

International Translation Services

SIL Translation Services (STS) works in collaboration with colleagues in SIL, and other agencies to creatively steward and advance the translation practices, tools, methods, and training necessary to enable a supportive environment for individuals and communities to flourish and engage with Scripture.

We value: Interconnectedness. Capacity Building. Diversity. Innovation.

June 2025

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Anticipating the Eternal Chorus

- **Angie Foo** - International Coordinator for Translation Research and Practice

John Piper, in his book, "Let the Nations be Glad" states that, "Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man."

When it has been over and it has been centuries of time, the redeemed will fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.

This quote essentially captures the journey my husband and I have taken from our involvement in the music and worship ministry to our work in Bible translation. The desire to worship, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man, was a theme that has been woven into the fabric of our lives. As we grew in our faith and ministry, God's desire for all nations to know and worship Him became our desire. We came to realise that the ministry of worship needs to overflow from the church into the world, and Bible translation is simply the means through which we can invite others to encounter the God who is worthy of all worship. By helping people gain access to the Bible, we are inviting the nations, many of whom have yet to be introduced before the throne of grace, to join the eternal chorus in worshipping our Lord.

The Gala Night during ICON 2025 gave some of us a little snapshot of what that could possibly look like. As people shared with joy the Scripture materials that have been produced from all around the world, some for the very first time, it was a sign that the numbers represented in that eternal chorus are growing. And with God's grace, we move forward with renewed resolve to reach the least, the least, and the last, by inviting them to us as we draw closer to the day when we are all a part of that eternal chorus, walking humbly, as alongside the church?

Grace came to the forefront as we reflected on the opportunities and concerns in each of our contexts, listening carefully to each other around our tables and seeking to understand our best trajectories. Throughout the week we have thought several rounds of deepening engagement with significant emerging themes. How do we engage the next generation? How will our relationship with Wycliffe Alliance organisations look in the future? How do we uphold standards in our work? SIL is filled with joy in what we are walking humbly, as alongside the church?

And hope! ICON produced ten directional statements, the last of which talked about SIL as a 'healthy, interdependent global community... locally rooted and globally unified' - a community of grace and hope... where people and partnerships flourish'. Amen! The other statements highlighted different hopes, and several stood out to me. They may not be beautifully worded at this stage, but they do reveal topics that are really important.

- That we will promote responsible, ethical and appropriate... use of AI...
- That we will champion... clear quality standards in Bible translation...
- That we will humbly journey with all levels of the Church... to collaboratively pursue the Church's mission of discipleship

And perhaps most significantly for me, the hope that we will continue and strengthen our position as a learning organisation - able to assess whether our work is leading to the transformational impact we desire, and to adapt our strategies as appropriate. This gives me hope that our work will continue to enable people to flourish in community, using the languages they value most. Looking forward to where God takes us in this joyous, gracious and hopeful journey over the next four years!

New Translation Consultants

Piangtong Joshua (Africa) & Prabhakara Atturi (Asia)

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Piangtong Joshua - Africa

Congratulations to **Piangtong Joshua** working with SIL Nigeria on completing all the requirements for certification as a Translation Consultant. Drew Maust (Chairman) announced that the SIL Africa Area Accreditation Committee for translation consultants has examined her dossier and they are pleased to say that the committee has formally recognized her as a Translation Consultant. Piangtong's experience, expertise, and wide-ranging competence, will, by God's grace, be a great asset to the work of Bible translation in Africa and beyond for years to come. Her primary mentor was Mark Gaddis.

When Piangtong graduated from secondary school in 2011 she became convinced that God was calling her to work in his vineyard rather than in the discipline of Medicine, which she so desperately wanted to pursue. It was difficult for her to let go of her desire and accept what God was telling her but finally she surrendered and went to study at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. When she bought the form, she did not know the courses available in that school but when she saw Linguistics and Bible Translation, she was convinced that was the way that God wanted her to go. She obtained a BA in Linguistics and Bible translation in 2017 and an MA in Biblical Hebrew translation in 2020.

