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Teaching of Urdu in France : Issues and Challenges

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Urdu – Brief description on origin and current status

- ❖ Language begins around 11th century, influenced by many languages (Schimmel 1975)
- ❖ Before 18th century several names of Urdu language
 - Musulmani Bhasha
- ❖ Vehicular language of India in the 19th century
- ❖ After the partition of India & Pakistan in 1947
 - ❖ Urdu – national language of Pakistan
 - ❖ Co-official language status in 5 states of India and official language of the Constitution
 - ❖ Around 20 Academies of Urdu in India
 - ❖ 230 millions speakers worldwide

(Ethnologue 2018)



Some different names of Urdu

Hindvi (13th-19th century)

Hindi (13th-19th century)

Musulmani zubaan (13th – 15th century)

Dehlavi (13th-14th century)

Rekhtah (13th-19th century)

Gujri (15th century)

Dakhini (15th-18th century)

Indostan (17th century)

Hindustani (18th-20th century)

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Urdu teaching History in the Indian sub-continent – A brief summary



SOUTH BARRACK FORT WILLIAM CALCUTTA.



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Teaching of Urdu in France

- ❖ Started in the year 1828
- ❖ Garcin de Tassy was the first chair of Hindustani in France (1828-1878)
- ❖ Hindustani – Devanagari & Perso-Arabic script
- ❖ 1962 – Chair of Urdu in Inalco





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Current Urdu program B.A.

- ❖ Three-year Bachelors program in language and civilisation studies (10 hours of language + 6 to 12 hours of specialisation in other disciplines)
- ❖ Master and PhD program
- ❖ One year Diploma program



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Brochure non contractuelle, à jour au 18 février 2021.



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Profile of students enrolled to learn Urdu

- ❖ Most of the students are of Pakistani origin
 - ❖ Bilingual in Urdu
 - ❖ Punjabi Parents / Punjabi cultural baggage
 - ❖ Difficulties and Advantages or *Issues and Challenges* with Bilingual Urdu students

- ❖ Few students are non-Urdu non South Asian background – *Issues & Challenges*
 - ❖ Army personnels
 - ❖ Researchers
 - ❖ Embassy personnels

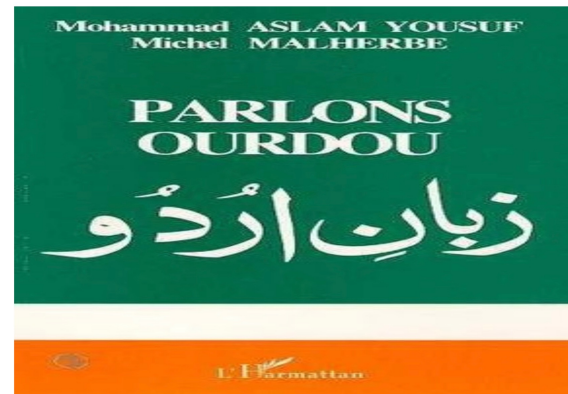


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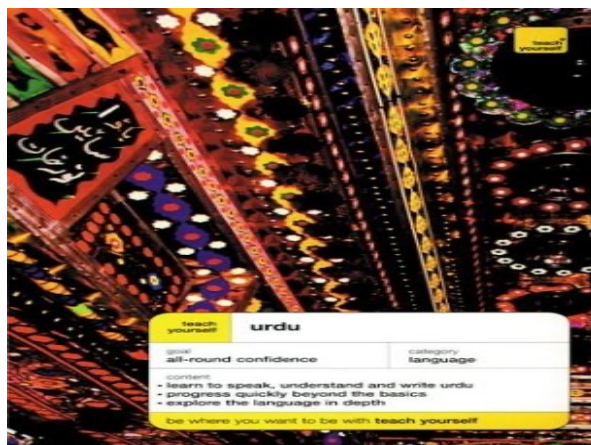
Some Urdu textbooks



