Broadcast 14 – More Technology

OLIVER:

Hello everyone. This is Oliver. In this program, we will continue sharing information on the resources, technology, and processes for publishing a Bible translation. We shared some of our own experiences with you last time. Now, Jade and I want to tell you about other options available for those seeking to get their work published.

JADE:

We are living in a new era. In the past, translators had to rely on publishing houses or companies to print and publish their work. Publishing companies provided a valuable service and filled a real need. But to publish through them also created challenges.

OLIVER:

That's right. One of the first challenges we want to discuss is the challenge of copyrighted work. Did you know most printed Bibles in the major language of the world are copyrighted? This means they are owned by a publishing company or Bible society. No one can translate them into another language or reprint any part of them without gaining permission from whoever holds the copyright. Often a payment is required for permission to be granted.

JADE:

Yes, that is a serious challenge! The Bible in the national language of my country is copyrighted by a foreign society. So, I would need to find a way to contact them and ask them if I can use that Bible to translate into my language.

OLIVER:

That is exactly right, Jade. What has been discovered through research is many of those companies that hold Bible copyrights will allow others to use their work if they are willing to pay for permission.

JADE:

And the difficulty there is how to afford the payment.

OLIVER:

Often it is quite expensive to pay for those permissions. This is a real barrier. One of the amazing resources is the program BTTWriter. It is online at bibleineverylanguage.org and has translated Scripture in more than 35 major gateway languages of the world. These are licensed under a "creative commons, share and share alike" attribution. That means they can be freely used by anyone to create new resources and translations that can also be shared freely.

JADE:

The source text we are using to translate into our language was printed using a regular personal printer. We downloaded it from the website bibleineverylanguage.org. This source text is in the common language of our country. Best of all, we did not need special permission to print our own copies or to use it as a source for translation.

OLIVER:

When we complete our translation, we can print and distribute it in any way we choose without having to pay someone for permission. Our work will be copyrighted under an open license. This will give others the opportunity to use our work, to improve it, or add to it, without having to get permission.

JADE:

Last week we mentioned the local schoolteacher who asked us if a children's version of the Bible could be made available. He hoped the school could use it for teaching children to read in their language. Since our translation can be freely shared, this teacher can revise it himself, or with the help of a team, according to the children's needs. He can print off portions of it himself once it is posted on bibleineverylanguage.org without paying anything.

OLIVER:

And that ability is not only because of the creative commons license agreement. It is also the result of new options for printing that became possible in recent years. This technology has provided faster and more consistent services in many areas. The advances also allowed individuals to become self-reliant in creating and publishing their own work. Printing Scripture on a personal printer is possible! We talked several times about how Pastor Fin uses the newly translated Scripture to preach on Sundays. We did not print our whole New Testament yet, because we did not finish translating it. Since the church has a printer, the pastor can take the completed portions to the office and print the part he wants to use for his sermon.

JADE:

One of the elders who lives in another village has done the same thing. After our checking session last Sunday afternoon, he went to the church office and printed off the part we checked in John. He took it back to his village and used it for the midweek Bible study.

OLIVER:

Once the whole New Testament is complete, we can print it using a local printing business, or even personal printers. We will not need to send it far away to a publishing company, pay for them to print and ship it, and then wait for months to receive it.

JADE:

Both the creative commons licensing and the availability of small-scale printing has made the Scripture translation more quickly accessible in the community. This was not possible a few decades ago.

OLIVER:

When we complete a book of the New Testament, we print off several copies—at least one for each member of the translation team, and sometimes more if we have enough paper. This way we can send that book home with each translator for them to share with their families. We receive a lot of positive responses from these book printings. A few people in the community came to us asking for their own copy of a book. We do not always have the paper or ink to print off enough copies for everyone, but we do tell them we can give them an electronic copy if they have a way to get it printed themselves.

JADE:

If you are working on a translation project, we encourage you to think of ways you can get portions printed so you can share them with others. It is a blessing and provides a way for us to receive feedback to improve our work as well.

OLIVER:

Since you are our tech expert, I want to spend a little of our time talking about other technology tools available for working on translations. We will share a little about some of the other tools and resources available on bibleineverylanguage.org.