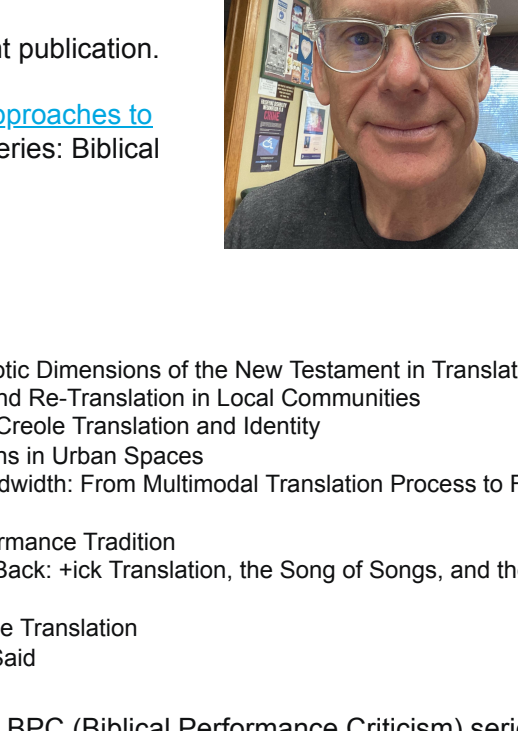
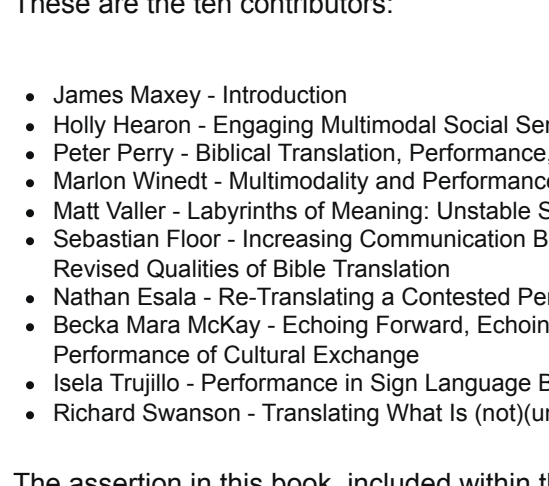
While in school, her spiritual formation leader, Prof. Andy Warren, advised her to connect with the Mwaghavul language project (her mother tongue) to connect with the team and gain additional experience.

So, she went and looked for the office during the holiday. The translators were very happy to meet her. From that time, they started inviting Piangtong to come and join them whenever they came to Jos for consultant checking. They later asked her to do backtranslation, a role which she kept playing until 2017 when she left and joined SIL Nigeria. After joining SIL Nigeria Piangtong was assigned to work on the "T" project as a linguistics and translation advisor. She was able to study the discourse features of the language and wrote a paper on the narrative discourse of the language. Although the paper has not been published, it has been checked and approved by a discourse consultant. She trained the translators on some of the discourse features of the language and how to apply them within translation. She is currently working on non-narrative discourse.

Due to her excellent performance academically, Piangtong was selected as one of the TCNN students to be trained to become a staff lecturer. She fills a critical role as part-time lecturer at the Linguistics and Bible Translation Department of TCNN. She enjoys interactions with the students and how they are honest to share their concerns and fears with her. She has found it a great blessing to be able to teach language development and Bible translation.

Piangtong has been involved in translation from 2014 to date. During her translation CIT growth, she was able to observe and learn from different consultants (Benjamin Kuekizy, David Rowbury, David Heath, Emily Gaddis, etc.) and she also got to do consultant checking for at least four different language teams on different books and genres. After she completed her MA she attended a consultant training (NITAC "1") workshop in Nigeria in 2020, just before the COVID-19 lockdown. After the training, she was primarily assigned to work with the Taji team and was focused on doing the discourse studies of the language and helping to form the team of translators, making sure that the team was working together. She began to focus more on her growth plan towards becoming a consultant in 2023. One very helpful initiative started by Piangtong was a community of practice for consultants-in-training. They met twice a month to discuss with Mark things that related to their growth and how to do their work better. Piangtong has a community of practice found it very helpful and learned a lot from the process. She is looking forward as a consultant to be able to help more language teams in Nigeria on their translations.

Piangtong is married to Chukwuna and they have three children.



