

Hausa and Swahili: A Common Arabic Heritage*

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Tsakure

Hausa da Suwahili su ne harsunan da suka fi yaduwa daga kudancin shara na Afirka. Mafiyawan al’umomin waɗannan harsunan sun karɓi addinin musulunci, saboda haka ne larabci ya yi tasiri matuƙa a kan harsunan. Sama da kashi talatin na kalmomin waɗannan harsuna an aro su ne kai tsaye daga Larabci ko kuma an baddala su daga Larabci. Byan tasirin da aron kalmomin Larabci daga Al’kur’ani, akwai kuma wani aron da Hausa ta yi ta fuskar Larabcin gargaliya na mutanen Misra da wasu kare – karen Larabcin Magaribawa. Haka ma Suwahili ya yi irin wannan aro daga Larabcin gargaliya na Omaniyawa da Yamalawa. Saboda haka ire – iren waɗannan kalmomin aro sun kara bunkasa waɗannan harsunan a dukkanin fannonin rayuwa, tunda yake shi Larabci harshe ne da tuni ya samu gatan rubutu. Wannan maƙala an nuna cewa a hanyoyi daban daban bayanan da aka gabatar sun fi karkata ne wajen nuna yadda kalmomin aro na Larabci suke tasarruƙi a Hausa. A yayin da kalmomin aro na Larabci a Suwahili suke kusan ƙin sarrafuwa. Yawancin kalmomin aro an fi

* In this paper, we use the following abbreviations: AR(rabic), BA(mbara), DA(gbani), DO(gon), FU(lfulde), HA(usa), KA(nuri), MA(ndingue), NU(pe), SA(ngo), SO(nghay), SW(ahili), WO(lof), YO(ruba). The transcription of Arabic is that one given by Wehr’s dictionary. As it concerns the other languages, the words are given according to the writing system used in dictionaries quoted in references, except for Hausa, given in the scientific transcription usually employed, which marks long vowels and tones, which are not marked in Standard Hausa, and Yoruba, where some corrections are made for words quoted from Abraham’s dictionary. In Hausa flapped *r* are not marked, on the contrary trilled *r* are given with an hyphen.

samun su ne a rukunin suna. Amma wadannan harsunan, an gano akwai ararrun kalmomin aikatau da dama. Ta wata fuskar kuma Suwahili ya yi aro a Larabci da kuma harsunan Nahiyar Asiya, misali Pasiya. Ko da yake, duk da tasirin Larabci nahawun harshen bai jirkita ba, tsarin sauti ya samu karɓuwar wasu sautukan Larabci tare da Karin kalmomin aron.

Hausa and Swahili are the most wide spread languages in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although they belong to linguistic phyla¹, they have many features in common. Both are spoken outside a single state and are used as a communication medium in a very large part of West Africa, in the case of Hausa, and East Africa in the case of Swahili. Apart from their border crossing distribution, there is a further common factor in both languages, which lies in their heavy Arabic influence on them. Both languages were both first written in *ajami*, i.e. with the Arabic alphabet². The acceptance of Islam by the majority of speakers of these languages has had such a great impact, that more than 30% of their lexicon is directly or indirectly borrowed from Arabic. Apart from classical Arabic, i.e. Arabic from the Koran, the main influence arrived from colloquial Arabic, i.e. from Egypt and some Maghrebinian dialects into Hausa and from Omani and Yemenite into Swahili. If we compare the loans which arrived into those languages, we see many astonishing similarities. Apart from the common loans related to the new religion (i.e. words related to law, customs, culture, etc.), one can find many words which substitute or

¹ Hausa is a Chadic language belonging to Afro-Asiatic phylum, whereas Swahili is a Bantu language, more specifically a member of the Sabaki subgroup of North East Coast Bantu (Nurse & Spear 1985: 46; Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 490-496).

² The earliest existent Swahili manuscript poem known to scholars is *Utendi Wa Tambuka*, an epic or heroic poem written in Pate for Fumo (Sultan) Laiti Nabhani, and is dated AD. 1728 (in the Library of the Seminar für afrikanischen Sprachen, Hamburg, No. 3554 H. 119). Hausa was comprisingly described first in a grammar by Schön in 1862.

took over the old local ones, considered from that time on as vulgar: it is especially the case of words indicating some private parts of the body³. So the loans enriched the local languages not only in the field of the new religion, but also in other spheres of their lexicon, since Arabic had the prestige to be a written language.

