



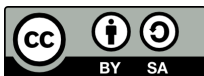
No topic has had a greater impact on the definition of the Urdu language than words.

The modules in this unit introduce readers to the five linguistic traditions whose confluence comprises the massive reservoir of words that is the Urdu language. The following lessons are intended as basic introductions to the topic. For detailed analyses, reader might consult some of the works listed in the bibliography.

Philologists and linguistics have historically categorized Urdu vocabulary using terms such as “Indic” and “Perso-Arabic.” They have even gotten more specific and designated words as deriving from Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and other languages. As we will see, this categorization can be very useful. But it has its limitations. The recognition that a word is etymologically derived from Arabic tells us nothing about the context in which it was borrowed into Urdu. Many Arabic words entered Urdu through Persian, but we wouldn’t know that just by reading an Urdu dictionary where a word’s etymology is marked as “Arabic.” The recognition of a Sanskritic etymology often tells us very little about the history of the word. Many Sanskrit words were borrowed into Urdu through Prakrit. Some may be borrowings from other modern Indic languages.

One way that philologists and historical linguists have drawn etymological distinctions among words is by their sounds and spellings. For example, خ and غ are considered Perso-Arabic (and thus not Indic) sounds. Likewise, because ذ and ط are considered to mark sounds in Arabic not used in Urdu (or Persian), they are imagined only to appear in Arabic loanwords.

Urdu presents serious problems for this narrative by way of substantial exceptions. In theoretical terms, it casts doubt on the notion that a sound is foreign to a language or language family by providing examples of speakers of that language or within that language family who have used the sound for centuries. To return to our examples, the letters خ and غ have appeared in Indic vocabulary in Urdu for centuries in words like پٹاخا [paṭākḥā] (firecracker) and غنڈا [ḡhundā] (gangster). By “Indic,” we mean vocabulary not found in Persian or Arabic and related in some way to other Indic languages such as Sanskrit. Likewise, ذ and ط are conventionally used to spell a small yet ubiquitous set of Persian words, such as گزشتہ [guzishtā / guzashtā] (past) and طوطا [totā] (parrot). In recent decades, attempts have been made to impose the etymological distinctions onto the language, for example by changing spellings to گزشتہ and توتا. This kind of etymological essentialism and exclusivism is something that Urdu has historically defied and continues to resist.



That said, it is useful for the purpose of vocabulary acquisition and word studies to make broad etymological distinctions. For that reason, the following modules divide the sources of Urdu vocabulary into separate sections according to etymological origin. In each section, we will learn a basic strategy for recognizing the origin of a word. We will also learn three word-building patterns that we can use to help build and refine our vocabulary.

## 1. Arabic Elements

Because Urdu uses a modified form of the Arabic script, most Arabic words in Urdu are spelled in their original form. The preservation of Arabic spellings in Urdu allows us to recognize Arabic loanwords in Urdu. It also allows us to recognize relationships among Arabic words. In turn, this not only helps us remember how to spell Arabic words, but to make educated guesses about the meaning of unfamiliar words that we encounter when reading. Likewise, knowing how words relate to each in Arabic other can offer clues to the correct spelling of unfamiliar vocabulary. Suppose you know the word ظلم [zulm] (tyranny) and you hear someone using an unfamiliar word, zālim, which correctly infer means “tyrant.” If you know a little bit about the ways that root letters and word-building patterns work in Arabic, you will be confident that the new word is spelled ظالم.

### Recognizing Arabic Words

The easiest way to recognize Arabic words in Urdu is to learn the letters that are only found in Arabic words. They are as follows.

ث ح ذ ص ض ط ظ ع

The rule is simple. If a word contains any one of the letters above, then it is Arabic. The only exceptions to this rule are in the case of a few non-Arabic words spelled with ذ and ط. Note also that Arabic words may be compounded with non-Arabic words, in which case the resulting word is not typically found in Arabic. For example, خوشخطی [khushkhattī] (fine penmanship; calligraphy) contains the marked Arabic word خط, but is not itself an Arabic word.

