

# Caduceus



Publication of the Medical Division of the American Translators Association



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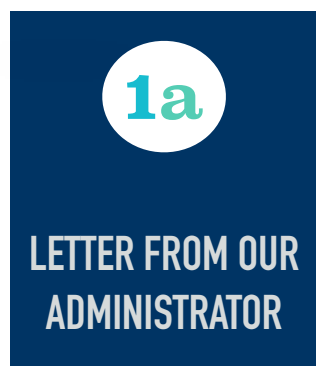
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**D**ear Medical Division Members,

**Here is the latest in your division:**

This year, the Leadership Council of the Medical Division has been working hard to offer our members as many activities and events as possible!

So far, we have held four networking events: three virtually on January 8, April 30, and June 14, and another one in person in Los Angeles on March 20, right before the CHIA Conference.

We also had two MED Talks with two amazing speakers: the first one, that took place on February 22, was titled “The Ins and Outs of IBS”, with Megan Greenlee Mapes RD, CDN, CSP, and the second one held on May 22, was titled “The Medical Translator’s Dictionary: What It No Longer Is and What It Could Become,” with José Antonio de la Riva Fort, a founding partner and director of Cosnautas, and whose article “Innovations in Medical Translation: Cosnautas and Digital Publishing” is published in this very issue.

In addition, the Medical Division’s webinar team secured three speakers who submitted ATA webinars, all of which were given early this year:

- “Brain Power for Medical Interpreters” on February 20
- “Developing Expertise in Interpreting: Reflection, Feedback, and Repetition” on March 20
- “Preventing Burnout in Healthcare for Translators and Interpreters” on March 25.

Once again, thank you for being part of our division.

Sincerely,

*~María Paula Plazas*



LETTER FROM THE  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

## Warm greetings to our readers,

In the Northern hemisphere it is spring, and where I live in what is referred to as Northern Virginia in the U.S., the rain has been plentiful, which in turn has made the flowers bloom and made everything green again. Out of town visitors often remark how “green” it looks in the Washington, D.C. metro area.

In this issue, you will learn about the Tremédica conference, officially known as the Jornadas Internacionales de Traducción e Interpretación Médica, a biennial international event organized by Tremédica, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the professions related to medical translation and writing, particularly within the Spanish-speaking community.

The conference took place April 24 to 26, 2025, at the University of Córdoba in Spain. This event was co-organized by Tremédica, Cosnautas, and the University of Córdoba. Betty Galiano provided us with a detailed description of the conference. You have some time to consider and plan to attend the next one.

Artificial intelligence has been a prominent topic for most of the world at the moment and we are all witnessing its impact on the interpretation and translation fields, so we are pleased to also have received an article from the founder of Cosnautas, José Antonio de la Riva Fort. He discusses dictionaries, AI, digital publishing and the “fight against the language flattening caused by unreflective and automatic translation.”

Karen Leube, Administrator for the German Language Division has provided us with a webinar review of medical language teaching for nurses coming to Germany who need to become proficient enough to work in medical settings.

Upon the great suggestion of one of our readers, we are including in this issue a handy Calendar of Events for the Medical Division and other pertinent ATA events. We hope you find that helpful for planning your professional development schedule.

We certainly welcome feedback for Caduceus, and we also want to encourage you to submit an article. We invite you to share your own experiences and expertise or suggest topics you'd like to see in future editions. Thank you for being part of our vibrant and dedicated network of medical translation and interpretation professionals.

~ *Silvia Villacampa*



Betty Galiano is an English teacher and a simultaneous conference interpreter, specializing in medicine, dentistry, entomology, and veterinary medicine. Her extensive career includes collaborations with international organizations, medical societies, research institutions, hospitals, clinics, and pharmaceutical laboratories.

In 1976, she founded the Language Department at the Italian Hospital and later became a founding partner of Ocean Translations SRL, localization company based in Rosario, Argentina. She currently serves on the board of directors of the Association of Conference Interpreters in Argentina, is Vice President of Tremédica, and she chaired the Organizing Committee of the **XIV International Conference on Medical Translation and Interpretation** held in Córdoba, Spain from April 24 - 26, 2025.

