



Northern Subanen NT*

A Guidebook for Eternal Life

Bible translator Ryan shares: “I remember Renato. He’s a Northern Subanen schoolteacher by profession and used to follow the animistic religion. I asked him to be my language teacher when the translation project first began. He would come to the house to teach me and my wife Diolia the Northern Subanen language and we would go to his school every now and then. He’s a member of the Scripture reviewers’ committee and also the key person to organize the 10-member Scripture read-through committee.

“Renato was with me and Diolia when we were testing the writing system of the language and checking exegetical and hermeneutical issues in the New Testament translation. Using content questions that we prepared ahead of time, our checking sessions ended up as a Bible study for the village leaders. God softened the heart of Renato and he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“On another occasion, Northern Subanen leaders came to warn the people about us: ‘If those missionaries living in the next village come to your village, don’t believe them. Community health is their front to tell you the story of Jesus Christ. They’re violating our culture by teaching us about another God, and when you believe in their God you’ll stop doing the *beklug* [a big sacrificial offering to worship the environmental spirits].’

“Renato responded, ‘I’ve been with Ryan and Diolia for the past 15 years. They never tell me what you’re telling us now. It’s up to the people themselves to decide whether or not to continue doing the *beklug*.’

“As we reflect on all these events, we ask ourselves the question, ‘Was it worth it?’ Yes. The Northern Subanen people need a guidebook that will lead them to life eternal.

“We’re grateful that the deadline for completing the translation of the Word of God was extended for an extra year to September 2011. During this extension, we were able to: (1) check the 70+ most commonly misspelled words in the Northern Subanen New Testament, (2) check the dialectical differences, footnotes and references, (3) incorporate all the suggestions from the translation consultants, (4) submit the New Testament for typesetting and proofreading and (5) send the whole New Testament to the printers.”

- Praise the “Lord of the harvest” (Matthew 9:38) for enabling the Northern Subanen translation project to reach this exciting point.
- Pray for the launching of the New Testament on February 18, 2012. This will be a whole-day affair. More information is to come.



- Location: Philippines
- Number of Speakers: 85,400
- Year Project Began: 1999
- Expected Completion Date: 2012

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Northern Subanen New Testament

Advocates for Reading God's Word

In 1999, Ryan and Diolia started the Northern Subanen New Testament translation project and integrated two more T's into their work: Training and Transformation. New to translation work, it was hard for them to manage and implement these two T's into the translation project with a limited timeline.

The couple had no experience in training mother-tongue translators. And they're not "high-profile evangelists" doing transformational work. However, in their hearts, they've been advocates for the people to read the Word of God. And to achieve this goal they developed long-term friendships with the Northern Subanen people that bore rich spiritual fruit over the years.



*The "four musketeers" working on the New Testament
(Ryan and Diolia on the right)*

- **Thank the Lord for rewarding Ryan and Diolia's commitment to this work by using their humble efforts to produce lasting results.**
- **Pray for the team as they're now doing promotional work among the 60 churches and villages in the Northern Subanen area.**
- **Pray for Old Testament translators Loreto and Virginia Taang who continue to work on Genesis and Exodus. The books of Ruth and Jonah are awaiting publication of 1,000 copies.**

Six Steps of Translation

1. **First Draft:** translators analyze what a passage says and produce a first draft.
2. **Team Check:** translators check each verse for accuracy and clarity.
3. **Community Testing:** translators share drafted Scripture with community members to test how well it communicates.
4. **Back Translation:** translators translate the draft "back" into a major language for a non-native consultant.
5. **Consultant Check:** a consultant checks the translation with the team to make sure expected standards are met.
6. **Proofread:** translators rigorously proofread the final draft for errors before publication.

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