does.” If you are interested in learning more about this initiative, please refer to the booklet link: <http://www.nbb.com.ua/fileadmin/files/final.pdf> (in Ukrainian).

And last but not least, I would like to ask all of you working with the Ukrainian language to give a New Year's present to the *SlavFile* and share your professional experience and interesting cases on its pages. We are all very busy, but it is certainly a great way of getting to know your fellow interpreters/translators and having your name and language pair(s) publicized. Contributions of any size as well as topic suggestions are greatly appreciated. Also if you have any questions, ideas or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at olgacollin@msn.com.

SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

ODDS AND ENDS, MAINLY ODDS

SIGN OF PROGRESS? PERHAPS NOT. For years I have considered it a minor mission to keep track of allusions to Russian literature and culture in the U.S. mass media. Recently in a comic strip with the euphonious title of “Zits,” whose protagonists are teenagers, a feckless but benign fellow with multiple piercings was in the school library searching for a particular long, serious novel with philosophical pretensions. Readers are clearly meant to be surprised and impressed at the hidden depths revealed in him. However, in the last panel it turns out that he is searching for this particular work to use as a pillow—since any work with fewer pages gives him a stiff neck while he naps through library period. Now, this is an old joke and in 95% of all previous occurrences the novel would be *War and Peace*, and in 4.9% of the rest something else by Tolstoy or perhaps Dostoevsky. However, in this case the book is a long novel by Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*. At first I took this as a sign of progress: the image of unreadability and sententiousness having shifted if not precisely to a non-Russian author at least to a novel written in English in the United States. However, further consideration caused me to wonder if this was simply a case of the cartoonist’s lack of certainty that his teenaged target audience had ever heard of Tolstoy.

Lest anyone believe that Russian culture is being slighted in our press, it behooves me to tell you that the heading of one of today’s editorials in the *Washington Post* is: *The Party of Nyet* (reference to Virginia’s Republicans). In addition, Nora Favorov has sent a *New Yorker* ad featuring those strange Russians (what exactly is the relationship between them, anyway?) who advertise Citibank credit card reward programs sitting on an airplane, the elder reading *War and Peace* (he seems to have read about 20 pages) and the younger holding a sign indicating the receipt of \$40 in reward points for purchasing “the longest book in print.” Certainly this last assertion is not even true. I wonder how many reward points one gets for reading it? How about reading it five times, four of them in Russian?

CAR (or at least license plate) TALK. Spotted in a parking lot: License plate: CD DOMA. A particularly apposite plate given that it was seen in Brooklyn, where the traffic is such that one’s most fervent wish is for everyone else to remain tranquilly within the confines of their own homes.

It saddens me to announce that my 19 year old car and the maiden bearer of the PEREVOD license plate has finally given up the ghost. Yesterday we finally found it a good home, so have freed up the plate to be transferred to my new vehicle (If anyone cares, a darling red Scion xB that looks as if it should be driven by Miss Priscilla Pig in a book for small children). My dilemma is that, completely by chance, the Virginia DMV issued the new car a plate start-

ing with the initials KEB. This was exactly my father’s pronunciation of his favorite mode of transportation (since he didn’t drive and my mother shouldn’t have driven), giving the plate true sentimental value. By the way, I suspect the syllable “KEB” would be heard incessantly on the streets of Brighton Beach were it not for the fact that the frugal residents all prefer to use a “карсервис.”

ON THE TRAIL OF THE WHITE SQUIRREL. In the last issue, I asked readers to help me settle a dispute I had had with my cousin Misha about whether the Russian name for squirrels (белка—seemingly derived from the word for white) indicated that at one time Russian squirrels were white. I am grateful to erudite SLD members Misha Ishenko and Elena McDonnell, who both sent me documentation for my affirmative position. A relevant quote comes from “Историко-этимологический словарь современного русского языка” П. Я. Черных, Москва, “Русский язык”, 1993. “В самом знаменитом этимологическом словаре русского языка Фасмера тоже говорится о “белой веверице”, которая упоминается в двух древнейших русских летописях X (!) века.” I guess sometimes words outlive species and sometimes vice versa. (My cousin says he doesn’t remember our dispute, which in no way detracts from my triumph.)

EMAIL ENVY. Some friends tell me they can eliminate virtually all of their SPAM and potentially virus-containing emails by simply deleting messages from senders with unfamiliar exotic names. How I envy them! You cannot do this if you are a translator, especially one active in a translators association, not to mention one who works with an organization dealing with post-Soviet Eurasia. If, in addition, you work with immigrants, you can certainly forget all about “name” profiling. Consider the two lists below. LIST A: Edsel Alvarez, Lemlem Msghana, Mugisho Bazibuhe, Sauyeh Jahann, Soledad Judge, Tsegezab Tesfay, the Zurschmeide Family. List B: Bannaker Kuffor, Desiree Padilla, Jummy Pilson, Maryanne Glusakk, Obenizzer Xashy, Santiago Morris. I challenge anyone to determine which is composed of our legitimate correspondents (clients, students, co-workers, etc.) and which comes from my deleted mail file of spammers. (No fair if you know my clients, or my spammers.)

Recently I answered an inquiry from one of my semiregular clients as to when I could get a particular job finished. I answered, “Thursday.” I soon received a return message that I read as HA, Thursday! Now I am not unaccustomed to clients reacting with rejection and scorn to my estimates of job completion times, but I was a little surprised that this client, who is unfailingly courteous would adopt such a tone. A minute later I realized that her e-mail headings were in Russian and she was simply replying to my message HA: Thursday.

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ХАЛАТНОСТЬ ПО-АМЕРИКАНСКИ. Shortly before Thanksgiving I was working in the kitchen in the early afternoon when I had to answer the doorbell. At that point I realized that I was still wearing the sweats I had slept in, which I had put on early the evening before. This in turn led me to decide that the wearing of sweats, at least in the daytime when not engaged in athletic endeavors, is analogous in tone and cultural significance to the wearing of the халат by Obolomov and others. Where then is the English equivalent of the wonderful word халатность? Can anyone think of or coin one?



