

Liebe GLD-Mitglieder! Dear GLD Members!

by Ruth A. Gentes Krawczyk, GLD Administrator

As much as I would like to feel I could address you all in perfect German, I think I will have a better chance at 'perfect' English, and so English it will be. It was so good to meet up with so many of you once again at the ATA Annual Conference, this past year in Orlando. And once again, there was the opportunity to put new faces with names from the GLD list! For instance, Ute Kegel and Judy Jenner! After each Annual Conference there are always a few more people I can picture in my head as I see their posts on the list. I only wish more people would participate in the listserv! I can honestly say I don't know what I would do without it and all of you! Our annual social hour was held at the conference hotel again, this year outside thanks to the delightful Florida weather. Attendance was good, and people expressed their appreciation for having no limit to the number allowed to attend (unlike in San Francisco). However, there were limits to the selection of food with a corresponding high price, so once again we will be looking for a different venue for next year in New York City where the options will likely be much more numerous. Our annual meeting was very well attended, and there was brisk discussion about the possibilities for next year's conference, as well as options for next year's social event. There was even the possibility of a mid-year GLD conference aired, and a committee has formed to pursue the idea. The election results were announced where I was voted Division Administrator by general acclamation (for which I humbly thank you all!) and Eva Stabenow was elected as my assistant, or as my predecessor Frieda Ruppenner-Lind always liked to say, my co-administrator. Speaking of Frieda, she had completed her second term, and was warmly toasted with spirit (even if without liquid spirits!) by Jutta Diel-Dominique for the many years of leadership she has provided the division. Indeed, without her I most certainly would never have agreed to take on the role. But having Frieda as a model, although I feel I have big shoes to fill, I know they are ones that will give me a hand, if needed. Thank you, Frieda!

The planning committee for the NYC conference is already well underway in conferring by means of the Yahoo listserv set up for this purpose. If you would like to participate in this exciting discussion, just let Jill Sommer (gertoeng@jill-sommer.com) know and she will send you an invitation to join the list. We have already approached potential division-invited speakers, and are hopeful that we will have a great program this year in NYC.

In this issue...

Liebe GLD-Mitglieder! / Dear GLD Members!.....	1
Fun in the Sun:	
The ATA Conference in Orlando from a First-Time Attendee's Perspective.....	3
Time Management at the ATA Conference 2008.....	5
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the ATA German Language Division.....	8
The State Exam for Translators in Germany – Information and Impressions.....	10
Translators in Profile.....	13
Calendar of Events.....	15

interaktiv

The newsletter of the German Language Division (GLD) is a quarterly publication within the American Translators Association.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of their authors. Articles are subject to editing. Submissions for publication are invited and may be mailed, faxed or emailed (the latter preferred) to the editors. The copyright on all articles remains with the authors.

Editors

Abigail Dahlberg, Kansas City, MO
Tel.: 816-792-0455
info@printtranslations.com

Roland Grefer, Dunedin, FL
Tel.: 646-502-7452
roland@grefer.org

Rainer Klett, Philadelphia, PA
Tel.: 215-843-1843
Rainer@rainerklett.com

Gerhard Preisser, Manassas, VA
Tel.: 703-733-1018
xlator@comcast.net

Proofreaders

Janice Becker, Chicago, IL
Tel.: 312-201-1626
jbecker@gabt.net

Susanne van Eyl, Evansville, IN
Tel.: 812-303-3441
sve@vaneyl.com

Layout

Katrin Rippel, Rainier, WA
Tel.: 360-446-5412
katrin.rippel@menuintl.com

American Translators Association German Language Division

American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel.: 703-683-6100
Fax: 703-683-6122
Website: www.atanet.org

GLD website/mailling list:

www.ata-divisions.org/GLD
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gldlist/>

GLD Officers

Administrator
Ruth Gentes Krawczyk,
Marietta, OH
Tel.: 740-376-0844
ruth@krawczyktranslations.com

Assistant Administrator
Eva Stabenow
Nashville, TN
Tel.: 615-883-6608
work@wordplay-translations.com

Webmaster
Michael Wahlster, Columbia, MO
Tel.: 573-445-6537
Michael@GW-Language.com

We have also approached our own members to encourage them to consider a presentation, in the hopes that 2009 will have more German-specific topics for us to learn from and attend. I don't mean to say we haven't had wonderful sessions offered by our members, we just seem to have focused more on the business aspect of our trade lately when it comes to presentations rather than on the language aspects. Sessions of any kind help highlight your expertise among your colleagues, and can give you a lot of exposure and free PR. Furthermore, sometimes we don't realize that what we do may very well interest others and be considered a real expertise, getting a great response at the conference! I am now in the process of reviewing German-related proposals for sessions, and it looks like many of you have stepped up to the plate! Hurray! It really looks to be a great year for German at the conference in New York City! The next agenda item for the planning committee will be planning for our social event, so if that interests you, please do let Jill know she should send you an invitation to the list!

