

Broadcast 3 – MAST Drafting

LUCAS:

Hello everyone! This is Lucas.

MARA:

And this is Mara!

LUCAS:

We are here to talk about Scripture Translation again. Last week we introduced you to MAST which stands for Mobilized Assistance Supporting Translation. MAST is a translation method that helps local believers translate the Bible into their mother-tongue language using Scripture from their national language. It has eight simple steps that some of us learned at a translation workshop we went to a few weeks ago. At the workshop, six of us from our village translated the Gospel of Mark. Now we are at home and continuing to translate the rest of the New Testament in unity with our local churches and pastors.

MARA:

Your wife, Siara and I met with the translation team last week and are very happy we could join the team even though we could not go to the workshop.

First, we learned the first four steps that taught us how to draft the scripture. Then we learned how to check our translations, using steps five through eight. The MAST translation method is simple to learn, but we did not learn the whole method in one hour. We had to go over the process a few times before we were comfortable with it.

LUCAS:

That is true. You and Siara both learned quickly, and worked very hard all week, in sessions with the team and alone, to complete the new Scriptures we will present next week. We worked on first, second, third John and Jude. We chose those books because they were short, and we did not want the new members of the team to be overwhelmed with long chapters as you were all learning the translation process.

So, let's get started! Does everyone have paper and a pencil or a computer ready to try this with us? If not, get it quickly because we are starting now!

When we started our workshop, we first decided what book we would start translating. Then we divided up the chapters between all the translators, so each of us had 3 or 4 chapters. I had chapters 1, 8, and 16, so I started with Mark chapter 1. Do you remember what step one is?

MARA:

CONSUME. First, we read the entire chapter in the national language at least one time to be sure you understand what it is saying. I was supposed to do it in just eight minutes but both, Siara and I took extra time, the first time through...

LUCAS:

That is okay, Mara. I am glad it was just this once. It should only take about eight minutes to do this step.

MARA:

That is right. Siara was not sure about her knowledge of the national language and I wanted everything just right the first time, but we both did better as we went along.

LUCAS:

You both did well and are great members of our team. For our demonstration, would you read the passage from 3 John as if you were going to consume it?

MARA:

The elder to beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be healthy, just as it is well with your soul. For I rejoiced greatly when brothers came and bore witness to your truth, just as you walk in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children walk in the truth.

Beloved, you practice faithfulness whenever you labor for the brothers and for strangers who have borne witness of your love in the presence of the church. You do well to send them off on their journey in a manner worthy of God, because it was for the sake of the name that they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles. We, therefore, should welcome such as these so that we will be fellow workers for the truth.

I wrote something to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us. So, if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing, falsely accusing us with wicked words. Not satisfied with that, he not only refused to welcome the brothers himself, but he also stops those who want to welcome them and drives them out of the church. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the evildoer has not seen God. Demetrius received a good testimony from everyone and by the truth itself. We also testify about him, and you know that our testimony is true.

I had many things to write to you, but I do not wish to write them to you with pen and ink. But I hope to see you soon, and we will speak face to face. May peace be with you. The friends greet you. Greet our friends there by name.

LUCAS:

Very good. Now, step two is VERBALIZE. Here you are going to say aloud the passage in the mother-tongue language. Do not try to translate it yet but get an overview of the passage. Ask yourself what the chapter is about and what the main points are. This is what you will verbalize. This will include what it is about, the characters, what they are doing or talking about.

MARA:

So, I will say it aloud to another person on our translation team, like you or Siara, who is in the chapter, what they are doing, and what I think the main points of the chapter are in our language. What if I am not working with the team, can I VERBALIZE with my husband or neighbor?

LUCAS:

Yes, Mara. That is a good question. You can do this with anyone. This is not a discussion of the text and what it means; it is for the translator to say it aloud and run it through the part of their brain that works with language and processing words. It will be helpful when they get to step four and start translating.