In a work published in 1988, I compared most of the common Arabic loans in those languages and they were related to almost all semantic fields. Giving examples on these topics, I would like to examine some grammatical aspects of borrowings from Arabic.

Grammar

Article.

In many cases the Arabic article is agglutinated in loans arrived into Hausa. Sometimes the forms with the article coexisted with those without it: *miskī*, *almiskī* (< *misk* ‘musk’); *tājirī*, *attājirī* ‘wealthy person’ (< *tājir* ‘merchant’), *laifi* and *aibu*. On this topics more examples are given by Baldi (1991: 84-85).

On the contrary the article is nearly never agglutinated in Swahili loanwords. The examples are very few: *alasiri* (< *‘aṣr*) ‘afternoon’; *alfajiri* (< *fajr*) ‘dawn’; *alhaji* (< *ḥājj*) ‘pilgrim’; *Alhamdulillah!* (< *al-ḥamdu lillāh*) ‘praise be to God’; *Alhamisi* (< *ḥamīs*) ‘Thursday’.

Adverbs.

In Hausa adverbs are divided into several groups. Each group contains both primary and derivatory adverbs; the latter are formed in various ways. Among them there are some of Arabic origin: *haka* (< *ḥākaḍā*) ‘thus’; *dōle* (< *daula* ‘power’) ‘necessarily’; *lābuddā* (< *lā budda*) ‘doubtless, etc.’.

As distinct grammatical or lexical items, adverbs hardly exist in Swahili⁴. Most of them are derived from nouns, verbs or pronouns.

³ It is the case of *azakārī* ‘penis’ (< AR *dakar*, cf. SW *dhakari*), Robinson (1925: 23b) says : “a word used by educated men for *būṣā*”; or *farjī* ‘vagina’ (AR < *farj* ‘vulva’) at the place of *dūṣī*, *gatō*, *gūṣū*.

⁴ Myachina (1981: 54).

The non-derived adverbs are very small in number: among them most are borrowings from Arabic: *afadhali* ‘rather, better’ (< *afḍal* ‘better’); *aghalabu*, *aghlabu* (< *aḡlab*) ‘usually’; *baada* (< *baʿda*) ‘after’; *bado* ‘not yet’ (< *baʿdun* ‘then; still, yet’); *dahari* ‘always’ (< *dahr* ‘time; age’); *daima* ‘perpetually’ (< *dāʾim* ‘lasting; perpetual’); *dike*, *tike* (< *bi-diqqa*) ‘exactly’; *fauka*, *foko* (< *fauqa*) ‘more’; *ghafula* ‘suddenly’ (< *ḡafla* ‘negligence’); *hadhara* ‘in public, before’ (< *ḥaḍra* ‘presence’); *halafu* ‘after a bit’ (< *ḵalfu* ‘back’); *hasa* ‘specially’ (< *ḵāṣ* ‘special’); *hobelahobela* ‘anyhow’ (< *ḵabal* ‘confusion’); *hususa* ‘expressly’ (< *ḵuṣūṣan* ‘especially’); *kadhali* ‘in like manner’ (< *ka-dālika* ‘so, like so’); *nusura* ‘almost’ (< *nazr* ‘little’); *salimini* ‘safely’ (< *salīm* ‘safe’); *sana* ‘very much’ (< *sanā* ‘brilliance’); *sawia* ‘then’ (< *sawīya* ‘equality’); *tasihili* ‘quickly’ (< *tashīl* ‘facilitation’); *wahedu* ‘alone’ (< *wāḥid* ‘one; sole’); *zamani* ‘formerly’ (< *zamān* ‘time’).

Conjunctions.

In Hausa there are very few conjunctions of Arabic origin: *lōkàcîn dà* (< *waqt* ‘time’) ‘when’, *sāʾàd/sāʾàn dà* (< *sāʾa* ‘time; hour’) ‘when’.

In Swahili there are no Bantu words which are basically conjunctions except NA which is composed of the -A of relationship and N- of association. There are, however, various ways of joining words and sentences (Ashton 1947: 197). Some are borrowings from Arabic: *ama ... ama* ‘either ... or’ (< *a-mā* ‘or?’); *ili* ‘in order that’ (< *ʿalā* ‘according to’); *kusudi* ‘with the object of’ (< *qaṣada* v. ‘to intend’); *wala ...* ‘neither ... nor’ (< *wā-lau* ‘even if, even though’).

