Both the topic and the speaker of CHICATA’s February 28th event forecasted a meeting not to be missed. And indeed, the cold temperatures and gusting winds did not discourage a number of interested members from attending the lecture on Saturday at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Elizabeth Lowe, Director of the Center for Translation Studies in the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, delivered her presentation entitled “The Future of Translation Studies.”

Upon opening her presentation, Dr. Lowe quoted Rosetta Stone’s commercial slogan: “Learn a Language — Without … Tedious Translation ….” This humorous idea was a much appreciated introduction into the discussion of the changing place of translation studies in the academic curriculum and the current trends in translation programs in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Lowe pointed out that after a significant period of decline in translation studies, the discipline is finally assuming its rightful position among the academic ranks, a proof of which is the attention devoted to the field by numerous organizations.

Among these organizations is the Modern Language Association, which has pronounced translation to be “the most important concept in cultural theory today.” Notably, the President of MLA, Catherine Porter, chose to make three questions the subject for her presidential initiative at the 2009 MLA convention: translation in theory, in practice and at work.

The presentation outlined explanations for the marginalization of translation. These included the problem with placing this inter-disciplinary field in the academy and in the widespread belief that translation constitutes merely a transfer of knowledge, and not creation of “new knowledge.”

Alongside these factors Dr. Lowe enumerated a number of controversies raised by our profession. Colonization, global hegemony of English, and the matter of authorship elicited quite a few nods of understanding from the listeners in the audience.

The following quote from an anonymous author, which appealed to me so much that I simply must repeat it here, triggered a wave of laughter in the room. It is a statement that, no doubt, rings true to every translator’s heart.

Many critics, no defenders, translators have but two regrets: when we hit, no one remembers; when we miss, no one forgets.

Finally, Dr. Lowe shared with us the implications for translation education stemming from the above. These implications constitute the guidelines for the certificate program in translation studies offered at the Center for Translation Studies.

Both the graduate and the undergraduate certificate are designed to respond to the inter- and intra-disciplinary nature of the field. The central position of ethics and attention to ISO and EU standards are part of the curriculum in order to ensure the provision of quality services by future translators.

In the course of the program, prospective professionals will also become equipped with solid tools for their future...
CHICATA News, published four times a year, is distributed free of charge to all its members. Membership dues are currently $40. The newsletter provides up-to-date information about its members, association activities, as well as news of the translation and interpretation profession. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of the editor, the association or its officers, and are solely those of their authors. Articles submitted become the property of CHICATA News and are subject to editing. No part of the newsletter may be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the editor.

On May 16, CHICATA sponsored the Twentieth Chicago Conference on Translation and Interpretation. The theme was “Entrepreneurship, Business Practices, and Ethics.” The conference was a tremendous success, and full coverage will appear in the next issue of The CHICATA News. The conference was well-attended and generated a lot of enthusiasm.

At the Annual General Membership Meeting, immediately following the conference, we “installed” the newly-elected Executive Committee. Special thanks to the outgoing Treasurer, Yves Lassere, and the outgoing Secretary, Spring Stillman, for their years of service to CHICATA. I would like to welcome our newly-elected Treasurer, Cristina Villanueva, and our newly-elected Secretary, Marie Clarke-Doane.

Our Vice-President for Programs, Erika Kugler, has been doing a fabulous job in planning programs. Our Vice-President for Membership, Vojin Drenovac, does an excellent job of maintaining the Membership Database. Our Webmaster, Pippin Michelli, does a great job of maintaining the CHICATA web site. Over the coming year, we will see even more improvements in the web site.

Rocio Jaramillo, Editor of The CHICATA News, asks that members continue to send articles and photographs. Adrienne Allen has begun work on improved publicity for CHICATA. She is working on getting greater visibility for our programs and for the organization as a whole. Please let me know if you would be interested in assisting with publicity efforts.

CHICATA typically takes a vacation during the summer months of June and July. This year, we had hoped to host James Nolan in July, to conduct simultaneous interpretation seminars. Unfortunately not enough people enrolled. Therefore, we will not be able to hold these seminars in Chicago this year. Perhaps we can try again next year.

