

Meetto Translation Interview with the Talbotts, Part 2

- Corinne T: I have Graham here beside me. I don't know if you have a question or two for him. He's just come into the room.
- John H: Hi, Graham. Graham, you're in seventh grade?
- Graham T: Yes.
- John H: And I don't know how many hundreds, maybe thousands of kids are listening to us. This is not live so nothing's going out at the moment, but when was the last time you were in the United States?
- Graham T: We came back in January.
- Corinne T: We actually spent all of 2008 in Kansas. We stay overseas for four year and then go home for a year to the U.S. And that's in western Kansas, so it's not that far from where you are.
- John H: Graham, as you think back, I take it from what your mom said, you've been using Sonlight all along and some of the people who are listening to this program are going to be kindergarten or first graders, and other are going to be your age. Can you think of any particular favorite books from your time?
- Graham T: It's kind of hard to think of any specific books because there's so many good books I've read.
- Corinne T: Can you think of a couple that have been favorites?
- Graham T: Maybe [The Great Turkey Walk](#) and –
- John H: What did you say after that?
- Graham T: There's lots I've enjoyed, but it's hard to name any specific titles.
- John H: Personally, I always come back to [Little Britches](#) and [the other ones from Ralph Moody](#). For some reason, they just move me, personally.
- Graham T: I really enjoyed those ones, too.
- John H: Graham, do you get involved at all in the work that your parents are doing? Or are you mostly just – I shouldn't say it quite this way, but are you mostly, “just” a student?
- Graham T: I guess so.

- Corinne T: Tell them who you play with everyday.
- Graham T: Little boys who live a little ways from us, and we see them quite often.
- John H: So these are Meetto boys?
- Graham T: Yes.
- John H: And when you play together, what do you play? What do you do?
- Graham T: At our house, we normally play soccer because we have a soccer ball and a field. When we're at –
- John H: You've got a house that's got a big enough field to play a soccer game?
- Graham T: It is.
- Corinne T: We live on the edge of town now and do have a lot of space, but it's just a small field. It wouldn't be a full-sized one.
- John H: I've heard before that in many cultures, balls are very rare, so when you say "because we have a ball," you're saying, yeah, we have a ball and Meettos that I know, they don't own balls. Is that correct?
- Graham T: No. They do have balls, locally-made balls, but we have a far superior ball. They have homemade balls. They make them from plastic bags.
- John H: How do they do that?
- Graham T: Sometimes they get a balloon and wrap plastic bags around it and tie it all together. Sometimes they just use plastic bags, old shopping bags.
- Corinne T: Tell them what they use to tie it up with.
- Graham T: Just string.
- Corinne T: Sometimes they'll have an old cloth that they'll wrap around it.
- Graham T: Yeah, that's quite common.
- Corinne T: Sometimes they use a bit of bark from a tree to wrap around it.

- John H: So the balls that they own are more or less round, but they certainly aren't going to bounce true or kick straight.
- Graham T: Yes.
- John H: The fact that you own a kind of professionally-made, probably synthetic rubberized ball that's going to be truly round and well balanced makes your ball very much nicer than the ones that they can make for themselves.
- Graham T: Yes.
- Corinne T: Tell a little bit what you do, Graham, when you go to their house.
- Graham T: We mainly just hang out, follow along what they do.
- John H: Which would be what? What do they do?
- Graham T: Well at this time of the year, they aren't really doing that much. They don't have very busy lives at this time of the year without fields or anything.
- John H: What do you mean "at this time"? Help us to understand when you say, "at this time of the year without fields." What does that mean? What do they do at other times of the year? What is this time of the year? What's unique about this time of the year?
- Graham T: Well, this time of the year is the dry season. It's the hottest time of the year. It's real dry.
- John H: How hot does it get?
- Graham T: It's not really that hot. But it's really dry.
- John H: So if it was wet, then they would be doing more agricultural stuff?
- Graham T: Well, they just finished harvesting a while ago because seasons here are divided into rainy season and dry season, with kind of a cooler, more moderate climate in between. The rainy season normally starts November or December. Sometimes it only starts till Christmas. In years past, it sometimes only starts till Christmas. It normally ends about May.
- Corinne T: April. No, the middle of April.
- John H: The rains just kind of come and then they go.

