

Broadcast 4 – MAST Checking

LUCAS:

Hello everyone! This is Lucas and we are going to discuss the last four steps of the MAST Bible translation method. This is what our team is using to translate the Bible into our language.

Today we have a translation team member with us – our family friend, Jade. Jade was part of the team that went to the initial workshop where we learned how to translate and stated the translation of the New Testament from our national language into our mother-tongue language. Last week Jade and I worked together to train new members of the translation team. We were excited to add Mara, my sister and Siara, my wife. We worked on first, second, third John and Jude to train the new members and finished a few more books of the New Testament! So welcome, Jade! We are glad you are here to talk with us!

JADE:

Thank you, I am glad you invited me to join you! I am very excited about this project and happy to help new members learn the translation process to grow our translation team!

LUCAS:

Jade, lives in a larger town a short distance away. She is a banker and has to do her translation work remotely sometimes. Do you want to start by telling us a little bit about how we all met and how you became involved in this project?

JADE:

I would be happy to! I met your wife, Siara, quite a while ago. We met when Siara was trying to make a little money for your family by doing handcrafts and selling them in the village market. I saw her work one day and bought some. We became friends and I gave her ideas to help expand her business. I was already a Christian, but Siara did not know Jesus yet. I talked to her about Jesus and how God loves her and after several conversations she came to love God and wanted to live for Him.

LUCAS:

It was seeing her life change that convinced me to seek God through Jesus. We have all been good friends since then!

JADE:

Hopefully, many others will come to faith through our translation of the Scriptures. I especially want to see your children, your father, and Mara's husband become believers. Should we start by telling them how we trained the new team members?

LUCAS:

Yes. We started by demonstrating how to do the translation using the first four steps of MAST. Then the last four steps, the edits and checks. It is not a good idea for one person to do a translation alone. It is too easy to allow errors and personal bias into the work. Even if you read the translation over several times you may not see your own mistakes.

JADE:

I think we should first review the first four steps of MAST. Do you mind if I explain them? I think it will help me to review them again. Step one is CONSUME. Read the chapter you are assigned a few times in the source text to understand what was being said. This should take about 8 minutes.

Step two is VERBALIZE. After consuming the chapter in the source language in step one, speak it out loud in your mother tongue language. Share what it was about, names, places and the main points. This should take only 2 or 3 minutes. Just a reminder; this is not a discussion of the text.

Next is step three - CHUNK which is to break the passage into small parts. Go through the chapter and divide it into smaller pieces by just marking the source text with a pencil. Most chunks were 1-3 verses long.

And finally, step four, the BLIND DRAFT. Read the first chunk several times, turn the source text over and write or type the translation without looking at any helps or the source text. Then move to the second chunk, then the third until the chapter is completed. Spend about 10 to 12 minutes on each chunk.

LUCAS:

Let's talk about what is next in the translation process. step five is SELF-EDIT. Check the translation to see if it makes sense before you show it to someone else. After the BLIND DRAFT is finished, look at the source text and compare the two. It should not be a word-for-word translation of the national language. Check to make sure the ideas of the source text and the translation agree. We want the translation complete, clear, and smooth in our mother-tongue language. Look to see if there is any added information or missing facts. Check the key words that are repeated in the text or are connected to the rest of the book and be sure to consistently use the same words in the mother-tongue language. Then make the corrections and make notes on any portions you are unsure of.

If you have access to any resources such as the key words or translation notes we had on our tablets at the workshop, use them.

Jade, you helped us learn how to use the translation words and translation notes on the tablet at the workshop. Since you use computers at your job at the bank, you quickly learned how to use the resources and demonstrated it for the rest of the team.

JADE:

The tools were built into the software on the tablets and were very easy to learn. You all did a great job and learned quickly.

LUCAS:

Now we get to step six, PEER-EDIT. This is where Siara really did well last week. I am very proud of my wife!

