



### **Wycliffe Associates Conversation Guide**

Thank you for joining Wycliffe Associates in the mission of Church-Owned Bible Translation. We pray this guide will equip you to train and inspire our global partners so that they may become ambassadors of Bible translation around the world.

The following guide is intended to help accomplish our organizational vision for Church-Owned Bible Translation.

This Guide is comprised of Conversation Guides for each training topic. These are designed to direct conversations rather than offer scripts to follow verbatim. The guides are simply a path to follow in achieving each training objective.

The Guide also provides a mechanism for the Discipleship Team to track translation partner progress in the D/T Activity section of our PORT Database. The STEP philosophy, which you will learn more about in individual training, provides a structural framework for achieving Church-Owned Bible Translation. The conversations in this guide offer direction for expressing, facilitating, and tracking the STEP progression of our National Partners.

Note: “Conclusions” are essential to ensure that partners fully understand each training activity. A “Helpful Questions” section accompanies each training activity to give examples of what you might ask to elicit the content of each “Conclusion.” You may already have other/better questions to ask, and that is fantastic. The goal is to have the partner give sufficient feedback on these topics to exhibit their understanding of the implementation required. (These were formerly called “teach backs.”)

\*In this conversation guide, *translator* is used to refer to the person who is being trained. It may not always be a translator, but someone who is going to lead and train others to translate.

\*\*In this conversation guide, *local church* is used to refer to the believers of a mother-tongue community whether they are from the same local gathering of believers or not.

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## 00. Introduction to WA

*Objective: The translators will understand our vision and mission and consider whether those match with their own goals.*

- Ask what members of the group think of when they think about Bible translation ministries.
  - Many think mostly of people who go to places far from their own home, to help translate Holy Scripture into a language that has none.

For more than 50 years, Wycliffe Associates has raised funds and recruited volunteers to provide practical support services to Bible translation workers.

In 2014, Wycliffe Associates piloted the first MAST translation event, and trained mother-tongue translators in this new methodology.

**Impact Story from B People of Nepal:** In 2014, a pastor from a small language community of the Himalayan mountains hiked into the city to meet with Wycliffe Associates missionaries about getting Scripture in his language. This young pastor told his brother his exciting discovery: they could launch the translation project themselves, with WA training and support! The two of them began to translate—and to recruit other believers to join them. In November of that year, a group of 13 gathered for training and translation of Scripture using the new MAST process. Within 2 weeks, this exceptional group had translated and checked 48% of the New Testament. They continued to work over the next months, finishing their New Testament in less than 2 years. The success, then, was immediate: there was unprecedented acceleration of translation!

During the next several years, Wycliffe Associates shifted its support focus to training translators in this new method. We now provide free, open-license resources to translators around the world.

At Wycliffe Associates, our vision is a Bible in every language.

1. We seek to involve people in the advancement of **Church-Owned Bible Translation**, through free training and tools. (We'll talk more about Church-Owned Bible Translation in an upcoming session.)
2. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–15 together. Talk about the metaphor of sowing. What does this passage teach us? God desires generosity from his children. We cannot outgive God. WA chooses to serve partners with a generous heart, because God has given so much to us.
3. We desire to train and equip partners who can train and equip other partners, in pursuit of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20).

**Helpful Questions:**

- Does what has been explained match with the team's vision?
- If not, why not?

**Conclusion: Participants understand that Wycliffe Associates is committed to serving the local church in achieving and spreading Bible translation to every language. They have considered whether WA's vision and mission match their own.**

## 1. Church-Owned Bible Translation (COBT)

This topic consists of two modules:

- The Four Beliefs about COBT (1a)
- The Six Behaviors of COBT (1b)

### 1a. The Four Beliefs about Church-Owned Bible Translation

*Objective: The translators will understand and accept the four beliefs about COBT.*

Wycliffe Associates believes that the local church possesses the Ability, Authority, Responsibility, and Accountability for their Scripture translations.

- Ask local leaders to give their definitions of each belief. We can then augment those definitions with our organizational expression of these beliefs.
  1. **Ability: The local Church with bilingual local believers has the ability to translate the Bible into their language.** The local believers understand their language and culture better than an outsider, and typically, the local multilingual believers have skill in sharing meaning through oral translation.
  2. **Authority: The local church has the authority to translate the Bible into its own language.** God's Spirit resides in every believer. He provides wisdom and gives each believer authority to share, teach, or translate God's Word according to the specific abilities and opportunities God has given him.
  3. **Responsibility: The local church has the responsibility to translate the Bible into its own language.** God gives local believers the responsibility to evangelize and disciple their community. Translating the Scripture into the heart language of the people is an essential part of that responsibility.
  4. **Accountability: The local believers are accountable to God and to one another for translating the Scripture** accurately and clearly into their heart language and for making it accessible to the community.

### Helpful Questions:

- Have they ever overheard someone who shares their heart language translate something from another language into their heart language? How well did he communicate the same message?
- Have they ever heard an outsider translate something from his own language into their heart language? How well did he communicate the same message?
- Which is easier for them: translating into their heart language or from their heart language into their second language?

- How do they understand authority? What does authority include in their culture? (Examples: the right to make decisions, the right to tell people what to do, the right to change things, the right to start new things, etc.)
- What areas are included in responsibility for the translation? (Examples: overseeing the process, ensuring progress, seeking outside help, making decisions on quality, etc.)

**Conclusion: The translators understand the four beliefs about COBT and have considered how those beliefs apply to their local church.**

### **1b. The Six Behaviors of Church-Owned Bible Translation**

*Objective: The translators will understand and value the complete vision of Church-Owned Bible Translation and will take ownership of their part within that. They will have a clear understanding of the full commitment this vision requires.*

- Ask the translators to explain what they think of as church-owned Bible translation. (Note: Their suggested elements may be a good starting point for the later conversation about Quality Assessment.) Make a list of what they share. Then make sure to explain all 6 behaviors of COBT (expanding on any they have already mentioned).
  1. Mother-tongue speakers, in fellowship with their local church, take responsibility for translating the Bible into the heart language of their local community.
  2. The local church manages community accessibility to the translated Scripture.
  3. Continuing refinement and revision will take place within the community, with mother-tongue Christian speakers.
  4. The church engages the local community in Scripture usage.
  5. The local church shares the concept and methodology of church-owned Bible translation with other language communities.
  6. The local church takes ownership of generational revisions and updates to the Scripture.