For example, take three common Urdu words for “love”: پیار [pyār]; عشق [ishq]; محبت [maḥabbat/muḥabbat]. Of the three, two are obviously Arabic loanwords. The ع in عشق and the ح in محبت are dead giveaways.

In addition to allowing us to identify which words come from Arabic, the Urdu script also allows us to recognize which Arabic words are related to each other. Here's how.

Most Arabic words have three root letters. Words that share the same three root letters in the same order are related. For example, the word عشق [ishq] (love) has the three root letters ع ش ق. Any word that has these three root letters in the same order is a relative. For example, the words عاشق [āshiq] (lover) and معشوق [māshūq] (beloved) both contain the same three root letters in the same order. By contrast, the words عيش [aish] (a life of pleasure and luxury) and شوق [shauq] (interest, passion) do not have all same letters, let alone in the same order, and are therefore unrelated. It is easier to remember the meanings of words if you know which words they relate to.

Once you can recognize Arabic vocabulary and identify root letters, you can begin to consider how the form of related words reflects (or determines) their meaning. Here's a basic introduction. Arabic derives vocabulary by prefixing, infixing, and suffixing letters to roots. Each pattern of prefixed, infix, or suffixed letters imparts a particular sense to the root. This is to say that if you know the meaning of the root, and if you know the sense imparted by a particular pattern of affixation, you can usually make a pretty good guess about the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Let's learn two of the most common patterns: active and passive participles of the basic form of the noun.

### Active Participle

Take عشق [ishq] (love) again. If we remove the short vowel ِ [i] under ع, we are left only with the three root letters, ع ش ق. Now, if we infix ا [ā] between the first and second letters of the root and infix ِ [i] between the second and third, we come up with عاشق [āshiq] (lover). This particular pattern (infixing ا [ā] between the first and second roots and ِ [i] between the second and third) is known as the active participle because it indicates the agent that enacts the action of the verb. It is akin to the suffix “-er” (and its many variations) in English. Here are three more examples: علم [ilm] (knowledge) and عالم [ālim] (scholar); ظلم [zulm] (tyranny) and ظالم [zālim] (tyrant); عبادت [ibādat] (worship) and عابد [ābid] (worshipper).

### Passive Participle

Now let's look at the word معشوق [māshūq] (beloved). First, we'll remove all vowels so we're left only with ع ش ق. Now we prefix م [ma] to the first root letter and infix و [ū] between the second and third. Hence, معشوق [māshūq] (beloved). This is known as the passive participle because it denotes

the passive recipient of the action of the verb. In comparative terms, it is similar to the English suffix “-ed.” Here are three more examples: علم [ilm] (knowledge) and معلوم [mālūm] (known); ظلم [zulm] (tyranny) and مظلوم [mazlūm] (tyrannized); عبادت [ibādat] (worship) and معبود [mābūd] (worshipped; that which is worshipped). Note that in many cases, the resulting passive participle can often be either an adjective or a noun (and sometimes both).

Here are the three examples laid out in a chart:

-ed	-er	Noun
معلوم	عالم	علم
مظلوم	ظالم	ظلم
معبود	عابد	عبادت

Notice the regularity of the patterns in columns two (-er) and three (-ed). When you encounter an unfamiliar word and recognize that it is in this pattern, you don’t need short diacritical markings to tell you how to pronounce it.

## 2. Persian Elements

The history of interaction between Urdu and Persian in South Asia is as old as the history of the Urdu language. The authors of many of the earliest extant Urdu texts also wrote in Persian, and all of them lived in a cultural milieu in which Persian was the language of administration, governance, and learning. Many of the earliest extant works in what we now recognize as Urdu were written in imitation of Perso-Arabic literary genres. Some were written in imitation of Persian masterpieces. Others drew heavily on Persian (as opposed to Arabic) aesthetic sensibilities. For example, the Urdu *ghazal* (lyric) and *masnavī* (long-form rhyming couplet) poetry written in the Deccan from the fifteenth century more closely resembles Persian masterpieces in these genres than those in Arabic. The same is generally true of Urdu poetry today. And because Persian remained the language of governance until the mid-nineteenth century, a language of education under colonialism, and to varying degrees remains a language of education, culture, and scholarship among many literate Urdu users, it has continued to shape and inform the contours of the Urdu language and its literature down to the present day. You can even find Persian lines and phrases in the lyrics of Bollywood item numbers such as the title song from the film *Om Shanti Om*.

