

Dini Afrika ya Mashariki

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KATRINA DALY THOMPSON

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Aliandikalo Mungu haliwezi kufutika.
(methali)

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About the author

Katrina Daly Thompson is Professor of African Cultural Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she directs the program in African languages. Her research concerns Swahili discourse on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and Islam. She is the author of *Popobawa: Tanzanian Talk, Global Misreadings* (Indiana University Press, 2017), co-editor (with Erin Stiles) of *Gendered Lives in the Western Indian Ocean: Islam, Marriage, and Sexuality on the Swahili Coast* (Ohio University Press, 2015), and co-author of *Swahili Learners' Reference Grammar* (NALRC Press, 2001). Her research on Swahili culture, language use, and language pedagogy has appeared in numerous journals, including *Agenda*, *Anthropology and Humanism*, *Critical Discourse Studies*, *Discourse and Society*, *GLQ*, *Language in Society*, *International Journal of Comic Art*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, and *Modern Language Journal*. She has taught Swahili at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Middlebury College, and UCLA.

Introduction

This module is designed to help learners of Swahili as a foreign language achieve Advanced Low proficiency on the [ACTFL scale](#). For classroom learners, it is most appropriate for students who have already studied Swahili for two or three academic years, while self-directed learners and/or those who have spent a significant amount of time in East Africa may find it useful at earlier or later stages of study.

You may notice that this module uses more English than you typically find in Swahili materials at this level. My use of English is purposeful, with Swahili and English serving dynamic and varied purposes. There are five main reasons behind my code choices in this module:

First, one of the goals of the Mellon LCTL project for which this module was created was to share resources not only among teachers of any given LCTL (in this case Swahili), but also among LCTL teachers of various languages, in order to foster the creation of additional materials. Keeping much of this module in English thus allows teachers of other LCTLs who don't understand Swahili to use this module for ideas as they create their own language teaching materials.

Second, according to [ACTFL](#), being able to follow simple written instructions is an indicator of the Advanced Low level of proficiency, so it would not make sense to expect you to be able to do this at the start of this module. By the end of the module, you will find the instructions in Swahili when that particular proficiency goal is targeted.

Third, students at high levels of proficiency should be engaging with authentic materials (Swahili texts created for real-world use rather than with learners in mind), not with textbook materials. The instructions here are designed to get you quickly engaged with the authentic texts herein (transcripts of Swahili conversations and interviews), so that you don't waste too much time reading "textbook Swahili."

Fourth, when instructions are in the target language, it is difficult to assess problems that arise in a learner's completion of a given task. Is the learner unable to do the task, or did they simply misunderstand the instructions? My own students at upper levels of Swahili tell me how frustrating it can be to do an assignment incorrectly only to find out later that it was because they misunderstood the instructions. Avoiding this potential problem allows students to showcase what they can DO in Swahili, fitting for a proficiency- and task-based approach.

Finally, and most importantly, the idea that only Swahili should be used stems from (and feeds into) a false sense of how language works, a kind of "canned monolingualism" that resembles "teacher talk" more than it does how Swahili speakers talk in the real world outside of classrooms and textbooks.¹ Swahili speakers use different linguistic resources for different purposes, frequently switching among or mixing Swahili, other East African African languages, English, or Arabic, with the particular languages at play influenced by the context, the speakers'

1. Levine, Glenn S. *Code Choice in the Language Classroom*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2011.

ethnic or religious backgrounds, and their level of education.² Learners of Swahili need to be able to develop these skills as well.

2. M. H. Abdulaziz Mkilifi, "Triglossia and Swahili-English Bilingualism in Tanzania," *Language in Society* 1, no. 2 (October 1972): 197–213, doi:10.2307/4166684; Jan Blommaert, "Codeswitching and the Exclusivity of Social Identities: Some Data from Campus Kiswahili," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 13, no. 1–2 (1992): 57–70; Alamin M. Mazrui, "Slang and Code-Switching: The Case of Sheng in Kenya," *Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere* 42, no. June (1995): 168–79; John Fenn and Alex Perullo, "Language Choice and Hip Hop in Tanzania and Malawi," *Popular Music and Society* 24, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 73(21); Thomas Geider, "Code-Switching Between Swahili and English in East African Popular Literature: David Maillu's Without Kiinua Mgongo and Other Cases¹," *Matatu*, no. 31/32 (2005): 115–131,278; Christina Higgins, *English as a Local Language: Post-Colonial Identities and Multilingual Practices* (Bristol, UK & Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters, 2009); Christina Higgins, "'Are You Hindu?': Resisting Membership Categorization through Language Alternation," in *Talk-In-Interaction: Multilingual Perspectives*, ed. Hanh Thi Nguyen and Gabriele Kasper (University of Hawai'i at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center, 2009), 111–36; Rafiki Sebonde, "Code-Switching and Social Stratification in a Rural Chasu Community in Tanzania," *Language Matters* 43, no. 1 (2012): 60–76, doi:10.1080/10228195.2011.627683.

Introductory Materials

Tips for instructors

This module uses the general topic of religion in East Africa to give students opportunities to practice the skills needed to achieve Advanced Low proficiency on the ACTLF scale. In this section, you'll find suggestions on how to use this module with your students. The module is organized into Units, lessons, exercises and Primary Source Texts. It begins with a unit on conversations, then asks students to extend what they learn about conversations to a slightly different mode, through a unit on interviewing, and finally moves on to a unit on reading. Students will be exposed to information on Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam, with a slightly greater focus on Islam. Each unit has at least two lessons with exercises. Some lessons and exercises are designed to be done for homework, some for self-assessment, some as preparation for in-class activities, and others to be submitted to you for assessment. If you use everything in this module, it will take about twenty-nine to thirty class days to get through, and about sixty hours of accompanying homework time.

Throughout the module, you will find links back to the relevant parts of this page that give you suggestions on how to use assignments that will require your assessment or on how to use them in class.

Each header below corresponds to a lesson of the module; clicking on it will take you to that lesson.

Throughout the module, I recommend that you read each lesson and exercise carefully before assigning any of them to students (which will sometimes require clicking through and/or completing an activity yourself), so that you can make a plan about how to use each one in class, assign any preparatory work your students may need in order to complete it successfully, note any errors you find so that you can explain them to students, and notice any areas with which your students are likely to have difficulty.

Proficiency objectives

Proficiency objectives tell you and your students what they should be able to *do* with Swahili by the end of the module. Specific proficiency objectives, alongside content objectives, are also included at the start of each activity in the module. You might take some time to assess your students at the start of the module, to determine which proficiency objectives they most need to work on and assign particular activities that will help them achieve those objectives. At the end of the module, you might ask students to submit a portfolio of evidence that documents their achievement of the can-do statements.

Msamiati wa Dini

This page contains religious vocabulary that I expect students to already know and be able to use before they begin the activities in this chapter. They will also encounter and acquire some additional vocabulary while doing the activities and exercises that follow. After assigning students to study this vocabulary, you could review it in class through various activities, such as handing out cards with each vocabulary item to each student and have them either use the word in a sentence, define it using circumlocution, or act it out. You could award “points” and make it a competition among individuals or teams. You could give students a graded quiz either in class or using an online quiz in your course website. Feel free to add additional vocabulary you think is important, and/or to leave a comment on the page if you’d like me to add anything.

Encourage students to keep a personalized vocabulary notebook where they keep track of all new words they encounter, whether in this module, in class, or through research.

Unit 1: Conversations

The first unit will take about seven class days to get through if you assign everything.

Warming up to conversations about religion

If you assign everything on this page, it will take about five class days to get through.

You might begin this lesson by sharing what you know about Hindus and people of Indian ancestry in East Africa. Be careful to share your own experiences, not to make blanket generalizations about anyone. It is important that students understand the tensions between people of various ancestries in East Africa, but not to perpetuate stereotypes.

Pre-reading exercise

In class, ask students to share the vocabulary they reviewed while researching the basic tenets of a religion. You can write these on the board while they share their ideas, or assign one or more students to do so. Ask students to explain the meanings of new words using circumlocution and/or examples.

Post-reading exercises

Exercise 1

Exercise 1 is a series of questions about the text that students can use to check their own understanding. It can be assigned for homework and you might just ask students in class afterwards if they have any questions about it. If you want to grade it, you could ask students to take a screen shot of their final score and print it out or email it to you.

Exercise 2

Exercise 2 includes three questions for students to think about and that you might discuss in class in small groups or as a whole class.

Talking about religion

If you assign everything in this lesson, it will take about two class days to get through.

