

The BOOK IN MANY LANGUAGES

BY DUANE E. HIATT

For Clara Leticia Cruz Cano of Puerto Rico, her love of the Book of Mormon started when she was about four. She noticed that her older brother got to take a turn reading in their family's nightly scripture study, and she wanted a turn also. She asked her parents to help her, and soon she was part of the reading circle.

At age 12, Clara took on a new challenge. Instead of reading in her native Spanish, she read the Book of Mormon in English. At age 14, she read it in French; at age 15, in Portuguese; and at 16, in Italian.

In August 2005, when President Gordon B. Hinckley asked Latter-day Saints to read or reread the Book of Mormon, Clara was already into it in German.

"This is harder, but I will get through it," she said.

Her reading in various languages has expanded her vocabulary.

"When I come to a word I don't know, I look

it up. Soon I get tired of looking it up, so I memorize it," she explains. Her study of languages has also helped in her schoolwork. Last year, at 17, Clara became the top public school graduate on her island.

Clara has uncovered some gems in her multilingual study. She even found that her middle name, Leticia, means "gladness" in the Italian translation (see 2 Nephi 1:21; 8:3).

Like some others, Clara has a collection of copies of the Book of Mormon in several languages. But, she says, "I decided I wouldn't have any copies of the Book of Mormon I can't read."

That means her next project is already on her bookshelf. Her bishop, Hector Alvarez, saw her perusing a copy of the Book of Mormon in his home and gave it to her. She now has the self-assigned opportunity to learn not only another language but also a new alphabet. The book is in Russian. **NE**



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