The identification of Persian vocabulary presents problems similar to those we have discussed in the case of Arabic. One problem is the difference between linguistic identity and the history of linguistic interactions and borrowing. As mentioned, many of the Arabic words in use in Urdu today were borrowed not from Arabic, but through Persian. In some cases, Urdu follows the Persian spellings, forms, and meaning of a word rather than the Arabic one. For example, the word تماشا [tamāshā] (spectacle) is correctly identified as an Arabic word, but is spelled in Urdu as it is in Persian. (In Arabic, it is spelled تماشى [tamāshī].) It is certainly correct to identify تماشا as an Arabic word in etymological terms, but the identification does not tell us the whole story.

A third dimension of Persian's relationship with Urdu worth keeping in mind is that Persian is a very close relative of Indic languages such as Sanskrit. Often, Urdu will have both a Persian word and its Indic cousins. For example, the Persian word شنا [shinā] (swimming) is etymologically related to the Sanskrit Urdu word स्नान [snān] (bathing)--also spelled and pronounced اشنان [ashnān] in Urdu--and its Prakritic descendant and relative نہانا [nahānā] (to bathe). Sometimes, the relatives are close enough to be obvious. For example, the relationship between a Persian word like کرده [kardā] (done) and Indic words like those derived from the verb کرنا [karnā] (to do) is obvious when we know to look for it. And sometimes, the Persian and Indic vocabulary is identical. For example, the word کار [kār] (work, task), which is the same in both Persian and Sanskrit. When we classify words in neat categories like "Persian" and "Indic," we must be careful not to overlook the close relationships among them or the interconnected histories they share.

That said, it can be useful for the purposes of vocabulary building to know how to recognize Persian words as such. Here's an overview.

One way to recognize that a word is Persian in origin without knowing anything about Persian is with reference to the letters in the word. In general, Urdu words that contain both letters not historically identified as Indic and those not found in classical Arabic are often Persian. For example, Indic languages stereotypically lack the sounds represented by خ [kh], ذ [z], ز [z], ژ [zh], غ [gh], and ق [q] (among others), and classical Arabic, in addition to specifically Indic sounds, also lacks the sounds represented by پ [p], چ [ch], ژ [zh], and گ [g]. Thus, if you were to encounter the word چرخ [charḵh] (circle), you could safely (and correctly) guess that it is a Persian word, since it contains both a non-Indic letter خ [kh] and a non-Arabic letter چ [ch]. You might also notice, due to its meaning, that it closely resembles the Sanskrit word चक्र [chakra] (circle, wheel), whence the English word "chakra," and its Prakritic relatives in Urdu such as چکر [chakkar] (circle; affair) and چکرانا [chakrānā] (to spin).

Likewise, you would be correct to assume that گذارش [guzārish] (request), too, is a Persian word, since it contains both گ [g] and ز [z]. Of course, knowing a bit about Persian word-building will also help you identify that a word is Persian and help you see connections among Persian words. For example, the ش [-ish] at the end of the last word, گذارش [guzārish], is a common way that Persian forms nouns from verbs. Knowing this, it is easy to recognize it and other words like it, for example, خوابش [khvāhish] (desire) and سازش [sāzish] (conspiracy) as Persian words.

The following three modules introduce some of the most common Persian word building patterns in Urdu.

### Abstract Nouns with ی [ī] and گی [gī]

One of the most common ways the suffix ی [ī] is used in Persian and Urdu is in creating abstract nouns. These may be formed by suffixing ی [ī] to an adjective. For example, by suffixing it to خوش [khush] (happy), we get خوشی [khushī] (happiness). They may also be formed by suffixing ی [ī] to nouns. For example, شاعر [shāir] (poet) and شاعری [shāirī] (poetry).