Exercise 1

In preparation for Exercise 1, assign students the following homework:

- Exercise 1 asks you to talk about your religious beliefs and practices with your classmates. Think about the questions you will discuss, how you will ask them in Swahili, and how you might respond. Look up, learn, and/or review any relevant vocabulary you will need in order to describe your religious beliefs and ask about those of others. Bring a list of new vocabulary to class.

You might also remind them about what they learned from their reading and discussion of the transcript of Braj and Irene's conversation in the previous activity (if you assigned it).

Prior to doing Exercise 1, start with a brainstorming activity where students share questions they might ask one another and/or the vocabulary they reviewed. You can write these on the board while they share their ideas, or assign one or more students to do so. Ask students to explain the meanings of new words using circumlocution and/or examples.

After doing Exercise 1, ask students to share what they learned about their conversations partners. If you have an odd number of students and need one group of three, ask the third person to report on what he or she heard as she listened to the conversation of the other two.

Exercise 2

In preparation for Exercise 2, ask each student to select a religion other than his or her own to research for homework. If you want to ensure variety, and depending on the number of students in your class, you might provide a list from which they can choose, and/or include denominations of the major religions (e.g. Protestantism, Pentecostalism, or Catholicism rather than simply Christianity; Sunni and Shia rather than simply Islam).

In class, prior to doing Exercise 2, start with a brainstorming activity where students share the vocabulary they reviewed. You can write these on the board while they share their ideas, or assign one or more students to do so. Ask students to explain the meanings of new words using circumlocution and/or examples.

Unit 2: Interviewing

The second unit, Interviewing, builds on what students learned in Unit 1, Conversations, asking students to think about the similarities and differences between ordinary conversations and interviews, and then to practice interviewing and using what they learn through interviews to practice writing. If you assign everything in this unit, it will take about eight class days to get through.

Warming up to interviewing about religion: Warm up

If you assign everything in this lesson, it will take about three class days to get through.

Pre-reading Exercises

For homework, assign students to do the pre-reading exercises, and tell them whether they should submit their responses to you via email or print it out to turn in during class. Note that they must do both Exercise 1 and 2 in order to export their answers. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, though you might grade them based on grammatical accuracy or use of relevant vocabulary. They are primarily to get students thinking before class so that you can discuss the same questions during an in-class oral discussion.

Alternatively, you could skip having students do the pre-reading exercises in writing, and instead simply discuss the questions in class, though students will likely perform better if they have had a chance to think and write about the questions in advance.

Pre-reading Exercise 1, Question 3

In class, ask students to compare and discuss their responses to Pre-reading Exercises 1 and 2. You could do this in pairs and then have them report back to the whole class, or simply have the whole class discuss. On one side of the board, take note of any new vocabulary that arises so students can add it to their study lists.

Post-reading Exercises

Post-reading Exercise 1

This is a self-check exercise that gets students to notice supportive minimal vocalizations. *In class the next day*, you might ask students to discuss it in class afterwards, and to practice making these vocalizations during their in-class conversations.

Post-reading Exercise 2

For homework, assign students to do the post-reading exercises, and tell them whether they should submit their responses to you via email or print it out to turn in during class. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, though you might grade them based on grammatical accuracy or use of relevant vocabulary. They are primarily to get students thinking before class so that you can discuss the same questions during an in-class oral discussion.

Post-reading Exercise 3

This is a self-check exercise focused on comprehension. You might ask students to bring their questions about Primary Source 1 to class so you can discuss any grammar or vocabulary they had difficulty comprehending.

Post-reading Exercise 4

For homework, assign students to do the post-reading exercise, and tell them whether they should submit their responses to you via email or print it out to turn in during class. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, though you might grade them based on grammatical accuracy or use of relevant vocabulary. They are primarily to get students thinking before class so that you can discuss the same questions during an in-class oral discussion.

Conducting an interview

If you assign everything in this lesson, it will take about five class days to get through.

Exercise 1

Before beginning this exercise, you might share some Swahili magazines with your students—either physical copies if you have them, or links to online magazines.

Step 1

Students could do the first component of this exercise (writing a list of topics) for homework or in class, and you might ask them to share the topics they came up with in pairs or as a whole class brainstorming activity. Students should be encouraged to list topics rather than actual questions, so that when they conduct interviews they have to spontaneously generate questions rather than simply reading them off the page.

Step 2

Students can do their audio-recordings for homework or during class. Or they could practice during class (with different partners) and then do the actual recording for homework. But discourage them from rehearsing so much that the interview becomes unnatural. Let students know how to submit their audio-recordings—e.g. should they email them to you? upload them to your course management system? share them in a course Facebook group or on their own blogs?

Step 3

Let students know how to submit their homework—to you? shared with one another somewhere? You might consider combining all their “articles” into your own online course magazine and sharing it with the public. Decide how you will grade their articles and whether they will have the opportunity to revise. You could also incorporate peer revision, giving them a chance to share their articles with a classmate who will offer corrections and suggestions, after which each student will turn in a final version to you for grading.

Step 4

In class, students can share what they wrote about interviewing and use this as a basis for discussion.

Exercise 2

Assign each student a character (make sure you flesh them out well) or spend some time in class having them come up with characters together and/or for one another. They could be famous East Africans or simply imaginary people. For homework, they will conduct the research necessary to pretend to be their assigned or chosen characters.

Unit 3: Reading

Unit 3 focus on reading skills, using examples from both the Qur'an and an interview transcript. The interview is with a former Muslim, now Christian, about invisible beings, exposing students to several different East African religions and the overlap among them. If you assign everything in this unit, it will take about twelve class days to get through.

The Qur'an

If you assign everything in this lesson, it will take about seven class days to get through.

Assign students to read the cultural notes on "Al Fatiha." You could play some online audio versions in class. If you are Muslim, you might share with students your own experience of reciting Al Fatiha or of performing ritual prayers, and/or your interpretation of the verse.

Exercise 1

This is an ungraded exercise that can be done for homework.

Exercises 2 & 3

Exercise 2 offers new vocabulary, while Exercise 3 is a self-assessment of it. In between the two, you could go over new vocabulary in class, have students practice circumlocution to explain the words to one another. After students have completed Exercise 3, you might give them a graded quiz on the new vocabulary, either in class or online.

Exercise 4 (Grammar)

There are grammar explanations and short self-check exercises for three grammatical points that are evident in the Swahili translation of "Al Fatiha." Assign the ones you think your students need to review, and spend time on them in class as needed.

Exercise 5

Exercise 5 includes discussion questions for students to write about in preparation for an in class discussion in small groups or as a whole class. There are no right or wrong answers. If you decide to grade them, you might do so based on grammatical accuracy and/or appropriate use of (new) vocabulary.

Religious Metadiscourse

If you assign everything in this lesson, it will take about five class days to get through.

The focus of this lesson is on religious vocabulary and circumlocution. Before assigning it, you might have students review the religious vocabulary they already know and practice discussing it with one another, e.g. asking one another "What does *x* mean? Is it similar to *y*? How is it different from *z*?" Model this for them and then have them practice in pairs or small groups.

This lesson is also the first one in this module that has instructions in Swahili, because one of the proficiency goals is being able to understand simple written instructions. You may need to go over some vocabulary used in

the instructions. You might have students practice writing instructions for one another and see if they can carry out the instructions. (In class, these could be simple activities like *Erase the chalkboard* or *Arrange the chairs in a circle*, etc.)

Kabla ya kusoma

Ask students to bring their list to class to brainstorm a shared longer list. You could also review the concept of *kisichoonekena* with non-religious vocabulary, e.g. various other abstract concepts that are unseeable such as love, pride, etc. Have students practice using this vocabulary in sentences, offering definitions using circumlocution, etc.

Soma

Assign Primary Source 2 for homework. You could go over it in class afterwards if there is vocabulary or grammar that students find too difficult in it.

Baada ya kusoma

Zoezi la kwanza

This is a self-check exercise designed to get students to notice the various words used for invisible beings.

Zoezi la pili

Assign each student one invisible being to examine more closely in the interview and through other research. If you have access to various Swahili dictionaries, bring as many as you can to class so students can compare and contrast how different dictionaries define these words. During the following class period, each student can present what they learned.

Insha ya kujumlisha ulichojifunza

In this final assessment, students will need at least two weeks to conduct their research into an interesting topic related to religion in East Africa, including conducting an interview with a Swahili speaker, and to write a final five-page essay. You might break it up into smaller assignments with deadlines spread out over a few weeks, such as a one-paragraph abstract of the topic, a list of interview questions/topics, an annotated bibliography, or a rough draft of the essay, with periodic opportunities for feedback from you and classmates. You might specify how long the interview should be, ask students to transcribe it, etc. Most of the work can be done outside of class, but you will need at least one class day to discuss the assignment, have students brainstorm ideas or give one another peer feedback, and one class day for presentations.

