

Sasônâso kêvmê Nëmfik rek znenan kižütêtrâ tidyn dê:
Mu zêvet kê vnisyt dümukmunum sno du om gešekruc sno našëtmunumgân Sasônâso kê Nëmfik.
Sasônâso züt Nëmfikvmê gyznytnoc tücelitum vmidökvê.
Nëmfik züt Sasônâsovmê cetikafit zanum ťukitvê.
Roâvmê našëtnoc šmiťünfê <dincifnövnin> tyk zütznök sno našëtnocëkfê roâ.

*Such a story as this is told of Sasônâso and Nëmfik.
When the sun and moon weren't old, Sasônâso and Nëmfik loved one another.
According to Sasônâso, Nëmfik's smell was pleasant like roses.
According to Nëmfik, Sasônâso was strong like an oak tree.
Because the house-master allowed their marriage, they were married during the next day.*

Do-joc, fmöxemmêt lacšo Sasônâso kesasëkût vmat.
Gamyk navnyc zyšen viťitvmê viťitdin-zon tüt düdötfê ro.
Rovmê ťüntüt züt viťitvmê fmatâ tücelitum kê zoâjot sũžnömum Nëmfikťot.
Gamyk xukatmunfê Sasônâso kê fmatâ sidücfê ro nicvâ.
Fmatâ sazycžutfê ro nicvâ Nëmfikťot.
Nëmfik tan "Manfê xek kêžê xek, našötnuno."
Vmyndatmunfê Sasônâso.

*Then Sasônâso came upon an egg in the forest.
Up in a tree, he saw something near a cute bird's nest.
According to his opinion, the bird's eggs were good, and they would be pleasant for Nëmfik.
Sasônâso climbed the tree and led the eggs with his hand.
He brought the eggs to Nëmfik.
Nëmfik said "Thank you for the twelve of them, I love them!"
Sasônâso smiled brightly.*

Do-joc, fmatâdê žëjükfê roâ kê zoâ sidücfê roâ.
Viťitfunâ jüvnökum fmatâ.
Kygûkfümöt gamikťen kyfixnümfê Nëmfik nicvâ kê risönfê ro.
Ro tan "Teťnymfynittuc-xon sêvmê darëfimjotvmê zanekťnu jüvnökfê sê.
Fmatdê-xon viťitfun misnemfê kê fikfê sêtê.
Tidyn sêvmê darëfimjot fikfê mân ro teťnymfê sê.
<Dom jüvet janukmunfê sê dotê>."

*They then boiled these eggs and lifted them.
The eggs had contained chicks.
Suddenly Nëmfik held her hand to her stomach and panicked.
She said "In my womb I have a child that grows.
The chick in the egg was injured by my carelessness, and it died because of me.
As if my own child died, while I was giving birth to it.
Because I didn't know the name."*

Rovmê lek deketfêsun.
Kesasëkût-xân valnümfê ro kê gamyk xukatmunfê ro.
Žo fmamegynfê ro kê ro fmamegynmunfê ro ťefam-ťâk kê ro fikfê do-ťok.

*Her happiness was erased.
She fled into the forest and climbed the tree.
She threw herself out and she threw herself against a rock and she died there.*

Pakan translation

by Carl Avlund

3rd of September, 2020

Φύ άny pituγί θάχι τάχα páu Αφύ χί Θίθι.
Χάνα φύ τά χυρά χί náχα pá níka Αφυχά χί Θιθά χιτά ýu.
Λί Αφύ Θιθά páu μýgy φάμαχι.
Λί Θίθι Αφυχά páu týu túmy.
Κύ τά θιφουθαχά pύγa χιμukά τά <týgy κιθύ> φύ <týgy κιθύ> χάνα lýgi.

Χί θύ θυφύ Αφυχά tatá φίθu <ρί τά kuθαχά lipí θυά θάχι>.
Θύ θά χý θί φαχί τάχα lú kí pylí gaki táθα.
γίγi Αφύ φίθu gaki pá gάθα láta Θίθιχι katá φίθu gaki.
Αφυχά γύφι θί φί θά χίτα lánu gίpi gά φίθu.
Χý lí Θίθu píkí φίθu.
Θιθά τάγι “Lάtaχu φί μάθα θάχι! Gitaθά matú!”
Αφυχά kátata.

