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Comprehensive Illustrated Pakuni Dictionary

By Thomas Alexander

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Foreword - A personal introduction

Pakuni, the language spoken by the “Monkey Men” in Sid and Marty Kroft’s “Land Of The Lost” was created by the late Victoria Fromkin, a linguist from UCLA. I have long enjoyed learning languages (this includes national languages as well as constructed languages). One day I decided to learn Pakuni’s “300 words” (an oft-quoted number). It was going to be a simple undertaking. I’d look up the Pakuni language courses on the internet, make my flash cards, and in a few months I’d have it all down solid.

What I found, however, was that while this language was well known to fans of the show, it was not well documented. The official information about the language (published while the show was still airing or shortly thereafter) was limited and sometime contradictory. A few fans of the show had put together some notes, but the spelling rules were somewhat arbitrary, and there were still many Pakuni words used in the show which did not have documented meanings. An additional point of confusion is that at least one fan had made up her own version of Pakuni with her own words and this dictionary was being referenced by other authors as if this was part of Fromkin’s language.

In 2009 I pulled all the available information together and set out to watch all the episodes to translate all known examples of Pakuni. The result is the accompanying dictionary. It was always my intention to put this information on line, but it was never quite clear to me where I should put it, and I never got around to re-writing it in a way that would make sense to anybody other than myself. Now (2014) thanks to the encouragement of some folks on the CONLANG mailing list and especially the people at Fiat Lingua, I have decided to put my 11 page dictionary on-line as is. I am grateful for this assistance.

I am also indebted to Nels P. Olsen and Clayton Barr for their work in documenting the Pakuni language. Olsen’s dictionary and Barr’s episode summaries (with Pakuni dialog) was of immense value in the preparation of this dictionary.

Note on Method

When I decided to undertake my own study of Pakuni, I watch each episode multiple times. First I would transcribe the Pakuni dialog from one episode and include any

relevant context that would help us understand what was being said. Then I would compare my transcriptions to Barr's. If there was a disagreement on what was said, I would go back and watch that portion until I was sure that I had transcribed it as best as possible. This formed the corpus on which the dictionary was founded.

I prepared an alphabetical word list and included every known translation from other dictionaries. When several sources agreed with each other (and when the meaning fit what I was seeing on the screen), I simply listed the source. If there was some disagreement or uncertainty, I included an example from the corpus.

Note on Sources

On the first page of the accompanying scans, there is a list of symbols that represent the source for a word. All these sources should be easy enough to find on line.

9/15
TV - to guide article
lg - "pakuni language test"
ff - encyclopedia of fictional & fantastic by
np - nels p olsen
pp - pocket pakuni dictionary
el olo perdido (portuguese?)
cb - clayton barr/enik 1138
10yr (Hal Erickson)
HE (Hal Erickson)


The first (TV) is the TV Guide article on Pakuni. The second (lg) is a "Pakuni Language Test" from a linguistics class. Next is (ff) which represents the Encyclopedia of Fictional and Fantastic Languages. The symbol (np) is for references to Nels P. Olsen's dictionary. The paragraph symbol (PP) is used for the Pocket Pakuni Dictionary from the book Puffinstuff and Other Stuff. I also included words from a foreign language dictionary which I believe was in Portuguese. Clayton Barr had sent me an unpublished list of words. I believe this is what I am referring to with (cb). Hal Erickson (HE) is a reference to Sid and Marty Krofft, A Critical Study of Saturday Morning Children's Television, 1969-1993, by Hal Erickson, which includes a short list of words.

Late in the production of these notes, I received a copy of Fromkin's own description of the language from 1995. There are important differences between what is in these notes and what was in the show. References to this document are indicated by (F95).

Finally (10yr) appears to be a reference to "Land of the Lost - Ten Years Gone." This is a variation of Fromkin's Pakuni and includes many words that were made up by a person known online as Laurel. In the time since 2009 when I prepared my notes, Laurel has

revised her web page making it easier to see which words are Fromkin's and which ones are her own. Since she quotes the same sources I list above, it was seldom necessary to quote her dictionary. However, some of these "made up" words did end up in my dictionary mostly via (ff).

Words attested to only by (ff) will need to be removed from this dictionary. There are other words included that are not attested to elsewhere. These will need to be sorted out and probably removed too.

This symbol , or the initials "twa" indicate that this is a meaning I have determined from context, or that I am expressing a question or doubt about the information being quoted.)

One other source worth mentioning is the dictionary from the DVD set. This turned out to be more or less the same as one of the other sources listed above.

Pakuni Alphabet

A B Ch D E F G I J K M N Ng O P R S Sh T U W Y

These are pronounced more or less as you would expect them to be pronounced from English. A E I O U should be pronounced approximately as

A - father
E - hate
I - heed
O - boat
U - hoot

(Examples taken from Fromkin's 1995 description of the language.)