#### **Helpful Questions:**

- What part of Church-Owned Bible Translation is new for them?
- How can they see this working in their community?
- What barriers do they see for their local church in truly owning translation?
- Can they think of any way they may be able to share the vision of COBT with other believers in their language community?

Understanding the full expression of COBT will help the translators to plan and prepare—not only for the completion of their own translation, but also for sharing this with others.

**Conclusion: The translators understand the 6 behaviors that are the responses to the 4 beliefs about COBT. They have begun to consider their own role, as well as their community's role, in enacting these behaviors for their language group.**

## 2. Open Copyright Licensing

*Objective: The translators will understand the purposes and benefits of open copyright licensing. The translators will commit to releasing their work with a CC BY-SA license.*

- Find out what they already understand about copyright. Is the Bible they use copyrighted? What does this mean? Make a list of what they share.
- Introduce CC BY-SA licensing: Explain what the letters CC BY-SA mean.
  - CC stands for *Creative Commons*. It is an organization that helps people license their work in a way that gives permission to others to legally copy, adapt, and distribute the work.
  - BY stands for *attribution*. It means that people may distribute or adapt the work so long as they give credit to the creator of the work. (Re-users must tell who the work they used was “by.”)
  - SA stands for *Share Alike*. This means that when people make and share an adaptation of the original work, they must use the same kind of license. This gives permission to others to copy, adapt, and share the new work.
- Ask how this seems different from what they know about traditional copyrights.
- Explain what CC BY-SA licensing does.
  - This license provides a standard way to grant the public permission to use creative work under copyright law. From the re-user’s perspective, the presence of this license on a copyrighted work answers the question, “What can I do with this work?”
  - This licensing makes it possible for others to copy, adapt, or distribute a translation without seeking permission or paying fees to WA or to the local church.
  - This licensing prevents others from taking the translated work and restricting the right to copy, adapt, or distribute it.
  - Most WA source text is licensed this way. It allows others to use and adapt the source material without seeking permission or paying a licensing fee. Translation of these source texts must be released with a CC BY-SA license.
- Explain the difference between copyright with CC BY-SA and the traditional practice of Bible societies’ holding the copyright and reserving their rights to copy, share, and adapt Bible translations.

### Helpful Questions:

- Who owns the translation?
- Who can print or otherwise publish it?
- What does the CC BY-SA licensing allow people to do with the translated work?
- What could happen if their translation does not have this Attribution-Share Alike license?

**Conclusion: The translators have expressed understanding of how our licensing agreement is different from what is generally expected, prior to being asked to sign the agreement.**

### 3. Release Early, Revise Often

*Objective: The translators will understand that releasing the translation for use does not mean it is done for good, but rather will need revisions and updates.*

- Explain briefly how Martin Luther published portions of his German translation and looked for the feedback of the community to be able to improve his next publication of it. Express that the modern translations of today have committees who receive and review feedback for updates to the version in subsequent publishing.
- Explain the philosophy of releasing the translation early and revising it often. Discuss the implications of this philosophy.
  - This means that translators release their translation when they believe that it is the best that they can make it at the time. They do not have to wait to finish a particular amount.
  - As the translation is used, translators will need to make corrections, improvements, and updates. The local church will need to determine when and how to make those updates and release the work again, keeping in mind that language changes significantly over time, which makes revisions necessary.
  - Suggest that they consider putting together a team of people from different denominations who will receive feedback on the translation and determine when it is time to produce an update. Planning ahead and taking steps now will help them to be ready, rather than surprised or overwhelmed, when people want to give feedback about changes that need to be made.

#### Helpful Questions:

- What kinds of improvements might they be looking to make in the future? (For example, they might change some of the words, improve the format, or print it on higher quality paper.)
- Do they have concerns about the idea of “releasing early”?
- If they have concerns, what do they see as solutions for these concerns?
- What could happen to the translation if the team does not release the translation early? (Example: In the past, translations have taken so long to reach the people who need them that changes in language mean that the translation already needs to be revised.)

The idea of releasing early can be daunting because translators often want their work to be perfect before it is released. Knowing ahead of time that past translators released their work early so that they could get feedback will help these translators to overcome their hesitancy and reassure them that letting people read their translation is a positive step for the local church.

**Conclusion: Translators have understood the importance of both releasing early and revising often. They understand the challenges, as well, and have begun to discuss and address their own concerns about these things.**



#### 4. Statement of Faith

*Objective: Each translator will understand the beliefs described in the statement of faith and agree to them in writing.*

- Ask what they think of as a “statement of faith.”
  - This is a list of the beliefs that a community agrees to.
  - For believers, this is a list of primary beliefs from Scripture. (Emphasize that we believe Scripture is God’s Word.)
- WA seeks partners who share our core values and beliefs. We ask them to sign a simple statement of faith that clearly states the essential beliefs of the Christian faith as we understand them from Scripture.
- Our core beliefs come from God’s Word.
- Many Christians have non-primary beliefs that vary from one another. (Example: baptism by immersion or sprinkling.) Differing in these non-primary beliefs will not keep us from working together.
- The statement of faith provides us with common ground—defining what is most important, building unity, and creating a foundation for us to work together.
- Discuss each belief in the “Statement of Faith” document (Appendix A). Ensure all translators understand and agree in writing.
  - This means going through each one and expressing its full meaning (while trying to avoid deep, lengthy theological discussions). You may want to do this by asking them to explain what they understand and then filling in any blanks for them.

#### **Helpful Questions:**

- Is there any belief expressed in the statement of faith that they struggle to understand?
- Are there beliefs that they find encouraging or challenging?
- Are there any beliefs they hold that are not represented in the statement?
- What could happen if some of the translators do not agree with the statement of faith?