The planning committee for a possible GLD mid-year conference has also started deliberations. If this is a topic that interests you, then please let Jill Sommer know (e-mail above) and she will send you an invitation. This would be a shorter conference concentrating on topics of special interest to German-English-German translators, and held in a smaller (and thus less expensive) venue, hopefully allowing many members to attend. From the experience on the committee in setting up such conferences in the past (for other divisions), it appears we will need a good year to make all the arrangements working with ATA headquarters, so we are currently considering May 2010. Again, the more heads brainstorming, the better!

At last count (3/31/2009) the GLD numbers 1301 members! Surely there is a good handful or better two willing to work on occasion to put together these special events that benefit us all. We are also looking for additional people to help put together *interaktiv*, our quarterly newsletter. This is the last issue Abigail Dahlberg will be bringing together, and we do have a few people who have expressed interest in helping out, but we could always use one or two more to spread the load. If you would like to get your name out among other translators for networking or other purposes, this would be a great way to do it! And I think Abigail would vouch for the opportunities and new horizons that *interaktiv* has helped open up for her. Please contact me if you would be interested! (ruth@krawczyktranslations.com)

The minutes from the 2008 annual meeting in Orlando are included in this issue, as well as being posted on the division website. We're also working on getting the PowerPoint presentations accompanying some of the sessions presented by our members at the Orlando conference posted on the website as well. We also have a newcomer's perspective on the annual conference included in this issue, as well as a new column series we're trying out, 'Translators in Profile'. This newsletter is our main means of communication with the entire membership of the GLD, so please consider writing an article or responding to a request to help with its contents. Now that I'm writing in English, we'll naturally be looking for more folks to include German-language articles.

Well, I hope you will all have had a wonderful start to the new year and will be able to enjoy spring and summer. I look forward to working with all of you over the next two years.

With warm regards,
Ruth Gentes Krawczyk



Fun in the Sun: The ATA Conference in Orlando from a First-Time Attendee's Perspective

by Ingrid Pelger

This was my first time attending an ATA conference. I did not have much time to think about the conference beforehand since we had been very busy in the office. I've been a project manager for 10 years now. Busy is ok. It just makes for very tight schedules, and everything has to be juggled, including personal time with friends, husband and kids, which usually works out if you are used to being a sous-chef in a 'busy restaurant'. The day before the early-bird registration deadline passed, my boss Doris Ganser asked me if I would go in her place as she was no longer able to attend. Orlando? I didn't really need much time to decide. I love Flo-ri-da. It's one of my favorite vacation destinations, and I had permission to add a few days of vacation after the conference. How can you not say 'yes' to that? The workload at the office remained very busy and before you know it I was sitting on the airplane with my laptop, proofreading some rush German translations.

The flight to Orlando went well. I arrived at the airport at around 5 pm, took the shuttle to the Hilton Walt Disney Hotel in Lake Buena Vista and checked in at the hotel desk. The conference hotel was quite impressive and the staff very friendly and hospitable. The surroundings were just what I expected: blooming oleanders, palm trees, swimming pool, great clean hotel room with all the amenities, etc. I then registered for the conference and received my conference package, quickly changed out of my winter clothes and literally ran to the welcome reception at the poolside, I had about 20 minutes left to get something to eat. The poolside was crowded, but I quickly caught a glimpse of Abigail Dahlberg and instantly wanted to join her, but thought I should get something to eat first since by now I was starving. Seeing a familiar face confirmed that I must be indeed in the right place. I fixed my plate with turkey, mashed potatoes and antipasto salad and I wound up wondering around the pool looking for a seat. Just a few steps further I made eye contact with some ladies at a round table and joined them after one of them grinningly waived me over. So now the networking could begin. Everyone loved to chitchat, which came in handy when you are in such a huge crowd of foreigners. The reception was coming to an end and everyone started to leave. I wound up joining the two ladies from Mexico and went shopping at the Disney Market Place located across the street from the hotel. Unfortunately, I'm not a roller coaster person, therefore, I didn't pay much attention to the local attractions.