RADICULITIS REVISITED. More than a year ago I regaled readers of this column with a tale of my aching back, the only redeeming feature of which (my tale as well as my tail) was that I ultimately was diagnosed as having radiculitis—a condition virtually no one has heard of in the U.S., and from which virtually every Russian of a certain age has suffered. I even had quite a sophisticated explanation as to why this should be the case. Now my consolation of having a Russian disease has been denied me. At a recent appointment my GP informed me that radiculitis is simply the technical name for what is commonly known as sciatica. She said it was surprising that the orthopedist had given me the former term rather than the latter. I can think of one explanation for this last fact—he was embarrassed to have ordered thousands of dollars of x-rays and wanted to have more to show for them than a diagnosis of the most common garden variety of back pain.

MORE ON THE LITERARY FRONT. I noticed that both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* included *Ab-surdistan* by Gary Steyngart as one of 2006’s notable books. I couldn’t bear to finish it. Perhaps I am turning into a fussy old lady (although I cannot remember thinking bad smells were amusing even in second grade), but just as I have little desire to be in proximity to unpleasant biological odors, grotesque overindulgence, and unattractive and unwashed body parts in the flesh (so to speak), I also like to keep my distance when they appear incessantly in print. We would be most willing to publish any dissenting comments or even a full review of this book.

В ЗАЩИТУ ДЕДА МОРОЗА

(А. Барто)

Мой брат (меня он перерос)
Доводит всех до слез.
Он мне сказал, что Дед Мороз
Совсем не Дед Мороз!

Он мне сказал:
-В него не верь! -
Но тут сама
Открылась дверь,

И вдруг я вижу -
Входит дед.
Он с бородой,
В тулуп одет,
Тулуп до самых пят!
Он говорит:
-А елка где?
А дети разве спят?

С большим серебряным мешком
Стоит, обсыпанный снежком,
В пушистой шапке дед.
А старший брат твердит тайком:
-Да это наш сосед!

Как ты не видишь: нос похож!
И руки, и спина! -
Я отвечаю: - Ну и что ж!
А ты на бабушку похож,
Но ты же не она!

IN DEFENSE OF SANTA CLAUS

A. Barto

Translated by L. Stone

By saying, “Santa isn’t real,
He’s just a myth, a lie!”
My brother thinks he’s some big deal.
He tries to make us cry.

“I can’t believe you didn’t know,”
Sarcastically he sighed.
Then we heard footsteps in the snow;
The door was opened wide.

And suddenly we both could see
A bearded man in red
Who asked: “Where is the Christmas tree?
Why aren’t you kids in bed?”

A round-faced guy, who glowed with cheer,
A bag slung on his back.
My brother whispered in my ear,
“It’s just our neighbor Jack!

He’s got our neighbor’s nose and hair.
His eyes, too, are the same.
I’d know this fellow anywhere
And Santa’s not his name.”

My answer put him in his place
For it was wise and true:
“They say that you have grandma’s face,
Yet no one thinks she’s you!”

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●
● A Poetic Translation for the ●
● Holiday Season (which will ●
● undoubtedly be over by the ●
● time this issue is distributed) ●
●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

Weekly Training Events: Teaching Translation and Interpreting Skills Online

Presentation by Elena Levintova Allison
of the Defense Language Institute
Reviewed By Nora Favorov

I have to admit that I attended this session primarily because I have known and respected its presenter for a number of years and not because I was particularly excited about its content, which I had only a hazy understanding of beforehand. The idea of using some sort of software to teach language skills sounded a bit dry and uninteresting. Although I could recall benefiting greatly from the language lab at my college when I was a beginning student of Russian, it was hard to conceive of an automated program that could benefit more advanced language learners.

Lena's presentation took place Saturday afternoon, when vendors were packing up their booths and conference attendees might have been out buying those last minute souvenirs or enjoying one last outing to the Café du Monde before leaving town. Nonetheless, the room was packed—and not just with us R-E-R translators and interpreters who know Lena, but with professionals from a wide variety of languages, particularly South- and East-Asian languages.

Weekly Training Events, it turns out, is a tool being developed at the Defense Language Institute to enable government linguists to make the most efficient use of the four hours allotted them each week to brush up on and improve their skills. It is a tool for a “motivated, self-guided learner.” The lessons would be “computer delivered” and provide an opportunity to practice reading, listening, and speaking. Currently, WTEs are being developed for Arabic, Chinese,

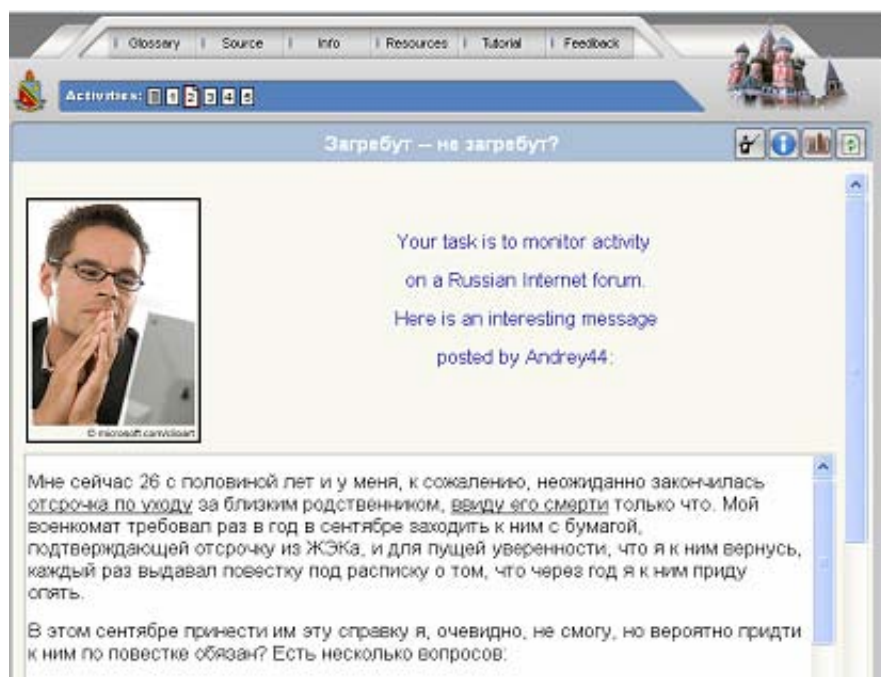
Korean, and Russian, with plans to add Dari, Hebrew, Hindi, and Sorani (a Kurdish dialect).

