

## DEVELOPMENT OF URDU PICTUREABLE WORD BANK FOR YOUNG MUSLIM URDU SPEAKERS

1. Dr.Hina Noor	2. Imran Nazir
PostDoc fellow, Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad. Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad	PhD Scholar (Special Education) Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:hina.noor@aiou.edu.pk">hina.noor@aiou.edu.pk</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:imran.nazir2008@gmail.com">imran.nazir2008@gmail.com</a>

### 3. Dr. Zahid Majeed

Director Academic Planning and Course Production, AIOU, H 8,  
Islamabad.

**Email:** [zahid\\_majeed@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:zahid_majeed@aiou.edu.pk)

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## DEVELOPMENT OF URDU PICTUREABLE WORD BANK FOR YOUNG MUSLIM URDU SPEAKERS

### ABSTRACT

Languages are not only the tool of communication, but they also represent the rich cultural diversity of its speakers. Urdu language embodies the rich Islamic civilization presented through literary documents also preserving historical evidence. In nurturing the language development of Muslim Urdu-speaking children, establishing a robust vocabulary bank is essential. This will help them communicating their thoughts and emotions within their Islamic cultural context. For promoting language proficiency in young children and strengthening their cultural identity, we need evidence-based document and mechanisms. Unfortunately, our society is not giving attention to development of Urdu language assessment and intervention tools for instilling a sense of pride and belonging in Muslim Urdu-speaking children. Our basic books for early childhood language development present the vocabulary that a publisher wishes to. It does not follow the rules of developing any intervention strategy focusing the evidence-based findings from research in language acquisition and child development. Word banks usually provide information about the age of acquisition of vocabulary and the frequency of use of words. It is suitable to serve as a research tool as well as a visual teaching resource. We can find word banks of various languages of the world but unfortunately no such resource is available for Urdu language nationally or internationally. The current research aims to develop a Urdu picture-able word bank on the basis of frequency of use of words in order to support parents and practitioners working with early childhood language development and therapeutic interventions.

**Keywords:** Urdu, Picturable, Word-bank, Early Childhood, Assessment, Urdu language development

### Introduction

Languages serve as more than just tools for communication; they encapsulate the rich tapestry of cultural diversity, none more so than Urdu, deeply intertwined with Islamic culture. Urdu, with its origins in the Indo-Aryan and Persian languages, is not merely a means of expression but a vessel carrying the heritage, traditions, and spirituality of its speakers. Like other languages, Urdu serves as a repository of human experience, embodying the essence of Islamic societies with its poetry, literature, and religious texts. As linguist Crystal<sup>1</sup> (2000) aptly observes, "Languages are repositories of human experience, and each one is a unique and irreplaceable resource." Through Urdu, we gain insights into the spiritual depth, social intricacies, and artistic expressions of Islamic civilizations, fostering connections across diverse communities and preserving

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1 Crystal, D. (2000). *Language Death*. Cambridge University Press.

cultural identities. Here the question arises, do other languages carry the religious and ideological expressions of its speakers. The answer is “yes”. Literature of any language is reflection of its speaker’s culture and religious identity. Although the translated versions may expose the reader to the ideological and religious identity of its speakers, a translated version cannot truly express the essence with 100% accuracy. Therefore, nations tend to give priority to their national languages over international languages while making their generations learn about their identity and characteristics. As far as Muslims ideological characteristics are concerned, we were guided by our prophet to prefer our own Muslim traditions, culture, languages etc. we were directed to show our uniqueness and adopt those unique styles for every matter as expressed below through Hadith<sup>2</sup> 2695 of Sunan Al Tirmidhi, narrated by Imam Tirmidhi in the Chapter Seeking Permission.

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ لَهَيْعَةَ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: " لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ تَشَبَهَ بِغَيْرِنَا ، لَا تَشَبَّهُوا بِالْيَهُودِ ، وَلَا بِالنَّصَارَى ، فَإِنَّ تَسْلِيمَ الْيَهُودِ الْإِشَارَةُ بِالأَصَابِعِ ، وَتَسْلِيمَ النَّصَارَى الْإِشَارَةُ بِالأَكْفِ

Translation: “Narrated 'Amr bin Shu'aib:from his father, from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: He is not one of us who resembles other than us, no who resembles the Jews nor the Christians. For indeed greeting of the Jews is pointing the finger, and the greeting of the Christians is waving with the hand”.