- Graham T: And it's real solid rains. Every day, almost, you'll get heavy rain. Or every other.
- John H: Is it gray skies all day? Is it kind of depressing at that time of year, or not necessarily?
- Graham T: Well, not really because it's real sunny between rains, it seems like. It's a real cheery season, in my opinion, because everything is green that season. Because the rest of the year, we will not get one drop of rain. That's all their water, moisture for a year. And then after that, there's normally a cool period, maybe a month, month and a half.
- Corinne T: I'd say longer than that, more from May until August it's fairly cool. Maybe till July, sometimes August.
- Graham T: And then till November or December, it's pretty hot and dry and that's – then everybody just kind of – you can't really do that much.
- Corinne T: But perhaps you realize that where we are right now in Lichinga-- Lichinga, I think, is as high as Denver is, so it's a pretty cool place here in Lichinga, and Marrupa's not as high as this, but we are on a ridge, and so it might not be as hot as you might picture Africa to be, just because of elevation.
- John H: Where are you compared – I'm sorry, I have not hauled out my map to be looking at it. Where are you compared with the equator? Are you south of the equator?
- Corinne T: Yeah.
- John H: So your seasons are – the seasons are just very different. I'm reluctant to call it opposite here in North America because it's not exactly like winter and spring and summer. It's, as you say, a rainy and a dry season with a moderate season in between. But yet, the hot seasons is not exactly what we would necessarily expect here in the United States.
- Anyway, talk to us a little bit, Graham, about what you do with your friends. You said right now, if I recall, you can play soccer, but then during the rainy season, you'll do something different?
- Graham T: Well, during the rainy season, since they're so busy with their fields and guarding their fields and such, we generally don't play near as much. Only once or twice a week. Because they just . . . They have to work hard if they're going to have food to eat the rest of the year.

- John H: Your mom had said that the girls, the Meetto girls, most of them, don't even go to school. The boys do go, but apparently, not a whole lot.
- Graham T: They go occasionally, but they miss a lot. I don't think any of them can actually read. They can write their names, but that's just memorizing the letters. They don't know letters, hardly.
- John H: These are boys who are about your age, 11-, 12-, 13-year-old boys?
- Graham T: Yes, about our age.
- Corinne T: And these are pretty much village boys.
- We live on the edge of town and his best friends live past us, more out in the fields, and so the boys that live in Marrupa would go to school more than these more villagey boys, but we quite like this family. But yeah, they're the more normal, all the people who live out in the villages, but there is quite a contrast with the town kids.
- John H: What do those boys have to look forward to when they grow up? Well, actually, I should ask you first, Graham, because this is a contrast: As you think about when you become an adult, what would you like to be or what would you like to do?
- Graham T: I'm not really sure about that. I guess **[inaudible]**.
- Corinne T: We don't get that question here, you know. Kids in America get that question all the time, so they come up with answers for it, but here, people don't really think about that so much, I think.
- John H: If you were to imagine yourself like the kinds of things that you might do, Graham, can you name some possibilities?
- Graham T: I think I might like to work overseas when I grow up, just because I've seen a lot of people work overseas and I've had a lot of a head start on all of the things that they have to learn. I know the language, which is real helpful. And culture. I can relate more than most people can, now that I've lived here.
- John H: By contrast, and it's not going to be a terribly strong contrast to what you've just said, but the boys that you know as your friends there amongst the Meetto, what are they likely to do when they become adults, and from what your mom said about girls getting married and having babies at 14 or 15 years old, are the boys

getting married at 14 and 15, or is it older men marry these 14- and 15-year-old girls?