The first conference day started with the opening session, the presentation of candidates and the elections. Everything went very smoothly and orderly. For me it was fun to recognize more faces, some from the Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA) Symposium and some of Doris' old friends and colleagues. I studied the program and selected the sessions that would be beneficial for me and my work as a project manager. I attended the 'Blogging: How and Why' presentation, which was very refreshing. The presenter kept a very fast pace and spoke at 100 miles an hour. She provided



details of a lot of IT tools as well as user information and this aspect was very interesting to me. This presentation pretty much helped me decide what would be beneficial to me and it turned out that I mainly attended IT technology sessions during the remainder of the conference since my knowledge of the rapidly changing technology in our industry is limited. My favorite sessions were 'Free and Open Source Software for Translators' and 'Translation Technology's Ring of Power; One Tool to Rule Them All...and in the Darkness Bind Them'? I also attended the German Division Annual Meeting, where fellow MICATA member Frieda Ruppaner-Lind spotted me and pointed me out as a candidate for writing the first time attendee article. Additionally, I went to all of Thea Dohler's sessions which were presented in German. Now that I'm recapping my ATA conference schedule, I'm realizing that all but one session that I attended were presented by German speakers, so 'Prost' to them.

Overall, I had a great time, met interesting people and brought back quite a stack of business cards from the exhibition hall and the job fair. Both places were very busy at all times, I tried to sneak in once per day, and had a chance to receive updates from the software makers of translation memory environments and I checked-out Freek Lankhof's dictionary and reference book stand. In the job fair room I actually had to elbow my way through but managed to pick up interesting business cards and resumes, which went like hot cakes. The days went by very fast and before I knew it everyone was partying at the closing ball.

The location and the hotel were a good choice for the conference, it allowed for a pleasant and professionally organized daily schedule. The only thing that wasn't my cup of tea were the choices for breakfast and lunch, there could be some improvement, but in my case, I found good food at the Italian restaurant in the hotel lobby and at Landry's Seafood House just around the corner from the hotel.

I would definitely recommend attending the conference to any translator or interpreter. Hopefully I will have the chance to see some old and new acquaintances in New York in 2009.



Ingrid Pelger, Transimpex Project Director. Ingrid Pelger graduated from the Alexandrinum Gymnasium in Coburg, Germany, and then obtained a degree from the Eurosprachenschule (Euro-Language School) Bamberg, Germany, as "State-Examined Foreign Language Correspondent" for German, English and French. She is also fluent in Romanian and speaks some Hungarian. She joined Transimpex in 1998.
Contact: Ingrid@transimpex.com

Photos courtesy by Judy Jenner of Twin Translations



Hilton Hotel in Walt Disney World



Opening reception



Nina Gettler, Judy Jenner,
Ted Wozniak

Time Management at the ATA Conference 2008

by Renate Chestnut

The sessions at this year's ATA conference in Orlando from which I benefited the most were both parts of a presentation on time management, titled "Taking Control of Your Time: If Not Now, When?" The talks were presented by Dr. Thea Döhler, the invited speaker of ATA's German division, and they were some of the best-structured, entertaining, and useful conference sessions I've ever attended. Dr. Döhler is a successful business consultant in Germany, and her connection to the world of translation – which helped her tailor her presentation to our community of continuously time-challenged freelance translators – is through her husband, a prolific English-German translator.

From the very beginning, it seemed as if Dr. Döhler knew about all of my very personal time-management shortcomings, but it quickly became apparent that the other attendees – and probably pretty much everybody else in business for themselves – were struggling with the same issues. Most of us seem to feel that there's never enough time to deal with everything on our schedules, from paid work to administrative tasks to continuing education to housework, family, friends, volunteer work, exercise and hobbies. We may try to become champions at doing various tasks simultaneously (my longer phone conversations are always accompanied by some household chore, like ironing or pulling weeds), but there are more productive ways of managing one's time.

In the ATA session, Dr. Döhler invited us to look at our personal time environment, at our roles and functions as well as the demands and constraints we experience in our particular situations, in the four areas of work/productivity, family/ other relationships, personal health/relaxation/hobbies, and personal growth/spirituality. When we know where we spend our time, and which parts we would like to change, we can establish goals that help us manage our time more successfully. Setting goals, and pursuing these goals in a rational manner – i.e., breaking tasks down into smaller parts, prioritizing!!! (one of my main weaknesses) and scheduling individual tasks, checking our progress and the final result – allows us to use our time more effectively.

We were reminded to pay attention to our individual biorhythms when scheduling particular activities – not everybody experiences the same peaks of "performance potential" in the morning or late afternoon. Difficult



Barack Obama elected President

Nina Gettler, Judy Jenner

Karen Tkaczyk, Judy Jenner

translations that require our fullest attention should, of course, be tackled when we are most alert, meaning that easier tasks – like reading and responding to e-mail, making phone calls or preparing invoices – should be scheduled for times when we feel a little slower, like after the mid-day meal. (This seems to be one of my big problems: “wasting” high-performance-potential time on simpler tasks.) Another important point is taking regular breaks – the suggestion was 10 minutes every hour.