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## 14TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MEDICAL TRANSLATION, WRITING AND INTERPRETATION

BETTY GALIANO

### **A Premier Event co-organized by Tremédica, Cosnautas and the University of Córdoba for Medical Translators, Writers, and Interpreters**

In an era where global connectivity and communication are paramount, accuracy and clarity in medical translations are more crucial than ever. The XIV International Conference on Medical Translation and Interpreting was a must-attend event for professionals dedicated to medical translation, writing and interpreting. This year, the meeting was held at the historic University of Córdoba in Córdoba, Spain, a city famous for its unique blend of tradition and modernity. This picturesque setting, famous for its charming courtyards adorned with vibrant flowers, provided an attractive venue for linguists from around the world.

### **Dates and Location**

From April 24 to 26, 2025, the University of Córdoba welcomed medical translators, writers, and interpreters, eager to enhance their skills, share knowledge, and establish invaluable professional connections. With its rich history and academic prestige, the university provided an ideal backdrop for a conference dedicated to excellence and innovation in medical communication. The meeting was in Spanish, with simultaneous interpretation into English available.

### **Special Celebrations**

This conference held special significance as we celebrate several important anniversaries: Tremédica's 20th anniversary, Panace@'s 25th anniversary, and Dr. Navarro's "Red Book" 25th

anniversary. These milestones embody the dedication and advancement in the field of medical communication and were highlighted with special activities and events throughout.

### About Tremédica and Panacea



[XIV Jornadas Internacionales de Traducción e Interpretación](#)

It all began with the visionary idea of a physician, translator, editor, and the mastermind behind MedTrad, a Yahoo forum that united doctors and linguists passionate about English-Spanish medical translation. To maintain high-quality advice and support, the group decided early on to keep its membership fairly exclusive. This commitment to quality inspired members to create Panace@, an online journal dedicated to medical translation, and to establish Tremédica, an organization offering invaluable resources for medical translators.

Tremédica has since grown into an internationally recognized association based in Spain, with significant membership in Spain, the USA, and Argentina. Founded in 2005, Tremédica brings together biomedical translators, editors, interpreters, writers, and other professionals who are passionate about medical terminology management, translation, interpretation, subtitling, medical writing, graphics, humanization, and linguistic validation. Many of its members are notable experts who have made significant contributions to these fields.

Tremédica values diversity in its membership, welcoming both seasoned experts and enthusiastic newcomers. This mix fosters a dynamic environment where experience meets fresh perspectives.

In addition to being an association, Tremédica publishes the journal Panace@, which has been in existence since 2000. Panace@ features original texts on various aspects of medical translation and language, primarily in Spanish and English but it is open to contributions in any language. The journal employs a rigorous evaluation and editing process, ensuring high-quality content. It publishes two issues annually: one general and one monographic.

### Award-Winning Journal

Panace@, internationally recognized by ESLETRA and honored with the 2009 Medes Award from the Lilly Foundation, is our premier publication. Tremédica members take pride in supporting the release of this unique resource for advancing specialized medical translation.



## Resource Hub and Professional Connections

Our headquarters aim to become a public source of terminological, linguistic, and regulatory resources. Additionally, thanks to our professional search engine, it serves as a channel connecting members with individuals and companies seeking linguistic services related to medicine and related areas.

## Membership Invitation

If you wish to support our activities in disseminating linguistic knowledge, benefit from the opportunities we offer, and join our international community of medical-scientific language specialists, we encourage you to become a member of Tremédica.

