

Topic 3 – 8 Steps of Mast – Session 2 – Checking

J – Welcome back to Wycliffe Associates' Bible Translation Educator series! This is **Session 2** of **Topic 3**, The 8 Steps of MAST.

T – In this session, we will focus on the last four Steps of the MAST process; the **checking** steps. As you may know, the quality of the translation depends on thorough checking. Each step described here is equally important to the best result and we suggest following them carefully.

J – **Step five** in the process is the **self-edit**. Here, each translator corrects their own blind draft by comparing it to the source text and adding or fixing anything they missed during the blind draft. When you have compared your draft to the source text and feel confident you have made it as clear and accurate as possible, you are ready to move to step six.

T – **Step Six** is the **peer edit**. This is where we ask another translator on the team to check the draft by comparing it to the source text. Checking each other's work is very important to the meaning based translation process, yet these steps can feel stressful for a lot of reasons. It can be hard to ask for help with checking your work. And it can be even harder to edit another translator's work if you see that person as more educated or honorable than you.

J – It may help to think back to your experience with these two editing steps. Remember what challenges you faced, so that you can share these with the new translators. God has put the team together and he has designed us to learn from each other. Each person on the translation team can help the translation to be better.

T - Keep in mind, peer editors should not make changes on the translator's draft. Instead, they should make notes of suggested changes, and then the two should talk over these suggestions. The translator of the portion should decide if changes are needed at this point. It is best to work in pairs for this step. More than two people can result in step six taking longer than necessary.

J - **Step seven** is **keyword check**. There are two parts to this step. The first part is to go through the chapter in the source text and make a list of all the key words—spiritual and abstract terms, as well as names and words that are essential to the meaning of the passage. Then at least two members use this list to go through the translation, checking that each word is accurately represented.

T - Remember, some words might not exist in the translator's language. In these cases, the team must work out a way to represent the meaning by creating a new word, borrowing or modifying a word from the gateway language, or combining words to create a phrase.

J – So, when the team disagrees on a how to represent the meaning of a key word, how will they proceed? Well, a useful resource called Translation Words is available on bibleeverylanguage.org and in the BTTWriter App. This resource provides definitions and translation suggestions for difficult words. Translators can consult this or other resources to help solve a disagreement.

T - However, if no resource helps, the team should submit to the translation leader or their pastors in making a final decision. When you were first learning to translate, did you face situations like this? How did your team make decisions? Sharing examples from your own experience will help new translators to understand this process.

J - The **eighth** and final step is **verse-by-verse check**. When possible, at least three translators should work through this step together. The translator will read their draft one verse at a time while the other translators follow along in the source text. They can even compare several texts at this point if available.

T - At the end of each verse the translator will ask if anything needs to be adjusted or added. If all the translators agree that the comparison shows an equal text, they will move to the next verse. There are helpful resources available for this step at bibleeverylanguage.org and in BTTWriter.

J- If translators are unsure of the meaning of a portion of scripture, they can consult a resource called Translation Notes. This resource provides an explanation of idioms and other figures of speech, as well as suggestions for ways to handle difficult issues.

T - Translators can also use a resource called Translation Questions during this step. A series of questions for each verse helps to assure that the translation is complete.

J - As a translator, you have worked through these steps many times. In this brief session, we have only mentioned the key elements of each step with some suggestions and ideas for how to share that with others.

T - Some questions to consider as we conclude this session might be:

1. What has helped you to become more confident in using the steps?
2. How pleased are you with the product after following the eight steps?

J - How would you encourage a new translator who says it's too hard or he or she doesn't have enough biblical knowledge to translate Scripture? Or, what if a new translator says he does not need a team member to check his work?

T - Finally, what practical advice could you give a new translator for disciplining himself to follow the steps carefully and consistently? Your experience and guidance could really help them build valuable confidence in their abilities.

J – We hope this walk through the checking steps of MAST has been helpful for you. In our next session we discuss Topic 4, how to create an Authentic Assessment of a meaning based Bible translation.

T – Please join us then, and as always, feel free to reach out to us through your mentor or directly via email at TS@WycliffeAssociates.org. May God richly bless you in your work for His Kingdom.