The same suffix can also be used to create nouns from compounds. For example, خوبصورت [khūb-sūrat] (beautiful) and خوبصورتی [khūb-sūratī] (beauty); رہنما [reh-numā] (leader) and رہنمائی [reh-numāī] (leadership).

When ی [ī] is suffixed to Persian words ending in ۰ pronounced [ā] (as opposed to the breathy h), the ۰ [ā] is dropped and گی [gī] is used instead of ی [ī] alone. For example, زنده [zindā] (alive) becomes زندگی [zindagī] (freshness) and بنده [bandā] (devotee) becomes بندگی [bandagī] (devotedness).

### Verbal Nouns with the Suffixes ان [ān], ش [ish], and نده [indā]

Many of the Persian words used in Urdu are built from Persian verbs. Persian grammarians typically distinguish two stems from which the majority of Persian verbal vocabulary is derived: the present and the past. In this unit, we will see how three suffixes are used to build words from the present stem.

The suffix ان [ān] is similar to the English suffix “-ing” or the Latin “-ent.” and likewise conveys a sense of progressive action to the verb. For example, suffixing it to the stem رو [rau] from a verb meaning “to go,” we get روان [ravān] (moving, flowing). (Note that the pronunciation of و changes because a vowel now succeeds it.) Likewise, suffixing it to نما [numā] (the stem of the verb “to

show”), we get نمایاں [numāyān] (apparent; prominent). Note that when the stem ends in <sup>۱</sup> [ā], an intervening ی [y] is used.

The suffix ش [ish] forms verbal nouns that refer to the action of the verb. For example, if we suffix it to our stem رو [rau] (from “to go”) we get روش [ravish] (way of going; fashion; manner; behavior). Suffixing it to نما [numā], we have نمائش [numāish] (display, exhibition). One interesting and helpful thing to note is that all nouns built in this way are feminine in Urdu.

The suffix ندہ [indā] is akin to the English “-er” and likewise generates agentive nouns that denote the doer of the action of the verb. Hence, if we suffix it to رو [rau] we get روندہ [ravindā] (traveler, goer) and to نما [numā] we get نمائندہ [numāindā] (shower). Note that the resulting words may also be used as adjectives. Hence, روندہ [ravindā] may mean “going” or “traveling” and نمائندہ [numāindā] may also mean “showing” or “exhibiting.”

### Compound Nouns with Present Stems

In addition to being the basis of vocabulary derived through suffixation, Persian present stems can also be suffixed to words to form agentive nouns and adjectives. In such compounds, their meaning is best understood as “-er” or “-ing,” but with the meaning of the verb coloring the sense of the action or active quality.

For example, if we take the Persian word پیش [pesh] (before, in front of) and suffix the present stem رو [rau] to it, we get پیشرو [pesh-rau], which literally means “someone who goes in front,” that is, a leader. If we suffix it to راه [rāh] (path) we get راهرو [rāh-rau] (wayfarer, traveler). Such compounds can also be adjectives. For example, if we suffix رو [rau] to سبک [subuk] (light), we get the adjective سبکرو [subuk-rau] (nimble, quick; clever). If we suffix our present stem نما [numā] to رہ [reh] (path), which is a shortened form of راه [rāh], we come up with رہنما [reh-numā], which also means “leader,” but more specifically a “shower of the way” as opposed to someone who walks or goes in front. We can also suffix it to the words بد [bad] (bad) and خوش [khush] (good, fine) to get the adjectives بدنما [bad-numā] (bad-looking, ugly) and خوشنما [khush-numā] (fine-looking, beautiful).

### 3. English and European Vocabulary: Tips for Reading

Largely owing to the history of European trade, British colonialism, and postcolonial globalization in South Asia, English and other European languages have left a profound and indelible impression on Urdu. As of 2022, it is impossible to watch an Urdu television serial or Bollywood film, listen to Urdu popular music, or have a conversation with Urdu speakers anywhere in South Asia or diaspora without encountering European, and particularly English, vocabulary.