## About the International Conference of Medical Translation, Writing and Interpretation

### Key Theme Lines

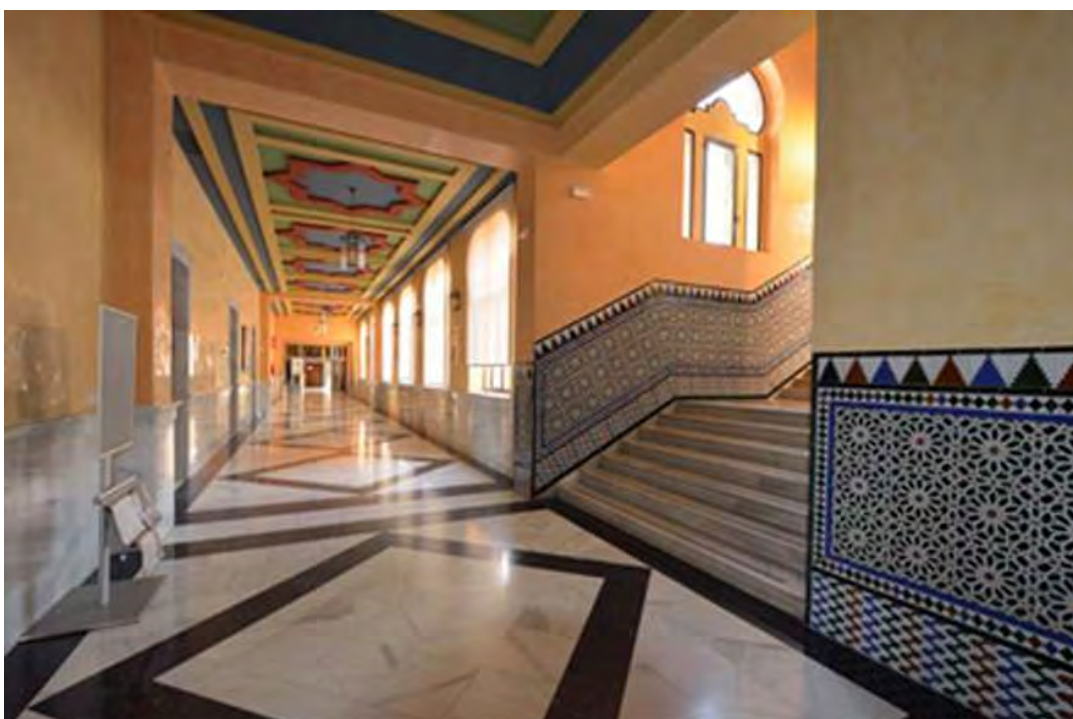
The International Conference covered the following key areas:

**Translation and Interpretation:** Advanced techniques and best practices to ensure accuracy and safety in translating critical information.

**Clear Communication:** Strategies to improve effectiveness and understanding in written and oral medical communication.

**Computer Tools and Artificial Intelligence:** Use of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and the latest innovations in AI applied to medical translation and communication.

**Graphic Medicine:** Exploration of how art and design can enhance medical communication and facilitate the understanding of complex information.



## Highlights

The conference was meticulously designed to address the most current and relevant challenges in the sector.

Attendees enjoyed:

**Expert Presentations:** Renowned international experts shared their insights and experiences, offering attendees the opportunity to learn from the best in the field.

**Practical Workshops:** Hands-on sessions provided practical skills and techniques that can be directly applied to their professional work.

**Interactive Roundtables:** Dynamic discussions fostered collaboration and idea exchange among participants, promoting a deeper understanding of key issues.

**Engaging Activities:** Art, games, and drawing were part of the activities, ensuring a lively and enjoyable experience and stimulating creativity and innovation.

## Top Influencers

We were thrilled to host a lineup of outstanding speakers who inspired and educated us. Their expertise and enthusiasm helped us gain deeper insights into our profession, enhancing our skills while also reminding us of the joy and fulfillment our work brings. These speakers, with their wealth of knowledge and experience, not only educated but also motivated us to strive for excellence in our careers.

## ATA CEUs

For the 2025 conference, the American Translators Association (ATA) awarded CEUs for participation in this conference. This was a valuable opportunity for attendees to earn professional development credits while engaging in high-quality learning experiences.

