# Birmingham Community Health Information Translation Project

## How to Identify and Solve Translation Challenges

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# Aims and Objectives

This presentation will explore some common challenges facing translators and suggest some possible strategies for solving them.

Contents
1. What are translation challenges?
2. Types of translation challenge
3. Names and acronyms
4. Intercultural differences
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6. Research resources

# What are Translation Challenges?

A translation challenge arises in any situation where there may be more than one way of expressing the content of the source text, or where you might need to make specific changes due to the cultural expectations or assumed knowledge of the receivers.

You will need to think carefully about the best solutions for these challenges and might need to do some research to find the solutions.

# Names and Acronyms

Sometimes there will be proper names or acronyms in your source text that the readers might not understand. For example:

> "The NHS does not offer any COVID-19 vaccinations to the public unless it is approved as safe and effective by the UK regulator."

In this example, NHS and UK regulator are considered to be translation challenges.

To translate these appropriately you need to ask yourself if the reader would know and understand them as they are, or if you might need to add more information, or perhaps even leave them out.

> "Covid-19 vaccinations are only offered to the public if they have been proved to be safe and effective."
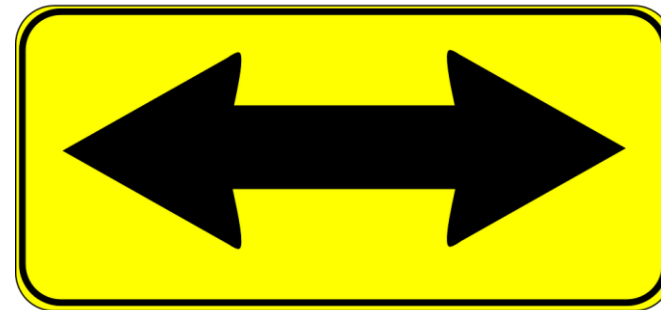
# Intercultural Differences

These arise when there are differences in conventions between the two cultures.

It includes things like measurements and numbers

and the structure and layout of a document.

# Linguistic Differences

These arise when there are structural differs between the two languages. They include things like the order of words in a sentence and how ideas like the past and the future are expressed.

A translator needs to know the target language really well to know whether linguistic differences have been taken into account effectively.

Linguistic problems can also be related to terminology, the specialised words and phrases used in a specific subject area.

Side effects

Herd immunity

Immune response

COVID-19
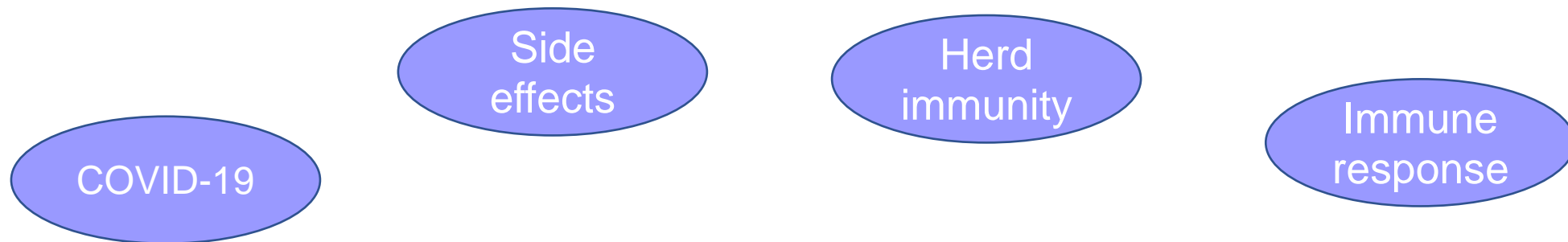
# Research Strategies

Sometimes your knowledge of the target language and culture will be enough to help you solve translation challenges. Sometimes you might need to find out more information before deciding how to translate something.

How?

1. Use the internet to do research
   - Online glossaries
   - Previously translated documents
   - Search engines
   - Online translation

2. Ask an expert.

There will not always be a clear solution to your challenge. As the translator it is your job to select what you think is the best solution.

# Summary

- Most translations will have some challenging elements.
- It helps to identify these challenges before you start to translate.
- There are several ways to research possible solutions.
- It is up to the translator to choose the best solution from the options available.