

BROADCAST #2

Steps 1-4

LIAM:

Greetings from Liam and Sofia. We are continuing the story of how our people were able to receive God's word in our mother tongue language. Last time we shared about our family and language community that does not have God's Word in their mother tongue. The Bible is only in the national language of our country. Our own mother had not been able to read or hear God's message. We were fearful that she would never hear God's message in her mother tongue before she dies.

SOFIA:

Then our cousin Samuel shared an amazing new process that we could use to see the Bible in our mother tongue in under a year! Our team of Caleb, James and Ruth have been working for a couple months now using this new process called MAST. MAST stands for **Mobilized Assistance Supporting Translation**, developed by a mission organization called Wycliffe Associates. We have seen the book of Mark translated and printed for our people already.

LIAM:

In a few moments we would like to share some of the first steps in the process

SOFIA:

Since we started this process, I have been amazed at the number of times that scripture talks about translation or the need to have God's Word in a form that people can understand and respond to. The other day I was reading from 1 Corinthians 14. This is a passage where Paul is teaching on the use of spiritual gifts. In the middle of this instruction, there is a verse that seemed to be very important. In verse 9 it says that if you speak words that are unintelligible, how will anyone understand what you have said? You will be speaking, and no one will understand you. The end of the verse says that it would be like you are speaking into the air.

LIAM:

The point is that when a people only have scripture in a foreign language, to those people it has no value, it makes no connection to their heart, and it is spoken into the air.

SOFIA:

Even though our team is all fluent in English, there are parts of scripture that seem to be in the air, beyond our understanding.

LIAM:

It is our desire to bring all of scripture out of the air and make it understandable to our people.

SOFIA:

We mentioned that we would like to talk about the first 4 steps in the MAST process. But first, we need to ask the question, what do we translate from?

LIAM:

That is a good question. Even in our national language, there are several versions and different people will like different versions. So, what is the best?

SOFIA:

I really like the Unlocked Literal Bible which is commonly used for MAST translation. It allows all of us on the translation team to have the same version to translate from, which helps with consistency. The Unlocked Literal Bible is what we call our source text.

LIAM:

Yes! We also call the Unlocked Literal Bible “ULB.” It is a literal version of the Bible specifically for translation. Also, I like it because it also avoids copyright issues. Copyright refers to laws that limit the rights to copy or translate something without the copyright owner’s permission.

SOFIA:

That’s right – it is a “Share and Share Alike Copyright,” which makes it easier to publish updates.

LIAM:

At the end of our first conversation, we mentioned who to contact if you wanted to get involved with seeing God’s word in your mother tongue.

SOFIA:

If there is not a sponsoring agency in your area, then email (radio@wycliffeassociates.org or reachingalldialects@gmail.com) with your questions and requests for help starting a project.

LIAM:

If you do not have a laptop or internet access, you can still do the work using paper and you can receive the help to do so from the sponsoring agency.

SOFIA:

We have mentioned the online tool, V-MAST. It stands for Virtual Mast. If you are able, go ahead and connect with V-MAST at v-mast.com. We suggest that you do what we did and begin with Mark. Once you connect to Mark 1, you will see that there is a step before you begin the Eight Steps. It is prayer. It is a step that should be taken first and repeated throughout the work no matter the tool you are using to translate. Ask for the Holy Spirit to guide us in all that we do, in every decision and word choice.

We were able to get printed copies of the book of Mark in the ULB version from our sponsoring organization. It did take a while before they arrived, but we did not want to delay the work, so we began the work using other versions of the Bible that we already had. They also helped us to print some paper that just had lines on it for writing out the drafts. Another way to get the ULB source text and additional translation help is on the website bibleineverylanguage.org.

LIAM:

Here we go with the **Eight Steps** of MAST!

SOFIA:

We call **Step One – Consume**. We often use this term to refer to eating, when we take in food. Our first step is to take a chapter of scripture and consume it, by reading and understanding what is being said. Sometimes we found chapters to be too long for this step and we would choose a smaller portion. With the book of Mark, some of the chapters are too long, so we divided some of the chapters into two portions. It should be a portion that can be read 2-3 times in a period of 8 minutes or less.

LIAM:

The purpose of **Step One - Consume**, is to gain understanding about the story or topic. This step is done by each person on the team, by themselves with the chapter of scripture assigned to them. We mentioned in the first conversation that our team of five, divided the book of Mark into five parts, and each team member was assigned his own chapters to work on.

SOFIA:

I took the first chapter from what I was assigned, sat down by myself, and read my copy of the ULB version of Mark. I read it three times and got a good understanding of the story. It took about 8 minutes.

LIAM:

Wow, that sounds easy. You mean all you did was take a portion and read it a few times so that you understood the passage?

SOFIA:

Yes, that was exactly what I did.

LIAM:

Step Two is Verbalize. To verbalize means to speak out loud, not in our head or talking to our self, but say the words out loud without reading along in the source text.

SOFIA:

It is best if you can do this step with another person but if no one is available, then speak it out loud by yourself. *What* are you saying out loud?

LIAM:

You are retelling the story or chapter that you just **Consumed**. This is like when I mentioned about sharing newspaper articles with my friends that cannot read our national language. I read it thoroughly and then retold the article in our mother tongue language, trying to be accurate, clear and complete. I told them what the story is about and what the main points are.

