

MUNGAI MUTONYA
Teaching Professor of African and African American Studies

African and African American Studies
Washington University in St. Louis
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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Linguistics, Michigan State University,
Dissertation title: Vowel Systems of African Englishes:
An Acoustic and Perceptual Analysis.
Dissertation Chair: Dennis R. Preston
- M.A. Linguistics, Michigan State University,
Thesis title: Language Attitudes Among Educated Africans
Towards Regional Varieties of African English
- M.A. Swahili and African Languages, University of Nairobi,
M.A. thesis title: *Maudhui katika Ushairi wa Hassan Maalim Mbega*
(Thematic Analysis of Hassan Mbega's Poetry)
- B.A. Political Science and Swahili Studies (**with Honors**),
University of Nairobi, Kenya.

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Sociolinguistics	Oral History
Swahili Studies	Language Attitudes and Perceptions
Urban Youth Varieties	Language Contact and Multilingualism

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Professor of African and African American Studies, Department of African and African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis	2018 - Present
Senior Lecturer, Department of African and African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis	2006 - 2018
Lecturer, African and African American Studies Program, Washington University in St. Louis	1999 –2006
Certified Swahili Oral Proficiency Tester, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages	2010
Study Abroad Advisor, Department of African and African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis	2000 - Present
Coordinator, Summer in Kenya Program, Washington University in St. Louis	2000 - Present
Linguistic Consultant, Center for Advanced Language Study, University of Maryland	2017- Present
Linguistic Consultant, Microsoft Machine Swahili Translation Project	2016 - 2017

Reader, US State Department Critical Language Scholarship Swahili Program	2017- Present
Reader, Washington-Mandela Fellowship, President Obama's flagship program for African youth	2013-Present
Committee Member, Kenya Diaspora Engagement Policy Draft Review	2012 -2013
Assistant Coordinator, Michigan State University's Summer Intensive Language Program	1996-1998
Coordinator, Bantu Languages Coordinator, Michigan State University,	1998-1999
Board Member, H-SWAHILI,	2005-2013
Board Member, St. Louis to Africa Interconnectivity Project,	2002-2005
Freelance Feature Writer, Taifa Leo, Kenya,	

PUBLICATIONS

[Books]

Mnada wa Sokomoko. Nairobi: The Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 2007.

Language Attitudes Towards Varieties of African English. Saarbrücken: Verlag, 2009.

Safari ya Mambosasa. Nairobi: Kilele Publications & Productions, 2012.

Punda Mjini: Safari ya Mambosasa. Nairobi: Kilele Publications & Productions, 2012.

Mitumba. Nairobi: Kilele Publications & Productions, 2012

[Book Chapter]

“Reframing Kenya from *Majuu*: Language Use Among Kenyans Living in the United States.” In Orwenjo, Daniel Ochieng and Ashiru Hameed Tunde (eds.) When Home Means more than One Country: The Discursive (Re) Construction of Identities in Trans-National Migrant Communities.

[Refereed Journals]

“KiKAR: a Swahili variety in Kenya's Colonial Army” (with Tim Parsons). Journal of African Languages and Linguistics, 2004, vol. 25 (2) pp. 111–125..

“Redefining Nairobi's street children redefining their world: a study of language and identity.” Journal of Global Initiatives, 2007, vol. 2 (2), pp. 169-187.

“African Englishes: Acoustic Analysis of Vowels.” World Englishes, 2008, vol. 27 (3/4), pp. 434-449.

“Swahili Advertising in Nairobi: Innovation and Language Shift.” Journal of African Cultural Studies, 2008, vol. 20 (1), pp. 3-14.

[Book Reviews]

“Dictionary of Literary Swahili by Jan Knappert and Van Kessel. Anthropos Journal, 2011/12, A.106, pp. 682-683.

[Newspaper Articles: Selected]

“Trayvon Martin Mtaani Zimmerman, Nairobi,” Mwakilishi: Kenya Diaspora News Leader July 19, 2013.

“Mtoto Mchanga Asiye na Jina,” Mwakilishi: Kenya Diaspora News Leader July 23, 2013.

“Kiswahili Amerika,” Taifa Leo, Kenya September 17, 2009.

“Barua ya Kujiuzulu ya Mwananchi wa Kawaida,” Swahili Hub September 5, 2012.