## Patient-Focused Meetings

One of the standout features of the XIV International conference on Medical Translation and Interpreting was the addition of dedicated sessions focused on patient perspectives. The aim was to strengthen the bond and improve the interaction between healthcare providers and patients, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are considered at every stage of the communication process. These sessions offered a unique opportunity for translators, editors, and interpreters to better understand patients' experiences and expectations, promoting more human and effective communication.

## Networking Opportunities

This international conference not only offered an opportunity to learn and improve our linguistic skills but also to connect with colleagues and industry leaders. It provided multiple networking

events, including receptions, dinners, and cultural visits around the beautiful city of Córdoba. These events allowed attendees to exchange ideas, establish collaborations, and build a sound professional network.

### Special Invitation

It would be an honor for us to have your participation next time. As mentioned before, we plan very dynamic sessions that include art, games, and drawing! You could participate in a presentation, workshop, roundtable, or game.

### Conclusion

This was a transformative event for all medical communication professionals. With an enriching agenda and an inspiring setting, this gathering at the University of Córdoba was a must-attend for those looking to lead and make a difference in the fields of medical translation, writing, and interpreting. It provided outstanding speakers, engaging activities, and unique networking opportunities. And the added benefit of earning ATA CEUs made this conference an invaluable professional development opportunity. We hope to see you next time!

[XIV Jornadas Internacionales de Traducción e Interpretación Médica - tremedica.org](https://tremedica.org)

**XIV**  
JORNADAS  
INTERNACIONALES  
DE TRADUCCIÓN E  
INTERPRETACIÓN  
MÉDICA  
**2025**

Del 24 al 26 de abril  
Universidad de Córdoba (España)

Coorganizan

**Tremédica**  
ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE TRADUCTORES  
Y REDACTORES DE MEDICINA Y CIENCIAS AFINES

**cosnautas**

**UNIVERSIDAD  
DE  
CÓRDOBA**

**GRUPO DE INVESTIGACIÓN  
TEXTOS, LENGUAJE Y TRADUCCIÓN**

**CÁTEDRA  
¿EN QUÉ  
TE PUEDO  
AYUDAR?**



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## TEACHING MEDICAL LANGUAGE: MORE THAN WORDS

KAREN LEUBE



Karen Leube, a native of Pennsylvania, is a freelance translator and translator trainer based in Aachen, Germany. She served on the faculty of the universities of Heidelberg and Mainz (FTSK), where she offered courses on biomedical technology and general medical translation in cooperation with local hospitals and research institutions. Since establishing her freelance business in 2004, she has taught numerous continuing education courses for translators and interpreters. Twelve of her book translations have been published to date, including Thomas Häusler's *Gesund durch Viren* (Viruses vs. Superbugs). Karen also specializes in international development cooperation and has worked both in-house and as an external service-provider for a major development cooperation agency in Germany for over two decades. Karen is currently the Administrator of the German Language Division.

*This webinar review is an excerpt from the German Language Division (GLD)'s blog post on August 2, 2024. Karen Leube, the GLD Administrator, is a medical translator and German instructor. She began teaching German as a Foreign Language to nurses from seven countries in May 2024.*

Like many Western countries, Germany is facing a shortage of skilled labor, particularly in the health care sector. To address this shortfall, health care professionals are being recruited from various regions worldwide. The Triple Win program requires nurses wishing to work in Germany to achieve a specified level of German proficiency before they arrive in Germany and then build on their language skills to ultimately achieve Level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) once they start working in Germany.

A webinar offered by the Hueber publishing company entitled “Kompetent im Klinikalltag – Mit Szenarien erfolgreich unterrichten” (“Using scenarios to teach learners competence in their everyday hospital setting”) in April 2024. In this case, the target learners were medical doctors rather than nurses.

The webinar was moderated by Dorothee Thomas, one of the authors of the textbook *Menschen im Beruf Medizin* (People at Work: Medicine). The webinar featured Professor Marion

Grein, an expert in teaching German as a Foreign Language (DaF). She started out by discussing the diversity of health concepts across cultures, noting that in the Western world, the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health is typically accepted. This definition describes health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,” thereby presenting a “positive” state of health. She emphasized that this concept is not universal, citing alternative views such as the perception of illness as a form of divine punishment (punitive medicine) and “balance medicine,” a holistic approach that underscores the interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit, as notable deviations from the WHO definition.