Lena demonstrated two Russian-language WTEs—one designed for teaching translation skills and the other for interpreting skills. The translation unit was entitled “Загребут — не загребут?” (Will he be nabbed?) and appeared to be taken from an actual Russian Internet forum. An introductory screen stated the objective (Practice translation skills working with messages posted on a Russian military Internet forum) and the tasks that would be performed:

1. Review vocabulary related to the military draft.
2. Do a quick sight translation of a forum query.
3. Full idiomatic translation of a lawyer's response to the forum query.
4. Give a full idiomatic translation of a colloquial response to the forum query.
5. Test your knowledge of vocabulary, structures, and culture related to this lesson.

When Lena started to run through the “event,” its value became immediately apparent. Learners were presented with actual, living, breathing, idiomatic Russian and a series of pop-up explanations to help them get through their tasks. Step 1, the vocabulary review, involved matching seven Russian words that would be coming up in the lesson to their English translations. For example, if you click on *военкомат* in the left column and then Military Recruitment Office in the right, you are rewarded

with a congratulatory pop-up window: *Точно! Военкомат -- это аббревиатура слов “Военный комиссариат”.* However, if after clicking on *уклонение* you select *Deferment*, you are advised: *Подумайте еще. “Уклонение” is a derivative of the verb уклоняться, which means “to dodge.”* Having seen the error of his way, a learner might then click on *Evasion* (*Правильно! Молодец.*), etc. Even during this fairly elementary exercise an experienced translator could learn a thing or two. (For example, I didn't know what the summons a draftee received was called until I was told, upon guessing the correct translation for *повестка*, that: *Правильно! Получил повестку—значит, надо идти в военкомат. Дело серьезное. Повестка – это официальный документ.*



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Weekly Training Events *Continued from page 9*

Now we are taken to the actual forum posting by a young participant going by the moniker “Andrey44.” His posting is filled with colloquial expressions and usages specific to his situation. Linguists are instructed to do a rough translation (перевод с листа) of his inquiry in a box provided at the bottom of the page and then compare their summary with one provided in the program. A glossary can be accessed if needed. The next task is to do a full idiomatic translation (a teaching note explains—in Russian—the difference between an idiomatic—литературный—and a literal—дословный—translation) of the response posted by a lawyer. (Учитывая то, как ведутся дела в военных комиссариатах, рекомендую туда не являться. Если пришлют повестку, тогда необходимо что-то предпринимать. Вариантов много. В случае необходимости обращайтесь в один из наших офисов.) Last, we have a posting from a fellow going by the moniker БЫВАЛЬИЙ (and a teacher’s note explaining the significance of this moniker). The learner is asked to do an idiomatic translation of this posting as well, and is reminded that this involves capturing not only meaning, but style. БЫВАЛЬИЙ had a pretty colorful, idiomatic style, so learners can surely have some fun with this.

The lesson ends with a little true/false (верно/неверно) quiz, my favorite question of which was: Мероприятие is a compound noun meaning literally *pleasant steps*. (Нет. Подумайте еще. “Мероприятие” is indeed a compound noun. But it may not have anything to do with pleasure. In fact, most of them are quite boring!)

The unit designed to teach interpreter skills is useful for anyone who has to produce and comprehend spoken Russian. The particular lesson Lena showed us had the colorful title, “Товарищ волк знает, кого кушать,” and dealt with an address by President Putin to the Federal Assembly, in which he uses a variation of this phrase while discussing Russia’s need to increase defense spending. Again, the tasks are spelled out from the beginning and follow more or less the same format as the lesson designed for translators:

1. Prepare for your interpretation tasks by reviewing some set phrases related to politics.
2. Capture implied content and explain the point of a joke.
3. Identify essential direct and implied elements of information while working with the Russian President’s speech.
4. Practice two-way interpretation in an interview between an American journalist and the Russian Duma representatives.
5. Test your understanding of the concepts presented in this lesson.

Before we are taken to the most challenging segment of the lesson (step 4), in addition to listening to an excerpt of Putin’s speech, we are provided the anecdote that is the source of the Comrade Wolf reference, and through a set of

военкомат	draft board; military registration and enlistment office
ЖЭК (жилищно-эксплуатационная контора)	Housing Department
загребут (Fut. 3-rd p. Pl. of загребать/загрести)	(they) will nab, catch; as in "The cops will nab him."
командировка	business trip
медкомиссия (медицинская+комиссия)	medical board
мероприятие	measure; step; event
отсрочка	deferment
повестка	summons
призыв	draft

multiple choice questions about the basic meaning of the tale, we come to understand its point.

I was very impressed by how the exercise took a very advanced task—the interpretation of very colloquial speech that incorporated subtle, culturally specific references—and walked the learner through the various difficulties inherent in it with a series of pop-up windows that could be ignored or used as needed. The type of cultural literacy the exercise instills is something akin to the Russian “small c” culture taught by Genevra Gerhart (SLD Greiss lecturer for 2003) in her books, *The Russian’s World* and *The Russian Context*. The task translators (and especially) interpreters face in keeping up with all the new usages, new cultural references, new news items, etc., is daunting, and working with a tool like the Weekly Training Events is a very effective way to broaden a linguist’s understanding of their source culture.

It seems to me that any motivated learner could benefit tremendously from lessons such as the ones presented here. They are very cleverly designed, appear to use a wide array of real-life written and spoken Russian (I have not seen, nor would I be able to evaluate lessons for the other languages), and have a very comfortable interface. It is encouraging to see that the U.S. government is putting so much thought and effort into training its linguists and breaking new pedagogical ground in the process.

Anyone interested in trying out the Russian lessons can write to elena.levintova@monterey.army.mil and request a beta-version CD.

LYING TO TELL THE TRUTH

Presentation by Anastasia Koralova

Reviewed by Vladimir Kovner

Anastasia Koralova's recent ATA conference presentation on translation of children's poetry was as interesting as it was unusual. It reminded me of a lecture delivered by a professor and authoritative literary critic analyzing a project for her students or, in our case, for a group of translators. The subject of this presentation was retaining the likeness between an original poem and its translation through a process that may involve various types of transformation, but which results in a translated poem with the mindset of the original and produces an analogous aesthetic or emotional effect on the reader. Koralova rejects the idea held by some translators that such a transformation cannot be analyzed because "inspiration cannot be dissected." I agree completely with this approach. Presumably each of us, when translating poetry, tries to create works that are as close as possible to the original in terms of meter, rhythm, form and meaning. Of course, all these components can be analyzed, and such analysis can become a powerful tool in a translator's hands. Among the tools for such analysis are: the peculiarities of our language systems, our cultural differences, differences in politics and literary traditions, and our respective national psychological perceptions of the world.