Χί φύ γýtu φίθu θάχι χίτα núka.
Φιθαχά lúna pýa φάθu.
Nά Θιθά týma γίθu lánu χίτα liγimá.
Χý τάγι “Lά púty tí púra τάχα gύφι.
Pγαχά φάθu <τάφu χύ φύti pái χýa> χίτα pí tí χýka χά.
Θuatά θάχι pá tápa tá púpili tí χά χάna τά χύ τάχι.
Χυλά θίtu θαχý pύ.”

Nytá ký tú.
Tá taxí χý χίmi θί lá θυφύ χίτα gύφι θί φί θά.
Χý χάθy pύ θά láta χάθy θί μý φί φukí χίτα ná χά.

Ethnographic notes

Pakan is a group of mutually intelligible dialects spoken by an ethnic group called Pakans. They inhabit a vast area dominated by grassy plains and forests.

The Pakans are a neolithic people of hunter-gatherers and agriculturalists. They live in small, tight-knit village societies and show relatively low mobility between villages. The structure of Pakan society is based around age; the older you are, the more privileges you have.

Tribes rarely wage any kind of war between each other, and the Pakan tribes can generally be said to be quite peaceful.

Goats are essential to Pakan life, and they have many purposes: Their milk is used to make cheese, their skin and fur is used for making clothing, and their meat is prepared in a number of different ways for consumption. Apart from goat meat, Pakans primarily get their proteins from deer and duck, while their carbohydrates come from different types of tubers which are grown by the Pakans. They also make extensive use of a type of acidic pear native to the Pakan-inhabited region.

Within Pakan religion, it is forbidden to prepare or consume any food or use any tools that you do not know the origin of. For food, this means that a Pakan must not eat anything if they don't know who made it, foraged it, found it, etc. One also mustn't cook meat if they don't know who herded, caught, and/or slaughtered the animal. Because of this, Pakans perform *áχa* before animal, ritualistically reciting the origins of everything that is about to be eaten.

Pakan grammar

Pakan is an SVO language with head-initial noun phrases.

Nominals

A nominal is a noun or a pronoun. Where most Indo-European languages distinguish between nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, Pakan makes no such distinction.

Theoretically, any nominal may be placed after another to indicate an attributive relationship between the two.

a) *nýphi* *týu*
fish strong
= "a strong fish"

b) *týu* *nýphi*
strong fish
= "a/the fish's strength"

c) *nýphi* *tí*
fish 1st sg. obl.
= "my fish"

In example *a*, *nýphi* constitutes the head of the noun phrase, while *týu* constitutes the so-called "attribute". The reverse is true for example *b*. Notice the different contextual meanings of the word *týu*.

Morphology

(See "Pakan Nominal Morphology".)

There are seven different declensions in Pakan, some of them very alike one another. There are three groups among these:

nl

In the first group are the simplest nouns, most only consisting of a single syllable. The stem of an nl-noun does not change; endings are simply added onto the stem as suffixes.

nll

This is the most abundant group. All nll-nouns are characterized by having stress on the first syllable (in their present state oblique form), two syllables, and a final vowel that changes as part of declension.

nlll

Nouns in the nlll-group are so-called "consonant stem nouns". These nouns are characterized by having a stem that does not change. When declined outside of their present state oblique form, their "stem consonant" appears, onto which the appropriate endings are added.

Case, state, and tense

All Pakan nominals are declined for two things: case and state.

There are only two grammatical cases in Pakan: 1) the oblique, which is the unmarked default case, and 2) the nominative, which is reserved for subjects only.

There are two so-called "states" in Pakan: 1) the present state (not to be confused with the present tense), which is the default state, and 2) the absent state. At its core, the Pakan absent state is used for things that are not present in the event which the sentence describes. In other words, the absent state is used for that

which there is a lack of. Therefore, it is often best translated with a negation of some sort.

a) *lánu* *χύμα*
hand big
= “a big hand”

b) *lánu* *χουμύ*
hand big.ABS
= “a hand that isn't big” (“a hand characterized by the lack of great size”)

c) *lanú* *χύμα*
hand.ABS big
= “no big hand” (“the lack of a big hand”)

Tense

The marking of tense happens on the subject of a sentence. The term “tense” for Pakan is somewhat inaccurate however, since it can also function much like aspect.

a) *Lychá* *χίμι.*
woman.NOM run
= “The woman runs.”

b) *Lyχaxá* *χίμι.*
woman.NOM.PST run
= “The woman ran.” / “The woman has run.”