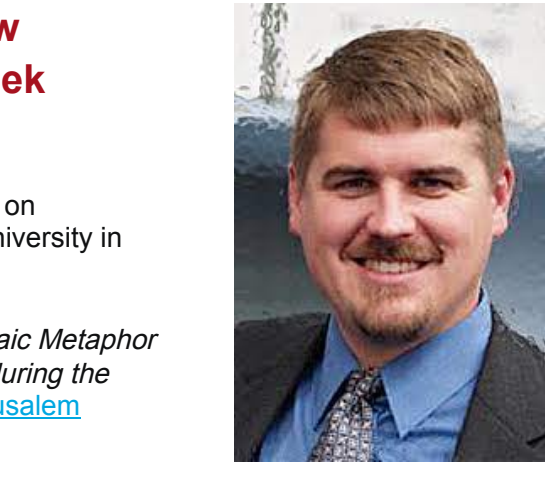
Prabhakara Atturi - Asia

Congratulations to **Prabhakara Atturi** working with SIL Global Consultant Pool (GCP) who has completed all of the requirements to be certified as a Translation Consultant. Keith Benn and Bill Blavin were his primary mentors. He successfully completed the Asia TCOW in 2024.

He began working in Bible translation in 2016 serving with a local organization translating translation and health materials into his mother tongue. Then he served as a translator facilitator, a scripture engagement worker, and finally as a translation manager for multiple projects. The lack of consultants, especially for the Old Testament, triggered an interest in his pursuing Hebrew studies in Israel. He also completed with Anne Kompare two different KTOT articles.

His CIT training included serving as an exegetical checker and working closely with one translation project. He was mentored by various consultants including Andy Minch, Daniel Sekwari, Pam Bakaly, Stephen Payne, Alex Strum, Roger Stirling, Mine Mathew and Selvi Michael.

Prabhakara has a Bachelor of Theology from Maranatha Veda Patasala (Maranatha Theological Seminary), a Master of Divinity from Asia Evangelical College and Seminary, a Bachelor in Bible Translation Studies from Semprona University and an M.A. in Biblical Hebrew and Translation Consulting from Institute of Biblical Languages and Translation (Whole Word Institute).



Interviews with Translation Consultants

We asked experienced Senior Translation Consultant, **Rick Floyd** (SIL Americas), to share some thoughts concerning his work and consulting of ministry. Experienced consultants have been a key organizational resource over the years, equipping and encouraging others to academic and professional excellence while providing much needed leadership and service to many Bible translation organizations.

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Rick Floyd - Americas

How did you get interested in Bible translation?

Hmmm... it's a long story short version: an identity crisis in my second year of university started me on a journey where I abandoned my art major, went to SIL in Norman, Oklahoma to study linguistics and ended up joining Wycliffe by accident.

What gets you excited when you work with others in Bible translation? I really enjoy working with the translation team I've worked with since the beginning of the Wycliffe project many years ago.

They are an absolute delight. So what really excites me is when I see the lights come on for them and all of the sudden something makes sense, or when scripture prompts are an emotional reaction on their part that reminds me of the kind of sensitivity to the Word of God I need to have. Similarly, when the lights come on for me when I see something I hadn't seen before even though I'd read it a hundred times.

What is your consulting philosophy? Consultants don't know everything and they certainly aren't always right; they are students with a whole lot of experience, and sometimes with views that are more entrenched than might be necessary.

I don't consider myself to be the "text-police". I bring another set of eyes to the table that hopefully will prompt a team to consider things they may not have thought about, to help them do the best job they can. And I also need to be able to do what I can in the process.

Translation and consulting are iterative processes; you are always working, and then you come back to it, and see all kinds of things you missed first time around. In other words, you have to take a long view and give yourself the freedom to revisit something you thought you'd already resolved by accident.