One of the most challenging issues to deal with is the “time stealers” – the interruptions and distractions that keep us from working most effectively. Dr. Döhler encouraged us to keep a daily time diary for a while in order to identify these often very small, but disruptive, interruptions, which can have a much more detrimental effect on our effective use of time than we might imagine. Even a very short interruption (phone call, e-mail, a child’s or pet’s demand for attention) of, for example, some focused work on a difficult translation assignment, requires a subsequent “ramp-up” time to get us back to the previous level of concentration, and we lose a substantial amount of time. In addition to self-discipline (avoiding unnecessary browsing on the Internet, checking e-mail only at specific times), we can schedule “quiet times” for concentrated work, during which we turn off the phone and automatic e-mail notification, turn away drop-in visitors (even family) and close the door to our office, if necessary.

Other ways in which we lose time are: spending too much time and energy on non-essential or routine activities; attempting to do too much without clear priorities; lack of planning and clear idea of what each project entails; poor desk management and personal organization; procrastination; ignoring one’s internal clock and personal performance rhythm. Dr. Döhler reminded us about the Pareto principle, or 80:20 rule, that appears to apply to personal time management as well: 80% of all important work gets done in 20% of the time spent working. Effective planning of one’s use of time is therefore the most important time management tool. Of the various time planning methods mentioned, I remember the following main principles: write things down (to-do lists etc.); make realistic estimates of time requirements of projects; allow for time buffers; set priorities; 8 minutes of planning save 1 hour of time. Specific suggestions from Dr. Döhler were: delegate things that don’t make effective use of my time; learn to say “no”; deal with e-mails more efficiently (set specific times for reading and writing, filter incoming mail, keep e-mails short, use the phone for complex interactions), bundle tasks (e.g., write several invoices at one time, pay all bills at the same time).



The bloggers’ lunch: Dierk Seeburg, Judy Jenner, Jane Wolfram, Susanne Aldridge, Jill Sommer, Abigail Dahlberg, Corinne McKay, Michael Wahlster

Jill Sommer, Abigail Dahlberg

Corinne McKay, Judy Jenner, Jane Wolfram, Jill Sommer

This presentation offered me many Aha! moments – I had known before that my time management was seriously underdeveloped, but now I had a much better idea where my weak points lie. I left with a list of resolutions for my home translation business and my life in general, and I have been taking small steps towards better management of my time in the weeks that have passed. (No more reading every e-mail right when it comes in!) I know this will be a never-ending battle, but I'm glad I had this help in getting started. – For those who would like similar help with their time-management skills, check out the books by David Allen, the “personal productivity guru” (as described on the cover of the previously sadly unread copy of “*Getting Things Done*” that I discovered on my very own bookshelf). Allen recommends very similar ideas for getting on top of your workload and achieving “stress-free productivity”.



Renate Chestnut is an English>German free-lance translator who now specializes in medical/pharmaceutical translations, but has in the past translated materials from a vast variety of fields. She is also an Adjunct Professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California, where she has been teaching technical and scientific translation into German for over ten years. Renate has attended more than ten ATA conferences over the years and enjoyed every one of them.

“A shorter version of this article was first published in the *Translorial*, the quarterly Journal of the Northern California Translators Association, as part of their reporting on the ATA conference in Orlando. That is the reason for it being in English.”



“Days begin with a continental breakfast served poolside.”



Workshops and meetings



Jane Wolfrum, Dierk Seeburg,
Judy Jenner, Corinne McKay,
Jill Sommer, Eve Bodeux

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the ATA German Language Division Orlando, Florida, November 7, 2008

by Dorothee Racette

The Administrator of ATA's German Language Division, Frieda Ruppaner-Lind, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

The assembled members approved the agenda of the present meeting and the minutes of the previous year's meeting.

Ms. Ruppaner-Lind first invited reports from Division volunteers with responsibilities for core services.

Michael Wahlster, the Division Webmaster, reported that the GLD website receives 150 hits a month. The site, which is due to be re-designed in the near future, now contains an industry news distribution service, to which members can subscribe. Mr. Wahlster welcomed suggestions from the membership for the design of the website.

Frieda Ruppaner-Lind as the outgoing Division Administrator provided an update about the conference sessions offered for translators and interpreters working with German, noting that many GLD members offered conference sessions in Orlando, which were not necessarily listed with the label "G" in the program. The conference organizer rejected one proposal for an invited speaker, and only one presentation was submitted independently.

The next report was given by Abigail Dahlberg, the editor of the *interaktiv* newsletter. Ms. Dahlberg reported that the Division published two issues of the newsletter in the past year, with Katrin Rippel providing the layout. The notification procedures for the newsletter have changed slightly, with new issues now announced on the GLD List and in the ATA News & Notes. Ms. Dahlberg also announced that she plans to step down as the editor of the newsletter and asked for volunteers to fill her position.

Gerhard Preisser as the co-moderator, read a message on behalf of Christoph Niedermair, the GLD list moderator. The GLD list, which is run as a Yahoo group, currently has 306 members. Discussions have been lively with an average of 636 messages exchanged a month and reached a new record in September 2008 with 825 messages. The moderation team continues to pursue a hands-off approach and only had to intervene in a few rare cases.