Awareness of patients’ perception of illness is therefore an essential part of communication that goes beyond pure linguistic exchange. Grein described four models of physician-patient communication:

**Paternalistic:** Physician dictates treatment (authoritarian)

**Patient-as-partner:** Physician and patient discuss treatment approach

**Interpretive:** Physician suggests treatment, patient considers and decides

**Informative:** Physician informs, patient decides

In terms of language, the particular scenario thus determines the structure of the physician-patient conversation. Grein advocated the use of role playing as the most effective method for practicing these scenarios. This approach offers several advantages, including its authenticity and practical applicability. Role playing also allows for the integration of multiple language skills, such as speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing. Additionally, a significant learning outcome of this practice is the increased confidence in real-life situations, which is developed through these dry run exercises.

In Germany, the role plays also serve to prepare the candidates for various equivalency examinations for recognizing the credentials of health care professionals. The simulations should therefore include not only the specialized vocabulary but also the cultural framework. For instance, a physician coming from a “punitive” system will have little experience taking a patient history that involves eliciting information on previous illnesses, etc. Another topic with widely varying culture-dependent perspectives is pain. Depending on the source culture, the concept of “empathy” may have to be specifically explained and practiced, for example.



<https://pixabay.com/photos/treatment-hospital-clinic-medicine-4099432/>

Grein presented the structure of the textbook *Menschen im Beruf Medizin*, focusing on its culturally specific topics and language use. She highlighted that in Germany, nurses and doctors commonly use the pronoun *we* when asking patients about their condition. For example, they might ask, “Have we had a bowel movement in the past 24 hours?” This usage reflects a particular cultural approach to patient interaction in the German medical context.

This also means educating non-German health care professionals about register, for example, of anatomical terms and disease names. In German, many anatomical terms have vernacular equivalents, such as *Blinddarm* for appendix and *Lungenentzündung* for pneumonia. While understanding Greek or Latin terms may suffice for comprehending professional publications, it is insufficient for effective communication with patients. Hence, familiarity with both the technical and common terms is essential for clear and empathetic patient interactions.

Regarding cultural competence, Grein referred to an article entitled “Cultural Competence in Nursing Muslim Patients,” which, although focused on the UK nursing context, holds significant relevance for Germany. Germany has a longstanding Muslim minority population originating from the 1960s guest worker movement and has recently seen an influx of migrants from Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Middle East. This demographic context underscores the importance of cultural competence in health care, particularly in understanding and addressing the unique needs of Muslim patients. Here the term “culture-sensitive medicine” is particularly important. The textbook includes various exercises that encourage self-reflection. Scenarios may encompass details such as family visits to patients and religious perspectives and values. For instance, they might explore who in the family is responsible for the patient's care. In this context, non-German health care professionals who share cultural backgrounds with their patients are invaluable.

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## INNOVATIONS IN MEDICAL TRANSLATION: COSNAUTAS AND DIGITAL PUBLISHING

JOSE ANTONIO DE LA  
RIVA FORT

José Antonio de la Riva Fort, director of Cosnautas, holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, a Master's degree in Publishing from the Universidad de Salamanca and a degree in Classical Philology, also from Salamanca. Besides Cosnautas, his career has so far been twofold: as a language professional—proofreader, project coordinator, translator, and writer, and as a university lecturer of classical languages, ancient literature, rhetoric, and other related subjects.



[director@cosnautas.com](mailto:director@cosnautas.com)

Medical translators and interpreters from all over the world have been using Cosnautas for 11 years to find various terminology recommendations and solutions to translation problems.

This article discusses dictionaries, artificial intelligence, and redefining publishing in the digital age for biomedical translation work.

