



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET  
INST FÖR SPRÅK OCH LITTERATURER

# Investigating Somali Grammar & Spelling with Electronic Corpora

Morgan Nilsson

Dept. of Languages and Literatures  
Section of African Languages  
University of Gothenburg





# Our courses

Start in September (2017?) 2018

SOL110 Somali in a contrastive perspective, 7,5 hec

SOL120 Somali in the world, 7,5 hec

Start in January 2017 (2018?) 2019

SOL130 The structures of Somali, 7,5 hec

SOL140 Somali in Swedish schools, 7,5 hec

Start in September 2017, 2019

SOL150 A contrastive introduction to Somali (as a foreign language)

One year Master, 2017 on campus, 2018 distance course?

Full Master (2 years)





# Spelling & Grammar

What is correct? What is wrong?

No clear decision by an academy or politicians.

So instead, what is common and what is uncommon.

Investigate the language by yourself!

Then you need a corpus.

The Web is also a corpus.





# Different corpora

Several different sources together confirm the findings.

- [Somali Corpus](#).
- The Swedish Language Bank: [Korp](#).
- Bing.
- Google.





# Searching with Bing

Start with a **+** sign.

Write the word within **"citation marks"**.

Add **anchor words**: **waa iyo** efter the citation marks.

+ "rootiga" waa iyo

+ "rootida" waa iyo

+ "roodhiga" waa iyo

+ "roodhida" waa iyo





# Some types of investigations

How frequent is a word?

We can compare synonyms.

**bisad, yaanyuur, mukulaal**

How frequent is a spelling?

We can compare alternative spellings

**wuxu or wuxuu or waxa uu or waxaa uu**

How frequent is a form?

We can compare two alternative grammatical forms .

**buugag, buugagga or buugaag, buugaagta**





# Other grammatical problems

Different possible **forms**: Which is the most common?

Plural of	wax	waxyaalo / waxyaabo
	dheer	dheerdheer / dhaadheer
akhrisaa	akhridaa	akhrinayaa akhrineyaa akhriyayaa akhriyeyaa
aqrisaa	aqridaa	aqrinayaa aqrineyaa etc.









# More spelling issues

Different **spelling possibilities**. Which is more common?

danbe      dambe      shinbir      shimbir

weyddiin      weydiin      sanad      sannad

wiilkan      wiilkaan      kowaad      koowaad

arkay      arkey      wayn      weyn      dhow      dhaw,





# How do you spell "radio" in Somali?

raadiye

raadiyo

raadiyow

raadye

raadyo

raadyoo

raadyow

radiye

radiyo

Radiyow

raydiiyow

reedhyow

reedyow





# Synonyms

Different **possible synonyms**. Which is more common?

calaamadda su'aasha / astaanta weydiinta





# Referensverk

Sök med Google:  
GUL somaliska

- [Somali language and linguistics: A bibliography](#)
- [Kort somalisk-svensk ordlista](#)





# Läromedel för somalisktalande

- [Kontrastiv somalisk grammatik för modersmålstalare med övningskompendium och facit.](#)
- [Lite om somaliskan med övningskompendium och ett facit.](#)
- [Somaliskt språkhistoriskt textkompendium.](#)
- [Somalisk-svensk och svensk-somalisk ordlista över grammatisk terminologi.](#)





# Läromedel för svensktalande

- [Kort somalisk grammatik](#)
- [Introduktionskurs i somaliska](#) med [ljudfiler](#).
- [Beginning Somali](#) med [ljudfiler](#).
- [Somaliska för första klass](#) med [ljudfiler](#) och [språkliga kommentarer](#).
- [Språkliga kommentarer till texterna i Af Soomaali, Buugga 2aad](#).