When step five, the SELF-EDIT is complete, get a partner or peer to help you with the PEER-EDIT. Give the translation to your peer to check. The peer-editor will read the text. Read it out loud if you want to; hear it as well as see it. Then read it in the national language to be sure it says basically the same thing. Compare the two, ask questions, suggest changes or improvements, and be sure the translation communicates the purposes of the source text. Ask yourself and the translator such questions as: Is anything missing? Is anything added? Is it smooth, clear, understandable, and accurate? You may want to check the key words for consistency. Then suggest and discuss potential changes to the translation. Make the changes directly to the translation or write or type a note in the space around the translation.

JADE:

Can other resources be used to look up information to check for accuracy?

LUCAS:

Yes, and it is a good idea to do that! For the last two steps you can work with a partner or several members of the team. The KEYWORD CHECK and VERSE-by-VERSE CHECK can be complex.

The KEYWORD CHECK can be done with the translator and a partner or more members of the team can help. Make a list of key words used in your passage or mark it in the source text. All proper nouns like names and places are keywords. All numbers, some pronouns and other important terms that may affect the meaning of the translation should be marked as key words. Some of these important words or phrases may be discussed even before you start translating to be sure you are all translating consistently. We want to make sure everyone is using the same words in our mother-tongue language in all parts of Scripture. It is good to make a list of these words available to all the translators and add to the list as new words and phrases are identified. It is also very important to check that accurate and literal common language terms for "Father" and "Son" are used when referring to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Some questions you can ask yourself as you check are, "What is the meaning of each key word in the national language? Is that meaning accurately communicated in our mother-tongue language translation? Again accuracy, completeness and consistency are what you want. Make notes as you go along and when you find errors or things missing, discuss them with the translator and they will make the changes agreed upon. As you move on with your translation, check for consistency of use in other passages.

JADE:

That is why some people were concerned about becoming part of the translation team. Some are not as strong in the national language as others are and could miss key words.

LUCAS:

I think we have missed an important step that was a part of everything we did last week. We opened each session in prayer and stopped and prayed many times as we worked,

not just as a group but as we did our own translating and checking. Scripture says that God will give us wisdom if we ask Him for it.

JADE:

I think we would all be afraid to show any of our work to others if we did not seek God's guidance in translating. Prayer is the most important part of translation. This is God's Word and just as the original writers must have been guided by His Spirit, we should ask for the Holy Spirits help if we want to bring that Word to our people.

Last is step eight, the VERSE-by-VERSE CHECK? There are also a few different ways to do this check. Two partners can work together or get three people to work together to do a back translation, or a group can read through it together and make comments and notes about changes they think should be made. If doing it aloud with three people, it is best if the translator reads the mother-tongue language translation to the others. This should be done chunk by chunk. If working with a partner then the partner translates it verbally back into the national language, without looking at the source text. Partner number three will look at the source text and will note if the two are consistent, not word-for-word but communicating the same ideas. Compare notes and see where corrections or changes are needed. Use every resource you have for this step. If you have more than three partners available, have the others doing the same as partner three. Be careful to consider accuracy versus opinion. You cannot be sure where the voice of God will be heard. It would also be good to do another check to be sure that accurate, consistent, and literal common language terms for "Father" and "Son" are used when referring to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

LUCAS:

Pastor Fin was not able to meet with us last week, but he knows more about Scripture than anyone I know. Even after doing our eight steps, I wanted his opinion of our work. We must be accountable to church authorities. Our translation is never copy-righted so that means that we can make changes to our translated Bible as often as we need to. We will have Church leaders check it after the MAST eight steps, but we will also have members of the community check our work to make sure it reads naturally in our mother-tongue language. We will talk in more detail about that in a later program. For now, we are coming to the end of our time together.

Thank you, Jade, for being with us. Please come back. Good-bye for now and God bless you. *In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to start a project of your own, reach out to the sponsoring agency in your area. If there is not a sponsoring agency in your area, please send an email to reachingalldialects@gmail.com or radio@wycliffeassociates.org or call or text:*

Time: 12:00