In August, we will have another CHICATAFest. Please watch for the announcements. We expect to hold a CHICATA Translators Institute in September on the important subject of Terminology Management. This program is still in preparation. Please watch your e-mails for details as they become available.

Sincerely,

John F. Bukacek
As a newcomer to CHICATA and to the city of Chicago, it was a nice surprise to share my first meeting, which was an evening of dinner and fun with the organization in such a lively place. The Alhambra Palace Restaurant was very unique not only for the décor, which was reminiscent of Moorish Spain, but also for the food, which was a mix of Lebanese, Moroccan and American cuisine. This was very fitting for an organization composed of multicultural members.

On that Friday, March 20, nearly thirty CHICATA members gathered to socialize, eat, and enjoy the live entertainment, which consisted of a demonstration of flamenco dancing. Flamenco is the typical song and dance of the Gypsies of Andalusia, in the southern region of Spain.

The dancers, wearing typical Gypsy costumes, danced to the music of an acoustic guitar and a couple of flamenco singers. They danced to various tunes from the region of Seville, and particularly from Triana, the region believed to be the birthplace of bullfighting.

It should be noted that flamenco dancing is supposed to embody the soul of the people of Andalusia: their color, romance, passion, and the moves of the matador in the bullring. That makes their dance either very meaningful, or occasionally funny if you are not familiar with the culture.

During the course of the evening, I was able to meet many of the translator and interpreter members from the Spanish group, as well as others from various European languages, and of course our John Bukacek, Japanese practitioner. They were all very welcoming and open to sharing their diverse experiences.

My first impression was that there are many more interpretation opportunities in both the legal and medical areas in Chicago than there are in Michigan, where I come from.

The evening became quite lively as it progressed, and for the few of us left with enough energy after the meal and the flamenco show, there was a later show, consisting of belly dancing. I am afraid I was one of the early risers that left before the belly dancing show began. However, if the previous show was any indication, the later one must have also been really enjoyable.

Our thanks to the CHICATA officers that coordinated this evening for us. Thanks particularly to our Vice-President for Programs, Erika Kugler, who was the main event coordinator.

Olimpia Hernandez is a freelance interpreter and translator between English and Spanish. She is a retired engineer, born in the Canary Islands in Spain. She has lived in Spain, Venezuela, and the US. She specializes in technical, automotive, manufacturing, and contracts.

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success in the field. These very practical skills will include proficiency in CAT and localization tools, terminology management skills, project management and quality assurance competence, cross-cultural communication skills and knowledge of marketing strategies.

Overall, judging by the lively discussion which followed the presentation, the program described by Dr. Lowe seemed to strike the fancy of the majority of people gathered in the room.

Worth mentioning is an idea of one of the listeners, namely, a mentorship program allowing both the students and already established translators to benefit from cooperation. Dr. Lowe told us she would look into that, and I am sure that many of the people gathered in the lecture room that day will be excited to learn if the idea has a chance of being implemented.

Anna Thorpe is a freelance translator and interpreter working with English, Polish and German. She holds a Masters degree in translation awarded by the University of Warsaw, Poland. Anna may be reached by email at a.jonas@yahoo.com.

Lower right: audience.
Photo submitted by Cristina Borges.
The art of translating children’s books
by Anne Butzen

The presentation on children’s literature in translation was given on April 25, 2009, by Naturaleza Moore, who brings an insider’s perspective to the topic. She grew up in a bilingual household, and story time was conducted alternately in English or Spanish, depending on which of her parents was doing the reading.

This session covered the development of translating literary works for children, methods used, and challenges of this specialization.

Development
Once upon a time there was no such thing as children’s literature. There was only storytelling — oral, organic and addressed to everyone.

Children’s literature as such got a boost from the invention of printing, but its real originator was Charles Perrault, who wrote (or at any rate compiled) such well-known tales as “Cinderella” and “Puss in Boots.” He was followed by the brothers Grimm, authors of “Rumpelstiltskin” and “Hansel and Gretel”, and Hans Christian Anderson, known for “The Snow Queen” and “The Mermaid.” These stories have long been in the public domain and available in translation for so long that now many people have no idea of their origin.