The particular poems Koralova chose to address in her presentation were written for children by Ann McGovern and translated into Russian by Ekaterina Monusova. "Although," says Koralova, "children's poems are written in a simple straightforward language, their simplicity doesn't make the translator's mission any easier." In her analysis Koralova attempted to determine whether or not the major transformations made by the translator were necessary; some of them are so drastic that they create the impression of sheer "lies," i.e., changes that are *seemingly* unnecessary. Yet, argues Koralova, these changes may result in a closer approximation of the truth.

A cat cried.	Плакала возле окошка
A cold thin cat	Худая замёрзшая кошка.
that could be a fat cat cried.	Я домой её принесла,
I took it home and gave it milk	Накормила, имя дала.
And called it mine.	Пусть живёт у нас – я решила...
My mother said no.	А мама не разрешила.

Here we encounter "lie" number one: a drastic change in the form of the poem. The translator has realized that the free verse in which most of this book is written would go against the grain of Russian verse-craft, and she chose to rhyme all the poems. This complete remolding quickens their pace, gives them a musical quality and poignancy. The presenter states that rhyme and rhythm seem to be *a must*

for Russian children's poetry. Listen to one of the best Russian children's poets and translators, Boris Zakhoder:

Без рифм, без ритма-
Пишут с детской верой,
Что это – белый стих.
А вдруг он – серый?

Actually I would put it slightly differently than Koralova: Rhyme and rhythm seem to be *a must* for both Russian and English children's poetry. After all, most of the most beloved English children's poets, for example, Robert Louis Stevenson, A.A. Milne, Ogden Nash, Dr. Seuss, Jack Prelutsky, and Shel Silverstein rhyme most of their verse. Of course, translation of rhymed poetry creates still another challenge for translators—how to preserve the meter of the original poetry.

Koralova provided more examples from this book to illustrate changes necessitated by poetic considerations, peculiarities of our language systems and cultural differences. This last embraces a wide range of things: our social and political structure, values, traditions, literary traditions... and even "gastronomic" preferences. For example, she discussed why the lines:

So I went to a party
and gave a present
and ate ice-cream.

were transformed by the translator into:

У подруги день рождения.
Я подарок принесла.
Ела вкусное варенье,
Чай с конфетами пила.

Tea and sweets are traditional Russian "goodies" at children's parties, but according to Russian belief, ice cream can provoke a sore throat, and some parents might be unhappy to have their children treated to ice cream. Such transformations of poems thus are not only justifiable but natural for a specific cultural reason.

Koralova went on to talk about the "lies" determined by *Russian* norms for this particular genre—children's poetry. She offered some very witty reflections on translation of an ailing boy's complaints:

And Mom has a headache.
(Sshh. You must be quiet.)
I don't care. –

as *И у мамы какой-то «мигрень»*,

Koralova argued that the translator has a specific purpose in opting for the medical term "migraine," hardly familiar to a little child. To emphasize this she has the "child" refer to it in the wrong grammatical gender. Then she omitted the words: "I don't care." All these changes ensure that

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LYING TO TELL THE TRUTH *Continued from page 11*

we see the boy not as a selfish child, but as an ailing and bored one who is simply grumpy and does not understand the situation clearly. Russian children's literature is highly moralistic and tends to have a strong didactic message. A child speaking selfishly about his mother's headache is not an acceptable poetic hero.

To meet the genre requirements in Russian, the translator of this book had to deviate from the "truth" more than once.

"Shut up," I said. "I'll hit you on the head. I'll throw you on the ground. I don't want you around. You're a bad, bad doll."	Я с тобою не играю! Я тебя поставлю в угол. Ты противная, Плохая, Хуже всех на свете кукол!
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The girl in the Russian poem is also angry at her doll, but her threats to punish it are different from those of her American counterpart. This can be explained by the requirements of the Russian genre, which focus on setting good examples and therefore forbid any kind of violence. The translator shuns anything that might be considered a potentially bad influence on children.

Using some more examples Koralova justified a number of such "intentional lies" as being grounded not in hypocrisy, but rather in a well-established literary tradition welcomed by the entire Russian reading public. Generally speaking, I agree this is a correct statement, but nevertheless I disagree with this latter practice. In my view it is hypocritical to pretend that we live in Victorian times. Every day kids watch ugly violent monsters in their cartoons, fight endlessly in between their classes, and then may be expected to listen to some saccharine lines of politically correct poems. That is why I like the "грубоватые" but honest poems by Jack Prelutsky I am translating, which have no didactic messages.

<i>I'm disgusted with my brother</i> I'm disgusted with my brother I am positively sore, I have never been so angry With a human being before. He's everything detestable That's spelled from A through Z. He deserves to be the target Of a ten-pound bumblebee... and so on.	<i>У меня отвратительный брат</i> Мой братишка – не подарок! Я ужасно раздражён. Никогда я так не злился. Ух, какой отвратный он! Он противней всех противных Всех, всех, всех – от А до Я. Хорошо б его ужалил Шмель, огромный, как свинья...
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Everyone knows that kids will always be kids--not angels! For all anyone knows it may be even more beneficial to children psychologically and behaviorally to learn through poetry that they are not the only ones who have "socially unacceptable" feelings and thoughts.

Koralova's presentation was both very interesting and useful for those of us who translate poetry. She touched upon some types of changes made in the process of translating sample children's poems, changes that made those poems more readable and appealing to an audience of Russian children. She clearly and convincingly explained the rather drastic changes (not "lies") that were called for by structural differences between the two languages (grammar and lexis), cultural differences, and the specific values and requirements of the genre.

I'd like to add some of my own thoughts on this subject. There is one component important for any translation that Koralova did not discuss—retaining the voice of the author. And I can understand why she did not in this presentation. She was analyzing the translation of what I consider less than first-rate poetry (although she refused to judge its quality), where changes in the resulting poem could well lead to improvements over the original. But the importance of saving the voice of the author would be much greater when dealing with works of good poets. I recall a well known epigram:

При всём при том, при всём при том,
При всём при том, при этом
Маршак остался Маршаком,
А Роберт Бёрнс - поэтом.