It just so happens that some of the most common Urdu words are borrowed from European languages. The words چابی [chābī] (key) and کمرہ [kamrā] (room) are borrowed from the Portuguese *chave* and *camara* (itself related to the English “chamber” and “camera” [obscura]). In fact, the Urdu word for “Englishman” (انگریز) whence the Urdu word for the English language (انگریزی) is a Portuguese loanword.

English words are so ubiquitous and thoroughly assimilated in Urdu that it is difficult to know where to start to begin to discuss them. To be sure, there are Indianisms of English usage, but it often feels when speaking with certain classes of Urdu speakers that nearly the whole of the English language is fair game and one can simply drop any English noun, adjective, or adverb into an Urdu sentence without disrupting the flow of the conversation. One shudders to think what it must be like for non-English-speaking learners of Urdu. They not only have to learn all of Urdu’s Arabic, Persian, Sanskritic, and Indic vocabulary, but its English vocabulary, too.

Somewhat ironically, English-knowing students of Urdu often find English words in the Urdu script the most difficult to read. An intermediate-level student of mine recently struggled to read the word انسائیکلو پیڈیا [insāiklopīḍiyā] (encyclopedia) before realizing that it was an English word. Once she did, she was able to recognize and read the word easily.

The Urdu forms of English words may involve approximations of English consonants, changes to internal vowel and consonant patterns, or the addition of sounds to avoid things like consonant clusters. The following modules contain strategies for recognizing English words as such. The modules are also useful for learning how to spell Urdu words correctly even if you have not read them before. For example, knowing that English *ts* and *ds* are almost always rendered as unaspirated retroflex consonants and that Urdu often prefixes <sup>۱</sup> [i] to avoid combinations and clusters of *s* and *sh* in the initial syllable of words, you would be correct to assume that the English word “standard” is spelled and pronounced اسٹینڈرڈ [iʃtāindard] in Urdu.



## English Sound Combinations

One indication that an unfamiliar Urdu word may be an English loanword is the presence of letters and sounds that are not typically present in words borrowed from other languages. The presence of Indic sounds such as **ٹ** [t̪] and **ڈ** [d̪] and what are conventionally considered non-Indic letters such as **ز** [z] and **ف** [f] in a single word is a good indication that a word may be borrowed from English, since Arabic and Persian lack the former and Indic languages like Sanskrit lack the latter, and these are the main sources of Urdu vocabulary. A second point to keep in mind is that the presence of letters and sounds not found in English is likewise an indication that a word is not an English loanword. Such sounds and letters include the exclusively Indic sounds **ڑ** [ɽ] and aspirated voiced consonants like **بھ** [bh] and **گھ** [gh], and the letters exclusively associated with Arabic (see the Arabic vocabulary module).

For example, if you were to read the word **گَزٹ** [gazaṭ] (gazette) includes the non-Indic **ز** [z] and the Indic **ٹ** [t̪] and you would be right to suspect immediately that it is an English word. Likewise, the words **فُتبال** [fuṭbāl] (football, soccer) and **ڈیزائن** [dīzāin] (design).

Practice reading the following English words and note indications.

ورلڈ پیٹرول ماسٹر سگریٹ ایجنٹ منٹ

## English Ts and Ds as Unaspirated Retroflex Consonants in Urdu

English *ts* and *ds* are almost always represented and pronounced as the unaspirated retroflex consonants **ٹ** [t̪] and **ڈ** [d̪], respectively, in Urdu. Therefore, even if a word lacks non-Indic sounds like **ز** [z] and **ف** [f], the presence of multiple unaspirated retroflex consonants may be an indication that the word is an English loanword.

For example, **ایٹیکٹ** [eṭiḱeṭ] (etiquette), **ڈپٹی** [d̪ip̪ṭi] (deputy), and **ڈیوٹی** [d̪iv̪ṭi] (duty) strike the eye as likely English words at first glance.