//

Annotate

Highlight

Proficiency objectives

Jump to [Tips for Instructors](#)

This module, *Dini Afrika ya Mashariki* (Religion in East Africa), is designed to help you reach the Advanced Low level of Swahili proficiency on the ACTFL scale. The units are focused on conversations, interviewing, and reading skills and the content is focused on religions, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and traditional religions.

By the end of this module, you should be able to check off the following can-do statements. After each one is a link to the activity or activities that focus on that objective.

- I can participate in conversations on a wide variety of topics that go beyond my everyday life: [Conversations about Religion](#)
- I can conduct or participate in interviews: [Interviewing about Religion](#)
- I can deliver a short presentation on social and cultural topics: [Religious Metadiscourse](#)
- I can meet basic school and academic writing needs: [Warming up to Interviewing](#)
- I can meet basic work and career writing needs: [Warming up to Conversations about Religion](#)
- I can understand spoken descriptions and stories of events that have happened or will happen: [Warming up to Interviewing / Primary Source Texts](#)
- I can find and use information for practical purposes: [Warming up to Conversations about Religion / Interviewing about Religion: Warm up / The Qur'an / Primary Source Texts](#)
- I can read texts that compare and contrast information: [Warming up to Conversations about Religion / The Qur'an / Primary Source Texts](#)
- I can follow simple written instructions: [Religious Metadiscourse](#)

At the Advanced Low level of proficiency, learners are also expected to be able to function at the Advanced-Mid level much of the time. This means that, after completing this module, you may not be able to check off the following objectives, but you will be well on your way toward doing so:

- I can communicate effectively about a wide variety of present, past, and future events: [Conversations about Religion](#)
- I can exchange general information on topics outside my fields of interest: [Conversations about Religion](#)
- I can understand spoken accounts of events: [Warming up to Interviewing](#)

- I can write well organized texts for a variety of academic purposes: [Warming up to Interviewing](#) / [Insha ya Kujumlisha Ulichojifunza](#)
- I can follow the general ideas and some details of what is written in a variety of stories and autobiographical accounts: [Warming up to Conversations about Religion](#) / [Primary Source Texts](#)
- I can understand written messages on a wide variety of past, present, and future events: [Warming up to Conversations about Religion](#)

Creating a Portfolio

As you use this module, keep copies of your work and/or take notes on what you can do that supplies evidence that you have achieved each of the can-do statements. At the end of the module, you will have a portfolio to demonstrate (to yourself, your instructor, and/or others) which can-do statements you have achieved.

Tips for independent learners



A woman learning Swahili in Kenya

Independent learning comes with both challenges and rewards. The most challenging aspect can be finding people with whom to practice and from whom to get feedback, but the reward is that you can learn at your own pace and focus on what interests you.

Since this module is designed for Advanced learners of Swahili, you have either already figured out how to learn

on your own or you already know some Swahili-speakers to whom you can turn. But if your previous learning was in a classroom and this is your first time learning Swahili independently, you may need some help getting started.

I have been working with independent learners of various African languages for several years, and have collected ideas from them about how to overcome challenges and maximize your learning.

In this video, some of my past students discuss how self-instruction differs from traditional classroom learning with regard to assessment and lifelong learning:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=340>

Another former student has created some Swahili-specific resources for independent learner, available at <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/swahili/>

Other Tips

Here are some other ideas I've garnered both from research and from observing what works well for my own students. In my course on self-instructional learning, students learn how to find and use materials that are *not* designed for self-instructional learners and/or how to create their own, but since you've already found materials (this module), I'll focus only on how to get practice and feedback.

Find a conversation partner

The greatest way to learn Swahili is, of course, to practice it with someone who speaks it well. This doesn't necessarily have to be a "native speaker," since, beyond the Swahili Coast, most East Africans speak Swahili as their second language. Even a student who has learned Swahili as a foreign language might be a good conversation partner if their proficiency level is higher than yours.

Choose a conversation partner with whom you feel comfortable. You and your conversation partner should not only trust each other but also feel good about working together and give each other support. One of my former students who taught herself Arabic recommends that both you and your partner should feel that you are working on the same project and you should be serious about it.¹

Search online

Nowadays, a simple Google search should be able to direct you to any community organizations in your area that may connect you to Swahili-speakers. Search for African organizations or East African organizations where you live. Most will have a website, phone number, or email address through which you can contact them. Some useful Google search terms are “Tanzanians in [city]” or “[name of city] and Kenya.”² Meetup (<https://www.meetup.com/>) sometimes has language-focused groups, or you could start one. You may also consider looking into immigration/resettlement programs. Ask if they are in contact with anyone from East Africa.

Go religious or go shopping

You may also consider seeking out churches or other religious organizations. Many East Africans are Christians or Muslims, and may continue to practice these faiths in the diaspora. Also, look around for businesses: African restaurants, specialty food stores, beauty shops and so on. Don't be afraid to walk in and say you're interested in learning Swahili. Even if the people you meet are not East African, they may know other Africans in the community and be able to help you find someone. You'd be surprised at how willing people are to help you. In fact, one of my students, who was learning Amharic, reports that most of her language-learning happened in Ethiopian-owned convenience stores in the United States.³

Take advantage of universities

Perhaps you attend university yourself or are fortunate to live in a city with a university or community college. Even if the local college or university does not offer Swahili, it may have students or faculty from East Africa, so this is a great potential resource. Most colleges and universities have international student centers, so you can start there. Consider emailing someone who works there, or walk into the office, and ask if there are any students from East Africa who might be willing to practice Swahili with you. Many large universities also have multicultural organizations or student clubs, so you may consider trying to find out if there are any African student organizations. Most universities also have some sort of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program for international students trying to improve their English skills. You may consider asking if there are any Swahili-speaking students who would like to do a language exchange with you. Even if there are no Swahili-speaking students at the college, consider searching for professors whose research intersects with East Africa. They usually will know if there is any community of Swahili-speakers in your city and can connect you.

1. Sara Farsiu, “Mentor,” Arabic Language Kitchen, 2015, <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/arabic-sara/mentor>.

2. Regina Fuller, “Finding a Language Mentor,” Krio Language Resources, accessed June 8, 2017, <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/krio-language-resources/finding-a-language-mentor>.

3. Sarah Bishop, “Finding an Amharic Language Partner,” Learning Amharic, October 10, 2016, <https://learningamharic.wordpress.com/finding-an-amharic-language-partner/>.

Contact people you know

Use your personal network. One of my students relied on this method to find a conversation partner with whom to practice Sierra Leonean Krio, and she found three people who helped her. She started by emailing American professors she knew who had done research recently in Sierra Leone, and asked them to share the contact information of their past language teachers or if they knew any Krio-speakers in the U.S. From this method, her contacts sent her the name of three people. She also emailed a friend who had lived and worked in Sierra Leone. Although based in a different city, her friend knew the Sierra Leone community there as well. She advises, “If you do not have this network yet, use it to reach out to people who have studied/researched/worked in your target country and with whom you share an interest ... People are generally helpful if you share an interest.”⁴

Advertise

Whether on-campus or off, advertising your need for a conversation partner may be useful. Hang up signs telling people that you are looking for a conversation partner, or post an ad on [Craigslist](#). Specify whether you are willing to pay, offer another service, or do a language exchange.

Search outside your geographic area

If you are unable to find Swahili-speakers to converse with you in your area, make good use of the Internet to broaden your search. Identify national organization and/or institutions that might have affiliations with East Africa and inquire about the possibility of locating a language mentor. Reach out to universities in other places where Swahili is taught. Contact professional organizations that focus on Africa, such as the [African Studies Association](#). Send messages to Africa-focused listservs such as [H-Africa](#).⁵ Through such resources, you may be able to find Swahili-speaking conversation partners living in East Africa, Europe, or the United States, and could talk with them by phone or Skype.

My Language Exchange (<https://mylanguageexchange.com/>) is an online community that allows you to search for tutors based on the language *you* want to learn, the language *they* want to learn, and region. ITalki (<https://www.italki.com/home>) is similar. [Facebook](#) also has a few groups geared towards Swahili-language learning. One of my students found her a Luganda-language conversation partner through the Uganda Studies Association Facebook page.⁶

Broaden your definition of “conversation”

If you can’t find an individual to practice speaking with regularly, you can “talk” with people in discussion forums or chat rooms. Google, for example, “Swahili forum” or “Tanzania chat” and you will find several to explore and choose from. They are usually divided into sub-forums by topic and you can find those that interest you. WhatsApp messaging is popular among East Africans and can be an inexpensive and easy way to engage in (short) conversations.