- Graham T: I'm not really sure as a kid on those sorts of things. My mom studied those things a lot more and knows a lot more about those things.
- Corinne T: Definitely older guys. Mid-20s. The boys in their mid-20s and the girls in their mid-teens, pretty much.
- John H: So these friends of yours, Graham, at 12, they still have maybe another 10 to 15 years before they're likely to get married. But they are not going to school, so, what: do they stay with their parents and work in their parent's fields as farmers? What do they do for the next 10 to 15 years until they get married and then afterwards?
- Graham T: Well, some people have businesses and people – yeah, it varies. They might stay, but they'll probably work till 20 or something, and then maybe leave their house, start their own *muchamba* or something.
- Corinne T: What is a *muchamba*, Graham?
- John H: Yeah, what is a *muchamba*?
- Graham T: A *muchamba* is what they call their farms. But it's not really a farm like you would have in America because they do not hire help. It's your own little plot of land that you grow your family's food. They **[inaudible]** so much from their *muchambas*. It's just for them to eat, mainly.
- John H: I think the technical term for that is, it's *subsistence farming*.
- Graham T: Yeah.
- John H: And they don't grow enough to have for trade or for earning money?
- Graham T: Well, they sell some stuff. And also, some people grow stuff like tobacco and cotton for money. But people there, they don't use that much money because a lot of the stuff that they need they make themselves. Occasionally, they'll buy soap and salt and most – they don't need any food, hardly. They don't buy any food.
- John H: In your friends' houses – it just struck me with what you just said – what do people own? You said they make most of the things that

they need, but in some ways, they don't need a whole lot, I imagine, and they don't own a whole lot of things.

- Graham T: But one thing is their homes are a lot different than the homes in America because of the temperature, you can live outside pretty much, they use their huts for sleeping and that's all, unless you have a big house. Like we always play outside. I've never been inside their houses.
- John H: You don't even go in?
- Graham T: No. They stay outside. In the evenings, they cook outside and play outside.
- John H: Even during the rainy season?
- Graham T: Well, then, normally, they have walls and they have an overhang of about a meter and a half all around, so they stay under the roof outside still. Or sometimes, people have *apundras* [spelling?], which are just roofs there.
- John H: But open on the sides?
- Graham T: Yeah.
- John H: And so, except for sleeping, they stay outside of their huts.
- Graham T: Yes. But another thing is that they have many buildings. Like in that family, I think the grandma and grandpa have a house, the boys have a house, so there's several different houses for different people because they all sleep together. They're one-room houses, little mud huts about the size of an average bedroom in America or smaller.
- Corinne T: Smaller.
- John H: And – wait a second – the boys have their own hut or house and their parents are not in that same place, because as you said, it's one room.
- Graham T: Yeah. But they're close together. In their kind of little place there with their related family, they probably have ten buildings there, granaries, places where they store their grain, different crops, where they have their goats because they do raise some goats.
- Corinne T: Tell them what their huts are made out of.

- Graham T: They're just mud. Now there's more brick houses, but the local ones, and I think all their houses, are not made of bricks. They make a frame out of bamboo and stalks, corn stalks, and then they will plaster that with mud. And then they have thatched roofs.
- John H: How often do they replace that thatch roof?
- Graham T: Well, they normally just add to it. The houses don't last that long. They're pretty biodegradable.
- John H: Biodegradable houses!
- Graham T: It does not take very long to make one. In a week, you could make a house easily. They're practically worthless because you just build one if you want one. There's not – housing is not valuable there.
- John H: How long does a house last? A year, maybe?
- Graham T: No, more than that. But they deteriorate slowly.
- John H: All the mud slowly kind of gets pelted off of the wall by the rain?
- Graham T: They have overhangs, but the roofs leak. So they erode away from that quickly and bugs and things. The roofs degrade. And also fires. They sometimes burn huts.
- John H: Because they're cooking and then the flame kind of lights the roof that's overhanging and that's the end of it?
- Graham T: No. They burn as part of to clear their fields. They'll burn the fields, except fires rage across huge expanses, so sometimes huts and stuff are burnt in those big fires, especially in our area. It's kind of windy, so it doesn't – it helps spread the fire.
- John H: Your mom said that people will sometimes be at your house at 5:00 a.m. So when do people go to bed there?
- Graham T: Well, they go to bed when it's dark, pretty much, because the only light they'll have, normally, is the campfire. So normally –
- John H: Not much light, is it?
- Graham T: So it normally gets dark about 5:30, 6:00. Well, it depends on the time of year, of course. So they maybe go to bed at 7:00 or 8:00. Sometime in there. And then they get up as soon as it gets light.