**Conclusion: The translators have understood and agreed with the statement of faith and are willing to sign it in order to partner with WA and take ownership of their own project.**

## 5. Oral and Written Translation

*Objective: The translators will have the information they need to decide which process is best for doing their heart language (HL) translation.*

- Explain that when we serve language groups in translating Scripture into their own language, each group needs to decide what is the best form of Scripture for their particular community. We encourage them make good, informed decisions on this.
- Explain that many language groups do not yet have a standardized writing system (also called an orthography).
- Explain that some language communities rely on oral communication. They derive meaning through oral means that other (literate) cultures might prefer to derive in writing. These language communities, then, value their orality as a significant part of their unique culture. They express themselves orally in words, songs, and stories in a way that they couldn't in writing. Because of this, these communities typically prefer an oral Bible translation.
- In contrast, other communities that do not yet have a standard writing system would like to communicate important cultural information in written form. They might highly value and desire literacy and believe that their community would benefit more from a written form of Scripture. (This includes those who believe that the preservation of their language hinges on developing a writing system.) Because of this, these communities usually prefer a written Bible translation.

In these instances, work is required to help them to develop a writing system and to further develop literacy in their own language, especially if they do not have literacy in another language already. This will usually mean that they need help from another organization, as WA does not specialize in creating entirely new orthographies or developing community literacy.

- Explain that it is the local Church that should make the decision on the best way to proceed with translating Scripture into their own language. That is, those who are believers in the community and are invested in getting Scripture for their heart language are the ones who will best know whether an oral or written translation will serve their community most effectively in the near future. If the language has never been written and the people are proud of their choice to use oral communication, they are likely used to important truths and messages being passed to them orally. They will be best served (at least for the present) with an oral translation. It also may sometimes be impractical for different reasons for a community to get a written translation right away (examples: lack of access to power, disruption or persecution, government restrictions).
- Ask if the people in the community will have a way to regularly listen to an oral translation—like a chargeable mp3 player or smart phone.
- Ask if the language community prefers oral communication for important information.
- Ask if people read and write in any language. (This does not have to be their heart language.)

- If they say yes, ask some more questions to determine if only certain age groups, cultural groups, or socioeconomic classes are literate or if many people are literate.
  - There will often be a relationship between the overall literacy rates of a community and their desire for a written Bible translation.
- Ask how much literacy in their heart language is encouraged and desired. (If this is a high priority of the community, it may be that they choose a written translation even if only a small percentage are literate at the time of the decision.)
- Ask what could happen if the church does not consider the people's abilities and preferences when deciding whether to release a translation in written format or audio format.
- Tell about the options for translation process and format.
  - Translate the Scripture in writing for a written translation.
  - Translate the Scripture in writing and make an audio recording.
  - Translate the Scripture by speaking and producing an oral translation. (This may later be transcribed to produce a written translation.)
- Ask if the people who will do the translation are literate in the gateway language (GL).
  - Explain that the source text is in written form in the GL. If translators are not literate in the GL, they may be able to listen to an audio recording of the GL text or have someone read it out loud to them. (People have begun making audio recordings of GL texts, but—so far—only the English Bible and portions of some other language Bibles are available.)
- Give a brief overview of the tools and support WA can offer for translating either in writing or orally.

**Helpful Questions:**

- Is there a cultural preference for written or oral messages?
- Has the church in their language actively encouraged education or literacy?
- Which format (written or oral) do they think will be most useful to the community right away?
- Considering the discussion so far, which process do they think will be best?

When translators understand the options, they will make an informed decision about how they will do their translation, and they will be better prepared to assist others in making this decision.

**Conclusion: The translators have begun to understand the importance of making the right decisions about the best process and format for their translation, and they have started to recognize some of the factors they must weigh in making those decisions. They have understood that these decisions are in their hands, not ours.**

## 6. MAST Preparation

This topic consists of two modules:

- Meaning-Based Translation (6a)
- Quality Assessment (6b)

### 6a. MAST Preparation—Meaning-Based Translation

*Objective: The translators will be able to describe what a meaning-based translation is and explain the difference between it and a literal translation.*

- Start by explaining that meaning-based translation does not focus so much on each individual word, but instead on the overall meaning of the message, while a literal translation tries to restate each word of the message as directly as possible.
  - *(Optional)* Share that beyond meaning-based translation is summary or paraphrastic translation where the translator just gives his own expression of the message. We do not consider these to be valid translations. People have produced versions of Scripture using this kind of summary style, and those versions can be very useful for other purposes. However, we should distinguish them from valid translations. (If applicable, you can share that *The Message* is an example of that in English.)
- Give a direct translation example. (A direct translation of the Spanish phrase that means “Nice to meet you. My name is \_\_\_\_\_” would be “Much I like. Myself, I call \_\_\_\_\_.”)
- Try having someone translate the following: “Hi, my name is Sam. I am very blessed to be here today. By God’s grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, Scripture will be translated into our own tongue.”

### Helpful Questions:

- Ask the person who translated the paragraph if they translated each word by itself or if they translated the message.
- Ask them to explain the difference.
- Ask if they can give an example of a literal translation from their heart language (HL), word by word, into English and then explain or retranslate it in a meaningful way. Perhaps they could give a literal word-by-word translation into English of the paragraph they had just translated into their own language.
- What would their Scripture translation be like if they translated it literally this way?

**Clarification:**

- Explain that they will still encounter particular words that need special care when being translated into their heart language, in order for their meaning to come through clearly. (This will prepare them for what could seem like a contrary perspective when we come to DFTs.)

**Conclusion: Translators understand that the 8 steps of MAST are designed to create a meaning-based translation. That means the translation will sound natural and clear in their heart language when they faithfully follow the 8 steps.**

**6b. MAST Preparation – Quality Assessment**

*Objective: The translators will understand the value of an objective guide to check the quality of the translation. They will create an assessment guide and be prepared to use it in checking the Scripture.*