Marking tense in subordinate clauses is optional.

When a time frame, which is in the past or the future, has been presented, all following subjects will be in the present tense by default.

c) *Lýgi* *lychá* *χίμι.*
tomorrow woman.NOM run
= “Tomorrow the woman will run.”

d) *Lýgi* *lyχaxá* *χίμι.*
tomorrow woman.NOM.PST run
= “Tomorrow the woman will have run.”

Adverbial noun phrases

A noun-phrase (including nominal clauses) in the oblique case can be placed attributively after the noun phrase it modifies, but it may also be placed on its own and behave adverbially. This is called an “adverbial noun phrase”, and these are mostly placed in the beginning or the end of a sentence or right before the main verb.

a) *Nýta* *χύ* *χίμι.*
happy 1st sg. NOM run
= “I run happily.”

b) *Tá* *φúτι* *πού* *χύ* *χίμι.*
REL think 2nd sg. 1st sg. NOM run
= “(While) thinking of you, I run.”

Nominal clauses

A Pakan nominal clause is a clause preceded by the nominalizing particle *tá* (marked as REL in gloss). A nominal clause may or may not have a subject, and unless a subject is explicitly expressed in the nominal clause, the implied subject can be assumed to be the same as the one in the main clause. A nominal clause constitutes a noun phrase.

a) *Xú* *katá* *táφu* *χίμι*.
1st sg. NOM enjoy REL.ABS run
= “I enjoy not running.”

b) *Xú* *katá* *tá* *mý* *χίμι*.
1st sg. NOM enjoy REL 2nd sg. NOM run
= “I enjoy that you run.”

When the subject of a sentence, *tá* is marked with the nominative case. The particle *tá* is declined as an nl-noun.

c) *Táχα* *χίμι* *πά* *γάθα*.
REL.NOM run be healthy
= “It is healthy to run.”

d) *Tálu* *χίμι* *πά* *γαθύ*.
REL.NOM.ABS run be healthy.ABS
= “Not running is unhealthy.”

Relative clauses

A relative clause is a subtype of nominal clause, placed attributively (i.e. after) a head noun. Here, the case of the particle *tá* determines whether or not the head noun is to be understood as subject or not in the relative clause.

a) *λύχα* *tάχα* *túka* *φάμα*
woman REL.NOM eat pear
= “a woman who eats a pear”

b) *φάμα* *tά* *lychá* *túka*
pear REL woman.NOM eat
= “a pear that a woman eats”

Just like in regular nominal clauses, subjects are optional in relative clauses.

Prepositions

Where Indo-European languages make a distinction between prepositions and subordinating conjunctions, Pakan has one category called “prepositions”. A preposition precedes a noun phrase, including nouns, pronouns, and nominal clauses.

Two or more prepositions may “stack” in order to convey more specifically the temporal or special relationship between the action and the preposition's complement. However, these “stacked” prepositions are noted as separate entries in the dictionary.

Conjunctions

There are very few “true” conjunctions in Pakan. Of these, the two most important are *χίτα* and *λάτα*. Unlike prepositions, clauses following these conjunctions are not preceded by the particle *tá*, but like nominal clauses they do not require a subject.