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

[Books]

“*Swahili Hybridity in Nairobi: Language, Urbanization, and Immigration, 1900 – 2020*” [under contract from Lexington Books]

“*Tuseme Kiswahili: Learn Swahili Language*” [Targets learners and instructors at beginning and lower intermediate levels of Swahili as a foreign language. The manuscript has benefitted from scrutiny and constructive feedback from my Swahili students.]

[Book Chapters]

“Speaking ‘Sheng’ in 1900 Nairobi.” Yale University Council on African Studies’ Conference Proceedings: Urbanization, Youth Languages and Technological Innovations in Africa [Submitted]

TEACHING

Washington University in St. Louis

Current Courses

- Emerging Africa: Language and identity in Changing Society (Spring)
- Beginning Swahili I (Fall, Summer)
- Beginning Swahili II (Spring)
- Intermediate Swahili I (Fall, Summer)
- Intermediate Swahili II (Spring)
- Readings in Swahili Literature (Fall, Summer)
- Topic in Africa: Contemporary Kenyan Society (Summer)

Previous Courses

- Language and Society in Africa: The Politics of Identity and Empowerment
- Introduction to African Studies
- Introduction to African Literature

Michigan State University,

- Beginning Swahili I & II
- Intermediate Swahili I & II
- Advanced Swahili Literature I & II

University of Nairobi, Kenya,

Pre-20th Century Swahili Literature

- Historical and Modern Development of Swahili

ACADEMIC ADVISING

[Graduate Thesis]

Ph.D. Dissertation Committee, David Ansong, Social Work, George Warren Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis (2013). Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina.

M.A. Thesis Committee, Leonard Muaka, Swahili Literature, University of Nairobi (1993). Assistant Professor, Howard University.

M.A. Thesis Committee, Zachary Mosoti, Swahili Literature. University of Nairobi (1993).
Associate Professor, United States International University, Kenya.

[Undergraduate Honors Thesis]

Thesis Advisor, Anisah Giansiracusa, International and Area Studies (2013),
Northwestern Law School, Chicago.

Thesis Advisor, Diamond Skinner, Performing Arts and African Studies (2012).
Teacher Coach at TNTF Teaching Fellows.

Thesis Advisor, Jamie Thomas, Swahili and Anthropology, African and African
American Studies, (2007). Assistant Professor, Swarthmore College.

Thesis Advisor, Eleanor O'Donnell, Linguistics and International and Area Studies,
(2005). Doctoral Student at Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Thesis Reader, Emily Galloway, International and Area Studies, (2008). Humanitarian
Assistance Officer at Global Communities, Washington, D.C.

Thesis Reader, Reynolds Whalen, Film and Performing Arts, (2008). Founder and
Director, Performing Arts Abroad.

Thesis Reader, Molly Kaplan, African and African American Studies, (2005).

Thesis Reader, Jeffrey Kalikow, International and Area Studies (2004). Associate at
Sherman & Sterling LLP.

Thesis Reader, Ethan Miller, African History, (2004).

PRESENTATIONS

[Special invitations]

“Epitaphs to Bygone Era? Catchphrase, Place Names, and Memory in Multilingual Kenya,” invited speaker,
African Interdisciplinary Studies Hub, Division of Applied Social Sciences, University of Missouri, Columbia,
2017.

“New Swahili Varieties: Transcending Uncharted Boundaries in Nairobi,” Urbanization, Youth Languages &
Technological Innovations in Africa, Yale University, New Haven, 2016.

“Kenya at 50: Language, Identity and Post-Independence Memory,” invited speaker at the 50th Kenya
Independence Celebration and 40th Kenya Semester Anniversary Celebration Symposium, St. Lawrence
University, New York, 2014.

“How Cultural Contexts Impacts Public Health and Social Work Practice,” invited speaker at the African
Graduate Students Association Workshop, George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington
University in St. Louis, 2013.

“Ubuntuism in African Linguistics and Literature,” AFAS Foundations Course, Washington University in St.
Louis, 2013.

“Language and Youth Empowerment in Africa,” invited speaker at the African Graduate Students Association
Workshop, GWB School of Social Work, Washington University in St. Louis, 2012.

“Experiences and Challenges Directing a Summer Abroad Program,” workshop for new study abroad faculty, International and Area Studies, Washington University in St. Louis, 2007.

“African Students Helped Change the World. How Will You?” African Students’ Association, Africa Week, Washington University in St. Louis, 2007.

“Computer Assisted Language Learning: Using Multimedia in an African Language Classroom,” Invited to present in Prof. Cindy Brantmeier’s (Department of Romance Languages and Literature) Graduate Seminar class: Second Language Acquisition and Technology, 2005.