Consider creating your own website or blog where you post materials that you create in Swahili, such as audio

4. Regina Fuller, “Finding a Language Mentor,” Krio Language Resources, accessed June 8, 2017, <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/krio-language-resources/finding-a-language-mentor>.

5. Kathryn Mara, “Locating a Language Mentor,” Learning Kinyarwanda, October 10, 2016, <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/learning-kinyarwanda/locating-a-language-mentor>.

6. Lindsay Ehrisman and Lauren Parnell Marino, “Finding a Language Mentor,” *Tusoma Luganda*, May 14, 2015, <https://sites.google.com/a/wisc.edu/tusomaluganda/gettingstarted/test-2>.

recordings, videos, or your own writing. If they are publicly available and you allow comments or provide a way for readers to contact you, you may “meet” Swahili-speakers that way or get authentic feedback from them.

[Permissions and credits](#)

Msamiati wa Dini

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Below are some Swahili words you will frequently encounter or need to use while communicating, listening, or reading about religion. You can sort the list by Swahili or English or search for particular words. If there are additional words you'd like to see on this list, please leave a comment. You will learn more vocabulary while completing the activities and exercises in this module. As you encounter new words, you should add them to your personalized vocabulary notebook.

Below the list, you will find a variety of activities you can use to develop or check your mastery of this vocabulary.

Note that words with a number after them are nouns (with the number indicating their Bantu noun class in singular and, if applicable, plural). Words with no number or preceding hyphen are verbs (in the imperative form). If you need to review noun class, see the [Appendix](#).

Kiswahili	Kiingereza
dini 9/10	religion
Ukristo 14	Christianity
Uislamu 14	Islam
Uhindu 14	Hinduism
silimu	convert to Islam
jini 5/6 & 1/2	djinn
malaika 9/10 & 1/2	angel
shetani 5/6 & 1/2	devil
Ibilisi	Satan
Isa	Jesus (as referred to by Muslims)
Asalaam aleikum	a greeting and farewell used among Muslims (literally 'peace be upon you')
Aleikum salaam	response to 'Asalaam aleikum' (literally 'and upon you, peace')
Mkristo 1/2	a Christian
Mwislamu 1/2	a Muslim
Mhindu 1/2	a Hindu
-a Kikristo	Christian
-a Kiislamu	Muslim; Islamic
-a Kihindu	Hindu
Yesu	Jesus (as referred to by Christians)
Yesu Kristo	Jesus Christ (as referred to by Christians)
Mungu 1	God
miungu 4 & 2	gods
soma	read, recite
sala 9/10	ritual Islamic prayer
sali	pray (for Muslims, perform ritual Islamic prayer; for Christian, perform any kind of prayer)
omba dua	pray (for Muslims, petition God through personal prayer, i.e. outside of ritual prayers)
sura 9/10	chapter
aya 9/10	verse
Mwenyezi Mungu 1	God Almighty
Mola 1	God, "Lord" (used primarily by Muslims)
mtume 1/2	prophet
msikiti 3/4	mosque
kanisa 5/6	church
dua 9/10	prayer
abudu	worship

Kiswahili	Kiingereza
kiumbe kisichoonekana 7	invisible being
roho 9/10	soul, spirit
pepo 5/6	ghost, spirit
mzimu 3/4	ancestral spirit

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=18>

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=18>

Unit 1: Conversations

Warming up to conversations about religion

Proficiency Objectives

- find and use information for practical purposes
- read texts that compare and contrast information
- follow the general ideas and some details of what is written in a variety of stories and autobiographical accounts
- meet basic work and career writing needs
- understand written messages on a wide variety of past, present, and future events

Content Objectives

- read about and discuss Hinduism in East Africa
- notice and discuss code-switching between Swahili and English

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Culture notes:

East Africa's main religions are Christianity, Islam, and "traditional African religions," but there is also a small number of Hindus, mainly people of Indian ancestry. (However, there are also Muslims of Indian ancestry.) In 2010, there were approximately 50,000 Hindus in Tanzania, 60,000 in Kenya, and 100,000 in Uganda.¹ There have been small settlements of Hindus in East Africa since at least the 1st century AD.² After British colonialism ended in the

1. Pew Research Center. 2012. "Table: Religious Composition by Country, in Numbers." Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project. December 18. <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/table-religious-composition-by-country-in-numbers/>.

2. "Hinduism in Tanzania." 2017. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hinduism_in_Tanzania&oldid=785604560.



The BAPS Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Kisumu

1960s, East Africans of Indian ancestry became a persecuted group, particularly in Zanzibar and Uganda, but also in mainland Tanzania, and many emigrated to India, North America, and Europe. In Tanzania at least, there are ongoing tensions between people of African ancestry and those of Indian ancestry.

Because most Hindus are not first-language speakers of Swahili, it can be difficult to find information about Hinduism in Swahili. However, most East Africans of Indian ancestry do speak Swahili to varying levels of proficiency, in addition to other languages such as Gujarati or Hindi.

Recommended further reading:

Brennan, James R. 2012. *Taifa: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

Higgins, Christina. 2009. “Are You Hindu?’: Resisting Membership Categorization through Language Alternation.” In *Talk-In-Interaction: Multilingual Perspectives*, edited by Hanh Thi Nguyen and Gabriele Kasper, 111–36. Pragmatics & Interaction. University of Hawai’i at Manoa: National Foreign Language Resource Center.

Pre-reading Exercise

Do some quick research on Hinduism in East Africa (e.g. using Wikipedia). For example, what do Hindus believe?

Are there different branches of Hinduism? Where do Hindus worship, and what does their worship look or sound like? Look up some of the words you think you will need to know in order to discuss Hinduism in Swahili. If you are a classroom learner, bring your vocabulary list to class.

Reading

The following reading comes from a book chapter by applied linguist Christina Higgins, “‘Are You Hindu?’: Resisting Membership Categorization through Language Alternation” (cited above) in which she analyzes a conversation between two Tanzanians, “Irene” and “Braj” (both pseudonyms) to demonstrate how they use code-switching between English and Swahili. Both were multilingual; in addition to both speaking Swahili and English, Irene was a speaker of Chagga and Braj of Gujerati. They worked together in a newspaper office in Dar es Salaam, where Higgins conducted linguistic fieldwork in the early 2000s.

I have modified the transcript to remove some features that are not necessary for our purposes, and added some punctuation. This chart explains some of the remaining symbols in the transcript:

Symbol	Meaning
wor-	a cut off word, i.e. when the speaker starts to say one word and then restarts with a different word
—	a cut off phrase, i.e. when the speaker starts a sentence one way and then restarts another way
<i>italics</i>	code-switched words (in this case, English)
#word	transcriber’s best guess at a word that is hard to hear
#	unintelligible syllable

Read the transcript below; just read for the gist and don’t worry about understanding every word. Some words that may be new to you are glossed in the right column.

-
- 1 Irene; Nanii wewe ni Hindu? *nanii* indicates the speaker is searching for a word; Higgins translates it here as 'um'
- 2 Braj; M-mh. Baniani. *Baniani (sometimes Banyani) 5/6 & 1/2*
a Banyan; a follower of Brahma; historically, a trader from the Gujerat region of India; in Tanzania, a follower of a Hindu sect local to the Dar es Salaam area
- 3 Irene; Eeh?
- 4 Braj; Baniani.
- 5 Irene; Baniani.
- 6 Braj; Eeh Hindu.
- 7 Irene; Baniani. *Is it different from Hindu?*
- 8 Braj; *Yeah* tunatofautiana kwa #kabila mbalimbali. Kwa mfano Wasukuma,
- 9 Irene; Eeh.
- 10 Braj; Wahehe,
- 11 Irene; Baniani. Eeh una- *you worship* kwenye hii nanii Jamatini pale? *jamatini 9/10* Ismaili mosque; *jamatkhana*
- 12 Braj; Jamatini ipi?
- 13 Irene; Jamatini ya hapo Upanga.
- 14 Braj; Upanga Road pale?
- 15 Irene; Hii hii ya hapa karibu na nanii
- 16 Braj; Na
- 17 Irene; na Aga Khani ## *hospital*.
[some lines omitted]
- 18 Braj; Nitakusindikiza. *sindikiza* escort; go a piece of the way with someone
- 19 Irene; *Whom do you believe in, Mohammed?*
- 20 Braj; Ni Waislamu.
- 21 Irene; Nyie? Nyie mnabelieve *in what?* *nyie* a contracted form of *ninyi*
- 22 Braj; Tunabelieve na mungu wetu.
- 23 Irene; Mungu wa Baniani.
- 24 Braj; Yes.
- 25 Irene; Ni nani huyu?
- 26 Braj; Kuna wa mbalimbali.
- 27 Irene; Miungu.
- 28 Braj; *Yeah*. Kuna m-
- 29 Irene; Kama sisi *Christians* tuna *Jesus Christ* kuna *Mohamed* for Muslims
-

30 Braj; *Yeah we have different ones.
Different*

31 Irene; *Kwa hiyo you don't have one god
you believe in.*

Post-reading exercises

Exercise 1

Answer the following questions to check your own understanding of the transcript. If you have questions about any of your errors, take note of them so you can ask another Swahili speaker (e.g. your teacher if you are a classroom learner; or your conversation partner if you're learning independently).