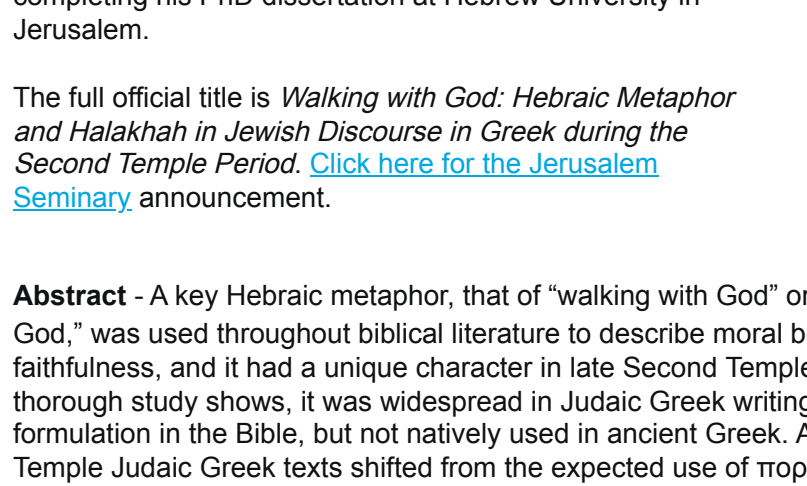
How do you continue to grow as a consultant? I taught in the SIL program at Biola University for a number of years, and I found that teaching graduate students fed the practical application of those ideas at the consulting desk, and vice versa. At the present time, I'm part of the team that plans and implements the consultant training program for Spanish speakers in Latin America (SILTEC). It's not a fixed curriculum; interacting with the SILTEC teaching staff and Consultants in Training keeps new ideas and challenges flowing our way. We are always having to consider what ELISE do the OT's need to know, or re-know, to add to their competence.

Can you share about a time when you realized you were wrong and what you learned from it? I'm always discovering my wrongness. Anyone you adjust anything it's a course correction from some previous "less-than-the-preferred" state. Yeah, I think about when we started the revision of the Wycliffe NT how surprised I was at how much I was doing "tweaking" as well as things we'd completely overlooked. I learned that "expertise" is progressing; hopefully I'll my craft better now than when I was first was dedicated to be a consultant, and that I should expect the same from CITs as we certify them; they are good now, they will be better.

Share something that you learned from a mentor or from a mentee? Probably the most memorable thing wasn't exactly from a mentor, but from an old, illiterate Quechua shepherdess. I talked about this in a presentation I did in Orlando in 2015. [Click here to view link](#), and look at the story of the sheep at timestamp 8:30-11:00.

What would you say to young/aspiring translators? It takes longer than you think, with more obstacles than you could anticipate. But do not fear. Be merciful, so thank him for the divine impulse he grants to keep you from seeing and worrying about all the things that could turn you back.

News



Bible Translation Conference 2025 - Chiangmai, Thailand

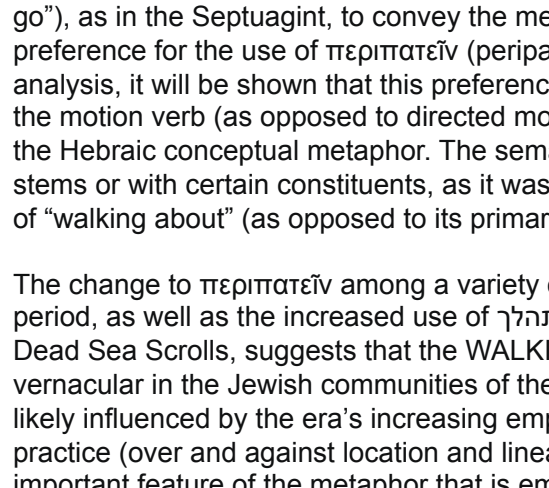
Register by the end of June 2025 in order to receive the Early Bird discount. More details on registration [here](#).

The Bible Translation Conference this year will be in Chiang Mai, Thailand (Empress Hotel) from 28-31 October on the theme of *Ethics in Bible Translation*.

Greek for Local Translators in Nigeria - David Rowbury

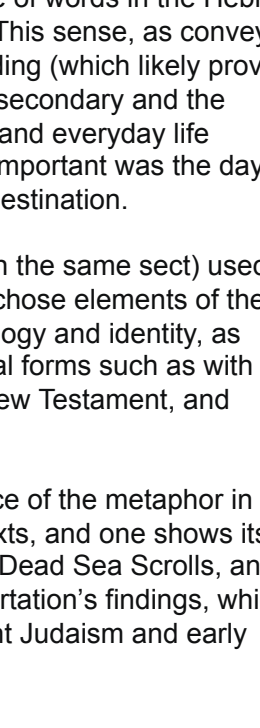
Accessing the scriptures directly from the Greek is having an impact on Bible translation in Nigeria. While doing translation consulting in Nigeria, [Baruch Kvasnica](#) found that some local translators are enjoying learning Greek using the [Alpha with Angels](#) resources.