- Explain that everyone we work with tells us they are dedicated to creating a quality Bible translation. We believe the local church owns their translation, and they are the best positioned to affirm both quality and naturalness in their heart language. One useful tool we've found to help ensure a translation meets the community standard is by building a Quality Assessment Guide.
- Explain that often, even when outside “professional consultants” have been involved, Scripture checking has relied on loosely defined standards. That is, people have different assumptions about what makes a translation accurate, clear, and natural, and even experts sometimes disagree as to whether a particular passage has been translated accurately or not. This can be frustrating for translators. A goal for translators should be to have an objective guide for measuring the quality of their translation.
- Ask the translators if they understand the difference between objective and subjective standards. Objective standards are consistent and can be measured. Example 1: “The average temperature in February in Milwaukee, WI, is 23°F/–5°C.” Subjective standards can change and are based on opinions. Example 2: “The average temperature in February in Milwaukee is very cold.” Both examples are commonly believed to be true statements, but the precision of the first statement allows it to be measured. A person could take the temperature each day throughout the month of February and verify the average temperature in Milwaukee.
- To use objective standards when they build a Quality Assessment Guide, translators agree on a set of standards for their translation, along with definitions for those standards. Then they use those definitions to create questions that can be answered YES or NO about the translation. They put their standards, definitions, and questions in their guide. Later, when they check their translation, they use the guide to see if the translation conforms to the standards.
- Make sure you explain that the standards are related to the content of the translation, not the process or the product. For example: “It must have a green cover” is not about the

content. Characteristics like that will be addressed later in Acceptability and Accessibility.

- Use the following steps, referring to CG Appendix C, to build a Quality Assessment Guide.
  - Step 1—Discuss the qualities listed on CG Appendix C one at time. Guide the group to define each quality.
  - Step 2—Ask the group if there are any other qualities they would like to add and define.
  - Step 3—Using the definitions just discussed guide the group to create 1-3 yes or no questions for each quality.

**Helpful Questions:**

- What advantage does this kind of quality assessment guide give to translators?
- How will you plan to use this guide? Which people will have a copy of it?

**Conclusion: The translators have a completed Quality Assessment Guide, and they know how to use it to check their translation as they work.**

## 7. MAST Process

This topic consists of two modules:

- Drafting Steps (7a)
- Checking Steps (7b)

### 7a. MAST Process - Drafting Steps (1–4)

*Objective: The translators will be ready to try the 4 drafting steps so that they can personally experience the results.*

- Briefly introduce the 8 steps of MAST using the MAST Steps document (the file name is CG Appendix B MAST Steps).
  - You can do this by explaining that the first four are drafting steps (and use your left-hand fingers for each step) and the second set of four are checking steps (and use your right-hand fingers for each step).
- Emphasize the importance of the timeframes given for steps one and two. The brain can only handle so much new information (input) before it needs to do something with it (output). If step one is going to take longer than 7 minutes, have the translator pause and think about what he has read; he can even get up and walk around for a minute while he reviews in his mind. Then he can continue reading.
- We suggest that you use one of the two options below for helping trainees get practice in using the MAST steps.
  - Have the team use the first four steps to draft a portion of Scripture.
  - Have the team use the first four steps to draft “MAST Steps” onto the blank portion of the document.
    - Instead of allowing them to skip step three by just chunking each step separately, ask them to look over the full document and group together the largest sections they can think of drafting.

#### Helpful Questions:

- Did they follow the first four steps carefully? How do they feel about their draft?
- What steps of the process did they wrestle with most? Why?
- Are they eager to check their work and improve it?

**Conclusion: The translators have tried the first four drafting steps and understand the importance of maintaining timing for these steps.**

**7b. MAST Process - Checking Steps (5–8)**

*Objective: The translators will be ready to try the 4 checking steps, so they can personally experience the results.*

- Briefly review the 4 drafting steps (unless these two modules are done in one session).
- Explain the process of each checking step using Appendix B. Go over each step individually and ask them if they understand how each one is different from the last.
- Tell them that these steps are not timed and can take as long as a person needs.
- Mention that we offer resources to help with checking, and that we will be showing them how to use those later.
- Have the team practice steps 5–8 on their draft from the previous lesson.
- After they practice, ask translators to go through their Quality Assessment Guide and say at which checking step each characteristic is assessed.

**Helpful Questions:**

- How did they feel about checking their own work? How did they feel about checking someone else's work?
- If there is a standard on their Quality Assessment Guide that is not checked during the 4 checking steps, how can they apply that standard and check the text for it? (For example, they might want the translation to use only words that young adults understand. How would they check for that criterion?)
- Considering all 8 steps, what do they think would happen to their translation if they skipped specific steps? (You can ask this about each step or about just a few of the ones we know they tend to skip—blind draft and self-edit.)
- Would they feel comfortable teaching someone these 8 steps? If not, why not?

**Conclusion: Participants have practiced using the steps. They have been told that a benefit of having translated the 8-step (“CG Appendix B MAST Steps”) document is that it will be available to each translator as a helpful reference throughout the translation process.**



## 8. Divine Familial Terms (DFT)

This topic consists of two modules:

- Divine Familial Terms Belief (8a)
- Divine Familial Terms Practice (8b)

### 8a. Divine Familial Terms Belief

*Objective: The translators will understand what divine familial terms are and will commit to assuring that they translate divine familial terms accurately.*

- Define divine familial terms--God is referred to as “Father” and Jesus as “Son.”
- Discuss the issues that have arisen.
- Express the importance of DFT to the integrity of Scripture and its meaning. (You might want to ask them to think of beliefs that are affected by a correct understanding of these terms.)
  - The nature of the relationship between God and Jesus.
  - The significance of God’s Son being sacrificed on our behalf by his Father.
  - The eternal nature of Jesus. (He did not come into existence at the time of his human birth.)
  - The relationships of the Trinity.

#### Helpful Questions:

- Can translators explain, in their own words, what *divine familial terms* are?
- How important to the translators is it that these terms are expressed clearly and faithfully? Why is this important?
- Can translators think of passages in Scripture where using an incorrect translation of a DFT could result in a misunderstanding of meaning?

Examples:

- 1 John 4:14b—“[T]he Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.” If “Son” is replaced with “beloved one” or some other term, the translation does not make clear that the Savior is God, and it does not show how great God’s sacrifice was.
- John 5:17b–18—(Jesus is speaking) “‘My Father is working even now and I, too, am working.’ Because of this, the Jews sought even more to kill him because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal to God.” If the term “Father” is replaced with “My Lord” or “My Master,” then the idea that Jesus made Himself equal with God makes no sense. The rest of this verse is very confusing if He does not in fact call God “My Father.”
- Other possible verses: John 10:30, 33–39; Hebrews 1:8; John 3:16.