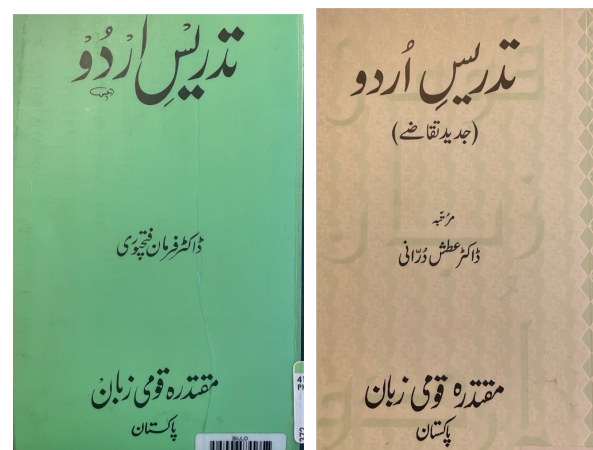
Spoken Urdu - Assimil



Spoken Urdu



Teach Yourself Urdu – Matthews & Dalvi



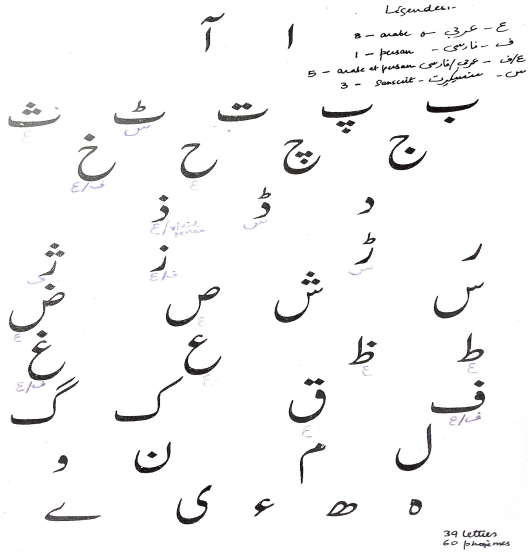
Books on instruction to teach Urdu to Non-Native Speakers

- ❖ Huge lack of proper textbooks in French for Urdu
- ❖ Many textbooks in French are full of errors
- ❖ Urdu textbooks are old fashioned and out of touch with radical thinking (Rahman 2010).



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Challenges for script learning



Alphabet of Urdu

Table 2: Urdu vowel list with IPA and CISAMPA symbols

Sr. #	Urdu Letter	IPA	CISAMPA
1	اے	ə	A
2	آ	ɑ:	AA
3	یے	e:	AE
4	اِ	ɪ	I
5	ی	i:	II
6	و	o:	OO
7	اُ	ʊ	U
8	وُ	u:	UU

The chart below gives the different positional variants of some of the significantly different letters.

		Environment										Letter	
	Letter	پ	ا	ب	ج	د	ر	و	ی	ے	پ	ل	ک
پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ
ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا	ا
ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب	ب
ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج	ج
د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د	د
ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر	ر
و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و	و
ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی	ی
ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے	ے
پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ	پ
ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل	ل
ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک	ک

Tashdid	◌̣
Madd	◌̤
Tanwin	◌̥
Hamza	◌̇
Jazm	◌̈
Jazm ulta	◌̉
Chota alif bala	◌̊
Chota alif zereen	◌̋

Diacritics of Urdu

- ❖ Urdu written in Urdu script
 - Persian script
 - Arabic script
 - Sanscrit phonemes
 - Written from right to left
- ❖ Hard to learn with rules of associated letters and numbers of diacritic signs



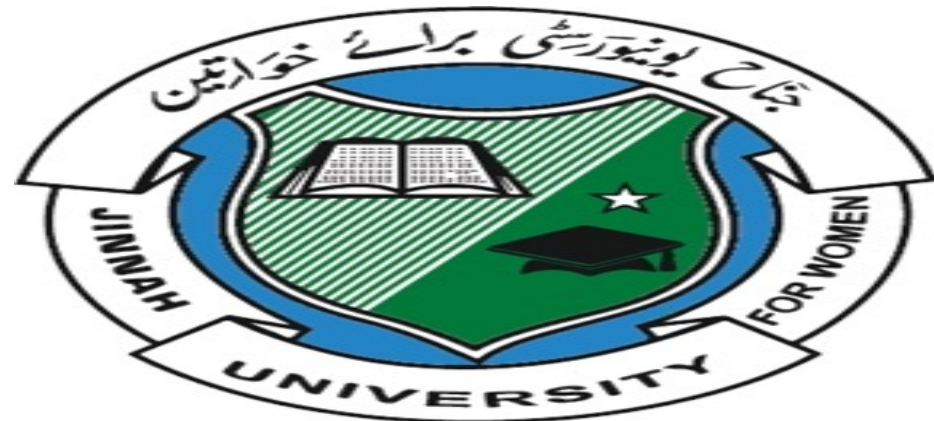
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Teaching & Learning Exchange Program

- ❖ Student immersion program in India or Pakistan
- ❖ MoUs with some universities in South Asia
- ❖ Recruitment of Native Urdu speakers



Jamia Millia Islamia



Conclusion ...

- ❖ Interest in Urdu declining among the young generation in India and Pakistan
 - ❖ Dominance of English. Career-oriented languages. Impact on Urdu language learning in abroad
- ❖ Lack of textbook in French for Urdu
- ❖ Lack of discipline to teach Urdu as a Foreign Language or as a Second Language
- ❖ More technological support needed

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