The hadith clearly defines that a person who resembles and/or prefers other than rich muslim culture will be at fault.

Another Hadith on Clothing of Sunan Abu Dawood 4078<sup>3</sup> about Clothing (Kitab Al-Libas) as written by Imam Abu Dawood is presented below for emphasis.

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ التَّمِيمِيُّ ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الْعَسْقَلَانِيُّ ، عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ بْنِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ زَكَاتَةَ ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ : أَنَّ زَكَاتَةَ صَارَعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَصْرَعَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، قَالَ زَكَاتَةُ : وَسَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، يَقُولُ : "فَرَّقُوا مَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ الْعَمَائِمَ عَلَى الْقَلَانِيسِ

“Narrated Ali ibn Rukanah: Ali quoting his father said: Rukanah wrestled with the Prophet ﷺ and the Prophet ﷺ threw him on the ground. Rukanah said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: The difference between us and the polytheists is that we wear turbans over caps.”

Both of these hadith are presented to clear the point to understand about Muslim culture and identity is that we should be cautious while using any language, material, dress with the aim of maintaining our distinct identity.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۙ

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

Now in this verse, by addressing the entire human race, this great error has been corrected, which has always been the cause of universal corruption in the world, that is, the prejudice of race, color, language, homeland and nationality has been prevalent from the earliest times till today. In the past, man has been drawing some small circles around

<sup>2</sup> Tirmizi: 2695

<sup>3</sup> Sunan Abu Dawood: 4078

<sup>4</sup> . Al-Quran 49:13

himself by ignoring humanity in general, those born inside he has declared as his own and those born outside. These circles are not drawn on any rational and moral basis but on the basis of accidental birth.

Some of them have to be born in a family, tribe or race, and some have to be born in a geographical region or in a nation of a particular color or speaking a particular language. Then, on these grounds, the distinction between oneself and others has not been limited to those who have been declared as one's own in the sense that they have more love and support than others, but rather Discrimination has taken the worst forms of hatred, enmity, humiliation and oppression. Philosophies have been devised for this. Religions are invented. Laws have been made. Ethical principles have been formulated. Nations and kingdoms have made it their permanent creed and implemented it for centuries.<sup>5</sup>

لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وُلَىٰ دِينِ.<sup>6</sup>

For you is your religion, and for me is my religion."

Means religion has given freedom to everyone this is the Islamic teaching that makes base of limited nation pass law that everyone has religious freedom.

This research in the light of Islamic teachings will define such problems which were solved through these teachings the western teachings has given us great progress where as Islamic teachings are their spirit which let us know how to pass a successful life based on perfection.

The holy Quran is the complete code of life which offers solution to every problem and provides spiritual peace. History bears testimony that Islam provide, more solutions in making human a complete human.

الم 'ذَلِكَ الْكُذْبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ، هَدِيٍّ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ'<sup>7</sup>

“ I am Allah above all , I am going to know , This is the perfect book. There is no doubt in this (word) that it guides the pious.”

Whenever people leave the guidance and guidance of the Creator and follow their own desires, they deviate from the straight path. As a result, corruption, mischief and corruption begin to arise in the society.

If the reasons for this tragic behavior of human beings with their fellow human beings are examined, the fact will be revealed that the center of all human activities, struggles and struggles are a few basic mountain claims, including justice and fairness and moderation. And due to not maintaining the balance, various forms of cruelty and brutality arise.

If things of very trivial nature like dressing are not allowed, than how can we teach foreign languages in preference to our national Urdu language which embodies rich Muslim culture? No doubt teaching of foreign languages is demand of the day but focusing more on it in comparison with Urdu is not justified. We have ignored this phenomenon in early childhood education and the result is that children are using English words more frequently and their thinking and habits are building as per English culture. Language all over the world goes through development and people are researching on their language with the aim to develop and strengthen it. Word Bank is one of the ways of doing so.