**Conclusion: The translators understand what divine familial terms are and the importance of translating them accurately. The team wants to ensure that the divine familial terms are translated accurately.**

## 8b. Divine Familial Terms Practice

*Objective: Translators will understand WA's policy on how the DFTs must be translated. Translators will know how to use the guides for reviewing their translations of "Father" and "Son."*

Policy: "WA commits to support only Bible translations that use accurate and literal common language terms for 'Father' and 'Son' when referring to God and Jesus Christ."

Plain language: In all the translations we support, Wycliffe Associates is committed to the use of common, familial terms for "Father" and "Son" in reference to God and Jesus.

- Present the policy and explain it with a plain language version.
- Introduce the DFT resource, "Review of Terms Used for God the Father," and demonstrate its use. (Appendix D God the Father Terms) *This resource is designed as a useful aid; translators are not required to complete it and submit it to WA.*
- Show on bibleineverylanguage.org where people can download the four DFT Review Guides PDFs.
  - God the Father Terms
  - God the Father Terms (Old Testament)
  - Son of God Terms
  - Son of God Terms (Old Testament)

### Helpful Questions:

- Can translators explain why the issue of translating the DFTs correctly is so important? (Explain that there are translations which do not accurately translate these terms and discuss problems in meaning which may arise from such practices.)
- In what areas of the world would these resources be important to share with national translators?
- Is there an issue with the understanding of DFTs in the translators' culture?
- What essential doctrines of Christianity are affected by how the divine familial terms are translated? (The deity of Christ, the Trinity.)

**Conclusion: All translators have reviewed and understood the DFT document. It should be available for reference throughout the translation process.**

## 9. Software Tools for Translating

*Objective: The translators will have a general understanding of the software tools available for various ways of translating and a clear understanding of the best tool for their language community to use.*

- Introduce available the available software and how it applies to their chosen method of translation (see p. 9). This conversation should focus on options for the current translators' writing and computer skills and their access to the internet. If you have already had the "Oral versus Written" conversation, it would be good to remind them of what they decided on.
- Discuss the primary translation technology tool best suited to this group. (You could demonstrate it if that seems necessary for the group.)
  - BTT Writer is good if a tablet or computer is available for translators to use. Not every translator has to have a computer. Translators can do all their work with pen and paper and then have a typist who is responsible for putting it into BTT Writer.
  - Autographa is a simple and intuitive program for teams who have low computer literacy, but none of the checking resources are available within the program.
  - V-MAST allows translators to continue working in the same room or in multiple locations, regardless of the distance. It requires a computer and good internet connection for each translator, because they work in V-MAST online.
  - BTT Recorder is for oral translating and for narrating written translations.
  - Orature, which is our most MAST-compliant software, is the newest way to create oral translations and narrations.
- Encourage translators to use the checking resources: Translation Words, Translation Questions, Translation Notes, and Translation Topics. All of these resources in English and some other languages are in BTT Writer and V-MAST. When the needed resources are not available in the tool, people can go to [bibleineverylanguage.org](http://bibleineverylanguage.org) to access and download them.

### Helpful Questions:

- Which tool does this team need to meet their translation goals?
- Have the translators exhibited basic proficiency in the necessary technology?
- What challenges, struggles, and successes have been identified through this process?

**Conclusion: Translators understand the tools available and have determined which one best fits their needs and accessibility plans.**

## 10. Checking Resources

*Objective: Translators and local leaders will know where to access helpful resources and how to use them while doing the four checking steps of MAST. (Refinement and Revision resources will be discussed in a following topic.)*

Translation Notes, Translation Words, Translation Topics, Unlocked Literal Bible (ULB), and Unlocked Dynamic Bible (UDB) are primary resources for the checking steps of MAST. Other resources that could be useful are the WA Bible Commentary and Greek Words for Translators.

- Review the concept of four drafting steps and four checking steps. Ask translators in which set of steps they would make use of helps/resources. (Make sure they understand that the resources are designed for the checking steps. All the drafting steps are to be done with only the source text and no helps.)
- Ask them to think about each checking step for a minute:
  - Go through each checking step and ask what kinds of question they might have and what kinds of resources they might want to look at.
    - For self-edit and peer-edit—other versions of the Bible, a Bible dictionary, a Bible commentary.
    - For keyword check—a Greek lexicon, a Bible commentary, a Bible dictionary, Bible maps, or other cultural visual aids.
    - For verse-by-verse check—a Greek lexicon, other versions of the Bible, a Bible commentary.
  - After they have answered these questions, encourage them by sharing that WA has created a huge library of free resources available online and embedded in some of the translation tools.
- Demonstrate where to find the resources in the translation tool they will be using. If possible, walk through using these resources, giving examples of how they might be helpful. (These are most easily accessed on BTT Writer)
  - Have learners read Matthew 19:24–25. (This is a passage where word pictures and rhetorical questions are explained in the notes.) Ask them what they think the word picture means. Talk about the disciples' question, "Who then can be saved?" Look at the notes for this passage and talk about how the information there would help a translator check their translation of this passage to confirm that the meaning is clear. Ask if they think what the disciples said must be formed as a question. Why or why not?
  - Have learners tell you what they think of as keywords in verses 24 and 25. Ask them to pick one for which they can look at the definition in Translation Words. Discuss how these definitions can help them pick the right word or phrase to translate the meaning of difficult terms.

- Additionally, English resources in PDF form will be provided on USB drives for events, training, and translation projects where no WI-FI is available.
- **Clearly express that the resources have been designed to help during the checking steps.**
  - Explain that using them for the steps leading up to drafting will make drafting much more difficult, take more time, and likely cause the translation to be very awkward instead of natural.

**Helpful Questions:**

- During which steps do they think the resources are most helpful?
- Can translators name a couple places where they can access helpful resources?
- Do they know what kind of help those resources offer? (Definitions of keywords, explanations of figures of speech, links to other verses using the same word, and questions to check that they have accurately and completely translated the passage.)