Certainly, this epigram is cruel and unfair but it has an element of truth. Sometimes the giants of the Russian school of translation (both of poetry in general and children's poetry in particular), Marshak and Chukovsky, enjoying their poetic freedom, completely forgot about the voice of the author. Regardless of this, their contribution to children's poetry has made them unshakable idols of Russian literary critics. One of them, M. Yasnov, writes: "Both these great writers urge translators to create poetry that is rich in sound, clearly understandable and easy to remember; they prefer free retelling to literal translating, **and** insist on equivalent substitution of images and subordination of rhythm and wording to the objectives of the original poems." Boris Zakhoder says the same thing in fewer words:

Конечно, Это вольный перевод! Поэзия В неволе не живёт...
--

Of course, This translation is free. Without freedom No poem can be!

Thus their underlying message is that poetic freedom is the most critical thing!

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Translating “Old Mother Hubbard,” Marshak sacrifices style, wording and the meaning of the original poem. The original is a pure nonsense poem where the dog behaves like a human being. In Marshak’s “Белый пудель,” which is a good poem in itself, most of the time the dog behaves like a normal dog.

She went to the fruiterer’s To buy him some fruit; But when she came back He was playing the flute.	Искала старушка Четырнадцать дней, А пудель по комнате Бегал за ней...
--	---

She went to the tailor’s To buy him a coat; But when she came back He was riding a goat.	Смотала старушка Клубок для чулок, А пудель тихонько Клубок уволок.
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..... <i>Mother Goose</i> <i>Маршак</i>
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Here is another example, this time of Chukovsky using his poetic freedom:

There was a crooked man, and he walked a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile;
He bought a crooked cat, which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.

Mother Goose

Скрюченная Песня

Жил на свете человек,
Скрюченные ножки,
И гулял он целый век
По скрюченной дорожке.
А за скрюченной рекой
В скрюченном домишке
Жили летом и зимой
Скрюченные мышки.

И стояли у ворот
Скрюченные ёлки,
Там гуляли без забот
Скрюченные волки,
.....

This is a wonderful poem for children inspired by the original, a clever variation on the theme of the word “скрюченный.” It could be argued that the ordinary reader (especially a child) experiencing aesthetic pleasure while reading a piece of good poetry doesn’t care whether it is a good and faithful translation or a good new poem inspired by the original. This is true, but then why should we call it a translation?

Why did these “giants” deviate from the “truth” so much? The simplest answer is: Because they could! Nobody could criticize them. The second answer may sound shocking: Possibly because they didn’t take children’s poetry very seriously. It is well known that Zakhoder complained many times that he was sick and tired of being called “a children’s poet,” as if this were less than respectable.

It would be very interesting to hear from a skillful literary critic such as Anastasia Korolova what she thinks about the “lies” (in my perception) of the classics of Russian poetry and of the founding fathers of the Russian school of translation.

Vladimir Kovner was born in Leningrad and worked for many years as an engineer for the U.S. automotive industry. He is currently collaborating on a book for which he has translated numerous English children’s poetry classics into Russian. Some of his translations have appeared in the SlavFile.

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RUSSIAN FREEBIES

Brian James Baer has kindly provided the *SlavFile* with a review copy of Volume 8 of *Ohio Slavic Papers: Translating Russia: From Theory to Practice*, of which he is the editor. This approximately 200-page publication contains ten articles under three rubrics: “Translating Culture,” “Beyond Semantics,” and “Contexts in Translation.” Notable articles include: “Terminology and Ideology: Translating Russian Political Language” by Lynn Visson; “Marks of Punctuation as False Grammatical Cognates” by Marian Schwartz; and “Between Norms and Style: Using Corpora to Understand Punctuation Use in Russian and English” by Tatyana Bystrova-McIntyre. If you would like to review some or all of the articles in this volume briefly or one in greater depth and promise to do so for the spring or summer issue of *SlavFile*, write to Lydia at lydiastone@verizon.net.

In addition, I (Lydia) recently acquired the highly acclaimed new Pevear and Volokhonsky translation of Anna Karenina. I had been planning on digging out the original and various earlier translations and picking a particular passage to use in comparing the translations. Indeed, I might well eventually get around to doing so. However, if anyone would like to beat me to the punch and write such an analysis for the SlavFile, I would be glad to send the book. Write to me at the e-mail address in the above paragraph.

A Few Thoughts on my First Conference

By Lucy Gunderson

Editors' note: We are delighted to announce that Lucy Gunderson has agreed to be the "newcomer coordinator" for next year's conference. Contact her at the address below with suggestions and concerns about making conferences as comfortable as possible for newcomers.

I thought of starting this article dramatically by comparing my fear of my first ATA annual conference to my fear of being lost in a Louisiana swamp. In truth, however, I was so pleased to be getting away from work and—dare I admit—family, that my apprehension was overcome by relief, as well as by anticipation of learning more about the profession of translating.

Nevertheless, I can pinpoint the sources of my underlying uneasiness. I have been an active member of the ATA since 2002, so I was well acquainted with the names of SLD members, but not the faces. Nora Favorov, Lydia Razran Stone, Vadim Khazin... I felt as nervous before meeting them as one might feel before meeting a гламурный* celebrity. Would these names accept me, accent and all? This groundless fear evaporated when the faces belonging to these names greeted me warmly before the welcome reception.

Another source of anxiety was the job marketplace. My многоходовка* game plan proved worthless. Agency representatives were thoroughly approachable and knowledgeable (and hopefully interested). No one bit off my extended hand like an alligator in a swamp would have done.

Agencies understand that the interesting thing about translators is that we come with all sorts of different knowledge. So a newcomer to the profession may have a strong background in an area that a more accomplished translator may not know anything about. We all have unique experiences that we can use to benefit the profession as a whole.

So to those who may have the pre-first-conference jitters, I—who am quite shy—say, Have no fear! Everyone from people at breakfast to heads of large agencies understands how you feel and tries to put you at ease.

I was not, however, dreading learning more about the profession in general and Russian translation in particular. The best lesson that I took from the conference is that translation is a free process that should not be confined to the mechanical reproduction of words. The авторитет* Michele Berdy drove home the point that a translation is meant for an audience and that if it does not reach that audience, then it has failed as a translation. This idea is extremely liberating and has already helped me in my own work.