<sup>5</sup> Molana Moudoodi , Tafsir Tafheem-Ul-Quran , Surah Hujrat , Verses 13

<sup>6</sup> .Al-Quran 109:6

<sup>7</sup> . Al-Quran 2: 3

A Word Bank (also called a vocabulary bank) is a written list of key vocabulary words and phrases. A word bank is a structured database of vocabulary. It may be age-appropriate or subject-related. Word bank is designed to be flexible and interactive, allowing users to generate analyses for groups of children (e.g., how many words do Muslim Urdu speaking girl produce between 16 and 24 months?) or for individual items (e.g., how many children are reported to produce the word “Allah” at 15 months?). In nurturing the language development of Muslim Urdu-speaking children, establishing a robust vocabulary bank is essential. Urdu, deeply intertwined with Islamic culture, serves as a conductor for transmitting religious teachings, cultural values, and societal norms. A comprehensive vocabulary bank tailored to the unique linguistic and cultural context of these children can enrich their understanding of Islamic concepts, rituals, and ethics. Moreover, it empowers them to articulate their thoughts, emotions, and spiritual experiences effectively within their cultural and religious framework. By incorporating a diverse range of words related to Islamic practices, Quranic verses, and Hadiths, educators and caregivers can foster a deeper connection to their faith while promoting language proficiency. This approach not only enhances language skills but also strengthens cultural identity, instilling a sense of pride and belonging in Muslim Urdu-speaking children (Khan<sup>8</sup>, 2017).

Word/vocabulary Bank is a resource for researchers interested in early language assessment and intervention. Different word banks have been developed in various languages in different countries and continents as well. A few of them are Hindi (India), Mandarin (Beijing), Mandarin (Taiwanese), Cantonese (Chinese), Korean (Korea), Hebrew (Israel), Greek (Cypriot), Arabic (Saudi), and Persian - Asia. Norwegian, Latvian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Portuguese, Czech, Turkish, Russian, Danish (Denmark), French, Croatia, Dutch, Finnish, Hungarian, Catalan (the language of European States), Italian, Estonian, German, English (British), English (Irish), British Sign Language – Europe, Kigirama (Kenya), Kiswahili – Africa, Spanish (Mexican), French (Quebecois), American Sign Language – North America, Spanish (Peruvian), Spanish (Chilean), Spanish (Argentinian) – South America. No data is found in a database of the National Language Promotion Department (ادارۂ فروغِ قومی زبان) of Pakistan about age and frequency of occurrence of Urdu words as word banks of many other languages of the world provide. Word Bank can be a good resource for early childhood professionals dealing with normal or delayed speech and language development of children in their early years. There is a need to work on the most frequently occurring Urdu Words for assessment and intervention purposes equally. Researchers have developed high-frequency words, and my first hundred words list to aid in the assessment and teaching of the specific language vocabulary to children with or without special needs.

Speech impairment refers to an impaired ability to produce speech sounds and may range from mild to moderate. Delayed speech and language development may affect the cognitive development of the child if the delay is more than 3 years. Initial years are very important for the speech and language development of any child affecting subsequent learning in later years of life. A child’s speech and language development

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<sup>8</sup> Khan, F. A. (2017). Urdu Language and Muslim Identity Formation in South Asia. *Asian Affairs*, 48(2), 248-264.

