



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports

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Urdu Informational Report

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Urdu History

اردو کی تاریخ

- * Urdu is a Central Indo-Aryan language that belongs to the Indo-European language family. Urdu is a Turkish loan word meaning ‘army’ or ‘camp’.
(Raatma and Sharma 2011)
- * Urdu is the national language & one of the official languages of **Pakistan**, and it is a state language of **India**.
- * It is also spoken in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Botswana, Fiji, Germany, Guyana, India, Malawi, Mauritius, Nepal, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, U.K., USA, and Zambia. (UCLA Language Materials Project)
- * Worldwide there are about 100 million Urdu speakers. Around 11 million speakers live in Pakistan, almost 50 million speakers live in India, and more than 250,000 speakers live in the United States. (Raatma and Sharma 2011)

Urdu Dialects

اردو علاقائی زبانیں ہیں۔



(No author, Map of Pakistan, UCLA Language Materials Project)

- * **Dakhini** – spoken in the Deccan region of southern India.
- * **Standard Urdu**-based on the Khariboli dialect of the Delhi region.
- * **Rekhta** – the language of Urdu poetry.

(UCLA Language Materials Project)

Urdu Alphabet

اردو حروف تہجی

- * Urdu has 28 consonants, which are all distinguished in the writing.
- * Urdu has 10 vowels – 5 long, 3 short, 2 diphthongs.
- * Long vowels - several sounds may be written with the same symbol.
- * Short vowels – are not usually written, but if a word may be misread they are indicated by symbols written above or below the letter they are associated with.

(Bhatia and Koul 2000)

ا	ب	پ	ت	ٹ	ث	ج	چ	ح	خ	
اَلِف	بے	پے	تے	ٹے	سے	جیم	چے	بڑی ہے	کھے	
alif	be	pe	te	ṭe	se	jīm	che	badi he	khe	
د	ڈ	ذ	ر	ڑ	ز	ژ	س	ش	ص	ض
دال	دال	ذال	زائ	ڑے	زے	ژے	سین	شین	صواب	ضابط
dāl	dāl	zāl	zay	ṛe	ze	ḷe	sīn	shīn	su'āb	ẓaḥḍ
ط	ظ	ع	غ	ف	ق	ک	گ			
طو	ظو	عین	غھن	فے	قاف	کاف	گاف			
ṭo	ẓo	'ain	ghain	fe	qāf	kāf	gāf			
ل	م	ن	و	ہ	ء	ی	ے			
لام	میم	نون	واو	خوٹی ہے	دو چاشمی ہے	ہمرا	بڑی ہے			
lām	mīm	nūn	vā'o	choṭī he	do chaśmī he	hamra	badi he			
۰	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵	۶	۷	۸	۹	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

(No Author, The Urdu Alphabet, Wikipedia)

Alphabet Continued

حروف تہجی جاری

Urdu Alphabet Jingle



(Urduforkids, 2008)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z719EX52iSc>

Important Characteristics of Urdu Writing

اردو لکھنے کے اہم مقابے

- * Urdu is an extension of the Persian alphabet, which itself is an extension of the Arabic alphabet.
- * Urdu is written from right to left, except for numerals which are written left to right.
- * The manner of writing is cursive & capital letters are not used.
- * Most of the letters have the following variant shapes: Initial, Medial, Final, and Independent.
- * Some letters share a single basic form and are distinguished by dots or other signs written above, below, or inside the basic form.

(Bhatia and Koul 2000)

Virtual Urdu Keyboard:

- * http://www.linguanaut.com/urdu_keyboard.htm

Linguistic Features of English That May Present Problems for Urdu Speakers

انگلیز کے بشرہ لسانی موجود ہے کہ ہو سکتا ہے کہ اردو کے مسائل مقررین

* Phonology:

- * Urdu has 28 consonants and 10 vowels compared to the 21 consonants and 5 vowels of English.
- * The sounds of the Urdu alphabet do not correspond exactly to any English sounds.
- * Urdu speakers may have difficulty in the pronunciation of certain letters which produce different sounds. (e.g. Letter 'c' produces the sounds /k/ & /s/ as in 'cat' and 'circus'.)
- * Many words in the English language have silent letters, so Urdu speakers will unknowingly pronounce those letters, which will make them mispronounce the words. (e.g. "knowledge" has the silent 'k')
- * The range of consonant clusters occurring at the beginning and end of English words is much wider than in Urdu. Urdu speakers simplify those clusters. (e.g. "istation" for "station", "faree" for "free", "filam" for "film")
- * Urdu has a tenser articulation than English, with vowels produced further forward, leading to the loss of some distinctions between vowels. (e.g. "sad" for "said")