### **Cosnautas Dictionaries**

The recommendations contained in Cosnautas' dictionaries, which are usually well-founded, shape the translator's criteria by presenting him or her with a choice among different priorities: correctness, clarity, use rate, and adaptation to the nomenclature of international organizations, among others. At the same time, dictionaries offer alternatives to enrich translations and fight against the language flattening caused by unreflective and automatic translation.

### **Artificial intelligence**

However, artificial intelligence applied to translation and neural network machine translation engines are a reality that all players in the translation industry must recognize.

This is not the first digital revolution relevant to Cosnautas' interests. Cosnautas began in times of change and innovation in the publishing world. E-books were beginning to expand their market, and it seemed that they would replace the printed book. The novel digital subscription models were just beginning to be timidly applied to the publishing industry. There were, of course,



already online dictionaries with content of professional interest, but not linked to a subscription model, like the nascent Netflix.

Cosnautas began by adapting to some important changes in the creation and distribution of content, clinging to the conviction that, on the one hand, reference works are far superior in their digital version than in print, and on the other, publishing for a small niche of specialists is more economically viable with a subscription model than with a single-sale one. The starting point for every decision has always been the user experience, the perception of usefulness to the professional.

Since computer-assisted translation tools are widely used, Cosnautas studied the development of an extension for one of them, but the recent spread of artificial intelligence applied to translation, with possibly greater scope, quickly changed the landscape and put other priorities on the table: how to integrate the content of Cosnautas to what artificial intelligence and neural networks achieve?

### **AI vs. Dictionary and How to Translate “Building blocks”**

In the recent presentation of the Diccionario de dudas de traducción de términos químicos (EN-ES) (DTQ)<sup>1</sup>, author Mar Jiménez Quesada showed eloquent examples of texts that artificial intelligence often mistranslates and that could be better rendered with the help of the dictionary. The sentence "Aminoacids are the building blocks of proteins", which Chat-GPT translates into Spanish as "Los aminoácidos son los bloques de construcción de las proteínas" and DeepL as "Los aminoácidos son los componentes básicos de las proteínas", is much better translated as "Los aminoácidos son las unidades constituyentes de las proteínas", using the information contained in the DTQ.

### ***Now for some practical examples from Cosnautas:***

#### ***Control***

For the English term control, we find that in Spanish blood pressure is not controlled but normalizada, that body temperature is not controlled but regulated (regulada); that pain is relieved (se alivia), that an overdose is neutralized (se neutraliza), that anemia is corrected (se corrige).<sup>2</sup>

#### ***Physical***

To translate the English physical into French we find that it can correspond to the adjectives physique, charnel, corporel, or matériel, or to the nouns examen clinique or bilan medical<sup>3</sup>

#### ***Vitiligo***

We can learn that the German Pigmentmangel has six different meanings in Spanish (hipocromía, acromía, hipopigmentación, albinismo, leucodermia y vitiligo (o vitíligo)).<sup>4</sup>



### *Significance*

We can also find out that to translate significance into Portuguese we must pay attention to the context to discern whether it corresponds to *significância*, a statistical notion, or to *relevância*, *alcance*, *interesse* or *repercussão*, more general meanings.<sup>5</sup>

### *Dropper bottle*

If we go into medical devices, *Cosnautas* can reveal that dropping bottle (or dropper in the US) is a *gotero* or *cuentagotas* in Spanish, which in French is equivalent to *flacon compte-goutte*; in German, to *Tropfenzähler-Flasche*; in Italian, to *flacone contagocce*; in Portuguese, to *frasco conta-gotas*.<sup>6</sup>

### *Target*

In *Cosnautas* we can find out that *target*, in clinical research and pharmacology, does not usually have its general meaning of 'objetivo', 'objeto', 'meta', 'motivo' or 'fin' but rather of *diana molecular* o *blanco terapéutico*,<sup>7</sup> If we translate in the field of immunology, we can see that in the translation of autoimmune disease we should avoid the calque *enfermedad autoinmune*, which means that the disease itself is immune to itself, which is illogical, so *enfermedad autoinmunitaria* should be preferred.<sup>8</sup>