The letter Z is sometimes included, but is only found in the word "oganza" - which is most credibly "ogansa" based on everything else we know.

Syllables are consonant + vowel + m/n/ng

Quick Notes on Grammar

Nouns begin with a vowel showing what category of object they are. Words in the dictionary are alphabetical by root word. That is, "etimi" (fish) will be listed under T. The prefix vowels were transcribed based on how the actors pronounced the words, which was not always clear. Additional notes have come to my attention, but I have not sorted through them yet.

Word order is SVO, and adjectives follow nouns. Adjectives and nouns take a plural ending (-ni).

The last syllable of a word can be repeated for emphasis. “Bisa” means big. “Bisasa” means very big.

Miscellaneous Notes

The language is generally referred to as “Pakuni” which is the Pakuni plural of “Paku”, then name of the monkey men from the show. Fromkin tended to call the language “Paku.”

Most of the examples of Pakuni that we have were spoken by a child actor wearing false teeth. The dictionary includes variations in pronunciation. The final version of this dictionary will include these as well so that it can be used to translate lines from the show. When the “correct” form of the word can be determined, this will be indicated.

a - and (TV)
- possibly "to" - chaka che dopi a ego tusa
- poss "after" cb *see P45 to follow - Bing*

a/B

(TV) - to guide article
- "pakung laguya test"
- encyclopedia of fictional & fantastic by
np - nels & drem
- pocket pacuni dictionary

el olo perdido (portugese?)

cb - clayton Barr/enik 1138
10 gr HE (Halerikson)
HE (Halerikson)

ba - come (TV) np
oba - cannot - tag team - *see afa fa*
bako - bring (H) np } ye baku yumani
bake - bring # } ye babaka epi ego egusa
Store soup

ab banda - came? /up (twi where's the prefix?)
ban/iban - paint/Paints.

ben - from Cohen - Finish - cb

bi - prefix - Bis - /up

beng - ye bengmin Enaschi - tag team

opi - head. #

bimu sachi - to be ok? → the musician ← clayton

abimi - man (H) np #

bimisa #

bimisa - mamsh #

bimike - mainly #

bishiki → on BASHIKI - poison (or fish) nice day

bisa / bisasa - Bis / very bis #

bina BINUSASA → poss "very heavy" - chaka says s.t. like this in pylon express → see pimu/stone

aboba - allisamus. /up → twi: abobo or ebobo (see the test.)

abosa - short #

aboma - np: "Fierce?" - twa: leader?

aboma - # leader

aboma - to know (10 gr) - Marashawa m ban na, sa opari
see wera gravity storm

abu - child (H) #

busa - childish (H) #

abusa - small #

bu - to be able (TV) np #

ebu - image/portrait (TV) /up - (tw ability?)
iban?

abuma - girl (TV)

Chē (tw/she?) - chase /np

Chi - open - ta ko chi eram sha ma - Pylar express
 - ye chi toye - see jito ye ^{see ka}
 - chase - agomba chi evokam - tag team ^{see koji}

echichi - egg /np → tw see ejiji

ching - pull @ /np

chiri - silence /np (tw - ^{not a} ~~prefix~~ ^{noun})
 - see tire (#)

Chiri is used by
 Will in the musician, & ^{the} ^{day}
 and By ta

chitoye /chi toye - see jito ye

ada - father (fr) /p

dan - with - to chaka ko ku dan/yan ye - Pylon express
see ya, yan, tum ye ba yan meni - pylon who came to dinner

daru - W? - ye daru onam - gravity storm.
↳ see daru

de - do /af

dena - Need? - a ga meni dena ota - sleep at good

dinda - to eat (fr) /p

do - unknown - chaka: do yo wira ari - gundy pick to lost city ^{the} sleep at good.

dochi - see duchi (dopi dochi nego tusa - trip)

edobi - door ^{pylon} → sa oneta edobi ko koji... pylon express

doma - ugly (fr) /p - sarisa taken
... doma, gosa, nichi - ~~that~~ the sleep at good

dora - see dura

doru - fromkin to throw - see daru, dora, dura

duchi - down (fr) /p
odumani - energy - pylon express

adusa - Boy (fromkin's textbook)

dura - throw CB (a) meni dinda (a) meni duru
sa otam gedora onam to Babster

E - for emphasizing questions ye mika ku ya meni, e? musician E f G

Fa - take/accept /np A = take

eFi - something np thing ~~np~~ Sa efi = what
- nefe nothing np
Finga → see mufinga

fo - to say (fu) → cb → called. → cb: oyu fo "ta" - the musician
efurami - ceremony /np → maybe eforami - w
Fu - happen /np → meaning unknown "Chaka Fu", gives ring - the musician
Fusa (chi) - quick(y) /np → poss - I am hungry
G ofu - speed A