are highly dependent on his ability to hear. Hearing sounds and words helps children learn to talk and understand. Hearing Impairment is a major and invisible disability globally and is more frequent in developing countries (Mumtaz<sup>9</sup>, et al. 2023). The prevalence of hearing loss is about 7.9% hearing loss in school children. Hearing loss can affect a child's development of speech and language skills. This can cause problems with speaking, reading, school success, and social skills. Any cause affecting the normal speech and language development pattern of the child may impose compromised learning in later years of life so it must be treated as early as possible. Literature shows a gap in information about the most frequently occurring words in the Urdu language. Similarly, the first 100 word list for Urdu is also not available to help the teachers and professionals working on early childhood language development. Teachers dealing with hearing and Speech Impairment don't know which Urdu word must be taught first to enable the deaf child to communicate orally with peers within the shortest possible time. Urdu words are used for assessment i.e. Assessment of Speech Impaired children, assessment of delayed language cases, and assessment of Hearing-Impaired Children. Similarly, teachers and practitioners use Urdu words during teaching and therapeutic intervention e.g. articulation therapy, Auditory Training, etc. However, the words selected for assessment and intervention purposes varied as per practitioners' choice or preferences. Usually, a word list of various categories like colors, animals, etc are used for the purpose without any knowledge of their age of occurrence or frequency of occurrence in everyday Urdu speech and language.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The website of "Word-Bank" contains data from 92,771 children, across 42 languages of the world and offers 89 instruments of language assessment. As far as the Urdu language is concerned no data is available all over the world on an open database of children's vocabulary. Language Promotion Department (ادارہ فروغ قومی زبان) of Pakistan has given data on Urdu literature and poetry but no data is given related to children's points of view. Most of the teachers and speech therapists dealing with Early Childhood Education use arbitrary words for children but they have no idea about which words must be used, preferred, or emphasized during teaching of the Urdu language vocabulary. They don't know which words are most frequently used in daily life. All Urdu basic books (Qaidas) provide us with words starting from the Urdu alphabet and different publishers use different words for the purpose. The selection of words for any Qaida is based on the choice of the publisher rather than the linguistic scope of the word. There is a dire need to develop an Urdu word bank according to Pakistani culture and context which can serve as a tool to develop assessment/ intervention for children with and without special needs. Most frequently occurring words can be combined to produce my first hundred Urdu words for this purpose.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

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<sup>9</sup> Mumtaz, N., Saqulain, G., Babur, M. N. (2023). Hearing impairment and its impact on children and parents in Pakistan. *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal*, 29(1), 33–39. <https://doi.org/10.26719/emhj>.

To find out the most frequently occurring Picturable Urdu Words in Speech of 3-6 years old children.

To develop Urdu Word Bank to serve as a tool for early childhood assessment and intervention in Urdu Language.

#### 4. Methodology

##### 4.1 Research Design

It was a developmental study. It investigated the word bank development based on the most frequently spoken Urdu Picturable by 3-6 years old young children.

##### 4.2 Population

The population of the study consisted of Early Childhood Children studying in public and private Early childhood schools of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

##### 4.3 Sample

Convenient sampling was used to select 2 schools from Rawalpindi and 2 from Islamabad.

##### 4.4 Procedure

Eight recorded sessions of 78 children aged (3-6 years) were obtained while children talked freely with their peers. Speech samples obtained were of total 247 minutes in duration. Details of the recorded samples are given in Table 1 below. Only Picturable Urdu words were used for developing word banks.

Table 1

*Details of the recorded speech samples of 3-6 years old children*

Name of the School/Speech Sample	Number of Children	Age ranges	Duration recorded Sample	Material used to stimulate free talk of the Children
Govt. Boys High School, Charagh Rawalpindi	14 Boys 17 Jan 2023	5-6 years	27 min recording	Books of their courses
Govt. Boys High School, Charagh Rawalpindi	12 Boys 20 Jan 2023	4-5 years	31 min recording	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Urdu readers
Air Foundation School System, H 13, Islamabad	8 children 24 Jan 2024	3-4 years	30 min recording	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Urdu readers
Air Foundation School System, H 13, Islamabad	10 children 24 Jan 2024	3-4 years	38 min recording	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Urdu readers
Air Foundation School System, H 13, Islamabad	8 children 24 Jan 2024	4-5 years	22 min	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Urdu readers

Air School System, H 13, Islamabad	Foundation	12 children 25 Jan 2024	4-5 years	31 min	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Books, Urdu readers
Air School System, H 13, Islamabad	Foundation	5 children 25 Jan 2024	5-6 years	38 min	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Books, Urdu readers
Air School System, H 13, Islamabad	Foundation	9 children 25 Jan 2024	3-4 years	30 min	Flashcards, toys, puzzles, course Books, Urdu readers
School of Saba Trust Homes, Gulraiz Phase 2, Rawalpindi.		17 children 26 Jan 2024	4-5 years	8 minutes	Teacher was probing questions related to their daily lesson (not included in analysis)
School of Saba Trust Homes, Gulraiz Phase 2, Rawalpindi.		25 children 26 Jan 2024	3-4 years	15 minutes	Teacher was probing questions related to their daily lesson (not included in the analysis)
Government Primary School, Islamabad.	Girls	12 children 24 Jan 2024	3-6 years	30 minutes	A volunteer was engaging children in talk along with course books (it was sent by a volunteer that's why not included in the analysis)

