

## Topic 8 – Session 1 - Translation Helps for Checking

J - Hello and Welcome back to Wycliffe Associates' Bible Translator Educator Series. This is Session one of Topic number 8...Translation Helps

T- In this session, we'll discuss helpful resources available to assist translators in *Checking* their work. Translating Scripture is a sacred task; the translator wants to convey the true meaning of the text accurately. God's Word must not be handled lightly. Often translators struggle because they do not feel qualified. The truth is every believer has the Holy Spirit within and can contribute to Bible translation by the Spirit's power and direction.

J - As you and your local church begin the journey of translating Scripture in your language, you can be sure to affirm quality in several ways. Translators must work together as a team, so no **one** translator is tasked with the full responsibility. Also, four of the eight steps of MAST are checking steps, where you work together to check each other's work in a step-by-step process. Another way to help ensure quality is using specific resources during these checking steps.

T - Wycliffe Associates has developed a library of free resources that will help the translators think through the best way to convey complicated meaning. These resources, Called Translation Helps, have been translated into many of the major languages of the world. They are available for download on a website called [bibleineverylanguage.org](http://bibleineverylanguage.org). Additionally, many of these resources are embedded in the BTTwriter application, the translation program we talked about in Topic 7. Translators can also ask their mentor for PDFs of the resources to be mailed to them. These checking resources are a great support tool for checking your work.

J - Let's look at the Translation Helps and see exactly what kind of assistance each provides. **Translation Notes** provides explanations and ideas for hard to translate expressions, figures of speech, and wording issues. These notes also provide background information about the context and setting of a passage and some historical/geographical explanations. For example, in Matthew 2:1, Bethlehem in Judea is mentioned. The notes clarify that Bethlehem was a town in the province of Judea.

**T -Translation Words** is another resource for helping translators affirm meaning and clarity. We can look at Matthew 2:1 again to see what kind of help the

translation words provides. Each of the geographical names used in the verse are listed in the Translation Words resource with a brief historical and geographical explanation.

**J - Translation Questions** is another helpful Checking resource. These are specific, concrete questions for every verse of the Bible. They can be used to confirm that all information is included in the new translation and to make sure it is communicated in a meaningful way. One question from Matthew 2:1 is, “Where was Jesus born?” If the translation has clearly included all the information from this verse a reader or hearer should be able to answer this question with no problem.

T-So when can translators use Translation Helps? Remember, the first four steps of MAST are drafting steps; none of the resources are designed to be used during those steps. But as soon as you have created a draft of the passage...using all four steps of the MAST process, you can use these resources to check your work.

J - As you compare your text to the source, you may wonder if you used the right word, or understood the passage correctly. Consider Matthew 2:1 again. Looking at that verse, you might wonder whether Bethlehem was a small village or a large city. What if, in your language, this makes the difference in how the place would be named. You can look at the notes for Matthew 2:1 and learn that Bethlehem is a small town or village, not a large city. Then you can adjust your translation accordingly.

T- During the **peer check** step, you may use these resources to help check your fellow-translator’s work in the same way you used them to check your own.

**Keyword check**, step 7, is a good time to use the **Translation words**. This is also the time to check all the names of people and places which both **Translation Notes and Words** provide information on.

J - Finally, these resources are great support for the **Verse-by-Verse** check in step 8 of the MAST process. If your translation team has a disagreement on how to understand the source text, you can refer to **Translation Notes and Words** for

support and clarification. Using the translation questions on this step will help assure that no information is missing.

T – Remember, you created an Authentic Assessment of qualities that you want to make sure are true about your translation. Use the **Translation Helps** to be certain that each of the qualities on your Authentic Assessment are achieved.

J - After step eight, the translation is ready to be shared. This does not mean it is perfect. But as a team, you have made it the best you possibly can. If you have followed the process carefully, and used the resources provided, it will be a good translation.

T - After this, the local church community must decide how they want to **refine** the scriptures, and which of these **Translation Helps** are useful for that. Wycliffe Associates has also created other resources to help with Scripture refinement...and We'll talk more about those in the next session.

J – It may be true that the more people involved in the checking, the more complicated checking can become. However, the benefit of including other people from the language group in checking and refinement of the translated Scripture, is a greater possibility for community acceptance and ownership.

T – Wycliffe Associates encourages church leaders to think through the implications of checking within the community...and to make a plan that best fits their needs and goals. For help with what that might look like, reach out to your mentor or contact us at [ts@wycliffeassociates.org](mailto:ts@wycliffeassociates.org)