**Conclusion: Participants understand that the checking resources are an essential part of affirming quality, and that translators will gain proficiency as they practice using them.**

## 11. Refinement and Revision Resources

*Objective: The translators will understand how to use the Reviewers' Guide and other resources to include a wider audience in refining the quality of the translation.*

- Explain that after the 8 steps of MAST are complete, translators should look for feedback on their translation from other Christians in their heart language community.
  - Ask them why they think it would be helpful to involve others.
    - Explain: This will help to affirm the quality and lead to broader community acceptance.
- Ask the translators how they could seek feedback from others. (Through passing out portions to be read and commented on, reading through passages in a group setting like a Sunday School and then discussing it together, etc.)
- Show them “Translation Topics” in the Translation Manual on [Bibleineverylanguage.org](http://Bibleineverylanguage.org) (BIEL) if they have WI-FI and English capability. This resource explains various aspects of translation and provides suggestions for hard-to-translate passages, idioms, or other figures of speech.
- You may want to also show them “Quality Assurance—Refinement and Revision” found inside the Translation Manual on BIEL. It gives information about helpful strategies for refinement and revision.
- Explain that the Reviewers' Guide is a resource that helps involve the community in quality assurance. It covers the primary doctrines of Scripture, as well as each book of the Bible. Explain that it is not comprehensive because it is designed to check the hardest passages.
  - Show them where to access the Reviewers' Guide on BIEL. If the translators have WI-FI, have them follow along with you. Choose one PDF to open and work through several passages of Scripture together.
  - Point out the divine familial terms PDFs. This guide covers every instance where God is referred to as Father and Jesus is referred to as Son. It provides a chart for checking each use, to make sure the translators have used accurate, common-language terms for “Father” and “Son” throughout their translation.
- Tell them about the Greek Words for Translators and WA Bible Commentary, which are also great resources for refinement. They are available on BIEL.

### Helpful Questions:

- How might involving more people in refining the translation affect people's attitudes toward the translation?
- How might using the Reviewers' Guide affect people's attitudes toward the translation?
- Who do the translators plan to involve in refining their completed translation?

- How might they use the Reviewers' Guide to get input from other people?
- What other resources might help them to involve others in refining the work?

**Conclusion: The team understands that getting feedback from a wider audience can help translators refine the translation, and it can give the community greater confidence in its quality.**

## 12. Completion Timeline Strategies

*Objective: The translators will have a plan for completing their Scripture and an awareness of the challenges they may face in completing their plan.*

- Read Luke 14:28–30 and ask the translators how this passage might apply to Bible translation.
- Explain that what Jesus is teaching here about counting the cost is a challenge that translators should consider as they start their translation. Planning for completion from the beginning is necessary.
- Discuss what things should be considered as they develop a plan.
  - Some common issues: translators quit, lost data, broken technology, and so on.
  - Ask them what resources they have in their community to help manage the challenges they might face. (For example, help from a local church for storing equipment, training new translators to help spread the work around, and so on.)
- Ask what kind of goal they would like to set for their completion of the New Testament (NT) or Old Testament (OT).
  - Work with them on developing a reasonable plan considering the length of the NT, how many translators they have committed to the project, and other environmental factors.
    - Help them think through how many translators they might want to recruit. The NT has almost 8000 verses. Think through how many days a translator could be expected to work on the translation, or how many verses per week a translator might be able to draft. With 52 weeks in a year, the NT could be completed in a year by accomplishing 153 verses per week. With five translators, that would mean about 30 verses per week per translator. This is just one example of breaking down the work to create a timeline.
    - Ask them to think about how to accomplish the checking steps and possibly set dates/times for checking sessions and refinement with other community members.
    - Ask them what plans they might make now to introduce Old Testament translation as a continuation of the work, so translators don't feel like they are done when the NT is completed.
  - Encourage them to sign a common agreement together.
- Show them a New Testament in a Heart Language on [bibleineverylanguage.org](http://bibleineverylanguage.org); ask if they will want their translation to be posted there. Explain that if they would like this, they can work with their tech team (Tech Advance team member) to make sure their translation is uploaded correctly and can be posted.

### Helpful Questions:

- How might the translators and project leaders recruit, train, and incorporate new translators during the initial translation project or during revisions?



- Will they plan for group checking or organize remote checking sessions?
- Do they feel nervous about meeting their goal? Why or why not?

**Conclusion: The translators have chosen to start out with a commitment to complete. They recognize challenges and have created a reasonable goal for completion.**

### 13. Cultural and Social Challenges

*Objective: Translators will identify cultural and social challenges to the progress of the translation. They will know how to overcome those challenges.*

In every workshop we face cultural and social challenges. These can be opportunities for growth and support. Remember: WHO (Jesus) we have in common is far more important than any differences.

- Provide suggestions for dealing with discomfort:
  - Take the role of a learner.
  - Ask questions and be willing to try new things.
  - Express appreciation for unique cultural aspects like food, dress, or language.
  - Accept embarrassment when you fail—and be willing to try again.
  - Connect—share differences and find similarities between cultures.
- Practice this by trying the following: pick two or three areas of culture—such as food, religion, marriage and family, work, housing, and recreation—and ask each person to share some stories or basics about that area of his or her culture. Taking turns doing this will help team members to find connections and build on common ground, while also appreciating differences.
- When working with a team of translators, expect that certain aspects of the training and the method will be countercultural. Accept that this is true for you and everyone in the group. Explain to the group that some of the translation process will feel uncomfortable because it does not fit with their culture. Talk about what they should or could do in these instances. Remember it is not our job to change culture, or to make people happy. We must find the right solutions for the team to be successful in translating without getting sidetracked by cultural differences.

#### Helpful Questions:

- What are some cultural and social challenges the local church experiences in your area? (Examples: Younger people might prefer a different kind of church service than older people. After getting an education, some younger people might not respect the older people. Other religions might influence people's beliefs and behavior.)
- When thinking about the MAST process, which steps might cause difficulty? (Examples: People of elevated position might not want others of lower position to check their work; women might not be accepted on the team; young people might not be respected.)

**Conclusion: Translators understand that they will face cultural and social challenges and will be more prepared for them, rather than surprised or deterred by them.**

## 14. Community Acceptance

*Objective: Translators will identify the needs within their cultural context for Scripture to be acceptable to the average consumer.*

Discuss the importance of a Bible translation being acceptable to the language community. As the Quality Assessment Guide helps the team plan for the content to be of good quality, the Community Acceptance Plan helps the team plan for the translation to be acceptable to the community.