"They call it the Sunshine State for a reason."

Very nice indoor/outdoor setting

Sandra Thomson, winner of the 2008 School Outreach Contest

Closing Dance

Jill Sommer, as the representative of the conference planning committee, invited those in attendance to contact her with ideas for the 2009 conference program.

As her last official act, outgoing Division Administrator Frieda Ruppaner-Lind led the uncontested election of Ruth Gentes Krawczyk to serve a two-year term as Division Administrator. The membership unanimously elected Ms. Gentes Krawczyk by acclamation. The election of the Assistant Administrator had been previously conducted by mail ballot. The counting committee consisting of Melissa Fields, Susanne Aldridge and John C. Cantrell reported a majority of votes going to Eva Stabenow.

Having been joined by Ms. Stabenow as the new Assistant Administrator, Ms. Gentes Krawczyk then proceeded to address new business. She invited discussion on planning the conference program for 2009. The discussion moved on to planning the conference content and social event for the 2009 conference, which will be held in New York City.

As in past years, the topic of a German-language mid-year conference was brought up. Given the emphasis on general content at this year's conference, several attendees noted the importance of offering language-specific content. It was decided to form an exploratory committee to look further into the possibility of organizing a 2010 mid-year GLD conference. Frieda Ruppaner-Lind, Susanne Aldridge, Jill Sommer, Susanne van Eyl and Eva Stabenow volunteered to participate.

GLD member Jutta Diel-Dominique, on behalf of the Division membership, thanked Ms. Ruppaner-Lind for her four years of dedicated volunteer service to the Division and highlighted her many accomplishments. The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dorothee Racette



Read *interaktiv* past issues, member articles, conference presentations and more on our website:

www.ata-divisions.org/GLD

Our website is due for a redesign in the near future. Any suggestions? Send them to Michael Wahlster (Michael@GW-Language.com)

The State Exam for Translators in Germany – Information and Impressions

by Christiane E. Bohnert

There are many ways leading to Rome, or into professional translation. The required linguistic mastery, special knowledge of fields, and experience is either derived from studying translation and choosing electives, or comes with a lateral career switch, in German a “Quereinstieg”. For those of us entering the profession laterally in the U.S., the ATA Certification goes a long way toward proving to clients and agencies that we know both our languages.

In Germany, professional associations are reluctant to accept as members those translators who cannot document their translation skills. For an automatic right to membership, the best-known German Bund der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer requires either a “Diplom” from university-level translation studies, or the “Staatliche Prüfung für Übersetzer”, the latter exam being administered by the German Länder and recognized nationally. Thus, the majority of our competition in Germany consists of, what you might call, “documented” translators.

So, in the spring of 2008, I finally decided to take the plunge and get myself documented, applying for admission (“Zulassung”) to the exam for the spring deadline of May 15, 2008.

The State Exam has three stages that stretch over six months: success in passing one stage gets you admitted to the next stage, so it requires a certain time commitment (either flying back and forth three times, or staying in Germany for half a year).

After looking at the information out there, I downloaded the official rules set forth by the Kultusministerkonferenz, and the other information from the website of my chosen examination office, Amt für Lehrerbildung, Abt. V, Dezernat 01, in Darmstadt (http://www.afl.hessen.de/irj/AfL_Internet?uid=76440311-ad5b-d411-1010-43bf5aa60dfa). There were also some answers to questions posed on ProZ. I did, however, miss a summary of experiences to visualize the exam further, and so, having passed the exam, I put together some information and impressions, including subjects as far as I remember them.

The first decision concerns the Bundesland, in which to do it. The exam is conducted by the Länder, as they are responsible for education. I decided on Hessen for personal reasons: I grew up in Wiesbaden, I studied in Mainz, and I always stay in Wiesbaden when in Germany.



The Hessian Prüfungsamt in Darmstadt is one of the biggest in Germany that, for translators and interpreters, also offers some “rare” languages and sign language. English is offered twice a year with the deadlines being May 15, and November 15. One of my fellow examinees traveled all the way from Hamburg because this spring the exam was not being offered any closer to Hamburg than Darmstadt.

According to your admission date, the three stages of the exam take place in early June or January, mid-September or March, and late November / early December or May/June. For admission, you need an exam as a translator or proof of several years of professional experience. You also need to pay the Prüfungsgebühr (€385.00, of which €50.00 is to be paid as a Verwaltungsgebühr before admission). In choosing your field (business/finance, law, sciences and medicine being some of the choices), you have to be prepared, extemporaneously, to translate a legal text in the oral exam, if your choice is not law. The exam will test your skills in both language directions and in both a general area and your chosen field. The texts are fairly current. One of the papers, for instance, was a text on Michael Dell from The Economist that was no more than four weeks old.