(with co-author Tim Parsons) *“KiKAR: a Swahili variety in Kenya’s Colonial Army”* AFAS Working Paper Series, Washington University in St. Louis, 2004.

“Africa in American Popular Culture,” Association of Black Students (ABS) Workshop, 2005

“Untold Stories of Black History: African Languages and Politics” The Black Arts and Science Festival, Washington University in St. Louis, 2003.

“Sounds of Swahili Poetry” Washington University’s Sesquicentennial Celebrations, 2003.

“African Languages and Literature,” The Wednesday Club of St. Louis, 2002.

[Professional Association Meetings]

“Language Contact and Swahili Hybridity in Nairobi from Early 1900s to ‘Unbwogable.’ 20th International Congress of Linguists, Cape Town, July 2018.

“Catchphrases, Place Names, and Memory in Multilingual Kenya.” 49th Annual Conference on African Linguistics, Michigan State University, March 2018

“Mental Maps and Imagined Communities Among Sheng Speakers,” International African Urban Youth Languages Conference, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, 2015.

Session Chair, Panel, African Urban Youth Languages Conference, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, 2015.

Session Chair, Panel 2, International Conference on Africa and the Diaspora in the New Millennium, University of Missouri, St. Louis, Missouri, 2012.

Session Chair, Panel IV, International Conference on Africa and the Diaspora in the New Millennium, University of Missouri, St. Louis, Missouri, 2012.

“Kisetla: Maintaining a truncated Kiswahili variety in colonial Kenya,” 43rd Annual Conference on African Linguistics, Tulane University, New Orleans, 2012.

“Harnessing Linguistic Resources for Social Integration in Africa,” Mid-American African Alliance for African Studies (MAAAS) 12, Hilton at the Ballpark Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, 2012.

“Ni Poa Kuchill: Trends in Swahili Advertising in Nairobi,” 38th Annual Conference on African Linguistics/11th Annual Conference of the African Language Teachers Association (ALTA), University of Florida, Gainesville, 2007.

“Nairobi’s Homeless Redefining Street Referents,” 37th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL), University of Oregon, Eugene, April 2006.

“Kinoki: Nairobi’s Urban Slang.” New Ways of Analyzing Variation (NWAV) Conference. New York University, 2005.

“Challenges and Rewards Teaching Kiswahili in a Short-term Study Abroad Program: The Washington University Experience,” The African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) Conference, Yale University, 2005.

“Sheng ya Base: Nairobi Street Children Redefining their World Through Language,” African Studies Association (ASA) Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, 2003.

“KiKAR: Soldier’s Pidgin Kiswahili Spoken in the 1920s,” The Africa Language Teachers Association (ALTA) Annual Conference on African Linguistics Conference, University of Ohio, Columbus, 2002.

“Did you Say ‘Bird’, ‘Bad’ or ‘Bed’?” Vowel Variations Across Africa,” 32nd Africa. Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL), University of California, Berkeley, March 23–25, 2001.

“Regional Varieties of African Englishes: An acoustic analysis of vowel systems” 5th International Association of World Englishes (IAWE) conference, University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign, 1998.

“Language attitudes towards varieties of African Englishes” African Language Teachers Association (ALTA) Conference, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1996.

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Advisory Board Member, African Oral History Project, Washington University in St. Louis,	2016-2017
Executive Board, African and African American Studies Program, Washington University in St. Louis,	2015
Co-Convener, African Oral History Project, African and African American Studies Program,	2015
Convener, African Voices Lecture Series, African and African American Studies Program,	2014
Chair, Swahili Lecturer Search Committee, African and African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis,	2013
Study Abroad Advisor, African and African American Studies,	2000-2017

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Reviewer and Interviewer, John B. Ervin Scholarship Program, Washington University in St. Louis,	2013 - Present
Coordinator, Summer in Kenya Program, Washington University in St. Louis, Washington University in St. Louis	2000–2015
Facilitating ‘Dinner Conversation Topics’ with Dean Jen Smith and a select group of Black freshmen	2016
Facilitator, Freshman Reading Program Faculty Perspectives Session, Washington University in St. Louis,	2008-2017
BLOC Mentor, College Residential Life, Washington University in St. Louis,	2013 –2015
Faculty Associate, College Residential Life, Washington University in St. Louis,	2004-2013
Faculty Advisor, African Students Association,	2000-2004
Assistant Coordinator, Summer Language Intensive Program, Michigan State University,	1994-1997
Graduate Instructor, Michigan State University,	1993-1999
Editor, African Students Newsletter at Michigan State University,	1996-1999
Bantu Languages Coordinator, Michigan State University,	1998-1999