Over time the genre developed a gradual rejection of realism and evolved into what we now think of as the fairy tale with witches, magic wands and talking animals. It wasn’t until the late 1960s that a new trend emerged. At that time children’s books were made educational.

As to children’s literature in translation, this is a mixed bag. On the one hand, the translator frequently gets short shrift: he or she tends to be anonymous and invisible, and often doesn’t even get credited on the title page. On the other hand, with this kind of work he can be more flexible. The translator has more liberty to enlarge, adapt or abridge.

Aida Marcuse of Uruguay is one of the few well known translators of children’s books. In addition to her translation work from English to Spanish, she writes short stories and poems for the educational market.

There are also bilingual books available. One title mentioned was “Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States.” Although all the poems were translated, there was no discussion of the practice of translation itself.

Recognition
In this capacity the British are well ahead of us. In 1996 they established the Marsh Award, given biennially, for the best translation into English of a foreign children’s book. In addition there is the Swiss-based International Board of Books for Young People, which is all about promoting international harmony through the medium of children’s books. Their web site address is www.ibby.org.

And for good measure there is International Children’s Book Day, established in 1967 and celebrated every year on April 2.

Resources
In addition to the organizations mentioned above, there are ink-and-paper libraries with substantial collections of children’s books for one to read. Two of note are the Newberry Library in Chicago and the Baldwin Library at the University of Florida. The Newberry Library houses 10,000 original children’s books in its collection, originating from every clime and place and written in many languages.

Conclusion
Ms. Moore concluded that the global dissemination of quality children’s literature is now more necessary than ever. To this end we need to encourage not only well-written books but well-translated works. And furthermore, those doing the necessary work of translation ought to be recognized for their part in the process.

Anne Butzen is a Spanish-to-English legal translator who was recently certified by the Graham School of the University of Chicago. She can be reached at anne@lepanto.com.
Talking shop

by Cynthia Garcia

On January 31, 2009, I had the opportunity to attend my first CHICATA meeting at the Sulzer Library, at which I had a very pleasant experience. I was very impressed with the talents of the members that I met at this Shoptalk session. Most spoke and translated not in one, but in two or three languages.

I also enjoyed mingling with all the various cultures that were represented in the group. For instance, one member present was Filipino, another German, and several others were Hispanic. And members of Arabic and Italian descent were also present. The ambiance was informal and relaxing.

I feel that these Shoptalk meetings serve as good support to someone like me who is just finding out about the field of translating and interpreting, or to those just looking to network among colleagues. I found the discussions to be of good content and also to be very informative.

Among the insights I learned that day is that the possibilities are many as to the type of assignments one can take on. However, we were cautioned to know our own limits in the quantity of work we can handle. Judiciously, someone suggested not taking an assignment under two hours.

Additionally, I was grateful to have acquired suggestions on the ethics and business practices of the profession. It was pointed out that one should always check with the better business bureau to see if a client is legitimate or of a good reputation, especially regarding delivery of payment for services rendered.

Since I would like to establish my own independent language services, I was personally interested in knowing where to start as an interpreter in terms of gaining clientele. I have interpreted and translated all my life in different arenas and for many different people who find themselves with specific needs or in various situations. Very graciously, people at the meeting directed me to begin my journey at the Chamber Of Commerce and at other resourceful organizations.

I look forward to attending more of CHICATA’s programs. I especially enjoyed having dinner with several of the members after our meeting. Until next time: Ciao! Hasta luego! Maselema! Good-bye!

Cynthia Garcia is currently enrolled in a medical interpreting class and is preparing to start on her own as an independent interpreter and translator.

CHICATA’s 2008-2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 22, 2008: Summer tango fest social.
September 27, 2008: Language groups meeting.
November 22, 2008: Interpreters Institute on sight translation.
December 6, 2008: Holiday potluck party and talent show.
January 31, 2009: Annual shoptalk meeting.
February 28, 2009: The future of translation studies.
March 20, 2009: Dinner and dancing social gathering.
April 25, 2009: The art of translating children’s books.
May 16, 2009: CHICATA’s twentieth annual conference.