David Rowbury is guiding a team of four Nigerian translators through the *Alpha with Angels* series of lessons and they have now completed up to lesson 20. This team of translators process the Greek training better than they could have and listen as a team than individually.



They also go through each lesson three times together: once to get an overview, then two more times where they listen to a little bit, then stop and discuss it. They work to discover the similarities and differences between their language and Greek, and then decide on how that will impact their translation.

An interesting side note is that one of the four translators is a grandmother from a small village. She has enjoyed the lessons so much that she started gathering village children around her and teaching them the lessons also.



Expanding Approaches to Bible Translation

- **James Maxey**

Congratulations to **James Maxey** on his recent publication.

James A. Maxey (Editor). 2025. [Expanding Approaches to Bible Translation: Multimedial Practices](#). Series: Biblical Performance Criticism. Cascade Books

These are the ten contributors:

- James Maxey - Introduction
- Holly Heaton - Engaging Multimodal Social Semiotic Dimensions of the New Testament in Translation
- Peter Perry - Biblical Translation, Performance, and Re-Translation in Local Communities
- Martin West - Multimodality and Performance: Greek Translation and Identity
- Matt Valler - Layerings of Meaning: Unstable Signs in Urban Spaces
- Sebastian Flor - Increasing Communication Bandwidth: From Multimodal Translation Process to Four Revised Qualities of Bible Translation
- Nathan Esala - Re-Translating a Contested Performance Tradition
- Beata Mara Moly - Entering Forward: Entering Back - Risk Translation, the Song of Songs, and the Performance of Cultural Exchange
- Isela Tzuclo - Informing in Sign Language Bible Translation
- Richard Swanson - Translating What Is (not)Unsaid

The assertion in this book, included within the BPC (Biblical Performance Criticism) series, is that translation is as fundamental to biblical material as performance—both in its history as well as in its research approaches. Translation in this sense is more than a transfer of meaning from one linguistic system to another. Bible translation highlights its innovative connections and conceptions to biblical texts, in their promulgation, reception, and ever-changing nature.

A performance theory used throughout this book is social semiotic multimodality. The communication theory informs an approach to translation that expands beyond words to other semiotic resources. Sign language, embodied performance, social media, theater, materiality, and many other types of multimodal communications inform translation.

It is important to understand that the Bible is a translated experience. Translation reflects the various ways in which the Bible has been mediated and appropriated throughout history. It follows, therefore, that Bible translation, as a global activity, has been and continues to be influenced by the political and economic forces of history. Race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other elements of our social locations directly influence the enterprise and results of Bible translation.

CBC Competency Manager Instructions

- **Chris Rice**

Chris Rice (*Asia/Pacific Language Technology Coordinator*) created this [Google Doc](#) with [step-by-step instructions](#), which provides some instructions for using the CBC Competency Manager. These instructions are designed for most tasks that domain coordinators, mentors, and mentees might do in CBC. A few of the details in Chris' guide are specific to language technology with some differences for translation and other domains.

Over the next few months, he hopes to expand this document to include some images for improved usability. Feel free to share this link with others. Email [Chris Rice](#) if you notice errors or other issues.

Walking with God: The Hebrew Metaphor in First Century Greek

- **Baruch Kvasnica**

Congratulations to Dr. **Baruch Brian Kvasnica** on completing his PhD dissertation at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

The full official title is *Walking with God: Hebrew Metaphor and Haskalah in Jewish Discourse in Greek during the Second Temple Period*. [Click here for the Jerusalem Seminary](#) announcement.

Abstract - A key Hebrew metaphor, that of "walking with God" or "walking in the ways of God," was used throughout biblical literature to describe moral behavior and covenantal faithfulness, and it had a unique character in late Second Temple Jewish Greek writings. As through study shows, it was widespread in Jewish Greek writing, reflecting the Hebrew formulation in the Bible, but not natively used in ancient Greek. Additionally, certain Second Temple Jewish Greek texts testify from the expected use of *πορεύω* [porouō], "to go," as in the Septuagint, to convey the metaphorical use of the root *yl* ("to walk") as a marked preference for the use of *περιπατέω* [peripateō, "to walk/to walk about"]. Through linguistic analysis, it will be shown that this preference for *peripateō* better conveys the manner of the motion verb (as opposed to directed motion) than *πορεύω*, and thus better reflects the Hebrew conceptual metaphor. The semantic range of *yl* when used with certain stems or with certain constituents, as well as in the "walking" metaphor, conveyed a sense of "walking about" (as opposed to its primary sense of "going").