Table 1 elaborates on the names of institutes from where the data was collected, the numbers of children in each institute, their age ranges, the duration of recordings, and the material used during the data collection. It can be observed that 27 children were there in the age range 3-4 years, 32 children were 4-5 years, and 19 children were 5-6 years old. Coursebooks, flashcards, toys, and puzzles were displayed on a table around which the group was sitting.

### Data Collection

Data was collected by using an Audio Recorder of OPPO F-17. The research assistant visited the selected schools along with a few Urdu readers, puzzles, flashcards, and toys as stimulants to talk. Age-wise groups of children were gathered in a separate classroom. Children were involved in free speech with their peers, toys, and flash cards. If silence occurred, the research assistant probed the children with some comments about any toy/puzzle, flashcards, and readers/course books. A total of 11 Speech samples of 3-6

years old children were recorded. Data (recording) of one government school in Islamabad was discarded as the teacher was probing questions related to their daily lesson only and students were not involved in free talk. Data from one private school in Rawalpindi was sent by a volunteer but it was discarded to maintain consistency of the recording environment. Data from nine speech samples was used for the analysis of finding age-wise most frequently occurring words.

### Data Analysis

Recordings were transcribed and all picturable Urdu words were extracted from samples. A total of 266 words were extracted (plurals and masculine/feminine words were counted as one word if differ only in vowel sound). Picturable words were listed from each sample recording and the frequency of occurrence was calculated by using tallies for each age group. Separate lists of mono, bi, and multi-syllabic words were also prepared. Pictures of the extracted words were collected from online open sources and compiled to form a data bank (alphabetically arranged).

Table 2

*Most frequently Urdu words spoken by 3-4 years (high to low frequency)*

Urdu Picturable Words	3 - 4 Years
بی	32
دو	30
گھر	28
پانچ	25
طوطا, گاڑی	24
جوتا, ایک	22
آم, آنکھ	21
تین, چار, پانی, بیخ	20
گھوڑا	18
بال	16
سورج, بابا-پاپا-ابو	15
کان, شیر	14
انار, کھانا, چڑیا, رنگ	13
ناک	12
پھول, مور	11
چھ, مرغا, ہاتھ, تالا, بس	10
زیبرا, مچھلی, جادو, روٹی	9

8	چاند , گڑیا , کبوتر , بچہ , پہاڑ , مرغی ٹماڑ
7	کوے-کوا , ستارہ , انگور , سفید , ہاتھی پرہ
6	پتے-پتہ , بالٹی , کالا , بھالو , آسمان چائے , چوڑا , چوہا , ٹرین , پاؤں مکھی , قپچی , سیب , سات , خرگوش , نیلا , گوشت

Table 2 expresses the Urdu picture-able words from the speech sample for the age range of 3-4 years of children. These words were extracted, and their frequency of utterances (high to low) was noted. Words with a frequency of more than 5 were considered as most frequently occurring words. Plurals of the words were counted in the same category i.e. parrot/parrots, kawa/kaway. Similarly masculine feminine of the words were counted in same category if the root word is same e.g. lerka/lerki/murgha/murghi.

Table 3

*Most frequently occurring picturable Urdu words in speech samples of 4.1-5 years old children*

Urdu Picturable Words	4.1 - 5 Years
رنگ	23
ایک	22
روٹی , یکہ	16
کالا , گھر , گاڑی	15
پتنگ , دو	14
جوتا	13
گھوڑا , شیر , ہاتھی , ناشپاتی	12
پھول , درخت , ٹائر , سفید	11
ٹماڑ , چھتری , زبیرا , ٹماڑ , کھانا , آم	10
مور , بچہ , انار , پانی , بھالو , پہاڑ , عقاب	9
کتے-کتا , بلخ , چھ , چائے , نکا	8
لڑکی , کپ , فوارہ , غبارہ , چاول , چڑیا , چار , ڈھول	7
لڑکیاں	