MARA:

What if no one is home? Can I verbalize with one of the kids, or maybe even our dog?

LUCAS:

Ha-ha, very funny, but yes, you can even VERBALIZE with the dog if no one else is there.

Now we can start step three which is CHUNK. We will divide all fifteen verses into smaller sections. Remember chunking is breaking the chapter into parts that make it easy to hold in your memory but large enough to keep the meaning in context. We will start at the introduction, verses one and two, and the greeting verses three and four and then in verses five and six he begins talking about the point of his letter. Then we can put together the verses about the missionaries in verses seven and eight. Diotrephes needs special attention so we will take his section next, verse nine and ten could go together, but 10 is very long, so I am going to split them up. Then I will put 11 and 12 together. This will also help us see Demetrius who appears to be opposite from Diotrephes. Finally, we come to the close and the hope for a personal visit in verses 13, 14 and 15. As you become more experienced with translation, your memory will expand and you will be able to do fewer chunks, so instead of 8 chunks you could do a chapter this size in six chunks, instead.

MARA:

I have marked the chunks in the scriptures in my national language just as you taught us to do. It only took a few minutes to do this step. I read through the chapter and divided it where it seemed like one thought ended and another one started, but I had to keep in mind that the BLIND DRAFT is next.

I have fifteen verses in eight chunks. I think they will be easy to remember because each advances the point of the letter which is that God wants us to adhere to the truth and to His Truth, His Son Jesus Christ.

LUCAS:

Alright, do you have your pencil ready? It is time to do the most exciting part of the whole

drafting process. You are going to do step four which is the BLIND DRAFT of your first chunk. So, first, put on this blindfold. After all, this is going to be a blind draft.

MARA:

That is funny. I think I will just turn the paper over to hide the source text while I am doing the BLIND DRAFT. First, I have to read the chunk, the first few verses in our national language a couple of times and start thinking about how I would say it in our language. Then I will turn the text over, so I am not tempted to copy it and I will write down the passage in our language.

LUCAS:

Very good. It is important that you do not read the national language text as you do the blind draft because you might simply translate word for word and lose the sound of our language. We want it to sound natural and smooth, like we are talking to each other now.

MARA:

Except for the jokes?

LUCAS:

Yes, except for the jokes!

It is also a good idea to leave a few spaces between lines when you translate if you are writing or typing. This will allow space to make corrections as we go through the four checking steps.

This is not expected to be your final product. No translator gets everything right in the first draft. The chapter will go through different checks before you consider the work done; and even then, as you present the work to the church and community leaders, there may be more corrections.

Remember, you are trying to express the words of God and want it to be your very best work. But, be humble in what you do. Even the writers of the Scriptures had editors who helped them. Many of the writers of the New Testament spoke Greek poorly or not at all and needed help going from their native Aramaic to Greek.

MARA:

You mean from Hebrew, right?

LUCAS:

Actually, no. While every one of the New Testament writers, except Luke, was a Jew and knew Hebrew, they did not speak it in daily conversation. By the time of Jesus, the mother-tongue language of most was Aramaic, a language they had learned in the Exile. Aramaic was their mother-tongue language and Greek was the national language spoken all over the Mediterranean world. We want to translate from our national language to our mother-tongue language, but they had to translate from their mother-tongue to their national Language.

MARA:

We truly are standing with the Apostles of Jesus. How exciting!

LUCAS:

Yes, Jesus Himself spoke in Aramaic, so the writers were translating His words just as we are translating John's words. So, how does it feel to have drafted a full book of scripture for our people?

MARA:

It is so exciting I cannot describe it. I want to publish it right now and let everyone read it.

LUCAS:

Not so fast. Remember we still have a lot of work to do. You need to take that pencil and go back over all you did and check for errors and misunderstandings.

MARA:

Then Siara and the others must check my work.

LUCAS:

And that is what we will talk about in our next program.

MARA:

I am looking forward to it! Good-bye everyone! *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:*

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