On a more practical note, the best advice I can offer to a

conference newcomer regards all the papers one accumulates in the course of a day. I spent a few minutes every evening going through these papers and discarding those that I knew I would never need again, like invitations to attend various events and lists of daily schedule changes. This way, I had an organized stack of business cards and brochures to go through when I got home. I was able to attack the task of following up with contacts much more efficiently than I would have had I been swamped with papers.

The only regret I have about the conference is that I did not see more of New Orleans. I had meant to go on a tour, but in the end I couldn't find a block of free time to do so. At future conferences, I will try to arrive a little early or stay a little later so I can soak up the local atmosphere. I did enjoy what I did see of the city, but I have to say that I felt that prices were a little high (this coming from a lifelong New Yorker). ATA should be applauded for keeping its commitment to New Orleans after Katrina, and I felt that the hotel could have been more appreciative.

Actually, there's one more regret: that I waited so long to attend an annual conference. I would encourage those who feel hesitant about participating to travel to San Francisco next year. After just four days surrounded by translators, I feel that I have a deeper understanding of the profession, and I am much more involved in it than I was before the conference.

My personal goal for the conference was to overcome my shyness and get to know as many people as possible. I am pleased to say that I achieved this goal and was able to make many friends and contacts who will help me professionally. I also wanted to overcome my irrational aversion to Trados, which I did by signing up for the SDL Trados certification program. It remains to be seen how that will go.

So, if I had to sum up the conference in two words, I would say, Slam dunk!** The organizers certainly hit a home run** for our team** of translators.

*Terms discussed by Michele Berdy at her preconference workshop.

**Terms discussed by Kovner and Stone at their presentation on sports idioms.

Lucy Gunderson is an ATA certified Russian to English translator based in New York City specializing in journalism, business and law enforcement. She lived in Russia for four years in the 1990s. During this time, she studied, translated and taught. After receiving a BA in Russian Studies from Connecticut College, she went on to receive an MA in Russian Language and Literature from SUNY Albany and a Certificate in Translation Studies from the University of Chicago. She may be reached at: russophile@earthlink.net.

Translation of English Language Advertising Materials: Use of Adoptions and Their Grammatical Assimilation in Russian

Presentation by Elena McGivern

Reviewed by Yuliya Cloud

Elena McGivern's presentation on the translation of English-language advertising materials was one of the most lively lectures of the conference in New Orleans and captured the attention of the audience. Elena McGivern is an interpreter and a translator who moved to the U.S. a few years ago after graduating from the Languages and Interpreter Academy in Munich and working in the EU. Not everyone has the courage to give a presentation at their first ATA conference.

One of the "trickier" aspects of translating advertisements is—in addition to getting the translation right—adapting it to the target audience. Experience has shown that product features or claims that are a plus in one culture may be perceived differently by the other. Elena gave the example of an advertisement for lubricants for an aluminum factory that said that "this product withstands a wide range of temperatures," emphasizing its suitability for use in very hot temperatures. However, to potential buyers planning to use it in a factory in Siberia that is not heated during the winter, this emphasis leaves open the question of whether or not it will work in conditions of extreme cold. In a case like this, a translation that clarified and even emphasized this originally neglected point would be optimal.

The Russian advertising market, according to the Annual Russian Advertising Exhibition (Всероссийская рекламная выставка), is growing at an astonishing rate. Among European cities, Moscow holds third place in the amount of advertising on its streets, after London and Paris. However in Russia, advertising is seen as a major irritant and gives rise to anger, even in its target audience. According to some, the reason is the fact that simply translating foreign commercials without any adaptation to the Russian market simply does not work, yet this remains the prevalent technique used by advertisers. The biggest advertising category is cosmetics, accounting for 17% of advertisements, followed by beer, with 8.7%, and then by such products as household items, chemicals, drugs, etc.

It is relevant here that the Russian language spoken and used in Russia is often quite different from that used in the U.S., and this is certainly the case when it comes to language used in commercials on the Russian channels in the U.S. Words like "benefit," "appointment," "application," "lawyer," "food stamps," "brand," "sale," "tax," "insurance," etc., do not seem to have found a clear Russian translation and are now widely used by Russian speakers and on Russian TV in the U.S. That, however, doesn't help the translator for the Russian market. If anything, it makes our job harder.

Elena described one of the popular techniques used in the translation of advertising material, called *intimization*—using a "familiar" form of address in order to create a friendly atmosphere.

Example: Все в восторге от тебя, а ты от Maybelline.

Here it must be noted that while it may be acceptable to use this technique in the translation of advertisements for household detergent or cosmetics, it should be avoided in translation of an advertisement for a brand of steel. Translators for the Russian market should also be aware that it is always preferable to avoid words with negative connotations, even if the advertisement describes a problem that will be solved by using their product. For example, "removes dirt" might be translated as "очищает от жира," rather than "от грязи," since that would create a negative psychological mood.

Advertising text undoubtedly influences the evolution of language. By its nature, it has to have dynamic flow and sound convincing. At times this may involve creating new words or expressions and introducing them to the language.

E.g., Семьи Hi-Tech выбирают Chevy.

Действие нон-стоп!

But one has to be careful about using words borrowed from English. Elena gave the example of the term that has become common for disposable diapers: *Памперс* (*Pampers*). Obviously, this would not be a suitable word to use in an ad for one of Pampers' competitors.

Another aspect of advertising that causes extra work for translators is the use of proper names of organizations, people, institutions, hotels, etc., under the assumption that everyone knows who or what is being mentioned and considers it prestigious. An example of this might be stating that Tiger Woods eats 5 servings of cereal a day.

Although known to everyone in the U.S., this name will most likely not be known to the majority of the target audience in Russia and thus cannot have the desired effect. Here the translator will have to find an equivalent solution for the local market.

Translators also have to contend with more universal expressions like "this tooth whitener will give you a Hollywood smile," as well as famous quotations and allusions that evoke the history of a country, for example, "United we stand" (Abraham Lincoln), or "I Have a Dream" (Martin Luther King), Old Glory, Stars and Stripes, etc.

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A New Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Column

Stephen M. Dickey and Janja Pavetić-Dickey

From Stephen: After recently seeing the request for a Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian editor in the Fall 2006 issue of *SlavFile*, I suggested to my wife Janja that we take this responsibility on to fill the need for representation of Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (hence BCS) in *SlavFile*. (Though in the past I have not been a member of the ATA, I have followed *SlavFile* attentively through Janja's membership.) Due to the violent breakup of Yugoslavia and the subsequent resettlement of refugees into the United States and Canada, the need for BCS translation and interpretation in this continent is now much greater than it was before the 1990s. Thus, there is a real need for a forum for BCS translation issues to be addressed.