6 سکول، کتاب، قینچی، ضعیف، سبز، زبان، ریل، آڑو  
مالٹے-مالٹا، لڑکے-لڑکا، پیلے-پیلا، نیلا، گائے، چوہا

Table 3 delineates the Urdu picture-able words from the speech sample for the age range of 4.1-5 years of children. These words were extracted, and their frequency of utterances (high to low) was noted. Words with at least a frequency of 6 or more were considered as most frequently occurring words. Plurals of the words were counted in the same category i.e. parrot/parrots, i.e. malta/malty. Similarly masculine feminine of the words were counted in same category if the root word is same e.g. lerka/lerki/murgha/murghi.  
Table 4

*Most frequently spoken picturable Urdu words spoken by 5.1-6 years old children*

Urdu Picturable Words	5.1 – 6 years
گھر	12
گھوڑا	11
طوطا	10
مرغی، آم، سکول	9
کتے-کتا، چوہا، جہاز، الماری، انار، چوہا، چڑیا	8
بچہ، دادا، دروازہ	7
ہاتھی، بس، کوئے-کوا، کلاس، لوگ، ایک	6

Table 4 describes the Urdu picture-able words from the speech sample for the age range of 5.1-6 years of children. These words were extracted and their frequency of utterances (high to low) was noted. Words with at least a frequency of 6 or more were considered as most frequently occurring words. Plurals of the words were counted in the same category i.e. parrot/parrots, i.e. kutta/kutty, and kawa/kaway. Similarly masculine feminine of the words were counted in same category if the root word is same e.g. lerka/lerki/murgha/murghi.

Table 5

*Frequency of occurrence of picture-able Urdu words spoken by 3 – 6 Years old children*

Urdu Picturable Words	3 - 4 Years	4.1 - 5 Years	5.1 – 6 years	Total
گھر	28	15	12	55
ایک	22	22	6	50
دو	30	14	5	49
گاڑی	24	15	4	43
گھوڑا	18	12	11	41
آم	21	10	9	40
طوطا	24	5	10	39

جوتا	22	13	3	38
رنگ	13	23	1	37
لی	32	2	1	35
پانی	20	9	5	34
پانچ	25	4	2	31
انار	13	9	8	30
کھانا	13	10	5	28
بیخ	20	8	0	28
چار	20	7	1	28
چڑیا	13	7	8	28
شیر	14	12	2	28
روٹی	9	16	2	27
آنکھ	21	3	3	27
تین	20	3	3	26
بال	16	5	4	25
پھول	11	11	3	25
ہاتھی	7	12	6	25
بچہ	8	9	7	24
کالا	6	15	2	23
مرغی	8	5	9	22
ستا	5	8	8	21
مور	11	9	1	21
سفید	7	11	3	21
چھ	10	8	3	21
ٹماٹر	8	10	2	20
چوہا	6	6	8	20
زیبرا	9	10	1	20
سکول	5	6	9	20
کان	14	2	4	20

Table 5 elaborates the total frequency of the most frequently occurred words spoken by 3-6 years old children. Words with frequency of less than 20 are not present in the table.

It can be summed up that the most frequently used Urdu words occurred by each range of children were ghar (home), ek (one), do (two), ghari (watch), and ghora (horse), etc. The complete list of all extracted picture-able Urdu words from each speech sample can be provided on request. Plurals of the words were counted in the same category i.e. parrot/parrots, kawa/kaway, kashi/kashtian, aankh/aankhen, kuta/kutay, etc. During assessment and intervention the most frequently occurring age-wise word list of words may also be of interest of professionals so presented below in table 6.