emuh agamba kisa

a gamba - dino and/or tyrannosaur np
→ agamba & agamba in episode chaka

aganka - pronounced like this in s tone count
iguana /np → see ekanga

oganza - magic
ogan sa - A

gan - a credit

agiga - ego agiga - over there - nice day

ego - place - Sa ego where A

egobi - coelophysis (spot) - w one of our p's

esoga - w Bowl (?) sa ego meni ko ba egogani? Babysitter
egogo - np: "leader?" → egogo - opima (skate soap)
gosa - fierce A

asw mba tyrannosaur (Basil) agamba

eguga (ego aguga) here is / here (w the test.)

ehēpi - mirror
hiroshi - marking
kuma → cf guman

/np - [no h!]
" "

(H) J/K

should be ego ejiga?

ejiga = - ye ma ejiga men - stone soup

oje - thunder/noise ^{np} # → noise

ejiji = egg → also echichi & ejiju - the test w

ejiri - house # others

Ji - beg #

me si ye - please #

Jitoye - unknown - I have this as ye Jitoye ge, clay ten has
ye chi toye = thank you (See "Saku")
↑
Jito = thank in Fromken

ka - open w - ta ba ka ecam sha ma - ta can open it - (pylon express)
see chi, see Koji

Kasa - happy (tu) - see also kesa

~~karita - great /np~~ "gareta"

ekanga - Igwara "chaka ekanga" Baby s/b

Kesa - young # → note "casa" in claytons transcription of tau pit.
oke - youth #

akika - there ^{np} #

"ocima" - cactus /np - cf etogo

akingo - grumpy (np) - akingo - pake who cane down

Koji - open (see ka) - sa ometa edobi ko koji, ye ko ku u - pylon express
chi

"Cora" - same - /np

"Coben" see ben (Finish)

Komo - steal? - ta komo egachini obimi [beads] [manhood] me. The text

ku - go (tu) /np

Ku^x egiga → w - that one (gravity storm) → poss. "efi egiga"

Kun - fight - chaka dingkun ta

Kunira - See nira

see examples of ku in Baby Sitter - poss
"here" ye ba ku onam -
ye ba ku - come back

m - negative prefix $g \rightarrow$ c.f. "em" in (10fr)

ma - give 1hp - 41

ma - give up
me - I me mine - A

me - I me mine -
mechi - please mp (Tw: Me ji ye?)
twi will promise

mechi - please
meche - more to help

meta - time (to) up

Amena - triceratops (Buford)
- AMENDA - episode: chicken

mech - alzum

~~mechefti - algo~~

mechometani - as veas

→ mika - want to join in fusachi - tag team ← Bing Me = Follow

mika - want to
min - ye bengmin fusachi - tag team ← Bing Me = follow
dani (mother) → poss mispron of B.

mika - want to
min - use beng min fusachi - tag team ← *Bingmin*
MISA → possibly adjective form of mi (mother) → pass mispron of BISA or NISA
→ *from kun* → *small*

mo - see komo (steal?)

ami - mother
omo - small
amu - parent
nifa ting emu - Fair trade.
who came to dinner

еми - риз

omu - pig /np/ → in parturition
omu - odor - /np/ → ye mu ota - steeple goat.

Ma-

~~Mu-~~
~~mund~~ - to secure

Ma - to score // H6 - to yeni un mundi - The test
mundi - Friedland H6 - m + Finca? to tar pit.

mundi - Frigidus Pb - ~~to~~ 8
ma Finga - Vb - Don't move \rightarrow m + Finga? to law pit.

amura - Frinend @

un → not → I've transcribed this variously as nung, ng → ^{see also} em N/O/P

Onam - food (fr) np ♀
nanda - Sorry ♀

nefi - nethy - see efi np

nichi/nichichi - nasty ♀ → sarisataka, ... doma, gosa, nichi the steered
nisa → adjective form of nichi? (tw) - chaka abu nisa! Pykon express
nira - tell - Ta ko nira ye, sa ometa - pykon express the best
noooo - no
mo aguga - today (day-here?) - tw mo aguga ye abimi / anu, non mo aguga pykon express

anu - no
nu - steal np ye nu onam (stone soup) ← see also komo/mo
nung/ug - apparent negation → sa nung wesa, → pakuni ng chig, chaka ng ko (be)
nuni - see nuni amuna = not? - stone soup. tan pit. ban ta.
apa tusa (tw) - see also tusa → tan pit - "apatusa fusaachi" "Danger? where"
epa - way - sa epa how ♀ See also opi