Numerals.

In Hausa the decades are all Arabic-based (i.e. *àshìrìn*, *tàlā̀tìn*, *àr̀bàʼin*, *hàmsin*, *sittin*, *sàbàʼin*, *tàmā̀nin*, *càsàʼin*⁵). There are also some higher numerals borrowed from Arabic which are less

⁵ Also *tìs(i)ʼin*.

commonly used, including: *minyā* ‘100’, *mētan* ‘200’, *āṛḃāminyā* ‘400’, and *hāmsāminyā* ‘500’, as well as the term for ‘zero’ (*sifrī* < *ṣifr*). Where all the components of a compound numeral are Arabic borrowings, the Arabic conjunction *wa* is used instead of the Hausa word *dà*.

In the first ten Swahili numerals three are of Arabic origin: *sita* ‘6’, *saba* ‘7’, *tisa* ‘9’. From 11 to 19 they coexist with the Bantu terms, but from 20 to 90, as well as the word for 100 (*mia*) and 1000 (*elfu*) they are all of Arabic origin. In such cases there is no concord.

Prepositions.

In Hausa very few prepositions are of Arabic origin: *bilā* ‘without’ (< *bi-lā*); *hàttā* ‘even’ (< *hattā*).

In Swahili there are no Bantu words which are basically prepositions (Ashton 1947: 195), so, among others, some words are borrowed from Arabic: *bila* ‘without’ (< *bi-lā*); *hata* ‘until, up to’ (< *hattā*).

Arabic Nominal Loans

The majority of loans is concentrated in the field of nouns. Here some examples are classified according to their semantic field. The large variety of semantic fields involved shows the enormous impact that Arabic had on these languages:

NATURE: HA *surāyyā*, SW *Thurea* < AR *ṭurayyā* ‘Pleiades’; HA *bahār*, *bahārī*, SW *bahari* < AR *baḥr* ‘sea’; HA *zaibā*, SW *zebaki* < AR *zi’baq* ‘quicksilver’; HA *zābīb*, SW *zabibu* < AR *zabīb* ‘raisin(s)’; HA *alhānzīr*, SW *hanziri* < AR *kinzīr*⁶ ‘pig’;

MAN AS A PHYSICAL BEING: HA *sautī*, SW *sauti* < AR *ṣaut* ‘sounds, voice’; HA *ālbarās*, *barās*, SW *barasi* < AR *baras*; HA *lāfiyā*, SW *afya*, *afia* < AR *‘āfiya* ‘(good) health’; HA *hālāwā*, SW *halua* < AR

⁶ The standard word for ‘pig’ in Swahili is *nguruwe*. *Hanziri* seems for me to have a connotation of moral disapproval.

ḥalwā ‘sweet’; HA *jubbā*, SW *juba* < AR *jubba* ‘jubbah’; HA *laimā*⁷, SW *hema* < AR *ḵaima* ‘tent’;

MAN AS A SPIRITUAL BEING: HA *bāyānī*, SW *bayana* < AR *bayān* ‘explanation’; HA *azīnā*, SW *adha* < AR *adāh*, *adīya*; HA *lāhīrī*, SW *taahira* < AR *ta’kīr* ‘delay’; HA *izīnī*, SW (-) *idhini*⁸ < AR *idn* ‘permission’; HA *kalmā*, SW *kalima* < AR *kalima* ‘word’; HA *hikāyā*, SW *hekaya* < AR *ḥikāya* ‘story, tale’; HA *hikāyā*, SW *hekaya* < AR *ḥikāya* ‘story, tale’; HA *imāmī*, *līmān*⁹, SW *imamu* < AR *imām* ‘imam; leader’;

MAN AS A SOCIAL BEING: HA *ajālī*, SW *ajali* < AR *ajal* ‘deadline’; HA *zūri’ā*, *zūriyā*, SW *dhuria* < AR *ḍurrīya*; HA *ladābī*, SW *adabu* < AR *adab* ‘good manners’;

