

The Boma People



A Word from an Enthusiastic Boma Pastor

“Preaching in the Boma language helps the congregation understand God’s Word better than when it is in the national language. Many people in the congregation are elderly and are very glad that God’s Word is now available in their language.

“When ministers preach in the national language, sometimes people nod their heads in affirmation, but they don’t really understand what’s being preached. But when the preaching is in Boma, they comprehend the message and can better relate it to their daily lives. In this way, God’s Word is planted more deeply in peoples’ hearts.

“When I went to P village, I explained the gospel to an old man using the Boma language. It’s much clearer for people than in the national language; they better grasp the Good News in the language they hear every day.

“When I pray in Boma, I feel more open and closer to Jesus while I express myself to Him. I don’t have to adjust my language to pray to Him.”

A Big-Picture Workshop: Delving into Discourse

People normally don’t think about how they structure their own language or why they express their thoughts as they do. But for a solid month at a workshop in nearby Malaysia, the three Boma translators dug into their mother tongue to find out those hidden things. Specifically, they learned how to recognize special features of different kinds of longer units of connected speech (discourse). For example, instructional paragraphs in some languages may use ordinal words (first, second...finally). A fiction story could begin with *“Once upon a time.”* Certain words may be repeated for emphasis at the peak of a narrative. Conjunctions can string sentences together, but may be omitted in certain places to shorten sentences and lend excitement or increase the pace.

The workshop also taught the team how to use a computer program called BART to help them study Biblical Greek. They learned some grammatical features of New Testament Greek discourse. After they returned from the workshop, the team had a better understanding of the nuances of their own tongue. Now they’re prepared to recognize these and use them as they translate God’s Word in Boma to ensure naturalness.



- Location: Restricted access area, Southeast Asia
- Number of Speakers: 245,000 primary speakers; 2 million second-language speakers
- Project Goal: New Testament
- Year Project Began: 2008
- Expected Completion Date: 2015





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Acts—Poised To Be Published

The team finished proofreading the typeset copy of Acts in the Boma language, and now the book is poised to be published in a single volume. This will allow people to have God's Word more quickly before the entire New Testament is printed.

Jonah—God's Love for Israel's Enemies

After the workshop, the Boma translators immediately applied what they'd learned by revising the book of Jonah together as a team. In the process, they reworked the poetry section in chapter 2 based on the discourse analysis they'd learned. The team is eager to get this powerful little book, which is full of good insights on God's love for Israel's natural enemies, into people's hands.

Translation Step 2: Team Check—The translation team carefully reviews the Scripture drafts together verse-by-verse, checking for accuracy and clarity.

Good Questions

When Bible translators test their Scripture drafts with members of the community, they first read them aloud to the listeners, and then they ask good questions that will tell them what the hearers have gleaned. Last month, the Boma team finished writing the test questions for 1 Thessalonians. It was the first time one of the mother-tongue translators had drafted test questions, so it provided some essential practice. The team has now checked through 1 Thessalonians among themselves. Next they'll take it to villages to share with the local people and ask the comprehension questions.

The team also continues working on the book of Ruth as practice in translating narrative discourse. They've drafted it and are now checking it as a team. After they finish the checking, they'll develop test questions for this book as well.

- **Please pray that the printing of Acts can be done soon. Pray also that the community will eagerly accept and use this new Scripture portion.**

- **Praise God for the team's increased understanding of the testing process and for the opportunities to implement it.**
- **Pray for translator Anid's husband; she's taking a leave of absence because of his health needs.**
- **Please pray for better electricity supply this month. The team has struggled in recent weeks with frequent power outages that interrupt their work and wreak havoc with the computers.**

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