- Identify and address current cultural and social challenges of the local church. (You may have already addressed this in a previous conversation; if so, you may want to review here, or move to the next step.)
  - Examples: It may be difficult for the older generation to accept or use an electronic version of the Bible. Some people may not think books printed on regular printer paper are an appropriate presentation for God's Word. People might not want hard copies if they fear persecution. People might not accept a translation if they do not trust the people who translate it or promote it.
- Guide translators in creating a Community Acceptance Plan by asking them to list the characteristics that need to be present for their translation to be acceptable in their culture. (They need not come up with 10 characteristics. It may only take 4 or 5.)
  - Are there expectations about how sacred writings should be formatted, printed, and bound?
- After they have listed the characteristics, ask them to define or explain any that seem unclear.
- When they have finished, let them know this will be the plan they will use throughout the translation and distribution process.

### Helpful Questions:

- Is the Community Acceptance Plan clear and agreeable to each member of the team?
- What resources can the group suggest to help address the practical challenges identified through these discussions?
- Can the group think of ideas for meeting the acceptance requirements outlined in the plan they created?
- What suggestions do they have for overcoming the challenges they have identified?
- What ideas do they have for releasing the Scripture in other formats (other than BIEL)?
- Upon the translation's completion, how might the team inform the language community that it is available?

**Conclusion: The team has a plan to translate and release Scripture in an acceptable manner and format. The Community Acceptance Plan should be made available for continued reference.**

## 15. Scripture Accessibility

*Objective: Translators will understand the accessibility and distribution options and have a plan for making the translation available to the language community.*

Accessibility and distribution can be a challenge, especially if the church has not planned ahead. By having a conversation and working through the necessary steps, the translators can ensure that their Scriptures are accessible to others.

### For Accessibility to Written Translation

#### Printed

- Ask if they will be able to distribute a printed translation. What plans or ideas do they have?
- What are commonly used formats for printed literature?
- Do they print materials themselves (on printers, copiers)?
- What is a common book format/binding?
- Are there expectations for sacred writings that might affect their plans?
- What options are there in the area for printing translations?
- Talk about the cost involved in printing and ideas for offsetting the expense.

#### Digital

- Ask how people get access to digital reading material.
- Will people read the translation on BIEL?
- Is there someone who can be trained to download the translation from BIEL?
- How can that download be shared?
- What can the church do to help those people? (USB drives, SD cards, Bluetooth, email?)

### For Accessibility to Audio Recordings

- Encourage them to think about what the commonly used format for audio literature is in their community.
  - Do people listen to audio files online? If so, on what devices do they listen to them?
  - Do people download audio files? If so, what devices do they download them to?
- Explain that we can offer support and guidance for the steps of uploading and downloading translated material.
- Connect them to WA staff in Scripture Accessibility, who can connect them to Information Technology (IT) or Tech Advance (TA) as needed, to help guide them through their next steps.

### Helpful Questions:

- Have they talked with the community about accessibility plans? If so, what feedback have they received?

- What are their expectations for final product accessibility?
- How can we work with them to ensure the translated Scripture is accessible?

**Conclusion: The team has a plan to have their Scripture translation released in an accessible format. The Scripture Accessibility Plan should be made available for continued reference.**

## 16. Scripture Engagement

*Objective: Reference the “Application Guide” chapters of the Reviewers’ Guide (Appendix E). Translators will understand how these chapters can be used to enhance Scripture engagement. Translators will develop a plan for encouraging Scripture use in their community. Translators will know how to use the Biblical Impact Questionnaire to develop Community Impact stories.*

- Discuss Scripture engagement and what it might look like in the translators’ community.
- Introduce translators to the Application Guide portions of the Reviewers’ Guide. This guide covers all the same passages as the Reviewers’ Guide, asking application questions related to the message of those passages.
  - Practice the guide with them. (Pick any passage and read it together, then ask questions and have them offer answers.) Talk about how this might work with a group. (Appendix E Application Guide for Doctrines is only one of the guides available.)
- Offer the Biblical Impact Questionnaire (Appendix F) as a feedback piece. Whenever possible, encourage them to use this and share their answers with us.
- Encourage them to create a plan for Scripture engagement.
  - Example: This might include planned weekly or monthly small group meetings for reading the new Scripture together.
- The plan should include ways to engage not just translators and their families or even church members, but also the larger community (non-believers and skeptics, as well).
- Optional example of Scripture engagement from the New Testament to help the team connect the work they are doing to the broader scope of the Great Commission:
  - Ask them to read Acts 8:27–38.
  - Ask how this passage demonstrates Great Commission work—Philip saw a man reading Scripture and asked if he understood what he was reading.
  - Ask if they can think of any ways that they are (or could be) using Scripture to fulfill the Great Commission.

### Helpful Questions:

- What types of Scripture engagement has the group benefited from in their community? Can they envision themselves reaching others in their community through similar methods?
- Looking through the Biblical Impact Questionnaire, what strategies can the team think of to engage the community in the Scriptures?

**Conclusion: The translators understand why community Scripture engagement is important for the spread of the gospel and the spiritual growth of the church. They understand the necessity of a plan to share their work with their communities. They have outlined a plan to enable Scripture engagement among the people groups.**

## 17. Leadership Training

This topic includes three modules:

- Why MAST works (17a)
- Workshop Planning: devotions, location/set-up, team skills inventory (17b)
- Sharing Bible Translation with others (17c)

### 17a. Why MAST Works

*Objective 1: Leaders and facilitators will be aware of the theory that forms the basis for the MAST process and will be able to communicate the theory to others.*

*Objective 2: Translators who are using the MAST steps will be aware of the theory and will be able to adjust their process to ensure the highest quality and completion rate.*

- Talk about the importance of teamwork: Different people have different skills; people learn from one another; contributing helps people feel a sense of ownership (responsibility, authority, and accountability); people can do more as they work together; people are more likely to finish the work if they have a sense of ownership.
- Explain values-based learning: a learner will achieve more if he senses that he is valued and his contribution matters. Why does this matter in a translation project? How can leaders express value to their translators?