## Prefixing Is- to Reduce English Clusters

In general, Urdu reduces consonant clusters such as “st” and “str” at the beginning of English words by prefixing **ا** [i] to break them into two syllables. When you encounter an unfamiliar Urdu word that shows signs of being an English loanword (e.g., unaspirated retroflex consonants; no

exclusively Indic letters or sounds), and you notice it also begins with ا [i], chances are decent that you are dealing with an English loanword. For example, اسٹابری [iṣṭābrī] (strawberry), اسٹاف [iṣṭāf] (staff), and اسپچ [ispīch] (speech).

Practice reading the following words

اسکالر شپ اسٹائل اسٹینڈ اسپنچ اسپورٹ اسٹیچو

## 4. Sanskrit Words

Discussions of Urdu vocabulary have rarely involved discussions of Sanskritic vocabulary. As the divide between Hindi and Urdu has widened in the past two centuries, so have notions of exclusivity risen to dominance. The result is that Sanskritic registers have become almost exclusively associated with Hindi and Perso-Arabic registers likewise with Urdu, especially high-register vocabulary.

But the fact remains that Sanskritic were central to the development of Urdu literature in its earliest centuries and remain part of everyday Urdu speech today. Commonplace Sanskritic words and phrases such as [darshan] (vision, visitation [esp. of a deity]) and phrases like [kāyā-palaṭ] (change, about-face) show the persistent relevance of Sanskrit and Sanskritic registers to Urdu.

Before we begin our analysis of Sanskritic registers in Urdu, it is important to keep in mind that just as the relationships among Arabic, Persian, and Indic languages are complex, so is the relationship between Sanskrit and so-called vernacular Indic languages like Urdu. We will see that much of the Indic vocabulary in Urdu can be related to Sanskrit. These relationships cover a fairly wide range, from direct loanwords to distant relatives with shared histories. It has become somewhat commonplace to speak of vernacular registers (a term which, itself, may imply a Sanskrit-centric, classicist perspective) as derived from Sanskrit vocabulary. In fact, the relationship between vernacular Indic words and Sanskrit ones is much more complicated and involves long histories of standardization, interaction, borrowing, circulation in the Prakrit, literary influence, and interactions among the vernaculars. Further, the conventional focus on relationship between Indic vernacular vocabulary and Sanskrit has meant that words from other linguistic families, particularly Persian, are often omitted from discussions of Urdu vocabulary that likewise stand in important historical relationships to Sanskritic words. With that in mind, let us proceed.

Philologists conventionally distinguish two kinds of words when speaking of Sanskrit registers in vernacular Indic languages like Urdu. *Tatsama* (U: تتسم [tatsam]) words are Sanskrit loanwords or those whose form did not change in Prakrit (the languages of India that preceded the modern vernaculars). *Tadbhava* (U: تذبھو [tadbhāv]) are those Sanskrit words whose form changed in the Prakrits. In Urdu, it is also useful to distinguish between *tatsama* and semi-*tatsama* vocabulary, since many Sanskrit loanwords in Urdu are identifiable as such, but differ slightly from their Sanskrit relatives in some minor respect. To apply these distinctions the examples above, the word درشن [darshan] (vision, visitation) would be understood as a *tatsama* word, since its form is identical to its Sanskrit relative. The word کایا [kāyā] (body) is arguably best understood as a semi-*tatsama* word, since it closely resembles its Sanskrit relative and is thus best understood as a loanword, but adds a long ā to the end of the Sanskrit *kāya* (body). Finally, the word پلٹ [paṭṭ] (turn, spin) is classified as *tadbhava* because, having come to Urdu from Prakrit, its form differs considerably from the Sanskrit verb پریس [paryas-] (to throw or turn around) to which it is related.

The following three modules introduce students to two *tatsama* word building patterns and one pattern describing the relationship between *tadbhava* and *tatsama* words.

### The Suffixes تا [tā], ال [āl], and وان [vān]

One way that Sanskrit derives vocabulary is by suffixation. Here follow three suffixes found in commonplace Urdu words.