### *Covid and coronavirus*

If we have a text on Covid-19 in our hands, it is useful to know that fluid-resistant surgical mask is a *mascarilla quirúrgica resistente a salpicaduras*, or that coronavirus, although often used inappropriately to refer to the disease, does not correspond to the disease itself but to the virus that causes it.<sup>9</sup>

### *AGT*

We can also discover that the acronym AGT has sixteen possible meanings in Spanish that are frequent in medical texts, of which some are equivalent to English acronyms, such as *ácidos grasos totales*, TFA (total fatty acids); *ácidos grasos trans*, TFA (trans fatty acids), and *amnesia global transitoria*, TGA (transient global amnesia).<sup>10</sup>

## **Redefining Publishing in the Digital Age**

Many of the important decisions at a publisher that provides resources for translators should be based on how translators translate, whether or not they use artificial intelligence, and whether the content can benefit from their relationship with it. In 2020, *Cosnautas* launched IRIS, a text analyzer that looks for potential translation difficulties, with an embryonic form of AI, and is now evaluating whether to develop a tool for editing translated texts or a translation engine. The starting



<https://unsplash.com/photos/black-framed-eyeglasses-on-book>

point is always the customer experience, but the experience of what: the initial reading (1), the post-editing (2) or the translation (3)? Which is the phase to address if the translation experiences and techniques of each user vary and are unpredictable?

Going back to our first example, should Cosnautas aim for a tool that when faced with "Aminoacids are the building blocks of proteins": 1) simply highlights the term building blocks as a complex translation term and links it to the dictionary entry (something IRIS already does); 2) revises the translation "Los aminoácidos son los bloques de construcción de las proteínas" and points out that bloques de construcción might not be an optimal translation; or 3) simply translates the sentence as "Los aminoácidos son las unidades constituyentes de las proteínas?" All three approaches have advantages and disadvantages—a translation service may have a higher commercial value while the proofreading function seems to be better suited to a variety of origins of translated texts.

If artificial intelligence becomes capable of sufficiently fine-tuning the context and "understanding" well enough that terms in certain positions, in proximity to other terms, have infrequent meanings, perhaps a system that translates with Cosnautas is the best performing idea. However, that moment still seems far away— as long as the ability of the AI (so attached to the crudity of mere statistics) to resolve these subtleties is so low, perhaps the best way to take advantage of the content of Cosnautas is only that of a translation assistant, which does not translate, but only gives recommendations when consulted.

Since poor translations in the medical field can have catastrophic effects, it makes sense to continue to trust that clients will value its quality. Therefore, translators will continue to place importance on finding sources of accuracy, clarity, and correctness, provided they are sufficiently available and adaptable to their changing ways of working.

If the concept of the book began to change at the beginning of the millennium with the advent of the E-book and we had to stretch it a bit to continue calling electronic dictionaries, which are basically databases with search engines, books, it is worth asking whether we can continue to call publishing the process by which a publisher shares with its clients (or users) not simply content (text, images, etc.) but computer services that process the content to automatically adapt it to the purposes that users tend to give it.

With medical translation, we are witnessing how publishing is migrating from the definitive and unique sale of physical objects with usable content in a single way (as was the case with printed dictionaries) to the provision of temporary and renewable access to digital content that is transformed and integrated into multiple forms of use.

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## ATA MEDICAL DIVISION

### Calendar of Events



#### ATA66 – Boston, MA

Medical Division Distinguished  
Speaker: Erin Halman

- Debriefing and Self Care for  
Medical Translators and Interpreters

Thursday, October 23, 2025  
1:30–2:30 p.m. EDT

- The Language of Palliative Care

Friday, October 24, 2025  
1:30–2:30 p.m. EDT

Mark your calendars and stay connected  
with us at [ata-md.org](https://ata-md.org)

\* Details on the MD Annual Dinner at  
ATA66 coming soon. Stay tuned! \*

Caduceus Team

Silvia Villacampa | Gabriela Penrod |  
Andreea Boscor