pa - now np → see wachi
pa - to happen - tw - sa efu pa? Baby sister ← also pan/pam ← past tense?
opan - reason Sa opam - why ♀ (tan p on foun pylons.)
pi - follow - np
opima - stone np → see binusasa
epi - light ♀ opi - danger (10gr) - I had ope/obi, clayton had ope in
pika trade ♀ chaka u ope bisa baby sister

pisa → Black (tw) ego tusa, ego pisa (tan pit)
pira - danger (see epi/opi) tw baby sister, tan
pira = salt - stone soup - see ripa

epo - hair ♀
mposa - hairless ♀
ampo - hairless-one ♀

pong - ~~cb~~ cb - happen → see pa
see pam in franklin

pu - understand (10gr) (tw)

puchi - to make? - From Clayton - tan pit 5:28 me ko ka puchi
mix? ban meche

R
 eram - moon
 ra - help
 arapa arafa - cannot - tag team - see Fromkin
 erapa
 re → unknown → I ma ^{Gift} Visa ^{us} meni Re - Pylon express
 → ~~ch~~ → save - see Cora.

~~ro - Bem - vinda~~ welcome
 roshi - mark (tw roshi eshisa)

eroka - Freak #
 rokasa - strange #
 roka - no, abu roka, misa, ku egiga - gravity storm.

ru - steal # → see also m. geni ru onam meni wachi a nwachi ^{steal} soup
 aruna - hook (nice Day)

sa - what # - sa paku/ni
 sa efi - what
 sa ego - were

asa (tr) - really asu
 saku (me saku) thank you # → see Jito

sesu hear - if per d/ton → I had "wind sisu"
 sisu - me un sisu - to hear

eshu - test /up → see ^{eshisu} eshistu

esuka - chaka ^{ding} buku esuka pakusa - ^{pass: Ejiri} Baby ^{sitter} pakusa
 ↳ glossed as "land/territory" in Fromkin

osu - water /up #

Sha - aquelle - eram sha ma

Sh/T

She - see che - chaka she dopi - tar pit

ash. ta telo ashi ima [gift] ta ^(decide) ^(knows) ^(what) gift - pylon express

chaka ko shi ra
the musician

shi - it ^{np} (not corroborated)
- do ^{try} ^{try} - chaka wachi shi - the musician
Shinu - ask ^{np}

eshisu - test (w/iroshi eshisu - mark of the test.)
shu → do → ^{try} the test "sa efi ye shi" → see also shi

ota - Fine /up 91 (ye ba, ota → chaka)

~~ta - come - as~~
otam - time? - sa otam ye dawa onum ta - Baby sister, - see Ometer

telo - see ash:
tiba - to bite → I transcribed Fish tiba etushini; Clayton: imu tiba pakuni nice day
etimi - Fish (nice day) ← From kun: ishimi

tiri - finger ^{PP} → see chiri

ting - Push ^{np} /up

tobi - greet /up

(e) toda - chaka - says thus in pylon express (when he runs from sa holly all the road)

etogo - Cactus g

todari - (poss dedari a endari) - the First (tar pit)

etonga → worms (?) → Fish tiba (bite?) etushini (nice day)

otu - evil g

tusa - evil g → np: "tall" bad. A tall → see also apa tusa

tum - with 91

etonga apu [abu]
- poss. an insulting
adjective
episode chaka

→ evil - tar pit: tusa tusa ku
chaka tusa

U (see also Wu-Holly Pylon express) - in (Pylon express) u ego agya, where?

W

VA = see Fa nels he/she → store soup

Wa - 41 - she/her
wani - they 41

wani - aquela

Wam - to sun 41

wachi - now 41

We - he/his 41
weni - not listed in 41

wesa - Fragrant? good? 41

wesa/wesasa - good 41

ser wesan - certo

wera - know/not know (gravity storm) - Mārashawa wera sa opari
see boma

oganza
bisasa

wo - to have 41 41
woye - Holly 41 - Fork

e woya - Flower 41 41 41 - Pakke who come to dinner

"wokasa" 41 → see "Rokasa" (strange)

oje wokasa - babysitter

me wo efi, aganka store soup

wusachi - agora - now

Wu - to see 41
- it 41

ya

yan → see Dan
also ya - Holly: ye miki ku ya meni, e? - the musician
ye - you, you

ugitsa - wall - ^{em, fo an (f)} ugitsa ku - the wall went - the musician
clayton transcribed "ye me bu ku", which I find doubtful.

ago → yes
yoooo
yom - certeza, sure

go go - Remember? - wani ^{the} _{one day} go go - Rick = Won't Forget his help
ten year - go go = true.
clayton - they agree

→ (Owim in Franken)

ogu - wind at → oyu fo ta - the musician, not in TA's transcript
A yura - ? - ayura meni - paku came to dinner - Note = YEBA meni in Clayton