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=245>

Exercise 2

Think about the following questions. If you are a classroom learner, discuss your answers with your classmates.

1. Higgins suggests that this conversation has an interview-like quality and that Braj seems to resist answering Irene's questions. Given the cultural background provided above, why do you think this might be the case?
2. Do you think Irene knows many Hindus? What is the evidence?
3. If you were going to have a conversation about religion with someone whose religious beliefs differ from your own, how might you approach to conversation in order to make your conversation partner comfortable?

Exercise 3

1. Imagine that you are the boss in the newspaper office where Braj and Irene work. Braj approaches you to tell you that his conversation with Irene about religion made him uncomfortable, and you decide that your office needs a policy on what kinds of personal conversations are appropriate for the workplace. In Swahili, write a memo addressed to your employees that outlines your proposed new policy and asks for their feedback before it takes effect. If you're not sure how to write a memo, you can find some examples in English [online](#).
2. If you are a classroom learner, exchange memos with one of your classmates. Take the role of an employee, perhaps Irene or Braj. In Swahili, write an email response to your boss, acknowledging the memo, agreeing or disagreeing with any of your boss's proposed policies, explaining your reasons for agreement or disagreement, and asking any questions you have about it.

Talking about religion

Proficiency Objectives

- participate in conversations on a wide variety of topics that go beyond your everyday life.
- communicate effectively on a wide variety of present, past, and future events.
- exchange general information on topics outside your fields of interest.

Content Objectives

- participate in conversations about your own and others' religious beliefs, using appropriate Swahili vocabulary.

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Exercises for classroom learners

Exercise 1

In pairs or small groups, talk about your religious beliefs and practices. What led you to these beliefs? How do your beliefs affect your everyday life? What do you believe happens when you die? Do you have any beliefs or practices in common? Are there words or concepts that your conversation partners use that are new you?

Exercise 2

Select a religion other than your own (or your teacher will assign one) and do some brief research about its



Pricilla Anbut (left) with Dr. George Mukundi Wachira (center) and Njeri Karuru (right) in conversation

basic tenets (e.g. using Wikipedia). For example, what do practitioners of this religion believe? Are their different branches/sects/denominations? Where and when do they worship? What holidays do they celebrate? Look up any words you will need to know in Swahili in order to explain what you learned. In class, you will take part in a role play where you pretend to be a practitioner in the religion you selected or were assigned. Your classmates will ask you about your beliefs and guess which religion you are describing.

Exercises for independent learners

Exercise 1

Either in an appropriate online Swahili space such as the [Dini/Imani forum](#) of [Jamii Forums](#), or with a Swahili-speaking conversation partner, start a discussion about others' religious beliefs and practices. What led them to these beliefs? How do their beliefs affect their everyday lives? What do they believe happens when you die? Do you have any beliefs or practices in common? Are there words or concepts that your conversation partners use that are new to you? Ask about them and/or take note of them to look up later and add to your vocabulary notebook.

Exercise 2

Imagine you are planning a trip to a particular city in East Africa and you would like to visit a church, a mosque, and a Hindu temple. Either in an appropriate online Swahili space such as the [Dini/Imani forum](#) of *Jamii Forums*, or with a Swahili-speaking conversation partner, find out where one of each of these religious spaces is, how to get there, and whether or not it would be appropriate for you to visit.

Exercise 3

Do some research to find out if there are Swahili speakers in your community. Some areas with large East African immigrant populations, such as Minneapolis, have Swahili church services. If possible, attend a service and have a conversation with at least one congregant.

[Permissions and credits](#)

Unit 2: Interviewing

Warming up to interviewing

Proficiency Objectives

- understand descriptions and stories of events that have happened or will happen.
- find and use information for practical purposes.
- meet basic school and academic writing needs.

Content Objectives

- discuss the difference between ordinary conversation and interviewing.
- discuss one Swahili-speaker's perspective on what it means to be Muslim.

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Pre-reading Exercises:

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=120>

Reading:

Read the interview with “Maliki” ([Primary Source 1](#)). Don't worry about understanding everything the first time you read it; just read for the gist.

Post-reading Exercises:



Zanzibar TV presenter Suleiman Abdalla Salum (left), shakes hands with Chaplain (Maj.) Dawud Agbere, U.S. Army Central, who visited the East African nation in the course of Natural Fire 11 to build bridges of understanding between Muslims and Christians.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=120>

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=120>

Post-reading Exercise 3

Re-read the interview with “Maliki” (Primary Source 1). You may want to keep it open in another tab so you can refer back to it while you answer the following questions.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=120>

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=120>

Moving on from here

Now that you've read an example of a Swahili interview that touches on religion, and thought about what an interview might be like, in the next set of exercises you'll practice conducting one or more yourself. *Bahati njema!*

[Permissions and credits](#)

Conducting an interview

Proficiency Objectives

- conduct or participate in interviews.

Content Objectives

- write a list of appropriate topics/questions to address in an interview about religion.
- conduct or participate in interviews about religion.



Exercises for classroom learners:

1. Imagine you have been hired by Swahili magazine to write a general interest piece about religion in your country.

- Write a list in Swahili of 10-20 topics about which you would like to ask people.
- In pairs, audio-record a 20-minute interview in Swahili with your classmate using your list of topics.
- For homework, write up a one-page article in Swahili about what you learned and include at least two quotations from your audio-recording.
- Reflect on how the interview went. Are there any topics you should have asked about but didn't? Any you asked about that you should have skipped or asked differently? After you have also been interviewed by a classmate, reflect on what it is like to be interviewed and whether it might impact the way you conduct interviews in the future. Write a short paragraph in Swahili about what you might do differently in the future.

2. Repeat the activity but this time the interviewee should pretend to be an East African. The interviewee should

take some time in advance to plan out their character, or the teacher can assign characters. Before class, research your character's religion and where s/he is from, and familiarize yourself with any vocabulary you will need to answer questions about your character and his/her religious beliefs.

Exercises for independent learners:

1. Either with a conversation partner or in an appropriate online Swahili space such as the [Dini/Imani forum](#) of [Jamii Forums](#), find a Swahili-speaker who is willing to be interviewed about some religious topic. You can do the interview itself in person, via Skype, or if necessary in a typed exchange. If the interview is in person or via Skype, ask permission to audio-record it.

- Write a list in Swahili of 10-20 topics about which you would like to ask people.
- Conduct the interview in Swahili with whoever has agreed to do so.
- Write up a one-page article in Swahili about what you learned and include at least two quotations from your interviewee. Consider “publishing” it somewhere, like on a blog or personal website, so that Swahili-speakers might find it and leave comments.
- Reflect on how the interview went. Are there any topics you should have asked about but didn't? Any you asked about that you should have skipped or asked differently? Write a short paragraph in Swahili about what you might do differently in the future.

2. As an exchange with the person you interviewed, invite them to interview you on any topic that interests them. Reflect on what it is like to be interviewed and whether it might impact the way you conduct interviews in the future.

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Unit 3: Reading

The Qur'an

Proficiency Objectives

- understand the main idea of popular genres.
- find and use information for practical purposes.
- read texts that compare and contrast information.

Content Objectives

- read the most well-known verse in the Qur'an.
- locate a specific chapter in the Qur'an and identify the structural elements common to all chapters.
- use Swahili religious vocabulary appropriately to discuss important aspects of Islam.