Some ways we express value to others:

1. We are honest with them.
  2. We recognize and praise their achievements.
  3. We find common interests.
  4. We protect them from unnecessary stress, harm, etc.
  5. We serve them.
- Explain input/output: The learner's brain can only take in about 5–7 minutes of new information before it needs to do something with that information. Then the brain should spend 7–10 minutes doing something with the information. This will help transfer the new learning to long-term memory. Relate this theory to MAST steps 1 and 2. Ask what they think will happen if these times are stretched longer. (The brain will randomly dump information.)
  - (Maslow's Hierarchy of Need) Ask what kinds of environmental issues might affect translators' ability to maintain momentum. Explain that often issues like safety, hunger, or lack of love can interfere with a person's ability to think about an academic task. Sometimes translators have environmental challenges in their life that make it hard for them to focus on the hard work of translation. In what ways can those issues be addressed?
  - When trainers and translators understand why MAST works, they will be motivated to teach it and to use it as it was designed to be used.

### Helpful Questions:

- What kinds of changes have teams asked to make in the 8-step process? How might these changes affect the translation?
- What do they think is the biggest challenge with pairing people up for checking steps?
- What are appropriate ways of showing value in their culture? Do they use these?

Leaders of translation projects will benefit from understanding the foundational theories of MAST as it will help them to guide the team and to know what elements they can adjust such as team divisions, teaching styles, and other aspects of the work, and what outcomes to expect.

**Conclusion: The leaders understand why changing or skipping steps will compromise quality and could negatively affect timing.**

## 17b. Workshop Planning

*Objective: Leaders will understand some of the intricacies of preparing for a workshop.*

### Devotions:

- Talk about directed devotions during an event or other gathering. What ways can these devotional times prepare translators for the work of translation?
  - Some devotional ideas:
    - Genesis 11 (Tower of Babel)—God’s hand in creating language
    - Revelation 5 (The scene at God’s throne)—God’s design for every tribe and tongue to worship him.
    - Matthew 28:19–20 (Great Commission)—How Bible translation is a part of “teaching to observe all things.”
    - Another idea for devotions during the workshop is to create a study of a book that is being translated, or key topics that are addressed in several books being translated (Jesus’ miracles or parables, for example).

### Location/Set up:

- Share a brief explanation of Maslow’s hierarchy of need—a person’s ability to learn and grow is hindered if his lower-level needs are not met, and it can be enhanced by meeting his higher-level needs. Levels of need: physiological (food, water), safety (shelter), belonging (family, community), esteem (contributing to the greater whole), self-actualization (being exactly who God created you to be).
- Talk about ways to plan for set up that will meet lower-level needs.
  - Are there people who could cook for the whole group?
  - Where could the translators sleep?
- How can needs for belonging and esteem be addressed?
  - Devotional, singing, and other fellowship times might reach the belonging need.
  - Connect the work of translation with present needs of the community and future generations. Show honor and respect for individual contributions to the whole.



- Discuss practical logistics: What things are necessary for a workshop? Tables, chairs, paper/pencil, technology, etc.
- Ask what kinds of environmental issues might affect translators' ability to maintain momentum once they go home after the workshop. In what ways can those issues be addressed?

### **Team Skills Inventory:**

- Explain ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development):
  - If possible, use the drawing of three circles to describe the different zones. The inner circle is what a learner (translator) can do on his own without help. The middle circle is what he can do with the help of someone one step ahead of him, and the outer circle is what he cannot do (yet) even with help. The middle circle is ideal as it helps a learner (translator) expand his ability.
  - This theory suggests that translators of similar levels will learn more from each other than a beginner and an expert working together. Examples that help express this: a marathon runner teaching a 6-year-old to run a race in the school yard versus a 10-year-old teaching that 6-year-old. Someone closer to the skill level can help more than someone who is advanced in the skill.
- Explain scaffolding: This theory uses the traditional scaffold for building projects to help explain how someone learns new things. Layers of support are offered—resources, a partner—that give the learner the aid he needs to reach higher in learning.
- Explain that a team skills inventory should be done at the beginning of a workshop to help the leader assign translators to groups based on these two theories. What areas of skills should be assessed?
  - The ones in the skills assessment are gateway language, heart language, technology, Bible knowledge, and thinking style.

**Conclusion: Leaders understand some of the theories and practices for hosting an event. They know that they must plan a workshop and have begun to think through what they will need to do.**

### **17c. Sharing Bible Translation with Others**

*Objective: Translators will understand their own part in advancing the mission of COBT.*

- Talk about the Great Commission. Ask how Bible translation fits into the Great Commission.
- Ask if there are language communities around them who still need Scripture. (If they don't know, ask them what they could do to figure this out. Help them come up with answers by asking further questions: Does their country have a department of Indigenous Peoples? When they travel to a central town or city, do they encounter people who speak other indigenous languages? Do they know pastors from other language communities who might know of Scripture needs?)

- Ask what they think the Christians from those communities would say if they shared their experience with Church-Owned Bible Translation? Would others be interested in how they could translate Scripture for their people?
- Share a story with them of when others have passed on the vision for COBT.
  - Example: George Banda heard from a pastor friend about the MAST translation process. He traveled to our checking workshop, not knowing what he was coming to, in hopes of learning more. Banda is a pastor of a church with 9 languages represented. When his car broke down on the journey, he left it and found public transportation. He told us he could not go home until he had an answer for the people of his church.
  - Ask if George Banda showed up at their workshop, what would they tell him about Bible translation?
  - George Banda did get the answer he needed and helped his own language group start their own translation, which they completed in 2022.
- Remind them about the resources designed for sharing Bible translation that we offer (Conversation Guide and resources in the document library).

**Helpful Questions:**

- Who is qualified to invite other people to do translation? If they don't have any ideas, offer the following suggestions. Talk about what qualifies them.
  - A believer with experience in Bible translation.
  - A believer who has a good reputation in the area.
  - A believer who is willing to share in the task.
- Did they feel qualified to translate when they were first invited to join the translation team?
- Do they feel like they have done good work? If they don't feel qualified to share with others, is it perhaps a matter of trying it and realizing that their feelings are inaccurate?
- Are they motivated to tell others about COBT? If not, what ideas might motivate them?

**Conclusion: Leaders have understood the spiritual value of telling other communities about COBT and know that they will be equipped with the practical resources needed to do it.**