My wife Janja and I have been active translators both separately and together for a number of years. Though I have followed an academic track and am currently Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Kansas, I have worked extensively as a translator of BCS and German. I started learning BCS while studying in Germany in 1989 and got involved in translation by what one might call "literary necessity." While in Germany, I read a German translation of Meša Selimović's *Derviš i smrt* (*Death and the Dervish*), and upon my return home I found to my surprise that this stunning novel had not been translated into English. I decided at once that one of my main goals would be to translate it at some point, when my BCS was good enough to translate the original. A few years later while at Indiana University, Bogdan Rakić (then a visiting professor) and I applied for an NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) translations grant to translate it, which we received, and the translation was published by Northwestern University Press in 1996. Since then I have translated Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian prose and poetry, including Borislav Pekić's *How to Quiet a Vampire* (*Kako upokojiti vampira*, Northwestern 2005).

It was largely on the basis of the *Death and the Dervish* that I was hired by the ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) in The Hague as a reviser and translator in 1997; my experience admittedly did not make me particularly suited for legal, military and medical translation, but at the time the ICTY was desperate for native speakers of English who knew BCS well and who had some knowledge of Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia, and I did have those qualifications. Once in the ICTY, I rapidly gained experience in such professional translation and revision, with a high standard of precision due to the courtroom use and international significance of the material. I worked a few stints at the ICTY and then decided that, no matter how interesting that work was, my heart was really in Slavic linguistics, so I returned to academia. Since then I have translated Pekić's *How to Quiet a Vampire* as well as various small projects and assisted Janja in some larger projects as needed. I should say that I think our combined

qualifications make for an excellent translation team, and without further ado I will let Janja tell her story.

From Janja: As is the case with many translators and interpreters, my language "career" began in my family. I grew up with a grandmother who spoke fluent German, Italian, Slovenian and Croatian until the day she died at the age of 99. A Slovenian native, she was born under the Austro-Hungarian monarchy to a father who worked as a civil engineer for the army. She and her family moved many times, which is how she learned so many different languages, which she also ended up teaching later on in her life. However, her real vocation was gymnastics, so at the age of 20, she moved to Croatia where she got a job as a gymnastics teacher, married my grandfather, and started a family. When some 50-odd years later I was born, little did either of us know what a profound impact her migratory life and love of languages would have on my own life and career.

I was born and raised in Croatia, where I earned a BA in German and English with translation from the University of Zagreb. During my studies, I spent extended periods of time in the UK and Germany, where I was the recipient of several academic exchange scholarships. In spite of my avid interest in foreign languages, I would not say that I chose to be a translator or interpreter consciously—it was more a case of being thrust into it. My first translation and interpretation jobs came through my university professors, who thought that I was good at it and got me involved in projects they were working on. Also, at that time, my country was embroiled in a bloody ethnic war, and the need for interpreters was great. Thus, it was at the recommendation of one of my professors that I was tested and selected as one of the 10 interpreters assisting the UN Bassiouni Commission of Experts investigating violations of humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia in 1993. I traveled with teams of legal experts throughout Croatia and Bosnia and interpreted at interviews of victims and potential witnesses of war crimes. I will never forget my first interview, which took place after nightfall in a shipping container in the UN compound, hidden from everybody's eyes. The victim was a young woman who had been raped. At her request, the interview began late in the evening after everyone had gone to bed and lasted until well after midnight. Needless to say, I was completely heartbroken at the end of it. If before this interview there had been any doubt in my mind as to whether I wanted to become an interpreter and translator, afterwards there was none at all. It was at this point that I realized for the first time how important the role of an interpreter/translator is—without us, the stories of people such as that unforgettable young woman with dreams similar to my own, would never be told.

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A New Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian Column

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Other interpreting assignments followed. In 1994 I was recruited by the UN ICTY to work as a field interpreter for investigation teams interviewing war crimes victims in Bosnia, Croatia, Germany and other European countries. My interpreting skills were thus honed in the field. Then, after two-and-a-half years of living out of a suitcase, I took the UN translation exam for what became known as BCS and English, and was offered a position as a staff translator and interpreter at the ICTY. During my six-year tenure with the Tribunal, I interpreted at high-level meetings between the officers of the Tribunal and the defense counsel for the accused, translated thousands upon thousands of pages of mostly legal, military and medical documents to be used as evidence in court, and compiled specialized glossaries for the use of other translators. I was also regularly asked to translate from German and also Dutch (which I learned while living and working in The Netherlands) into English. These translations provided a welcome respite from the often monotonous and depressing content of court materials, while at the same time enabling me to practice my German and Dutch translation skills. Another welcome distraction was the MA in English literature that I completed at the University of Leiden, spending one semester at the College of William & Mary in the U.S. on a College of Liberal Arts scholarship.

It was this brief return to the groves of academia, and the fact that my husband, whom I met while working at the Tribunal, was offered a teaching position in the Slavic Department at the University of Kansas, that finally brought me to the U.S. three years ago. We have since been living in Lawrence, Kansas, where my husband teaches BCS and I am completing a PhD program in American Studies. Six months ago we were blessed with the birth of a son, and are currently eagerly awaiting his first words, wondering whether they will be spoken in Croatian or English. Since my arrival in this country, my work has mostly been involved with the courts, government agencies and the medical field. Both alone and with my husband, I have provided language consulting and translation services for various academic journals and university departments. For me, the switch from being an in-house interpreter/translator to being a freelancer was easier than I thought it would be. This is primarily due to two things: 1) My membership in the ATA and its local chapter MICATA, which provided me with an opportunity to network with a remarkable group of language professionals eager to offer advice and assistance; 2) The ATA certification exam, which I took as soon as it was offered. Despite the formal qualifications I already possessed, I believed the exam was an important element of professional development, as well as a way of showing gratitude to all the people who worked hard on getting it established. I felt extremely fortunate to be able to benefit from this opportunity and am still humbled by Paula Gordon's enthusiasm, energy and continuous efforts to make South Slavic languages more prominent in the ATA.