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Understanding “Al Fatiha”

Most Muslims perform ritual prayers (called *sala* in Swahili, from the Arabic *salat*) five times each day, and each prayer is comprised of a specific number of recitations of a Qur'anic chapter. The Swahili verb *kusoma* (to read) is used for reciting (i.e. to read aloud), even though many Muslims do not know how to read Arabic script or comprehend Arabic; they simply memorize the Qur'an. At each prayer time, the first chapter recited is the first chapter of the Qur'an, referred to by its proper name *Al Fatiha* (with some variation in spelling) in Arabic, Swahili, and English—meaning “the opening” in Arabic—or sometimes as *Sura ya Kwanza* (the first chapter) in Swahili. This makes it the most well-known, and most-often recited chapter of the entire Qur'an. Some Muslims say it encapsulates everything one needs to know about Islam.



Boys reading the Qur'an in a mosque, Stone Town, Zanzibar

For ritual recitation, the Qur'an is always recited in Arabic, never in translation. If you hear a Muslim praying, anywhere in the world, "Al Fatiha" sounds something like this:

*Bismillahi Rahman iRahim
Alhamdulillah rabbi alamin
Ar-Rahman ar-Raheem Maaliki yaumid Deen
Iyyaaka na'abudu wa iyyaaka nasta'in
Ihdinas siraatal mustakim
Siraatal ladhina an amta alaihim
Ghairil maghdubi alaihim waladaalin
Aamin*

If you search for "Al Fatiha audio" online, you can find various recitations that you can listen to for free. One site with many different reciters is [Quranic Audio](#).

The first verse of "Al Fatiha", *Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem*, occurs before almost every chapter in the Qur'an, and it is also used by many Muslims before beginning any activity, as a way of invoking God's blessing. For that purpose, it is sometimes shortened to simply *Bismillah*. Among Swahili-speaking Muslims, this word is used often.

Even though most Muslims memorize "Al Fatiha" in Arabic, they also want to know what it means, and so they read the Qur'an in translation. You can find a Swahili translation of the Qur'an online at <https://archive.org/details/swahili-quran-translation>.

Exercise 1

Below is an image of a page from the Swahili translation of the Qur'an I was given as my *mahari* (dower) by my Zanzibari in-laws when I got married in Zanzibar in 2009.¹ It shows the Swahili translation side by side with the Arabic original. Click on the hotspots to learn about each component of the text.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

Exercise 2

Study the new vocabulary from "Al Fatiha," and take note of the relationship between this new vocabulary and some words you may already know.

1. Abdallah Salih Farsy, trans., *Qurani Takatifu*, 8th ed. (Nairobi, Kenya: Islamic Foundation, 1997).

Kiswahili	Kiingereza	Related words
-neemesha	make rich, provide well for	neema 9/10
neema 9/10	ease, affluence, comfort, bounty, favor, help, grace	-neemesha
-stahiki	be worthy of	haki 9/10, -stahili
-miliki	own	mali 9/10
-ongoza	lead	kiongozi 7/8 & 1/2
-nyoka	become straight	
-kasirikiwa	be the object of anger	-kasirika; hasira 9/10

Exercise 3

Fill in the blanks in the following text.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

Exercise 4 (Grammar)

Use the following exercises to review relevant grammar as needed. (Click the double arrow icon in the lower right-hand corner of each exercise to make it full-screen.)

1. Causative verbs formed from nouns

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

2. Reduplication

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

3. The emphatic copula

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

Exercise 5

Answer the following discussion questions.

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=192>

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Religious metadiscourse

Proficiency Objectives

- Deliver a short presentation on social and cultural topics
- Follow simple written instructions

Content Objectives

- Understand and use key religious vocabulary
- Give a short presentation on some key concepts in a major East African religion
- Discuss similarities and differences among major East African religions

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Kabla ya kusoma

Unakumbuka maneno gani yanayotumiwa kutaja viumbe visivyoonekena? Andika orodha ya maneno hayo.

Soma

Soma mahojiano yangu na Mustafa ([Primary Source 2](#)). Si lazima kufahamu kila neno. Uwe mwangalifu kuhusu msamiati mpya.

Baada ya kusoma

Zoezi la kwanza



A large baobab tree said to house spirits

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
<https://wisc.pb.unizin.org/dini/?p=365>

Zoezi la pili

- Chagua neno moja la viumbe visivyoonekana (k.m. *Mungu, miungu, roho, pepo, mzimu, jini, shetani, malaika*), au ukiwa mwanafunzi darasani mwalimu wako akuchagulie.
- Soma kwa bidii na kwa uangalifu Mustafa anasemaje kuhusu neno hilo.
- Fanya utafiti zaidi kuhusu neno hilo katika kamusi mbalimbali, mtandao, au/na vitabu. Waislamu wanatumia neno hilo kiviipi? Wakristo wanalitumiaje? Wafuasi wa dini za kienyeji wanalitumia vipi?
- Ukiwa mwanafunzi darasani, tayarisha wasilisho la dakika tano hivi kuhusu ulivyojifunza. Utawasilisha darasani mbele ya wenzako. Ikiwa unajifunza peke yako, tayarisha video ya wasilisho lako na kuiweka kwenye blogu yako.

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Final Assessment

Insha ya kujumlisha ulichojifunza



Wanafunzi wakiandika darasani Mombasa

Jump to [Tips for instructors](#)

Chagua mada yo yote inayovutia kuhusu dini Afrika ya Mashariki, na ufanye utafiti juu yake katika vitabu, makala, na mtandao. Fanya mahojiano na angalau mtu mmoja asemaye Kiswahili. (Unaweza kumhoji mtu kwa mtandao ikiwa hakuna wasemaji wa Kiswahili unakoishi.)

Weka kila unachojifunza pamoja kwenye insha ya kurasa tano au zaidi. Ikiwa huna mwalimu wa Kiswahili, weka insha yako kwenye blogu yako ili wasomaji wa Kiswahili waisome.

Baada ya kuandika insha yako, utawasilisha darasani.

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Primary Source Texts

In July and August 2009, I interviewed people in Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar Town about a legendary figure called *Popobawa*, a mythological creature who sodomizes people in their sleep. Later I wrote a book about my findings, *Popobawa: Tanzanian Talk, Global Misreadings*.¹ Because the Tanzanians I spoke with about Popobawa were all either Muslim or Christian, many of them talked about how their religious beliefs related to their belief in or skepticism about Popobawa.

The following sources are transcripts of excerpts from my interviews. I have simplified them to remove pauses and some errors, and substituted pseudonyms for my interlocutors or other names that could be used to identify them. The following table explains some symbols you may see in the transcripts.

Symbol	Meaning
--------	---------

@	a pulse of laughter
---	---------------------

:	vowel lengthening
---	-------------------

wor-	a cut off word, i.e. when the speaker starts to say one word and then restarts with a different word
------	--

—	a cut off phrase, i.e. when the speaker starts a sentence one way and then restarts another way
---	---

<i>italics</i>	code-switched words (not in Swahili)
----------------	--------------------------------------

#word	transcriber's best guess at a word that is hard to hear
-------	---

#	unintelligible syllable
---	-------------------------

ALL CAPS	a syllable spoken with emphasis
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1. Thompson, Katrina Daly. 2017. *Popobawa: Tanzanian Talk, Global Misreadings*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Primary Source 1

Excerpt from an interview with “Maliki”

The following excerpt from my July 2009 interview with “Maliki” is from the prefatory conversation before we started talking about Popobawa. We met at a bar where he worked and I came back the next day to interview him during his break. I have edited the transcript slightly for clarity and to remove some unnecessary details.

- 1 MALIKI; Sawa?
- 2 KATRINA; Eh, sasa inarekodi.
- 3 MALIKI; Mimi naitwa Maliki Adili Suleiman.
- 4 KATRINA; A! Ni Maliki, si Malik?
- 5 MALIKI; A-a. Malik ni kifupi tu.
- 6 KATRINA; E, sawa.
- 7 MALIKI; Eeh, lakini ni Maliki. Mimi natokea visiwani Zanzibar.
- 8 KATRINA; Kisiwa kipi?
- 9 MALIKI; Unguja.
- 10 KATRINA; Sehemu gani?
- MALIKI;
- 11 Kaskazini Unguja. Inaitwa Mwanda. Nimezaliwa mwaka elfu moja mia tisa sabini na tisa.
- 12 KATRINA; O! Ni mdogo wangu! @
- 13 MALIKI; @Ndiyo. @@@
- 14 KATRINA; @@@
- 15 MALIKI; Eh, nina miaka thelathini thelathini. Ya, *exactly* thelathini thelathini.
-