As I said, I just plunged in, but if you want to prepare, there is a two-year correspondence class at AKAD at a cost of almost €5,000 (http://www.akad.de/startseite/sprachen/englisch/lehrgang_staetlich_gepruefter_uebersetzer/lehrgang_staetlich_gepruefter_uebersetzer_englisch.29181.8476.8660.8543.29180.29181.htm). In Baden-Württemberg, the Oberschulamt Karlsruhe has old written-exam texts on its website (<http://www.rpbwl.de/karlsruhe/abteilung7>) dating back to 2001.

The exam’s first part is a paper consisting of four translations of about 400 words (special texts) to 700 words (general texts). These translations are sent to you, and you do them at home without outside help. In my case, the general texts concerned social problems in Egypt (E to D), and pedagogical problems with migrant children (D to E). For the papers, you have two weeks of time.

The second stage consists of the written exam. It took place in Frankfurt at the Lehrerseminar building, close to the main train station, and involved one afternoon (3 hours) of essay writing with a choice among 3 topics, including two on Britain, of which one was fairly specific (about the future of the royal family), and one on the U.S. (“America, Europe, and NATO – an Appendix?”) as well as four 60-minute translations the next day. You have to write by hand in a class room, joining your fellow examinees from all kinds of languages. The original planning was for rest periods of comparable length, but the monitor suggested that we have 15-minute breaks in the morning and early afternoon, and one large lunch break between the general and the special translations. That enabled three of us to go to the train station for a real lunch and some conversation.

For the general texts, the use of a dictionary is not permitted, while for the texts in your special field you are allowed to use one (1) dictionary. From what I could see, many of my fellow-examinees had opted for large general dictionaries. When choosing which dictionary to take, I decided against heavy carrying (that ruled out those general ones and Hamblock-Wessels), and opted for “Zahn”, only to have both texts in my special field of Wirtschaft being from outside the field of banking and investment. Luckily, in my moment of need, Zahn did list the word in question. Six weeks later, the letter arrived informing me that I was invited to the third and last stage, the oral exam.



The oral exam was held in Darmstadt in the Prüfungsamt's building, not too far away from the Darmstadt main train station. I arrived early and the staff was extremely kind and helpful, offering water and some cookies to me, and a place to wait. The exam takes about one and a half hours, and it includes a talk about Germany and the other country (in my case, the U.S., and St. Louis); reading a text aloud, and translating it extemporaneously; translating a short legal text (in my case a divorce certificate) into the foreign language, again extemporaneously; and interpreting a conversation between the two examiners. The last task I found exhausting, as I am not trained in making notes while somebody is talking, and thus, it seemed to me, my interpreting was rather a summarizing, but I survived the ordeal without prejudice to my result. The examiners were friendly and professional. Occasionally, they showed a bias toward British English, as had also been apparent in the choice of essay topics. Afterwards, they consulted while I waited, and then gave me the results of the oral exam and the previous stages together with the total result (i.e., grade). They also immediately handed me my Certificate. This immediate conclusion of the process was very pleasant, and considerably added to my Christmas cheer.

In general, the exam will test your language skills in many respects, and on every level. Quite apart from the current economic climate, I do not know how useful this qualification will turn out to be. Nonetheless, doing the exam will be an interesting experience that, if it does nothing else, will lead to meeting interesting people. Moreover, its successful conclusion will boost your self-confidence.



Dr. phil. Christiane E. Bohnert, ATA-Certified Translator, English to German, Staatlich geprüfte Übersetzerin Englisch, specializes in finance, accounting, law, public relations, and tourism. She lives in Saint Louis, Missouri.

@ How to subscribe to the GLD email list

As a member of ATA's German Language Division you are entitled to subscribe to the GLD mailing list. To subscribe send an email to:

gldlist-owner@yahoogroups.com

- In the Subject line of the message write: **subscribe gldlist**
- In the body of the message write:
 - your email address,
 - your full name,
 - your ATA membership number.

Translators in Profile:

Birgit Vosseler-Brehmer

Wo leben Sie und was hat Sie in die Vereinigten Staaten geführt?

Ich wohne in Huntsville, Alabama. Die Arbeit meines Mannes, der hier im Rahmen der NATO an einem internationalen Rüstungsprojekt arbeitet, hat mich – nun schon zum zweiten Mal – in den Süden der USA geführt.

Wie sind Sie zum Übersetzen gekommen?