The change to *περιπατέω* within a variety of Jewish writings in the late Second Temple period, as well as the increased use of *yl* (*hithalekh*, "to walk/to walk about") in the Dead Sea Scrolls, suggests that the WALKING metaphor was common and current vernacular in the Bible and the Jewish communities of the time. The prevalence of this metaphor was likely influenced by the era's increasing emphasis on covenantal faithfulness and halakic practice (over and against location and lineage) for the formation of Jewish identity. An important feature of the metaphor that is emphasized by the choice of words in the Hebrew and Greek of the period is the semantic sense of "walking about." This sense, as conveyed for example in the Israelite wilderness wanderings and in shepherd (which likely provide the source of the conceptual metaphor), places the destination as secondary and the journey as primary. When applied to an understanding of religious and everyday life according to a Jewish understanding this indicated that what was important was the day-to-day or the step-by-step journey, rather than the timely arrival at a destination.

Various Jewish religious groups of the time (and even writers within the same sect) used the walking metaphor with different intents and emphases. Many chose elements of the walking metaphor to express key aspects of their religious terminology and identity, as seen in the shifts in the verb mentioned above as well as in nominal forms such as with *deresh* ("way") in the Dead Sea Scrolls, (the *hithalekh* ("way") in the New Testament, and *halakiah* in the Mishnah.

Of the dissertation's three main chapters, one shows the prevalence of the metaphor in Judaic Greek texts, one shows its absence from Hellenic Greek texts, and one shows its prevalence in the Hebrew Bible and later Hebrew texts, especially Dead Sea Scrolls, and points to the broader historical conclusions suggested by the dissertation's findings, which can contribute to a better understanding of some aspects of ancient Judaism and early Christianity.

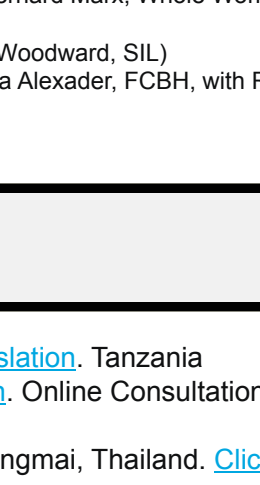
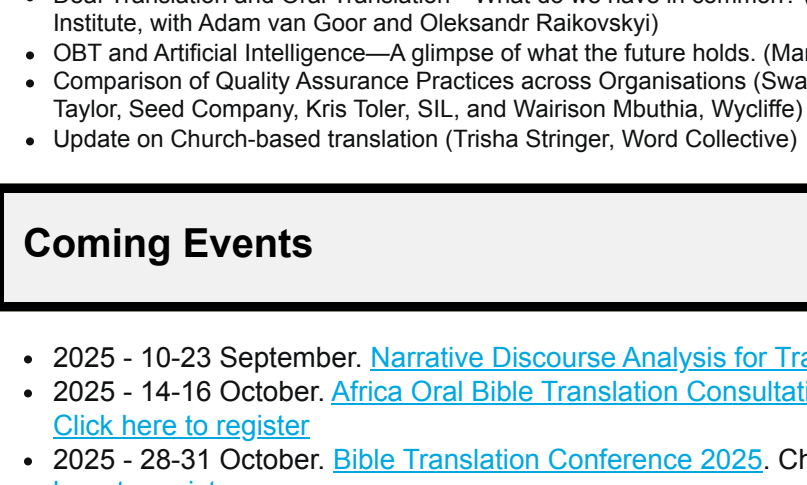
FLEXTrans Workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand - Tim Stirtz

FLEXTrans Workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand
3-6 Nov 2025, immediately after the Bible Translation Conference

FLEXTrans is a rule-based machine translation system that can quickly multiply the reach of high quality translations by adapting them into related languages with similar translation goals. It has been shown to cut the time for drafting in half, speed up consultant checking, and decrease spelling and formatting errors. It speeds the work of the mother tongue translator by providing a draft that already incorporates effective ways to express Biblical meaning in culturally communicative ways.