Table 6

*10 most frequently occurring Urdu words spoken by 3-6 years old children*

Sr. No	3-4 years	4.1 -5 years	5.1 -6 years
1	بلی (32)	رنگ (23)	گھر (12)
2	دو (30)	ایک (22)	گھوڑا (11)
3	گھر (28)	یکہ, روٹی (16)	طوطا (10)
4	پانچ (25)	کالا, گھر, گاڑی (15)	مرغی, آم, سکول (09)
5	طوطا, گاڑی (24)	دو, پتنگ (14)	انار, کتا, الماری, چوہا, چڑیا, جہاز (08)
6	ایک, جوتا (22)	جوتا (13)	دادا, بچہ, دروازہ (07)
7	آنکھ, آم (21)	ناشپاتی, گھوڑا, شیر, ہاتھی (12)	کلاس, لوگ, ہاتھی, کوا, بس, ایک (06)
8	پانی, تین, بیخ, چار (20)	ٹائر, درخت, سفید, پھول (11)	مولی, نمازکھانا, کلر, بستہ, نیلا, پانی, بکری (05) دو, سات,
9	گھوڑا (18)	کھانا, زبیرا, چھتری, ٹائر, آم (10)	کان, تالا, چھتری, بال, درخت, پاکستان (04) گاڑی, دیوار, لڈو, لوٹا, کتاب
10	بال (16)	مور, عقاب, پہاڑ, پانی, بچہ, بھالو, انار (09)	پھول, تین, سفید, کپڑے, جوتا, سب (03) پتہ, امی, ابو, اللہ, آگ, آسمان, چھ, آنکھ رات, خرگوش, چچ, چائے, جھنڈا, جھولا, مکھی, لیموں, گھڑی, صوفہ, سبز, ستارہ,

Table 6 delineates the top ten most frequently occurring words for each group. Billi (cat), do (two), and ghar (home) occurred in the children with the age range 3-4 years. Rang (color), ek (one), and roti (bread) were observed by the children in the age range of 4.1-5 years. Ghar (home), ghora (horse), and tota (parrot) occurred in children in the age range of 5.1-6 years. We can see that the lists contain the same words also although their frequency of occurrence varies with varying age. Sometimes the practitioners may take consideration of having mono, bi, and tri-syllabic words while developing any tool of assessment or intervention, therefore the separate lists of most frequently occurring mono, bi, and tri-syllabic Urdu words were also prepared, as presented below.

Table 7

*Frequency of most frequently occurred mono, bi, and multiple syllabic Urdu words.*

Mono-syllabic word	Frequency	Bi-syllabic Word	Frequency	Multi-syllabic word	Frequency
گھر	55	گاڑی	43	ناشپاتی	12
ایک	50	گھوڑا	41	دروازہ	9
دو	49	طوطا	39	الماری	8
آم	40	جوتا	38	پاکستان	6
رنگ	37	پانی	34	خریوزہ	5
پانچ	31	کھانا , بطخ	28	ہیلیکاپٹر	4
شیر , چار	28	روٹی	27	ژالہباری	3
آنکھ	27	ہاتھی	25	موٹر سائیکل , موہتی , کورونادائرس	2
تین	26	مرغی	22	مچھردانی , انگلیاں , ٹراؤزر	1

We all know that every language changes over the period of time. The same is true with Urdu Language and the process of code switching was found to be dominating during development many of the picture able English words were present in the spoken samples of 3-6 years old children. Some researchers may have taken interest in this element so a separate list of picture able English words found in the speech samples of 3-6 years old children was also developed. Researcher is sharing the information for dissemination purpose only and it does not contribute towards objectives of the current research. The point of consideration is if the code switching with English language will continue further, many of Urdu words will become obsolete.

Table 8 *List of common English words spoken by 3-6 years old children.*

Words	Frequency 3 – 4 Years	Frequency 4 – 5 Years	Frequency 5 – 6 Years	Total
Green	2	1	4	7
Red	1	1	1	3
Duck	8	1	-	9
Dog	4	5	-	9
Green	2	1	-	3
Butterfly	7	1	-	8
Hen	6	2	-	8
White	1	3	-	4
Picture	1	1	-	2
Ant	5	-	3	8
Five	2	-	3	5

Blue	3	-	1	4
Elephant	2	-	1	3
Four	2	-	1	3
Time	2	-	1	3
Six	1	-	2	3
Yellow	1	-	1	2
Seven	1	-	1	2
Doll	1	-	1	2
Chair	-	4	2	6

Table 8 delineates the list of English words spoken by 3-6-year-old children. These are common words spoken by the children with different age ranges in the list. Two words “green and red” were spoken by each range of children. The total high frequency of these words was 7 and 3.

