

Taylor Tidings

February 2012

Matt & Christy Taylor
Kaitlyn, Nathan, Justin, Julianne and Elijah

partners in Bible translation
with the Nukna people
of Papua New Guinea

When last we wrote, we were in Australia waiting for Elijah's visa paperwork to come through so we could return to Papua New Guinea. After weeks of waiting, the visa finally arrived, and with much gladness we returned to our home in Ukarumpa, PNG, just in time for Christmas. So what have we been up to since we arrived back to PNG? I'm glad you asked!

Language Work with Two Nukna Men

In January we flew two Nukna men, Muransi and Robin, to Ukarumpa to work with Matt on language-related tasks. For Robin, it was his first time coming to Ukarumpa. We stayed busy working on various tasks including translating literacy books into Nukna, transcribing Nukna stories, exploring the meaning of new words (we added 150 new words to the Nukna dictionary), and recording some new stories. All of these things are giving us a better understanding of the Nukna language and will lead to a better Bible translation.

BOLD

Matt spent a week living in a village in the Highlands of PNG while he worked with a research team from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Headed by Dr. Steven Bird, the team is working on the BOLD project – Basic Oral Language Documentation – in which they are developing a practical, simple and affordable method for recording and preserving the thousands of languages around the world that are in danger of becoming extinct. Working with the Usarufa people of PNG, we tested a prototype of the method they have developed which uses smart phone technology, finding

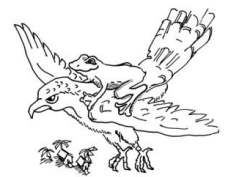
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Christmas 2011
Kaitlyn, Justin, Elijah, Nathan and Julianne

Wáina tán du kásángená yá
Roki inuk, "Kulá nahára wu
taon káin kukuya ku rina
tángga ku kuinelák?" Ing inán
du Roki yá miuk, "Náku kung
liplip káman da ketnán áre
nehánga kahetang kuinek."
Ing mengga ku liplip pa
sulinán hangga há kuk.
Roki málám kuk ngáyá kung
liplip káman kangga wata
ketnán putung áran, liplip wata

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tángga kahetang kumálák.
Kungga átnarán kálu hára iruk
maming táwi tángga Roki
hásing san káwak káin han
liplip málám re kahetang Roki
sangga háná kuk.

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We recently translated this Nukna story book,
entitled "Frog Seeks the Good Life".



left to right:
Robin and
Muransi came
to Ukarumpa;
Christy, Matt
& Elijah;
Brothers! -
Elijah & Justin



left: Dr. Steven Bird, Andrew Bird, Matt Taylor and Florian Hanke in Imikori village



right: Usarufa speakers listen to stories in their own language

out what worked and what didn't. Matt provided logistical support, including translating between the research team and the Usarufa people. It was a great opportunity for Matt to rub shoulders with other linguists, learn more about language documentation, and get to know the Usarufa people.



An Usarufa man helps a village woman record traditional stories

Linguistic Research and Writing

One of the steps that leads to a quality Bible translation is understanding enough about how a language works to write a formal linguistic write-up. Matt has been spending large amounts of time holed up in his office, analyzing the Nukna language and writing a formal grammar paper. It is a slow process that will take many months of concentrated effort. However, it is also exciting as we continue to discover more about the Nukna language. For example, in Nukna (like in English) there is just one word meaning "this." But did you know that there are seven different Nukna words for the word "that"?! It all depends on whether the "that" you are referring to is nearby, far away, higher than yourself, lower or at the same level.

What's Next?

We are delighted to be hosting Christy's parents, Kurt and Julie, here in Papua New Guinea for the next few weeks! Matt will continue to work on studying and analyzing the Nukna language, and putting his findings into the grammar paper he is writing. In late-April, our family will be heading back to Hamelengan village for a two-month stay where we hope to continue on the revision of the book of Mark among other things.



Welcoming Grandpa and Grandma at the airstrip



Matt with a group of Usarufa people



Giving

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- 1) Elijah is four months old!
- 2) Kaitlyn at the airstrip waiting for Grandpa and Grandma's plane
- 3) Big sister! 4) Nathan – best dressed kid in town
- 5) Julianne just had her 3rd birthday – her hair just keeps getting more curly!