-
- 16 KATRINA; Umeoa?
- 17 MALIKI; Mimi nilioa, lakini sasa niko mwenyewe. Tumetengana na mwanamke. Na nina mtoto, na nimesoma kule *primary* hadi hawakuweza kuniendeleza kimasomo. Nikatoka hapo nikaomba tena kusoma, wazazi wangu wakaniambia, “kwa kweli nikajitahidi mwenyewe, nikaanza kufanya kazi hapa na pale. Nikapata pesa kidogo, nikaingia chuo, ingawa vile vile ku Lakini—
- 18 KATRINA; Ilikuwa chuo cha aina gani?
- 19 MALIKI; Ni *tourism*. Chuo cha utalii.
- 20 KATRINA; Mmhh...
- 21 MALIKI; Baadaye nikaacha tena chuo. Nikakaa tena mitaani. *And then* nikarudi tena chuo. Nikamaliza masomo. Nikaanza kazi k
- 22 KATRINA; Mmhh.
- 23 MALIKI; Iko Unguja. Nilifanya kazi hapo kwa muda wa miaka mitatu. Kutoka hapo nikaenda kwenye hoteli nyingine. Inaitwa P tayari nishakuwa na mwanamke. Wakati naacha kazi Pwani Ocean nikaja huku *mainland, I mean* Dar es Salaam. Nikaf
- 24 KATRINA; Mm.
- 25 MALIKI; Nikafanya mwaka mmoja pale, mkataba ukaiha. Nikaacha tena pale, nikaja kufanya kazi Kumbwaya Beach Hotel. Wal nyingine ya kazi, hapa, so nikaangalia maslahi yako wapi? *I mean yah* pesa nzuri. Nikaja TYC nikafanya *interview*, kwa
- 26 KATRINA; Mm.
- 27 MALIKI; Kwa hivyo nilikuwa nafanya kama' ... *casual*. *Casual* kwa Kiswahili inaitwa? Kibarua. Kwa hiyo nikaja hapa. Nikapata mwenyewe hapa Msasani. Nimepanga chumba kimoja. *Yah* hayo ndiyo maisha yangu yalivyo sasa.
- 28 KATRINA; Mm. Na bado una familia Unguja?
- 29 MALIKI; Watoto wangu wako Zanzibar. Yah wazazi wangu wote wawili wako kule Zanzibar. Unguja *I mean, I mean*. Wako kule tunagawana. Ni bado maskini. Lakini nazidi kutafuta ili niokoe maisha ya wazee wangu pamoja na mimi. Ninachokipata vile nishaomba nafasi ya masomo hapa. Kwa sababu kila mwaka anatoka mtu mmoja anaenda kusoma. Nasomea ufani nikapata— Shida yangu ni nichukue *diploma*.
-

30 KATRINA; Mm.

31 MALIKI; Ya utalii. Lakini kuna vizingiti huku na huku. Sasa nitajitahidi nitafute mwenyewe, niingie chuoni ili niongeze elimu ili ma
ya maisha yangu yalivyo. Ndiyo.

32 KATRINA; Asante. Wewe ni: Mwislamu?

33 MALIKI; Mimi ni Mwislamu, ndiyo.

34 KATRINA; Na bado hapa barani unafuata dini? Yaani—

35 MALIKI; Wapi?

36 KATRINA; Hapa. Baada ya kuondoka Unguja bado uliendelea kufuata dini hapa?

37 MALIKI; Um, kwa kweli mimi tangia niko kule Zanzibar, naweza kusema kipindi nikiwa mdogo, wakati naishi na wazee wangu nili
Korani. Lakini nikaacha kufuata dini kwa sababu ya kazi zangu.

38 KATRINA; Mm.

39 MALIKI; Sisi Waislamu kuna baadhi ya vitu hatutakiwi hata kushika. Kama pombe.

40 KATRINA; Eeh.

41 MALIKI; Nguruwe. Lakini mazingira ya kazi yamesababisha mimi nishindwe kufuata dini. Na kwa kweli mpaka leo sifwati dini.

42 KATRINA; Mm.

43 MALIKI; Mmm. Nasikitika sana lakini, kwa sababu ya maisha, sio kingine. Mm. Ni hivyo.

44 KATRINA; Asante.

45 MALIKI; @ @ @Asante @na @wewe.

46 KATRINA; Unamaswali yo yote juu ya maisha yangu au?

47 MALIKI; Ya.

48 KATRINA; Kabla ya kuanza na hadithi?

49 MALIKI; Ya, nitapenda mimi nijue kidogo.

50 KATRINA; Haya.

51 MALIKI; Maisha yako yako vipi?

52 KATRINA; Haya. Mimi nilizaliwa Marekani, jimbo la New York.

53 MALIKI; Ndiyo.

54 KATRINA; Katika mji mkubwa wa New York.

55 MALIKI; Sawa.

56 KATRINA; Lakini nilipokuwa na miaka mitano hivi tuliamia jimbo la Massachusetts, ambapo babangu alizaliwa. Kwa sababu mara sana.

57 MALIKI; Ndiyo.

58 KATRINA; Na nilikuwa mtoto pekee wa wazazi wangu.

59 MALIKI; Ndiyo.

- 60 KATRINA; Kwa hiyo tuliondoka mji mkubwa tukaenda kijijini. Kijiji hicho kilikuwa na watu elfu nne tu, nafikiri. Na baada ya miaka mama yangu tulihama. Tukaenda jimbo lingine, lakini baada ya mwaka mmoja au miwili hivi tulirudi jimbo la Massachusetts.
- 61 MALIKI; Ndiyo.
- 62 KATRINA; Na baada ya kumaliza shule ya sekondari nilihamia pekee yangu jimbo la Iowa, kwenda chuo kikuu
- 63 MALIKI; Ndiyo.
- 64 KATRINA; Na wakati wa chuo kikuu niliamua kwenda Afrika, kusoma kwa nusu ya mwaka. Nikaenda Zimbabwe. Nilianza kujifunza
- 65 MALIKI; Ndiyo.
- 66 KATRINA; Na niliamua kuendelea na fasihi za Kiafrika ama lugha za Kiafrika, hasa Kishona. Lakini nilipofika chuo kikuu kingine ili k amestaafu mwaka huo. Kwa hivyo walimu wengine walisema “A, itabidi usome Kiswahili badala ya Kishona.”
- 67 MALIKI; @
- 68 KATRINA; Nikaanza Kiswahili, lakini sikuvutiwa sana nacho kwa sababu nilikuwa sijafika Tanzania au Kenya.
- 69 MALIKI; A, ndiyo.
- 70 KATRINA; Lakini baada ya miaka miwili ya kusoma Kiswahili nilipata nafasi ya kuja Tanzania. Nilikaa Unguja kwa wiki nane, pamoja
- 71 MALIKI; Ndiyo.
- 72 KATRINA; Halafu baada ya hapo nimerudi mara nyingi. Sasa kila mwaka au miaka miwili narudi.
- 73 MALIKI; Ndiyo.
- 74 KATRINA; Naenda kuwatembelea familia
-

75 MALIKI; Mmm.

76 KATRINA; ya Unguja. Au nakuja Dar es Salaam. Kwa hiyo nina marafiki hapa.

77 MALIKI; Ndiyo.

78 KATRINA; Nimefanya utafiti mwingine kuhusu muziki kama Bongo Flava na kadhalika.

79 MALIKI; Mm.

80 KATRINA; Lakini sasa nimeamua kufuatilia hadithi za popobawa.

81 MALIKI; @ @ @ Sawa. Umeolewa?

82 KATRINA; Niliolewa lakini nimeachana na mume wangu.

83 MALIKI; Na una mtoto?

84 KATRINA; Eh tuna mtoto mmoja. Ana miaka saba.

85 MALIKI; Kwa hiyo sasa uko mwenyewe.

86 KATRINA; Eh.

87 MALIKI; Sawa. Nashukuru.

Primary Source 2

Excerpt from an interview with “Mustafa”

The following excerpt is about an hour into my interview with Mustafa (a pseudonym), a Pentecostal leader who was formerly a Muslim sheikh. We met at the Pentecostal church where he worked. Prior to this section, he had explained his educational background within Islam and told a lengthy story about one of seventeen types of popobawa with which he was familiar. Throughout our interview he displayed an unusual level of esoteric knowledge about “the unseen world.” As I describe in my book *Popobawa: Tanzanian Talk, Global Misreadings*, many East African Muslims and Christians believe in spirits and demons, and people have syncretized pre-Islamic beliefs in spirits with Islamic beliefs, Arabic terminology, and biblical depictions of Satan.

I have edited the transcript slightly to remove unnecessary details.