Die Entscheidung zu einem Sprachstudium mit der Ausrichtung auf das Übersetzen fiel bei mir nach reichlicher Überlegung im Anschluss an die Schule und einen Auslandsaufenthalt. Zum hauptberuflichen Übersetzen gelangte ich schließlich auf Umwegen. Mein Studienabschluss fiel in eine Zeit, die durch „Akademikerschwemme“ gekennzeichnet war, in der freie Vollzeitübersetzerstellen sehr selten vorkamen. Bei meinen ersten Arbeitsstellen handelte es sich um Sachbearbeiterstellen mit Übersetzungsaufgaben. Damals war ich darüber nicht so glücklich. Heute halte ich diese Erfahrung mit für mein größtes Kapital, denn ich habe dadurch Einblick in viele verschiedene Branchen gewinnen können.

Es folgten Heirat, das erste Kind, Umzug in die USA und ein weiteres Kind. Nach Klärung der Formalitäten – nicht zu unterschätzen, wenn man als Ausländer hier arbeiten möchte – streckte ich meine Fühler in Richtung freiberufliches Übersetzen aus. Bevor sich das jedoch richtig vertiefen ließ, zogen wir zurück nach Deutschland. Dort stellte sich schnell heraus, dass eine Festanstellung – mein Traum nach der Familienpause – mit zwei kleinen Kindern in einem qualifizierten Job eine Illusion war. Mit der Unterstützung zweier lieber Kolleginnen, die ich über den BDÜ-Verband kennengelernt hatte, habe ich dann endgültig den Weg zum freiberuflichen und hauptberuflichen Übersetzen eingeschlagen.

In welchen Sprachen arbeiten Sie und was sind Ihre Fachgebiete?

Spätestens seit meinem zweiten Aufenthalt in den USA habe ich eingesehen, dass es unmöglich ist, auf allen Gebieten auf dem Laufenden zu bleiben. Mein Schwerpunkt liegt seither auf Übersetzungen aus dem Englischen ins Deutsche. Die Ausbildungssprachen Russisch und Französisch sind jetzt stärker in den Hintergrund getreten. Gelegentlich lese ich noch für eine Kollegin Russisch-Deutsch-Übersetzungen Korrektur. Fachlich liegen meine Schwerpunkte auf den Bereichen Wirtschaft und ausgewählten Themen der Technik.



Was gefällt Ihnen an der Arbeit als Übersetzerin am meisten?

Dass ich am Puls der Zeit bleibe. Als Übersetzerin bin ich täglich mit den Veränderungen und neuesten Entwicklungen in Wirtschaft und Technik konfrontiert. Das finde ich sehr spannend. Auch die Weiterentwicklung der Sprache, vor allem des Amerikanischen, ist faszinierend, auch wenn ich mir darüber meistens die Haare raufe, weil ich es entweder nicht verstehe oder seltsam finde...

Was am wenigsten?

Die Arbeit im stillen Kämmerlein. Sosehr ich mich darauf freue, mich in eine Übersetzung zu vertiefen, fehlen mir gelegentlich die spontanen Impulse und Anregungen, die von Mitmenschen ausgehen. Deswegen bin ich auch eine begeisterte Besucherin der ATA-Konferenzen.

Was war Ihr merkwürdigster Auftrag?

Das war ein Dolmetschauftrag während meiner freiberuflichen Anfänge hier in den USA: ein junger deutscher Mitinhaber einer amerikanischen Firma lag nach einer Hirnblutung im Koma. Ich sollte im Auftrag der Firma für die eingeflogenen Eltern dolmetschen, die die Zustimmung zur Abschaltung der Beatmungsmaschinen geben sollten...

Welche Ziele haben Sie 2009?

Privat gilt es den Rückumzug nach Deutschland zu bewältigen und die Kinder wieder in die deutsche Schullandschaft einzugliedern. In beruflicher Hinsicht sagt mir die Vernunft, die Messlatte etwas niedriger zu legen und den Status quo zu erhalten - ein transatlantischer Umzug ist ja bereits Herausforderung genug. Aber es gibt da natürlich noch das eine oder andere Vorhaben, das mir durch den Kopf schwirrt und das auf seine Umsetzung wartet: Einrichtung einer Website oder gar eines Blogs, Vertiefung der Spezialisierung auf das Sachgebiet Finanzen, Update von Software und Einsatz neuer Software. Was sich davon realisieren lässt, wird sich zeigen.

Welche Hobbys und Interessen verfolgen Sie neben dem Übersetzen?

Ein Hobby im eigentlichen Sinn habe ich nicht. Ich lese gerne und bin Mitglied eines Lesekreises, der sich einmal im Monat trifft, um ein Buch und was uns Frauen sonst noch so bewegt zu besprechen. - Wenn ich aber auf das letzte Jahr zurückblicke, denke ich, dass Reisen wohl das größte Hobby war, zumindest das, womit ich am meisten freie Zeit verbracht habe. In unseren Reisen haben wir die Nationalparks des Westens, ein Skigebiet in Colorado, New York City und kürzlich Hawaii erkundet.