Peer Consultant, Teaching Assistants' Program, Michigan State University,	1995-1997
Tutorial Fellow, University of Nairobi, Kenya,	1992-1993

DISCIPLINARY SERVICE

[Occasional Referee]

Nordic Journal of African Studies	2015 - Present
Journal of African Language Teachers Association	2016 - Present
International Journal of Linguistics	2017

[Outreach]

Advisory Board Member, Kenya Kid's Exhibition, The Magic House, St. Louis	2017- Present
Consultant, Center for Advanced Study of Language, University of Maryland	2017 - Present
Consultant, Swahili Machine Translation Project, Appen Butler Inc. and Microsoft	2016
Consultant, Professional Edge and Leadership Training, Nairobi	2016-Present
Translator, UNESCO	
Reviewer, Microsoft Machine Translation for Swahili software,	2015
Editor, H-SWAHILI, an affiliate of H-NET,	2003-2005
Board Member, H-SWAHILI,	2005-2013

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS AND AWARDS

Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program. Awarded by Carnegie Corporation and the Institute of International Education to embark on a joint educational project with the University of Nairobi, Kenya. 2020.

Goethe Institute Afrika Young Adult Swahili story finalist. Sponsored to attend a writers workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. 2019.

College of Arts & Sciences Course Innovation Grant, Dean of Faculty of Arts, Washington University in St. Louis, 2016

Civic Engagement Fund for Curriculum Development at the International Welcome School, Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement, 2012

Certificate of Appreciation, WU Women's Panhellenic Association, (for continued commitment and dedication to sorority community at Washington University in St. Louis), 2011

Vitendo Shujaa Award, Kenya Community in St. Louis, 2011

Certificate of Appreciation, Wema Centre for the Rehabilitation of Street Children, Mombasa, Kenya

Service-Learning Grant, Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement (awarded to strengthen Washington University's Summer in Kenya Program initiative to establish community libraries in rural areas of coastal Kenya), 2010

Community-Based Teaching and Service Learning Grant, Gephardt Institute for Public Service (awarded to facilitate African Refugees' Outreach Project), 2008

International Studies Activity Research Grant, Office of Overseas Programs, Washington University in St. Louis, 2001

International Studies Activity Research Fund, Office of Overseas,
Washington University in St. Louis. 2000

Technology and Curriculum Initiative Grant, The Teaching Center,
Washington University in St. Louis. 2000

Thoman Fellowship for the Alleviation of Hunger and Poverty in the World, 1998

ESTABLISHING INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES

Invited Kenya's ambassador to the United States, H.E. Elkanah Odembo
to Washington University in St. Louis to explore partnership between WU and
Kenyan universities. 2011

Coordinated Haba na Haba's visit, an internationally acclaimed Nairobi theater
Group, to Washington University in St. Louis 2009

Coordinate a visit by group of Washington University in St. Louis students
on a two-week partnership with The Green Belt Movement in Kenya. The project
culminated in a dinner conversation with Nobel Laureate Professor Wangari Maathai 2004

Invited Ngugi wa Thiong'o, internationally-recognized Kenyan writer, to
Washington University in St. Louis 2003

Represent WU Steering Committee member, Nairobi-St. Louis Educational
Exchange Program 2002

MEDIA APPEARANCES

Le Monde, France

Interviewed by Bruno Meyerfeld, Le Monde's Africa Correspondent, on the dynamic
Nairobi youth slang (Sheng). "*Les Kenyans n'ont pas la langue dans leur poche*" article
appeared in June 2016 edition.

International Educator

Interviewed by Nicole Branan for a feature article regarding community and WU's
Summer in Kenya Program. "Lending a Helping Hand," articles appeared in Jan/Feb
2008, vol.17 (1)

Youth Talk, GBS Television Program in Nairobi

Interviewed by Solomon Werek on the teaching of Swahili and Africa-related courses in the
United States. The interview aired varied dates in 2016.

St. Louis American

Interviewed by Tavia Evans regarding African immigrants in St. Louis. "African Community
Prosperes in St. Louis," was published on February 12, 2004.

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili (CHAUKIDU)

African Language Teachers Association (ALTA)

Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL)

African Studies Association (ASA)

New Ways of Analyzing Variation (NWAV)
International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters (IAPTI)
International Congress of Linguists