If you have been wanting to try out FLEXTrans, and you are attending the BT Conference, this is your chance! There is a one-day Taste of FLEXTrans workshop on Monday 03 November, for decision makers and project members to experience what it is like to use FLEXTrans. Then, for those who want to learn how to set up FLEXTrans for a translation project, there is the four-day FLEXTrans for Rule Writers workshop on 3-6 November (Monday to Thursday).

[Click here](#) for further details - held at [The Juniper Tree](#). Registration: [FLEXTrans Registration Form](#).



Africa Oral Bible Translation Consultation - **Drew Maust**

The 2025 [Africa Oral Bible Translation Consultation](#) (AOBT2025/TOBA2025) will be a bilingual English and French online consultation from 14-18 October 2025. [Click here to register](#). If you are not very familiar with oral Bible translation, you may wish to watch this [OBT's Involving Experiences](#) to familiarize yourself.

Some of the themes that will be covered during this year's conference include:

- Update on the work of the ETEN Bible Translation Innovation Lab (Andy Kellough, Mission Mutual)
- Emotional Experiences When Translating: Why is it particularly important for oral translation? (Joah Priest, SIL, SL)
- Celebration of the 50th New Testament Dedication and next steps (Rev. Katsia Jackson Jones, BILTA)
- Case study: OBT in Niger - Measuring the Impact (Richard Okenda and Lungu Makari, FCBI)
- Deaf Translation and Oral Translation: How do we have in common? (Serafin Marx, Whole Word)
- OBT and Artificial Intelligence—A glimpse of what the future holds (Sapna Alexander, FCBI)
- Comparison of Quality Assurance Practices across Organizations (Sapna Alexander, FCBI, with Rob Taylor, Seed Company, Kiva Teler, SIL, and Warrson Moutte, Wycliffe)
- Update on Church-based translation (Tisha Springer, Word Collective)

Coming Events

- 2025 - 10-23 September. [Narrative Discourse Analysis for Translation](#), Tanzania
- 2025 - 14-18 October. [Africa Oral Bible Translation Consultation](#) - Online Consultation. [Click here to register](#)
- 2025 - 28-31 October. [Bible Translation Conference 2025](#) Chiangmai, Thailand. [Click here to register](#)
- 2025 - 03-06 November. [FLEXTrans Workshop](#), Chiang Mai, Thailand. [Click here to register](#)
- 2025 - 18-21 May. [EMDC](#), Chiangmai, Thailand.

Useful Links

- [Bible Translation Consultant Competencies](#) / [YouTube Channel for TCI Competencies](#)
- [SIL Senior Translation Consultants](#)
- [Email the SIL International Translation Officer](#) / [International Translation Services](#) IL5 page
- [Join/writhe the SIL Translation Resources](#) Google Group
- Visit the public [SIL and Translators](#) site
- Find Translation Resources (both free download and for purchase)
- [SIL.org/Resources/Publications](#)
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SIL Translation Services

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- **Phil King** - STS Director & Coordinator for Translation Training and Development
- **Angie Foo** - SIL Coordinator for Translation Research and In-Field
- **Nick Peterson** - SIL Coordinator for Translation Resources
- **Koa Lee** - SIL Coordinator for Quality Standards Services
- **Yuli Mathew** - Director, Global Consultant Pool
- **Brian Molplaza** - STS Operations and Project Management

Area Translation Coordinators

- **Angeline Fong** - *Asia/Pacific* - Asia
- **Graig Carlson** - *Pacific*
- **Drew Maust** - *Africa/Pacific* - Africa
- **Josephine van der Boven** - *Asia/Pacific* - Africa
- **Guinevere Owen** - *Europe*
- **Rick Floyd** & **David Swanson** - *Americas*
- **Bernadette van der Louw** - *Global Sign Languages Team* (GSLT)

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You are receiving this email because of your interest in translation updates.

This newsletter is produced by SIL Translation Services. It contains items of interest for translation personnel within SIL and related quality assurance. It includes notices of upcoming conferences and workshops, announcements of recent dissertations and journal articles, and pointers to useful information related to translation.

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