Calendar of Events

Date	Location	Organization	Event	URL
May 6-8, 2009	Szczecin, Poland	University of Szczecin	Us and Them – Them and Us: Constructions of the Other in Cultural Stereotypes – Perceptions, Challenges, Meanings	www.us.szc.pl
May 11-13, 2009	Toronto, Canada	Translation World	Translation World 2009 – Translating Global Priorities	www.translationworld.com
May 16-17, 2009	London, UK	Institute of Translation & Interpreting (ITI)	ITI International Conference 2009 – Sustainability in Translation	www.iti.org.uk
May 23-25, 2009	Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada	Canadian Association for Translation Studies (CATS)	CATS Canadian Association for Translation Studies 2009 Conference	www.uottawa.ca
June 30-July 2, 2009	Lancaster, UK	Linguistic Politeness Research Group	Linguistic Impoliteness and Rudeness II (LIAR II): The 2009 International Conference of the Linguistic Politeness Research Group	www.lancs.ac.uk
July 6-8, 2009	Sydney, Australia	Dept. Of International Studies, Macquarie University & Dépt. de Sciences du Language, Université Montpellier 3	Cross-culturally Speaking, Speaking Cross-culturally	www.eurolang.mq.edu.au
July 6-9, 2009	Amsterdam, Netherlands	IAFL - International Association of Forensic Linguists	9th Biennial IAFL Conference on Forensic Linguistics/Language and Law	http://iafl09.let.vu.nl/
July 8-11, 2009	Utrecht, Netherlands	Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS (UiL OTS) of the University of Utrecht	7th International Symposium on Bilingualism	www.let.uu.nl



Date	Location	Organization	Event	URL
July 12-17, 2009	Melbourne, Australia	International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)	11th International Pragmatics Conference	http://ipra.ua.ac.be/
July 20-31, 2009	Hong Kong	Hong Kong Baptist University	Translation Research Summer School: Non-Western Perspectives on Translation	http://ctn.hkbu.edu.hk/TRSSHK2009.asp
August 3-5, 2009	Berkeley, CA, USA	Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA)	Berkeley Globalization Conference (LISA @ Berkeley): Language – Society – Technology	www.lisa.org
August 17-21, 2009	Aarhus, Denmark	Aarhus School of Business, University of Aarhus	XVII European Symposium on Languages for Specific Purposes: The Purpose of LSP Research	www.lib.hha.dk
August 18-20, 2009	Batu Feringgi, Penang, Malaysia	School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia	12th International Conference on Translation – The Sustainability of the Translation Field	www.usm.my
September 9-12, 2009	Sofia, Bulgaria	New Bulgarian University, Sofia	44th Linguistics Colloquium “Globalization, Intercultural Communication and Language”	www.nbu.bg
September 11-13, 2009	Berlin, Germany	Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V. (BDÜ)	Interpreting the Future – Challenges for Interpreters and Translators Arising from Globalisation	www.interpreting-the-future.com
October 8-11, 2009	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada	American Association for Corpus Linguistics (AACL)	AACL 2009	www.ualberta.ca
October 28-31, 2009	New York, NY, USA	ATA	American Translators Association (ATA) 50th Annual Conference	www.atanet.org
November 6-7, 2009	Adelaide, Australia	ProZ & Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT)	The Language of Entertainment – Translating & Interpreting in the entertainment industry	www.proz.com
June 30-July 2, 2010	Basel, Switzerland	University of Basel	5th International Symposium on Politeness: “Politeness and Impoliteness, On- and Off-line”	http://engsem.unibas.ch

Date	Location	Organization	Event	URL
October 27-30, 2010	Denver, CO, USA	ATA	American Translators Association (ATA) 51th Annual Conference	www.atanet.org
October 26-29, 2011	Boston, MA, USA	ATA	American Translators Association (ATA) 52nd Annual Conference	www.atanet.org
October 24-27, 2012	San Diego, CA, USA	ATA	American Translators Association (ATA) 53rd Annual Conference	www.atanet.org
November 6-9, 2013	San Antonio, TX, USA	ATA	American Translators Association (ATA) 54th Annual Conference	www.atanet.org



ATA Certification Program

Exam Date	Location
5/15/2009	Indianapolis, IN
5/15/2009	Scottsdale, AZ
5/16/2009	Grand Rapids, MI
5/17/2009	Washington, DC
5/31/2009	Somerville, MA
6/13/2009	Austin, TX
6/14/2009	Philadelphia, PA
8/8/2009	Novi, MI
8/15/2009	Katy, TX
8/29/2009	Atlanta, GA
9/13/2009	Nashville, TN
10/31/2009	New York, NY (AM)
10/31/2009	New York, NY (PM)

www.atanet.org/certification/upcoming.php