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICS: HA *asalī*, SW *asili* < AR *aṣl* ‘origin’; HA *tūhumā*, SW *tuhuma* < AR *tuhma* ‘suspicion’; HA *jāsūsū*, *jāsūsī*, SW *jasusi* < AR *jāsūs* ‘spy’; HA *kāmūs*, SW *kamusi* < AR *qāmūs* ‘dictionary’; HA *būkārī*, SW *bikari* < AR *bīkār* ‘compass’; HA *fā’idā*, *ālfā’idā*, SW *faida* < AR *fā’ida* ‘profit’; HA *himīlī*, *hamālī*, SW *himila* < AR *ḥiml*, *ḥaml* ‘load’;

NATURAL LAWS: HA *sāwwā*, SW *sawa* < AR *sawā* ‘equality’; HA *jimlā*, SW *jumla* < AR *jumla* ‘sum’; HA *māhallī*, SW *mahali* < AR *maḥall* ‘space’; HA *zāmānī*, SW *zamani* < AR *zamān* ‘time’;

Arabic Verbal Loans

In contact between two languages the majority of loans is generally from nouns - and verbs are very few. But in the case of these two languages we can observe, that the number of verbal loans is quite frequent. For Hausa, as a Chadic language, which is genetically related to Arabic, it is not so unexpected to find many verbal loans, but for Swahili, a Bantu language, it is quite surprising to find such a

⁷ The word comes into Hausa through Kanuri *lāima* ‘tent’, see Baldi (1992: 11).

⁸ In Swahili it can be a noun and a verb.

⁹ This variant, , arrived through Kanuri *limān* ‘imam’, see Baldi (1992: 12).

great number of loans; sometimes in double forms of loans: *safara* “to travel” gives *-safiri* v. “to travel” and *safari* n. “journey”. Here some examples are given:

Arabic	Hausa	Swahili	English
<i>ṭalā</i>	<i>dālayā</i>	<i>-taliza</i>	AR ‘to paint’ HA ‘to pare’ SW ‘to plaster’
<i>ḡayyara</i> II	<i>gayyārā</i>	<i>-ghairi</i>	‘to change’
<i>waṣafa</i>	<i>wassāfā/ wassāftā</i>	<i>wasifu</i>	AR-SW ‘to describe’ HA ‘to explain’
<i>‘araḍa</i>	<i>àralà</i>	<i>-aridhia</i>	AR-HA ‘to happen’ SW ‘to explain’
<i>‘aliqa</i> <i>ta‘allaqa</i> V	<i>tà‘allakà/ 'allakà</i>	<i>-aliki</i>	AR-SW ‘to hang’ AR-HA ‘to be devoted; to be dependent’
<i>kalifa</i> <i>kallaḥa</i> II	<i>kallāḥā</i>	<i>-kalifu</i>	AR ‘to charge’ HA ‘to impose sth. on s.o.’ SW ‘to trouble’
<i>kamala</i> <i>takāmala</i> VI	<i>kammālā/ kamāltā</i>	<i>-takamali</i>	AR-HA ‘to complete’ SW ‘to trouble’
<i>balāga</i>	<i>bàlaga</i>	<i>-balehe</i>	‘to reach puberty’
<i>halaka</i> I <i>hallaka</i> II	<i>hàlakā/ hallakā</i>	<i>-hiliki</i>	AR-HA ‘to perish; to die’ SW ‘to be destroyed’
<i>salima</i> <i>sallama</i> II	<i>sallāmā</i>	<i>-salimu</i>	AR-SW ‘to surrender’ HA ‘to give in’
<i>FSR</i>	<i>ḥasārā</i>	<i>-fasiri</i>	‘to explain’
<i>FLS</i> <i>hallasa</i> II	<i>ḥallāsā</i>	<i>-filisi</i>	AR-SW ‘to declare bankrupt’ HA ‘to squander’
<i>RTB</i> <i>rattaba</i> II	<i>rattābā</i>	<i>-ratibu</i>	‘to arrange’

Arabic Adverbial, Conjunctional and Prepositional Loans

Here few examples of common Arabic loans of these two languages can be observed:

<i>abadan</i>	<i>àbādân/ ābādîn</i>	<i>abadan</i>	AR-HA ‘for ever and ever’ AR-SW ‘never’
<i>illā</i>	<i>illā</i>	<i>ila</i>	‘except’
<i>au</i>	<i>au</i>	<i>au</i>	AR-SW ‘or’ HA ‘whether ... or’
<i>bi-lā</i>	<i>bilā</i>	<i>bila</i>	‘without’
<i>lā budda</i>	<i>lābūddā</i>	<i>labda</i>	AR-HA ‘definitely’ SW ‘perhaps’
<i>bas</i> ¹⁰	<i>bas</i>	<i>basi, bas</i>	AR-HA ‘only’ SW ‘well; it is enough’
<i>bal</i>	<i>bal</i> ¹¹	<i>bali</i>	AR-SW ‘but’ HA ‘used to intensify a contradiction’
<i>hattā</i>	<i>hattā</i>	<i>hata</i>	‘even’
<i>sawīya</i>	<i>sawwi</i> ¹²	<i>sawia</i>	AR-HA ‘equality’ SW ‘at that time’
<i>qaṭṭu</i>	<i>kàtsū</i> ¹³	<i>katu</i> ¹⁴	‘ever; never’
<i>ka-dā</i>	<i>kàzā (dà kàzā)</i>	<i>kadha wa kadha</i>	‘such and such’
<i>ka-mā</i>	<i>kāmā</i>	<i>kama</i>	AR-SW ‘as, such as, like’ HA ‘similarity, appearance’
<i>lā</i>	<i>lā</i>	<i>la!</i>	‘no’
<i>lākin</i>	<i>lākin</i>	<i>lakini</i>	AR-SW ‘but’

¹⁰ See Roth-Laly (1969: 50b).

¹¹ See Bargery (1934: 67b).

¹² See Robinson (1925: 363a).

¹³ Bargery (1934: 586b) gives: *kàtsū*.

¹⁴ The word is found in Sacleux’ dictionary.

			HA 'for'
<i>matalan</i>	<i>masalàn</i>	<i>mathalan</i>	'for example'
<i>na'am</i>	<i>nà'am</i>	<i>naam</i>	'yes'
<i>wa-lākin</i>	<i>(dà) wàlākin</i>	<i>walakini</i>	AR-SW 'but, however' HA 'there's more than meets the eye'

Differences

Hausa has received loans relatively early and not only from (classical and spoken) Arabic, but also via some local West African languages like: Bambara, Fulfulde, Kanuri, Mandingo, Songhay, Tamasheq, etc.

Hausa *wàllafà* v. < Fulfulde *wallifa* v. < Arabic *alifa* v. (II) 'to compose';

Hausa *lâdî*¹⁵ < Kanuri *lâdâ* < Arabic *al-aḥad* 'Sunday';

Hausa *lāhirā* 'the Next World' < Kanuri *lāira* 'the Next World' < Arabic *al-ākira* 'the hereafter';

Hausa *lardî* 'district' < Kanuri *lârdâ* 'earth; country' < Arabic *arḍ* 'earth; land';

Hausa *lîmân*¹⁶ < Kanuri *limân* < Arabic *imām* 'imam';

Hausa *lāyā*¹⁷ 'written charm' < Kanuri *lāya* 'amulet, charm' < Arabic *āya* 'Koranic verse';

Hausa *wànzāmî* 'barber' < Songhay *wànzâm* 'barber' < Tamasheq *wa-aḥažžam* 'barber, cupper' < Arabic *ḥajjām* 'cupper'.

On the contrary Swahili has received loans from Arabic and other oriental languages, like Persian, but no Arabic loans entered through any local language. The reason probably lies in its pre-eminent role in the region. The majority of Arabic loanwords entered the language

¹⁵ In Hausa there is also: *lahâdî*, arrived directly from Arabic.

¹⁶ In Hausa there is also: *imāmî*, arrived directly from Arabic.

¹⁷ In Hausa there is also: *āyā* 'verset (surt. du Coran)', arrived directly from Arabic.

relatively recent; most date back only as far as the period of Omani Arab domination in the 18th and 19th centuries respectively (Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 315):

Swahili *balozī* ‘ambassador’ < Turkish *balyos*, *balyoz*¹⁸ ‘consul of Venice’;

But both languages, Hausa and Swahili, spread Arabic words into other neighbouring languages:

Hausa as a medium of spreading Arabic Loans

Hausa has get many loans from Arabic (few through Fulfulde, Kanuri, Songhay, Tamasheq, etc.), but it was also a donor languages:

Arabic *al-aḥad* ‘Sunday’ > Hausa *lâdî*¹⁹, *lahàdì* > Buli *alaadi*, *laadi*;

Gurenne *lasere daare*, *lahere daare*; Vagla *alaadi*;