- 14 MUSTAFA; Mufo ni kama mfu. Yaani aliyekufa, ni kama mizimu yaani, ni neno linalotokana na mfu. Mufo. Inaitwa Mufo au Mfu. Inaitwa Mufo. Hii ndiyo aina ya popobawa ambayo inawaadhibu wanaume. Sasa hii, haina dawa nyingine, zaidi ya kugundua kosa. Na kama hawakugundua kosa, maana sehemu nyingine, wengine wanaweza wakaamua wababa watulie. Mtu ameingiliwa na popobawa halafu akakaa kimya. Hakueleza lakini anaugua. Anaweza kumwambia mke wake tu, “Mi naumwa.” Lakini asieleze kinachomwumiza. Sasa mwingine si hatajua. Na mwingine akafanyiwa hivyo hivyo na yeye akaamua asiseme. Litaendelea litawapitia litawapitia litawapitia, mpaka linaamua lenyewe linaacha.
- 15 KATRINA; Mm.
- 16 MUSTAFA; Inakuwa ni adhabu yao. M:h.
- 17 KATRINA; Na: kwa kawaida watu ambao wanaingiliwa na popobawa, ni Waislamu?
- 18 MUSTAFA; Ni:?
- 19 KATRINA; Waislamu? Au Wakristo wanaweza kuingiliwa pia?
- 20 MUSTAFA; A:h hapana, ah nanii— Hata Wakristo, lakini Waislamu wanaathirika zaidi. Kwa sababu ukanda huu wa Waislamu, ndiko zaidi kwenye mambo hayo zaidi. Kuna aina nyingi za popobawa, wanaonekana zaidi, kuliko sehemu ambazo hazina Waislamu. Kwa hiyo uwezekano wa kupata shida Waislamu zaidi, ni mkubwa zaidi. Ni mkubwa zaidi. Kuliko Wakristo. E:h. Kwa sababu eneo la- wanalo- Unajua huku kwetu Afrika mashariki, upande wa bahari ndio kwenye Waislamu.
- 21 KATRINA; Ndiyo.
- 22 MUSTAFA; Na huku ndiyo kwenye shida ya popobawa kuliko maeneo mengine.
- 23 KATRINA; M:h.
- 24 MUSTAFA; Yes.M:h.
- 25 KATRINA; Umetumia maneno: mbalimbali, kama mapepo, mashetani, majini,— Kuna tofauti gani baina ya- baina yao?
- 26 MUSTAFA; M::h! Shetani, labda niseme shetani, ndiyo maana yake ni “asi”, ni yule aliyeeasi. Kwa hiyo shetani anaweza kuwa pepo, au anaweza kuwa mwanadamu. Au anaweza kuwa kitu yoyote. Maanake ni ile hali ya kutokubaliana na Mungu. Ndiyo shetani. Yaani kinyume cha Mungu ni shetani. Awe mwanadamu anaweza kuwa shetani. Awe pepo, awe jini, anaweza kuwa shetani. Maana yake anayetofautiana na mapenzi ya Mungu, huyo ni shetani. Unaposema jini, “jini” ni neno la Kiswahili, linalotokana lenye asili ya Kiarabu. Waarabu wa zamani walikuwa wanatumia neno “janna.” “Janna.” *J A double N A* Janna. “Janna” kwa Kiarabu cha zamani, ni— Maanake kilicho fichika, kisicho onekana kwa urahisi, yaani kisicho onekana kwa macho ya binadamu haya, kwa ma- kinachoonekana kwa macho ya rohoni, au, kin- kikionekana kwa macho ya- ya- ya kibinadamu, maanake kuna- kuna tukio kubwa. Kuna jambo kubwa limetokea. Hiyo. Sasa’ Waraabu wa zamani walikuwa hawajui- hawamjui Mungu, walikuwa na miungu mingi. Walikuwa wanaabudu miungu Mingi! Waarabu wa zamani, KAbila ya Uislamu. Sasa’ ulipokuwa ukiwaambia kuwa kuna Mungu, wanakuambia tu, “Onyesha.” Kwa sababu kulikuwa- walikuwa na miungu yao, inaonekana ni masanamu, wanakwambia huyu mungu fulani, huyu anaitwa: labda, labda miungu ya Waarabu, kwa mfano huyu nanii “Latta,” huyu anaitwa Latta. Huyu anaitwa Manattah. huyu anaitwa Al Uzah. Hiyo ndiyo miungu ya Waarabu ya zamani. Ilikuwa inaonekana kwa macho. Sasa ukisema habari za Mungu, Mungu, kuna Mungu. Wanakuambia, “Yuko wapi?” Haonekani. Wanasema, “Basi ni janna,” yaani ni kitu kisichoonekana kwa macho ya kawaida. Ikiwa na pamoja na upepo pia ni janna. Kitu kisichoonekana kwa macho ya kawaida ya nyama. Na: chochote ambacho ni imani, bila kuonekana, walikuwa wanakiita Janna. Yaani kitu kilichojificha. Kitu cha kiroho. Unaona eh? Sasa ikaendelea hata walipopata dini sasa wakaanza kujua kuna Mungu. Mungu mwenyewe pia walikuwa wanaita Janna. Baadaye waka fanya wakafanya marekebisho, wakaona, “M-m. “Tukisema Mungu ni janna? “lakini kuna ma- kuna maroho mengine mabaya mabaya, yaani ni janna, sasa tutatofautishaje kati ya janna Mungu na janna asiye mungu? na janna shetani? Kwa hiyo wakaita jini. Jini ni roho mchafu, asiyeapatana na Mungu. Lakini neno lenyewe limetoka kwenye asili ya neno la Kiarabu, la kitu kilichojificha. Kisichoonekana. Sasa baada ya kujua kwamba kuna Mungu asiyeonekana, walipojua hilo, ndio wakaamua kulibadilisha neno, kuna jini, na kuna Mungu. Ambayo siyo janna, yeye sio jini. Ni Mungu tu. Ambaye ni roho asiyeonekana lakini ni mzuri. Ehe:. Kwa hiyo kuna malaika na ninii. Na—
- 27 KATRINA; Na pepo?

28 MUSTAFA; Pepo ndiyo— Wao ni hao maroho mabaya, ni hayo hayo maroho mabaya,

29 KATRINA; Ni sawa na jini?

30 MUSTAFA; E:h ni kama jini, lakini jini ingawa ina maelezo mapana kidogo. Ni roho mchafu. Ehe:.

Appendix: Noun Class

As you know, linguists group Swahili nouns into different noun classes based on the form they take in the singular and plural and the agreements they take with other parts of speech. Some Swahili grammar books and teachers refer to these noun classes by their prefixes, e.g. *the m-/wa- class*, as in the following table.

Class name	Example nouns
m-/wa-	mtu / watu
m- / mi-	mti / miti
ji - / ma-	jina / majina
ki- / vi-	kitabu / vitabu
n- / n-	njia / njia
u- / n-	ulimi / ndimi
u-	uhuru
ku-	kusoma
pa-	hapa nyumbani
ku-	huku nyumbani
mu-	humu nyumbani

I prefer to refer to noun classes by their number, which has the advantage of making it easier to talk about them in Swahili, e.g. *ngeli ya kwanza* ‘the first noun class, Class 1’, has fewer exceptions (e.g. you don’t need to deal with the fact that “the ji-/ma- class” includes lots of nouns that don’t start with *ji-*), and makes them comparable to noun classes in other Bantu languages if you ever decide to learn one. So I refer to nouns using the following chart:

Class number	Example noun
1	mtu
2	watu
3	mti
4	miti
5	jina
6	majina
7	kitabu
8	vitabu
9	njia
10	njia
11	ulimi
14	uhuru
15	kusoma
16	hapa nyumbani
17	huku nyumbani
18	humu nyumbani

When you learn a new noun, the important thing is to know both its singular and plural forms. Referring to its noun class is a short hand way of doing this. Nouns that refer to animate beings sometimes are referred to as belonging to more than one noun class. For example:

ng'ombe 9/10 & 1/2 cow

The numbers 9/10 tell you that the singular and plural are the same, while the numbers 1/2 tell you that it takes agreement with parts of speech from class 1/2:

Ng'ombe mzuri anakula. The beautiful cow is eating.

If you need more review of noun class, see the chart in the back of Hinnebusch & Mirza's *Kiswahili* textbook, or the chapter on noun class in my grammar book.

Recommended further reading

Hinnebusch, Thomas J., and Sarah Mirza. 1998. *Kiswahili, Msingi Wa Kusema Kusoma Na Kuandika (Swahili, a Foundation for Speaking, Reading, and Writing)*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Thompson, Katrina Daly, and Antonia Folarin Schleicher. 2001. *Swahili Learners' Reference Grammar*. Madison, Wis.: NALRC Press.

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