SOFIA:

When I retell the story, I share who is in the passage, where they are, and what happened. Is that okay? This step takes the portion that I've **Consumed** in our national language and moves it through my brain and into my mother tongue language. So, when we **Verbalize**, we say it aloud in our language.

LIAM:

Yes, Sofia, there are a few ways to verbalize and your way is fine too. When I speak this chapter to another person, they listen quietly until the end. This is not a time to discuss the passage or debate the translation. When I finish, the listener can comment if something is unclear. I sat down with Sofia and after reading my first chapter to myself in the source text, I turned to Sofia and told the story in our mother tongue the best that I could. It really helped me to get the story set in my mind in our language. This step usually takes two to three minutes.

SOFIA:

After Liam verbalized his chapter to me, it was my turn to verbalize my chapter to him. I read my source text a few more times, then put my source text away and retold Liam what I remembered from that passage.

LIAM:

So, it is clear to everyone, Sofia, each person works on one chapter at a time. Okay, what is **Step Three**?

SOFIA:

Step Three is called **Chunking**. Chunk and chunking may sound like strange words. What you are doing is taking the chapter that you consumed and verbalized and breaking it into smaller pieces. For example, when you have a large loaf of bread, you usually break or cut it into smaller pieces or slices for eating.

LIAM:

Look over the chapter that you **Consumed** and begin to separate it into smaller pieces or thoughts that can be remembered and translated at one time. There will be 1-3 verses of scripture in each chunk.

SOFIA:

On the paper copy of my source text, I drew a line to divide the chapter into several chunks.

LIAM:

We each did this with the entire chapter that we were working on.

It took me about 5 minutes to break my chapter into smaller **Chunks**. I read through the chapter and drew lines to separate each chunk. Each chunk was a complete thought that I could easily remember and rewrite.

SOFIA:

Step Four is Blind Draft. This is taking the scripture in the source text and writing it in our mother tongue language. Again, each person works on his own chapter.

LIAM:

Blind Drafting is the most challenging step. Do not worry, it will get easier and easier the more you do it.

SOFIA:

I took the first chunk of 2 verses and read it over 3-4 times in the source text. Then I took a minute to think about how I would say it in my mother tongue language. Then I covered it and wrote everything I could remember from that chunk.

LIAM:

I found it helpful to write on the first line and leave the next few lines blank. That seemed very wasteful, but I was glad to have the extra space for adding corrections later. I did not worry about putting in the verse numbers in this step; that will happen later.

SOFIA:

Once I read the chunk, I quickly wrote it out in my mother tongue. I was not trying to memorize the passage word for word but tried to make it sound natural in my language. This first draft will never be perfect. I always leave something out or add something that was not in that chunk of scripture and making mistakes. That is ok. We have four different checking steps that come after the **Blind Draft**.

LIAM:

I had to resist the urge to look back at the source text. It was very hard not to look back especially when we first started translating. I tried hard and needed many corrections but by chapter two, it was getting easier. By chapter three, I no longer had to stop my hand from reaching for the source text in the middle of writing the translation. It took about 5-8 minutes for each chunk.

SOFIA:

Samuel shared that when they did their translation, there were some who looked at the source text while translating; in fact, some were even drafting word for word. Later in the day when the team members read their translated material to each other, it was clear to everyone which person did the step properly and who looked back at the source text. Those that looked and did not hide the source text for the drafting, sounded rough and broken. Those that did a true “blind” draft had a translation that sounded smooth and natural.

LIAM:

In our next conversation we will look at the next four steps. These steps will check the translations for accuracy, clarity and naturalness.

SOFIA:

Before we meet the next time, Liam and I would like to challenge you to meet with your team and practice the Four Steps that we’ve discussed today.

LIAM:

That’s right, Sofia. Remember, we all met together and worked through the four steps together. We chose Mark 1:1-20; that way we could compare the steps and become comfortable and familiar with them.

SOFIA:

Last broadcast we began a story about Sani and a group of Militants. Let’s go to the beginning of the story and see the miraculous events that led to this unbelievable sharing of God’s Word in their mother tongue language.

LIAM:

Our friend, Sani, is a former Militant, that is now a Christian. He has a heart for his family and people in his community that worship other gods. He played a key role in helping to see God’s Word translated into his own mother tongue.

SOFIA:

One day, Sani received a phone call from an unknown number. He answered the call and the caller said that he and his friends knew that Sani was also from their people group and mother tongue and that Sani often shared about Jesus in their language. The caller asked if Sani would come and meet with them to share more about this Jesus.

LIAM:

Sani was aware that there are those that would wish him harm because of his conversion to Christ and his preaching. He suspected that the caller and his friends may even be from a militant Islamic group that was attempting to trap him. Sani said, “No” to their request to meet.

SOFIA:

The next day the caller phoned again, begging Sani to come and meet with them. As Sani continued to hesitate, the caller said, first please listen to this story we have tell.

LIAM:

During our next conversation we will continue with Sani's story and hear about the amazing visions that these callers experienced.

SOFIA:

That's it for now. If your mother tongue does not yet have God's Word and you would like to be a part of seeing that happen send **an_email_to_reachingalldialects@gmail.com** **or_radio@wycliffeassociates.org**, **[or call/text...](tel:)** In the meantime, share this good news with others, assemble a team and begin practicing the first four steps we have just shared. Pick a short narrative, maybe Mark 1:1-20 like we did.