ány	v.	tell (a story); explain
Aφύ	nlllx	Aphu (male name)
γά	nl	amount
gaki	nlllθ	(small) bird
γάθα	nlla1	well-made; sturdy; healthy; nutritious
γίπι	v.	grab; pluck; collect
gitá	nlllθ	perfect; splendid
gúty	v.	boil
gúφι	v.	grow; develop
gýφι	v.	crawl; climb
katá	v.	enjoy; benefit from
kátata	v.	smile brightly
kí	prep.	with; by; next to
kiθú	v.	go out (together); become a couple
kú	prep.	because; as result of
kúθα	nlla1	life; lifetime
ký	pron.	3rd sg. obl.
lá	prep.	inside (of)
lánu	nllu	hand
láta	conj.	and (between clauses)
	->	<i>láta</i> indicates that the two (or more) actions are more or less concurrent
concurrent		
látaχu (φί)	interj.	thank you (for)
lí	prep.	into; to (recipient)
lipí	v.	plan; prepare; make ready
li?imá	v.	panic
lú	v.	be (locative); sit; stand; lie
lúna	v.	hide; contain; conceal
lýgi	nlli	tomorrow; next day (usu. adverbial)
maxítú	v.	overflow; be excessive
máθα	num.	2 (cardinal)
mýgy	nllly	smell; odor
ná	nl	moon
ná	nl	sudden; spontaneous (usu. non-subjective)
níka	nlla1	old; old age (usu. non-subjective)
núka	v.	raise; lift
nýta	nlla1	happiness; joy
pá	v.	be
pái	v.	become; bring about
páu	v.	seem; resemble; show; explain; expose; exude
pí	prep.	because; because of
píki	v.	bring; deliver
pitu?í	nlllt	story; parable; lesson
pú	pron.	2nd sg. obl.
pú	prep.	from; out of
púty	nlllm	womb
púpa	nlla1	baby
	->	The absent state is used when referring to an unborn child.
pú?a	nlla2	house; hut; dwelling
pýa	nlla1	child; kid
tági	v.	say; utter
tatá	v.	come upon; stumble upon; find
tápa	nlla	copy; identical; resemblance; resembling
táθα	nlla1	cute; sweet (usu. non-subjective)
táχι	v.	give birth
taχί	v.	flee

tí	pron.	1st sg. obl.
tú	v.	disappear; expire
túmy	nllly	oak tree
týgy	nllly	ceremony; ceremonious
túma	nlla1	belly
týu	nllu	strong; strength
ýu	v.	love
θά	nl	tree
θάχι	nlli	this (usu. non-subjective)
θαχύ	nlllx	name
θί	v.	see
θί lá	prep.	into
θί μύ φί	prep.	down onto
θίtu	v.	know; be familiar with
θί φί	prep.	up to; up into; onto
Θίθι	nlli	Thithi (female name)
θιφύ	nlllθ	leader; ruler
θύ	prep.	in; at; by
θυά	nlllt	action; that which has been done
θυφύ	nlllθ	forest
φάμαχι	nlllf	pear flower
φαχί	nlllk	something; small object; thing
φίθu	nllu	egg
φύ	pron.	3rd pl. nom.
φukί	nlllx	rock
φύti	v.	think; consider; take into consideration
χά	v.	die
χάna	prep.	during; while
χάna φύ	prep.	before (temporal)
χάθy	v.	jump
χί	conj.	and (between nominals)
	->	χί may also be used in the beginning of a clause: "then; thereafter"
χίmi	v.	run
χίmuká	v.	allow
χίta	conj.	and; and then (between clauses)
	->	χίta always indicates a sequential relationship
χίta	nlllx	each other; both; reciprocal
χύ	pron.	1st sg. nom.
χulá	pron.	1st sg. nom. abs. past
χύpu	nllu	sun
χύ	pron.	3rd sg. nom.
χύa	nlla1	hurt; wounded (usu. non-subjective)
χίθu	v.	place; put
χίχι	nlli	suspicion

nI		Present	Absent	nIli		Present	Absent
Oblique		-∅	-φu	Oblique		-i	í
Nominat.	Present	-χα	-lu	Nominat.	Present	-ά	a
	Past	-χά	-lá		Past	-αχά	-alá
	Future	-χι	-li		Future	-ixi	-ili
nIIa1		Present	Absent	nIIy		Present	Absent
Oblique		-a	-ú	Oblique		-y	-ý
Nominat.	Present	-ά	-u	Nominat.	Present	-ú	-u
	Past	-αχά	-alá		Past	-υχά	-ulá
	Future	-αχι	-ali		Future	-ixi	-ili
nIIa2		Present	Absent	nIIu		Present	Absent
Oblique		-a	-ú	Oblique		-u	-ú
Nominat.	Present	-ά	-u	Nominat.	Present	-ά	-a
	Past	-αχά	-alá		Past	-αχά	-alá
	Future	-ixi	-ili		Future	-yχι	-yli
nIII		Present	Absent				
Oblique		-∅	-ú				
Nominat.	Present	-(C)ά	-u				
	Past	-(C)αχά	-(C)alá				
	Future	-(C)ixi	-(C)ili				

Pakan translation with its English translation along with cultural footnotes

by Carl Avlund

3rd of September, 2020

Φύ άny pituγί θάχι τάχα páu Aφύ χί Θίθι.

