

# SOMALI PLURAL FORMATION

LIANE GUILLOU AND ALEXANDER FRASER

## 1. CREDITS

The following exercise was taken from: Haspelmath, M. & Sims, A. D. (2010): *Understanding Morphology* [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.], chapter 3 ‘Rules’, London: Hodder Education.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Somali exhibits a great amount of allomorphy in the plural formation of its nouns. Four different allomorphs are represented in the following examples.

N.B. In actual fact, the conditions are more complex, but for this exercise, we have to limit ourselves to a subset of the data and generalisations.

<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>	
<i>awowe</i>	<i>awowayaal</i>	‘grandfather’
<i>baabaco</i>	<i>baabacooyin</i>	‘palm’
<i>beed</i>	<i>beedad</i>	‘egg’
<i>buug</i>	<i>buugag</i>	‘book’
<i>cashar</i>	<i>casharro</i>	‘lesson’
<i>fure</i>	<i>furayaal</i>	‘key’
<i>ilmo</i>	<i>ilmooyin</i>	‘tear’
<i>miis</i>	<i>miisas</i>	‘table’
<i>qado</i>	<i>qadooyin</i>	‘lunch’
<i>shabeel</i>	<i>shabeello</i>	‘leopard’
<i>waraabe</i>	<i>waraabayaal</i>	‘hyena’
<i>xidid</i>	<i>xididdo</i>	‘eagle’

## 3. PART A

Based on these examples, formulate a hypothesis about the phonological conditions for each of the plural allomorphs.

**Allomorph 1:**

**Allomorph 2:**

**Allomorph 3:**

**Allomorph 4:**

4. PART B

Based on the generalisations found in Part A, form the plural of the following nouns:

<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>	
<i>tuulo</i>		'village'
<i>tog</i>		'river'
<i>albaab</i>		'door'
<i>buste</i>		'blanket'