Linguistic Features Continued

لسانی بشرہ جاری

* Rhythm, Stress, and Intonation:

- * English is a stress-timed language - word stress is both heavily marked and not always predictable.
- * Urdu is a syllable-timed language - there is a regular time interval between each syllable.
- * In Urdu, word stress tends to be weakly realized and is always predictable, since it is usually on the first syllable. Word stress is secondary to the rhythm.
- * Intonation causes a problem for Urdu speakers, because they use a substantially raised pitch, without heavier articulation, to indicate emphasis. The rising intonation of questions in English is reserved for expressions of surprise in the Urdu language.
- * These differences can lead to connotation that is not communicated to the listener appropriately. (e.g. Word stress - “ne’cessity” & “ne’cessary”, “pho’tograph” & “pho’to’grapher”. Intonation - “She has a brother?” for “Does she have a brother?”)

Linguistic Features Continued

لسانی بشرہ جاری

* Grammar:

- * Urdu distinguishes the following differences from English which can cause difficulties:
 - * All nouns are masculine or feminine.
 - * Pronouns are not distinguished for gender, & the third person singular pronouns – the equivalents of *he*, *she*, & *it* – are represented by demonstratives, also meaning *that* or *this*. (e.g. “I know this car and his problems.” for “I know this car and it’s problems.”)
 - * The word order is Subject-Object-Verb, whereas in English it is Subject-Verb-Object.
 - * Adjectives lack markers for the comparative and superlative forms.
 - * Urdu does not have an equivalent of the definite article. Learners often omit the articles especially “the”, or substitute “one” for the indefinite article.
 - * Urdu uses postpositions placed after a noun or pronoun instead of prepositions. A common error of Urdu speakers will be using the wrong preposition. (e.g. “I was angry on him.” for “I was angry with him.”)

Linguistic Features Continued

لسانی بشرہ جاری

* Vocabulary:

- * English loanwords are present in the Urdu language, but they may not be immediately transferred back into English, because their pronunciation has been altered. (e.g. “a’gast” for “August”; “ak’toober” for “October”).

(Swan and Smith 2001)

* Urdu Punctuation Differences:

It appears as though Urdu punctuation is written upside down when compared to English.

- * A dash is used for a full stop instead of a period. (-)
- * An inverted comma is used in place of a comma. (‘)
- * An inverted question mark is used in questions. (؛)
- * Semicolons are inverted when written. (؛)

(UCLA Language Materials Project)

Urdu Communication Styles

اردو اوجائی گی

- * Men greeting men – a handshake & hug is common.
- * Women greeting women – a handshake & hug is common. Some exchange kisses on the cheek.
- * Men greeting women – very often a nod of acknowledgement will suffice. Handshakes are common, but it is always best to wait for the woman to extend her hand first.
- * An arms length is common when speaking to members of opposite gender. This space can be closer with same gender members.
- * Male friends often walk holding hands or with their arms around each other, but men and women hardly ever display any form of physical affection in public.
- * There is a fair amount of touching only between men and men and women and women.
- * People usually point towards something using their index finger.

(Culture Crossing)

Communication Styles Continued

اردو اوجائی گی

- * Direct eye contact is the norm between members of the same gender and age.
- * Indirect eye contact is the norm when speaking to elders and members of the opposite gender.
- * They often ask personal questions as a way to get to know one another, & they always praise the person they are speaking with.
- * Silence is often used as a communication tool by answering vaguely. Therefore, it is important to ask questions in several ways so you can be clear as to what was meant by a vague response. (Kwintessential)
- * Putting a hand on one's chest is a way of saying hello and showing respect.
- * It is considered acceptable to interrupt and talk over people during conversations.

Communication Taboos:

- * Men making eye contact with a woman on the street and vice versa are considered rude and unethical.
- * Showing someone the palm of your hand with all fingers outstretched is considered very rude.
- * It is taboo for religiously observant men to touch women and vice versa.

Interesting Facts

دلچسپ حقائق

- * **PST - Pakistani Stretchable Time** - It is the norm where 20 minutes usually denotes an hour. (e.g. “I will be there in 20 minutes.” is understood to mean “I will be there in an hour.”)
 - * Time is free-flowing, (except in business situations) where people tend to arrive late for everything (e.g. weddings, meetings, events).
 - * Transportation regularly arrives/leaves late.
- * The English word “khaki” comes from the Urdu language meaning “dust-colored”.
- * The English word “pajamas” comes from the Urdu word “pajama”.
- * If something is easy or soft we might say it’s cushy. That comes from the Urdu word “khushi”, which means happiness.

(Raatma and Sharma 2011)

Resources

نامزد کیا گیا

Books

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Resources

نامزد کیا گیا

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Maps

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Images

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