The suffix تا [tā] forms abstract nouns. For example, in ممنا [mamtā] and its variant مامنا [māmtā] (motherly affection), both related to ماں [mother]; and the semi-*tatsama* word بیرنا [bīrtā] (heroism, bravery) from بیر [bīr] (hero, a brave person), which is the standard Urdu pronunciation of the Sanskrit वीर [vīr], and the *tatsama* سندرتا [sundartā] (beauty) from سنندر [sundar] (beautiful). Nouns bearing this suffix are feminine in Urdu.

The suffix ال [āl] and its relatives الہ [ālā] and الیہ [āliyā] all relate to the Sanskrit suffix آل [āle], which forms nouns of place. It is found in everyday vernacular Urdu words like ننیال [nanyāl] (maternal family), which is derived from نانا [nānā] (maternal grandfather), and semi-*tatsama* vocabulary like شوالہ [shivālā] (temple, especially one devoted to Shiva) and ہمالیہ [himāliyā] (the Himalayas) from the Sanskrit word ہم [him] (snow).

The suffix وان [vān] and its feminine counterpart وتی [vatī] form adjectives roughly meaning “possessed of” the quality of the word to which they are suffixed. For example, دهنوان [dhanvān] (wealthy) from دهن [dhan] (wealth) and بهگونان [bhagvān] (God) from بهگ [bhag] (divine power).

### The Prefixes ا [a], پر [pra/par], and و or ب [vi or bi]

The prefix ا [a] and its relative ان [an] is related to the English prefixes a- (as in ahistorical) and un- (as in unbelievable) and likewise means “not” or “without. Hence, امر [amar] (immortal) from مر [mar] related to مرنا [marnā] (to die) and the tadbhava انجان [an-jān] (ignorant) related to the Sanskrit گیان [gyān] (knowledge).

The prefix پر [pra or par] means “above, beyond, more.” It is found in commonplace Urdu words like پردادا [pardādā] (great-grandfather) as well as *tatsama* words like

The prefix ب [bi] is the most common form in which the Sanskrit و [vi], meaning “different,” is found. For example, in the word بجوگ [bijog] (separation) from the word جوگ [jog] (pairing) (in Sanskrit, یوگ [yog]), whence the English “yoga;” and بدیس [bides] (foreign) and بدیسی [bidesī] (foreigner) from دیس [des] (country), a common vernacular form of the Sanskrit دیش [desh].

### Derived Words and Vowel Change

Sanskrit observes complex rules whereby the quality of certain vowels change when words are derived from each other. Compare the shift in the quality of the *a* when from “nature” we derive “natural.” The shift often occurs when adjectives are derived from nouns or abstract nouns are derived from concrete nouns. One of the most common shifts is for a short *a* in the initial syllable to elongate to *ā*. For example, in the shift from پربت [parbat] (mountain) (compare with the *tatsama* پروت [parvat]) to derive پربتتی [pārbatī] (born of the mountain; the name of a Hindu goddess) or the *tatsama* form پاروتی [pārvatī], both of which are also commonplace names. In addition, some suffixes, for example, ک [ik] (an adjectivizing suffix), also require the shift. Here follow three examples.

The word منس [manas] means “mind” and is related to the Urdu word من [man] with the same meaning. We can derive a related adjective by suffixing ک [ik] and lengthening the short vowel on the initial syllable to get مانسک [mānsik] (mental, intellectual).

Likewise, the suffix ک [ik] can be applied to the word ويد [ved or bed] (science, knowledge; the Vedas) and its Prakritic variant بيد [bed] to derive ويدک or بيدک [vaidik, baidik], both of which may describe things related to the Vedas or refer to Vedic medicine or Vedic scholars.

Finally, we can suffix ک [ik] to the Sanskrit word دهرم [dharm] (righteousness; religion) to derive دهارمک [dhārmik] meaning that which has to do with *dharm*, hence righteous or religious.

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### Further Reading:

Barker, M.A.R. *A Course in Urdu*. 2 vols. 1967. Montreal: McGill University, 1967.

Bruce, Gregory Maxwell. *Urdu Vocabulary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.

Shackle, Christopher and Rupert Snell. *Hindi and Urdu Since 1800: A Common Reader*. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1990.