Development of Urdu Word Bank of Picture able word

Pictures of all words identified through data analysis and presented in above tables were collected from free internet sources. Prints of all pictures were compiled in the form of booklet. Print version of the draft of the word bank book was shown to 5 children of 3-6 years age range for pilot testing. The children were asked to identify the pictures of the words spoken by the research assistant. The pictures correctly identified by children were finalized. The unidentified pictures were changed and re-asked by children for identification. The process continued till all pictures of the words were identified by the children. The final draft of Urdu word bank was prepared by arranging all words alphabetically showing their respective frequency of occurrence at bottom of each picture for reference. A separate list of most frequently spoken words by 3-4 years old, and 4.1-5 years old and 5.1-6 years old were given afterwards for reference. Separate sections/pages of mono syllabic, bi-syllabic and tri-syllabic words were also prepared in the same pattern and placed after alphabetically arranged words. Separate lists of English words and other most common abstract words whose pictures cannot be drawn e.g. relationships, counting etc. were also developed and placed at end of the word bank.

### Discussion

An Arabic tool, Communicative Development Inventory (CDI) was developed to screen out vocabulary in early children between the ages of 8 months to 30 months. Across seventeen Arab countries, It was focused on only short-form words, comprehension, and production of the first 100 words in 17 main dialects of Arabic. These words are freely accessed by parents, practitioners, and researchers to assess the language skills of children in the age range of 8 to 30 months (Abdelwahab<sup>10</sup> et.al., 2021). Current research results are also helpful as far as development of screening and intervention tools of early Urdu language development is concerned as it presented the words with highest frequency. The parents and teachers can use these words to assess or enhance vocabulary of young Muslim Urdu speakers. The data can be presented in a hard copy

<sup>10</sup> Abdelwahab, A. G. S., Forbes, S., Cattani, A., Goslin, J., & Floccia, C. (2021). An adaptation of the MacArthur-Bates CDI in 17 Arabic dialects for children aged 8 to 30 months. *Language Learning and Development*, 17(4), 425-446.

of word bank or through any freely accessed software. For the purpose sponsors will be required. The results of current study can also be used for assessment of early speech perception skills of children in the age range of 3-6 years.

A study was conducted to observe the speech perception abilities of Hindi children aged 6 to 8 and to identify the patterns, words that are bi-syllabic or monosyllabic, minimal pairs, and sentences. Picture-pointing response mode was used and recorded stimuli. It was found a feasible way to assess speech perception in young people, especially those who have hearing loss (Arya<sup>11</sup> et.al., 2019). The current study also focuses on making a Picturable word bank for early-aged children. A piece of evidence has been found from this study that which words the children speak in the age range of 3 to 6 years. We can add these words in basic books (Qaida) for early childhood children. A tool can be developed by using these words to examine the speech and language of children. We may also prepare a plan for speech therapy and those with delayed speech. We may use these words to develop the word vocabulary of the children by using the Urdu word bank. This Picturable word bank can be useful for the assessment and intervention of children in the age range of 3-6 years old.

### **Conclusion**

The pilot study presented the most frequently occurring Picturable Urdu Words spoken by young Muslim Urdu speakers of 3-6-year-old. Urdu Word Bank has been developed to aid in the development of early childhood assessment and intervention tools in Urdu Language. The words of the word bank can serve as a pool for the development of Urdu assessment and intervention tool development for children with or without special needs. A list of the most frequently occurring Urdu words has been provided in the study for 3-6 years old children along with the most frequently spoken English words.

### **Recommendations**

Urdu Picturable word bank is recommended to be used in Early Childhood Education for children with and without disabilities. The age-wise list is recommended to be used by professionals working on the speech and language development of children. The study may be extended widely and can be conducted in other provinces of Pakistan to develop a more inclusive word bank. The participation of children residing in rural areas of Pakistan is recommended for future studies of wider scope.

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<sup>11</sup> Arya, R., Nandurkar, A., Shah, M., & Verma, N. (2019). Speech perception skills of Hindi speaking children with pre-lingual hearing loss using hearing aids and cochlear implants. *Indian Journal of Otolaryngology and Head & Neck Surgery*, 71(Suppl 2), 1241-1247.



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