- John H: So in a way, here in the West, we extend our hours because we have lights, whether it's electricity nowadays or 150 years ago, lanterns or candles. But there, hey, you don't have candles, you don't have lanterns, so it's dark. It's time to go to sleep.
- Graham T: Yeah. Except all this I'm talking about are friends. But in the city, people are getting more modern. There are people that have electricity, bigger houses, more American style. So it's a huge contrast. Not like in America where it's not near as much difference. But in Mozambique, there's huge contrasts. Like us, we live in a fairly modern house, big house, so there's such contrasts.
- John H: What kind of clothing do the people wear?
- Graham T: A lot of it's used clothes that come from America.
- Corinne T: Good Will. They all wear Good Will clothes.
- Graham T: But clothing's pretty cheap, generally. But they still – my friends, maybe, have two pairs of clothes each. And so they maybe wash their clothes once or twice a week.
- Corinne T: You kind of know the kids by their shirts. You can see them from a ways off and you know who it is because you know the shirt they wear every day.
- Graham T: And their clothes are in tatters. They probably buy new clothes very rarely. And they have heavy use, too.
- John H: I think we should probably draw this to a conclusion and I, again, want to thank both of you for participating and taking so much –
- Corinne T: John, can I just – I'm sorry. Before Graham leaves here, I know that always whenever we're talking to American kids, they always want to know about animals here, and Graham was starting to say that when he goes out to the fields with his friends in the rainy season, a lot of the reason they're doing that is to guard. Let me just tell you quick what they're guarding against and why they do that.
- John H: Absolutely. Please. Thank you.
- Graham T: That reminds me, we have been hanging out quite a bit in rainy season. It's just not at their house, at their *muchamba*. And that's because they have fields around their house, but also, they have another patch of land a little bit farther away that they also farm.

- Corinne T: And why do you have to hang out there? What do you do?
- Graham T: Because during the daytime, there's baboons. And they're all around. They eat the corn and stuff. They're a real pain. They always – because we have the dog, they sometimes ask us to bring our dog to chase the baboons, because they're terrified of our dog.
- Corinne T: Why do they have to guard at night?
- Graham T: At night, there's pigs. Wild pigs come through at night.
- John H: So day and night. So somebody has to stay awake at night?
- Graham T: Well, they don't really guard because it's getting populated. In rural areas, they have to guard more. There's a guy near us that said there's a pig that went through every evening at 6:00. But other than that, there isn't that much pig activity around. But occasionally, people kill them.
- Corinne T: And his friends' *muchamba*. They don't have elephants right there, but just a little ways – Go ahead. You tell.
- Graham T: But actually, there are elephants. Just maybe a week ago, there were some elephants on the road near us, maybe 100 meters from us and near their house, like 10 meters from their house, just eating stuff. Except they didn't have much left in their fields.
- Corinne T: Some people not too far from us do stay up at night to guard for elephants because elephants really mess up their fields badly.
- John H: They just trample it all down, as well as eat it.
- Corinne T: Yeah.
- John H: When you're guarding, are you using – is it just waving your arms, or do you have a rifle or something? How does that work?
- Graham T: I've not guarded against pigs or anything. I'm not sure if I'd want to because they can be dangerous. So can elephants. In fact, a person died maybe a month ago, got killed by an elephant in the *muchamba*. But their grandpa does have a bow, just a homemade one he made himself. And so if they got close enough, he would try to shoot them. But they're smart enough creatures that they don't get too close and it's not real powerful or anything. So maybe just throw rocks, yell at them.

