

# A magical realist language? From the 'chutnification' of English to multilingualism in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and its film adaptation

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In 1982, Salman Rushdie defined the language of *Midnight's Children* a literary idiolect derived from a process of 'chutnification', i.e. the incorporation of elements of Indian languages and dialects into English. Creatively resorting to inflection and derivation, borrowing, compounding, neologisms, and Indian expressions,

Rushdie's 'chutnified' English contributes to the magical realist narrative mode of the novel and its subversion of western paradigms of historical representation. In the homonymous film directed by Deepa Mehta in 2012, instead, parts of the novel have been 'translated' into Hindi and Urdu in order to provide the audience with a mimetic representation of Indian multilingualism. By privileging code-switching over an impossibly hybrid language, however, the film adaptation fails to convey the magical realism of the novel and its discursively disruptive power.