While we each have considerable experience working with all three of the languages that have come to be collectively known in professional circles as BCS, we are very aware that the current tripartite division of what was administratively considered one language in Yugoslavia can present translators with a host of challenges (and despite all the efforts to establish standards for each of these languages, the three languages are still very much in flux). It is quite difficult for any single person to stay simultaneously abreast of the linguistic trends in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia. However, as language professionals, we have a responsibility to do so. My husband and I keep in close contact with linguists in all three countries and regularly bring home boxes filled with books when we visit in the summer. Many of you surely do the same. We hope that this column will be an additional source of information for all of you who are working with these languages. We would like it to be a welcoming forum for addressing (or beginning to address) some of the questions we all encounter in our jobs as translators, interpreters and editors of BCS.

At the moment this goes to print, there are 50 translators listed for CRO>ENG and SER>ENG, and 31 for BOS>ENG in the ATA online directory. In the other direction, there are 26 listed for CRO, 25 for BOS and 24 for SER. This is a sizeable community, and there must be problems and issues each of you tackle on your own that other members would be interested in hearing about. To this end, we would be delighted to hear from you. To begin the conversation, we invite you to propose a "catchy" name for our column. Feel free to email us your suggestions for this (or about anything else) at smd@ku.edu and/or jpdickey@ku.edu. Likewise, we welcome essays, reviews or other pieces for publication in this forum. And if there is enough interest, perhaps a BCS conference session could be organized for the annual ATA convention.

Translation of English Language Advertising

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According to Elena, the key to the translation of advertisements is remembering to be creative and take into consideration the medium in which your copy will be presented—in text or audio—never losing sight of the purpose of persuading people to buy something. If all else fails, it is useful to remember that humor will often be the best option.

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POLISH MISCELLANY

Genowefa Legowski
SlavFile Editor for Polish

NEW ORLEANS

It was an eerie feeling getting out of the plane in New Orleans, almost like stepping on hallowed ground. Walking the streets freely and seeing life going on as usual (at least in the areas I saw) was somewhat surprising. Sometimes I felt as if there was a big, green monster waiting for me around the next corner. I ate beignets in Café du Monde, then felt guilty. So much pain and destruction had befallen this city and its people and here I was doing something so trivial. In moments like this it helps to remember the good capitalist factor—money—for the people of New Orleans are helped when tourists spend money here, even by buying a basket of beignets.

The ATA Conference went well, I think. I do have to admit I did not find as many interesting lectures as at previous conferences. This year, I never found myself having to choose between sessions that seemed equally interesting to me. There was even one lecture I left after 15 minutes; the guy was blabbing incoherently, but seemed very pleased with himself all the same.

One of the Russian translators asked me an interesting question. “So, what do the other (not Russian) members of the Slavic Division do at the conference, since almost all the Slavic Division sessions are devoted exclusively to Russian?” Obviously I can only answer this question for myself: I go to non-language-specific sessions that I think may be of educational benefit for me. I’m not that great with computers, so I’ll go to any lecture that may help me to conquer the beast. Also, these days I’m focusing more on editing, so I always try to find something in this area. Visiting the exhibition hall also takes a considerable amount of time. This year I was trying to figure out which CAT tool would be the best for me, so I tried to talk to as many “technical” people as possible. However, the best aspect of the conference is that it provides endless opportunities to meet interesting people from all over the world. Sometimes one can learn something really valuable during a short breakfast conversation. It would be really great though if we could manage to organize some informative sessions focused on Polish at each conference. I know for a fact that those evaluating proposals for lectures are positively inclined toward approving SLD sessions for languages other than Russian. But they have to receive something to evaluate. I know there are many great Polish translators out there. Everybody is busy, but let’s think about what we can share with our fellow translators. Let’s see if we can manage to organize a Polish session for San Francisco.

TŁUMACZENIE – PRZEKŁADANIE (TRANSLATION – TRANSLATION)

Rereading the speech by Kapuściński (“The Translator, a Prominent Figure of the Twenty-First Century,” *SlavFile*, Spring 2006, full Polish text published under the title “Tłumacz – postać XXI wieku” in *Gazeta Wyborcza*,

June 4-5, 2005), I was reminded that two words exist in the Polish language to describe the process of translation: “tłumaczenie” and “przekładanie.” The latter was always used as the more “noble” word, usually describing literary translations. It appears that today this word is slowly giving way to “tłumaczenie.” With increasing frequency one can see “tłumaczenie” instead of “przekład,” or “tłumaczył/ła” instead of “przełożył/przełożyła” on the title pages of translated books, including literary ones. It is interesting that the words have different root meanings: the noun “tłumaczenie” comes from the verb “tłumaczyć”—“to explain.” “Przekładanie” also describes the process of transferring things from one place to another; the verb “przełożyć” means “to reschedule a time for something.” It is also used to describe placing layers of different substances on top of each other, e.g., for a cake. One way or the other, all of this relates to the process of translation, don’t you think? The noun “przekład,” though, is used only to describe the finished product of a translator’s work, a literary text that has been translated.

LINGUISTIC TIDBITS

One of the non-native Polish speakers on the ProZ forum asked for help with translating the phrase “poczta sztandarowa.” If you did not know the whole sentence, the only way you could understand this term is that somebody is talking about an exemplary post office, the pride of a postal district or even the whole region. Here is the text in which this phrase appeared: “...uczestniczyli w uroczystości otwarcia budowy muzeum m.in poczty sztandarowe organizacji i stowarzyszeń.” (...among others, **color guards** of organizations and associations participated in the ceremony of starting the building of the museum.) Our colleague incorrectly assumed that the singular form of the phrase “poczty sztandarowe,” would be “poczta sztandarowa,” whereas it should be “poczet sztandarowy,” and that means “color guard.”

A young and ambitious member of my family from Poland, Asia, sometimes sends me outrageous examples of attempts at translations. For this article I picked out “Take cover,” translated in a very popular American movie as: “Wyjdźcie z ukrycia,” which is the total opposite of the English. It should be “Kryjcie się!” Asia hated the translation of the Harry Potter books so much that she read them in English with the help of dictionaries. When she started this, she was a junior high student, far from being fluent in English. This dislike of the Polish translation of her favorite books made her work harder on her English. This is one interesting, I’m sure unintended, result of one translator’s work.

All the editors of *SlavFile* would welcome submissions of articles relating to the Polish language.