- Corinne T: We get to eat those wild pigs sometimes because, of course, our Muslim neighbors don't eat them but they like to kill them and bring them to us as a prize.
- John H: Do you buy it off of them or do they just give it to you?
- Corinne T: No, they sell it to us, but pretty cheap. They're happy because they made some money and we're happy to have good meat.
- John H: How big are these pigs?
- Graham T: 20 kilos.
- Corinne T: Just the size of a dog, basically.
- Graham T: Big, heavy dog.
- John H: 20 kilos. For a regular American, that's about 45 pounds. 2.2 pounds per kilo. So these baboons, though, how big are they?
- Graham T: They are huge creatures. Some of them probably get up to 200, 300 pounds.
- Corinne T: No, I don't think that big.
- Graham T: They probably get up to 150 pounds.
- John H: A lot bigger than you.
- Corinne T: Yeah.
- Graham T: They don't look that big because they run on all fours. They're big, muscular creatures and stout.
- John H: Are they vicious?
- Graham T: If they – Our dog: we've let him off to chase them if they come too near to our yard. He'll chase them and they'll run. But if they stop, he will back off.
- John H: What kind of dog do you have?
- Graham T: A mixture.
- Corinne T: A black dog.
- Graham T: He's about –

- Corinne T: He's medium-sized, I'd say.
- John H: Kind of like a retriever size?
- Graham T: About that, I guess. He's part sheepdog, isn't he?
- Corinne T: Yeah, he does have some sheepdog in him.
- John H: It sounds like, though, if the pigs can get through, they don't have fences around their fields.
- Graham T: Occasionally they do, but our friends – sometimes they have log fences. I've seen them. I have. But only rarely. Our friends have some nets that they put up, and so they put those around the fields. But they also use those nets to hang things.
- One time I went with them and there was a rabbit that they tracked because they got the poop and – they're quite good at tracking and stuff. And so they put the nets and the people on the sides tried to get it in there, and they circled and that rabbit managed to escape, but I think they've managed quite a bit because they don't eat meat very often.
- John H: It's amazing that a whole bunch of people – It sounds like several people were involved in catching one small rabbit. I mean, a rabbit isn't all that much meat.
- Graham T: They're guarding the fields. They're not doing that much more.
- Corinne T: They have time and it's a group of boys, a whole bunch of boys.
- John H: As you consider we've got a bunch of Sonlighters listening in: What would you like to say to Sonlight students, and I guess, their parents who are praying for and giving toward the Meetto Bible translation? Is there any special message or thought that you'd like them, particularly, to think about?
- Corinne T: I'll let Graham answer, but I'll answer first. Just to say that to ask them to pray for a spiritual breakthrough, but also, for more workers, for more missionaries to come, and also for more Mozambiquan Christians to be able to move into our area. What about you?
- Graham T: I guess just what you said, pretty much.
- John H: Anything else? Any other thoughts or insights you'd like to share?

- Graham T: Another thing I'd like to say about the trapping animals is that they trap tons of birds, some they kill with rocks and stuff.
- John H: They can throw a rock and hit a bird?
- Graham T: Pretty good. They trap them with little traps and things, also. And so they eat quite a lot of those, just little tiny tweetie birds.
- Corinne T: Tell him one way that they trap them with the little –
- Graham T: They have **[inaudible]** sort of stuff and they put it on twigs. And when the birds land on that, they get trapped. They have lots of different methods of trapping birds, though, to eat. I think it's mainly just kind of a hobby for them because they get a lot of stuff, a lot of food from that, though. But for that reason, there's a lot of – especially since there's lots of deforestation, the bird population is going down quite a bit. But our yard has tons of birds because of that – because we don't shoot them, except crows. So lots of birds come to our yard, which is kind of nice, because we've left most of the trees there.
- John H: My guess is that as people listen to this interview, they will, themselves, have a bunch of questions that they'd like to ask. And again, I want to thank you both for taking this time and we pray that what we all are involved in will have good success and have good impact. May all the people who are listening-in pray diligently for additional workers, for spiritual breakthrough, and for progress in this translation. Thank you so very much. You guys have a great day.
- Corinne T: You, too.