Arabic *ammā* ‘but’ > Hausa *àmmā* > Dagbani *amaa*; Gade *àmá*;

Gurenne *ama*; Songhay *àlmáá*; Vagla *ama*;

Arabic *baṣal* ‘onion(s)’ > Hausa *àbasà* > Buli *alabasa*; Busa *àlùbàsàn*;

Dagbani *albasa*; Gurenne *alabasa*; Vagla *alibaasa*;

Yoruba *àlùbósa*;

Arabic *ṭalāṭā* ‘Tuesday’ > Hausa *tàlātā* > Buli *talaata*; Gurenne *attalaata daare*;

Vagla *atalaata*; Yoruba *àtálátà*;

Arabic *al-iṭṭinain* ‘Monday’ > Hausa *littinîn* > Buli *tani*; Gurenne *attanii daare*;

Vagla *atenē*; Yoruba *àtìní*;

Arabic *jum‘a* ‘Friday’ > Hausa *jumma’ā* > Buli *azuma*; Gurenne *azuma daare*;

Kotoko *jəmáwà*; Vagla *alajima*; Yoruba *jímó*;

Arabic *akbār* pl. ‘news’ > Hausa *lābārī* > Buli *labaari*; Dagbani *lahabali*;

Gade *làbárí*; Songhay *làbááRi*; Yoruba *làbárí*;

Arabic *duniyā* ‘word; earth’ > Hausa *dūniyā* > Buli *duninya*; Dagbani *dunia*,

duniya; Gade *dúníya*; Gurenne *dunia*; Vagla *dunia*;

Arabic *zakāh* ‘alms tax (*Isl. Law*)’ > Hausa *zàkkā*, *zàkà*, *zakkā* > Dagbani *zaka*;

Yoruba *sàká*.

¹⁸ The Turkish word is coming from old Italian *balio* (see: *New Redhouse Turkish-English dictionary*. Istanbul 1968: 129).

¹⁹ Via Kanuri *lâdè*.

Swahili as a medium of spreading Arabic Loans

Swahili was not only receiving Arabic loans, but it was also a donor language. Many Bantu and non-Bantu languages have received Arabic loans in the area via Swahili:

- Arabic *barwa* 'waste, scrap' > Swahili *barua* 'letter' > giKuyu *marua* 'letter'; luGanda *bbàluwà* 'letter'; Madi *bàrúà* 'letter';
- Arabic *bunduqīya* 'rifle, gun' > Swahili *bunduki* 'gun, rifle, musket' > giKuyu *bundūki, bindūki* 'rifle, gun'; luGanda *mmūndu* 'gun, rifle'; Madi *mùndúkú, bündúki* 'gun';
- Arabic *kaīma* 'tent' > Swahili *hema* 'tent' > giKuyu *hema* 'tent'; luGanda *weemà* 'tent'; Madi *kémà* 'tent';
- Arabic *daqīqa* 'minute (time unit)' > Swahili *dakika* 'minute' > giKuyu *ndagīka, ndakinga* 'a minute'; luGanda *ddakiika* 'minute'; Madi *dákíkà* 'minute; one minute; a moment';
- Arabic *sā'a* 'while; hour; timepiece' > Swahili *saa* 'time; watch' > liNgala *sâ (sáa)* 'watch' > Sango *sáà* 'watch';
- Arabic *māl* 'money' > Swahili *mali* 'wealth' > Ila *madi* 'money'; Ndonga *oshimaliwa* 'money' (via Nama); Shona *mari* 'money' (*cash*); isiXhosa *imali* 'money';
- Arabic *qahwa* 'coffee' > Swahili *kahawa* 'coffee' > liNgala *káwa* 'coffee' > Sango *káwà* 'coffee';
- Arabic *qartas* 'paper' > Swahili *karatasi* 'paper, a piece of paper' > Acholi *kàrtaci* 'sheet of paper';
- Arabic *kūfīya* 'kaffiyeh' > Swahili *kofia* 'fez' > Acholi *kòfīà* 'tarboush'.

Although the grammatical structure of the language has been unaffected by its contact with Arabic, the phonological system has absorbed some Arabic sounds along with the borrowed vocabulary (Contini-Morava 1997: 842).

Swahili has being one of the first languages in Africa to be appointed as a national language in Tanzania (1967) and Kenya, has

increased its role, even outside the national boundaries, so that in a near future, without any doubt, it will continue to spread Arabic loans.

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