Xána φύ tá χυπά χί náχα pá níka Aφυχά χί Θιθά χιτά ýu.

Λί Aφύ Θιθά páu μýgy <φάμαχι>*.

Λί Θίθι Aφυχά páu týu túmy.

Kύ tá θιφυθαχά pύγa χιμukά tá <týgy κιθύ>** φύ <týgy κιθύ>** χána lýgi.

They tell this story, which is about Aphu and Thithi.

Before the sun and the moon were old, Aphu and Thithi loved each other.

To Aphu, Thithi smelled of pear flowers.

To Thithi, Aphu was strong like an oak.

Because the leader of the house allowed them to ceremoniously become a couple, they ceremoniously became a couple during the next day.

Χί θύ θυφύ Aφυχά tatá φίθu <ρί tá kuθαχά lipí θυά θάχι>***.

Θύ θά χý θί φαχί τάχα lú kí pylí gakí táθa.

γίγi Aφύ φιθά gakí pá gáθa láta Θίθιχι katá φίθu gakí.

Aφυχά γύφι θί φί θά χίτα lánu γίρι gá φίθu.

Χý lí Θίθu píkí φίθu.

Θιθά tági “Látaxu φί má pí θάχι! Gitaθά maxitú!”

Aφυχά kátata.

Then Aphu came upon an egg in the forest because life had planned this action.

In a tree he saw something next to the next of a cute bird.

He suspected that the bird's egg would be healthy and that Thithi would enjoy the bird's egg.

Aphu climbed into the tree and then grabbed an amount of eggs with his hand.

He brought the egg to Thithi.

Thithi said “Thank you for these twelve! Their wonderfulness is overflowing!”

Aphu smiled brightly.

Χί φύ γýtu φίθu θάχι χίτα núka.

Φιθαχά lúna pýa fáθu.

Ná Θιθά týma γίθu lánu χίτα liγimá.

Χý tági “Lá púty tí púra τάχα γύφι.

Pγaxá fáθu <tάφu χύ φύti pái χýa>**** χίτα pí tí χýka χά.

Θuatá θάχι pá tápa tá púpili tí χά χána tá χύ τάχι.

Xulá θítu θαχý pύ.”

Then they boiled the eggs, and then they lifted them.

The eggs has contained chicks

Suddenly Thithi put her hand on her stomach and panicked.

She said “In my womb, there is a baby that grows.

The bird's chicks became injured with me being inconsiderate, and because of me they died.

This is just like my own baby dying while I'm giving birth to it.

I didn't know your name.”

Nytá ký tú.

Tá taxí χý χίmi θί lá θυφύ χίτα γύφι θί φί θά.

Χý χάθy pύ θά láta χάθy θί μý φί φukí χίτα ná χά.

Her happiness disappeared.

Fleeing she ran into the forest and then climbed the tree.
She jumped from the tree, and she jumped down onto a rock and then died.

*There are no species of rose native to the Pakan speaking region, so I decided to change the word to *φάμαχι* “pear flower” instead in order to get the same idea across.

**As there is no such thing as marriage in Pakan culture, I had to paraphrase the verb “marry” it as “ceremoniously become a couple”.

***The Sajem Tan word I had to translate was *fmöxemmêt* which I understood as having an adverbial function, meaning “according to destiny”. Because the Pakans don't really have a word for or concept of “destiny”, I had to paraphrase it as a subordinate clause; “because life had planned out this action”.

****The text in Sajem Tan featured a verb *misnemfê* meaning “be injured by another's carelessness”, which I paraphrased, in this context, as “become injured with me being inconsiderate”.