JADE:

That is a good idea. One tool we mentioned before is BTTRecorder. We'll talk a little more about possible uses of this tool.

OLIVER:

Last week we shared our plan to make an audio file of our New Testament translation available by recording our work when we are done translating. This will help those who do not read well in our language to still have access to Scripture.

JADE:

This program is designed to run on android devices, which means it works on many of the more affordable phones, computers, and tablets. It is easy to learn as it was designed to be used by beginners. It allows the translator to record and re-record as many times as necessary until he is satisfied with his work. It also has easy-to-follow steps for making changes to the recording.

OLIVER:

Some translators from unwritten languages worked directly with BTTRecorder to create an oral translation of the Scripture for their people. This works well in communities where there has never been a writing system for their language.

JADE:

In the past, unwritten languages had to wait until their language was written down and literacy was taught before they had access to Scripture. But now, many communities desiring God's Word have a way to achieve that, without waiting for their language to be written down. BTTRecorder helps them to provide that accessibility to their community. They can also upload the recordings directly from the program to a server called BTTExchanger. This is used to securely store their audio files and invite community checking and review.

OLIVER:

Another tool available for working on a written translation is called Autographa. This is a free app like BTTWriter but is a simpler design and does not have embedded resources. To use the resources, we talked about before, the translator would need to download them as separate PDFs from bibleineverylanguage.org. The advantage of this program is its simplicity. Since it does not have a lot of embedded data, it opens and runs quickly and smoothly.

JADE:

Autographa can be used without internet and the data input will be saved right in the program. Later it can be uploaded to the server for printing and posting.

OLIVER:

This is a helpful tool for those who have access to computers but are not educated in technology.

JADE:

We should also mention the web-based tool called V-MAST. V-MAST is a tool for language groups where everyone has a computer or tablet and good internet access. V-MAST has translation resources like BTTWriter such as Translation Notes, Translation Words and Translation Questions. The best part of V-MAST is that it walks you through every step of MAST with instructions and helps in the sidebar, so if you forget what you are supposed to do on a step, the instructions are accessible on each page for you to look at. Each translator creates a log in and is assigned a chapter of Scripture. They will see the

chapter they are to CONSUME on the webpage. Once the translator is done, they click "yes, I did" and the next step button at the bottom and it takes you to a new page to VERBALIZE, then another page to CHUNK, and then BLIND DRAFT one chunk of Scripture at a time. The best part is the checking. If I want to PEER-EDIT your chapter, Oliver, then I look at the notifications and click on your chapter, then my page turns another color and I see your translation with a place to make notes for each chunk. You can see the notes from your computer right after I type them. It is the same for KEYWORD CHECK and VERSE-by-VERSE CHECK. I work on computers every day for my job, so I enjoyed seeing a demo of this program. It can be found at V-MAST.com or can be accessed on the bibleineverylanguage.org website with the other tools.

One last tool we should mention for now is called the BTT USFM converter. This tool allows translators to take their work out of BTTWriter and convert it to a format that can be used in Microsoft Word or Libra office. It can also convert them to PDF files for immediate printing.

OLIVER:
This is a helpful tool for those who worked in one of the programs we mentioned here but then want to print small portions on their own. It makes the conversion of the file a simple matter that even those with little computer training can accomplish. In addition to these technology pieces, there are other programs and processes that meet unique Scripture access needs in the world.

JADE:
There is a program called DOT with stands for Deaf Owned Translation and is specifically designed to help provide videos of signed Scripture for deaf communities.

OLIVER:
And SUN—which stands for Symbolic Universal Notation—is a program for reaching deaf and deaf/blind individuals with Scripture. SUN is a system of symbols that can be quickly learned and easily used through touch or sight to communicate the message of Scripture. You can read more about these under the "processes" tab on the bibleineverylanguage.org website.

JADE:
We hope you are encouraged by all the available tools and support for getting Scripture posted, published, and printed. Please visit bibleineverylanguage.org under the tools tab to see for yourself all the tools we described in this program.

Good-by for now and we pray God will help you to learn to use these tools.

 If you have questions about your current project or want to start a project in your own mother-tongue language, please call or text (local country partner info) or send an email to reachingalldialects@gmail.com or radio@wycliffeassociates.org.