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Language Hybridity in *Midnight's Children*: A Comparative Study of the Croatian and Czech Versions of the Text

Abstract. This chapter investigates Salman Rushdie's experimentation with language obtained through code-mixing, used as a constructive means of a binary model that explores reinventions of hybrid traditions in postcolonial India on lexical and syntactic levels. Linguistic reconstructions are approached from the perspective of translation studies in a comparative analysis of the Croatian and Czech versions of the text. The paper encompasses two variants of code-mixing, English and Indian, perceived as complementary components in the code-mixing process. The lexical relations between English and Hindi-Urdu are, in the English variant, equalised, while the Indian variant disrupts standard English. The variants of the source text do not correspond to their counterparts in the translated versions. As a result, the English text shows a higher degree of hybridity than the Croatian and Czech translations. The objective is to demonstrate the consequences of the unilateral method applied in the transfer process, resulting from neglect and misconception of the Indian component in the code-mixing system. The Croatian version insists upon an Anglophone approach. The Czech version is used as a heuristic tool to illustrate the alternative possibilities of the idiosyncrasies peculiar to the bilingual model applied by the author.

Keywords. hybridity, code-mixing, postcolonial literature, transfer process, target language

Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* (first published in 1981) figures among one of the most expressive examples of the "contact literature"[1] that attained international fame in the post-Nehru era. The novel, written in Hinglish, is characterised by a heterogeneous mixture of cultural, literary, and linguistic forms, multilayered intertextuality, irony, and remarkable linguistic innovations. Rushdie's style and narrative techniques and the historical and political aspects of the text have all been the subject of many critical studies. Still, the question of language in Indian English writing is insufficiently explored, especially when

1 Kachru 1983: 44.

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perceived through the lens of translation studies. I emphasise this because playing with multilingual forms is one of the most representative features of Rushdie's creative practice. The novel owes much of its success to the writer's double cultural heritage, where language hybridity plays a central role.

Rushdie's experimentation with hybrid forms is known as chutnification. In the context of narration, it can be described as encapsulating culturally mixed, crowded, overlapping, and yet systematically arranged layers of a multilingual Indian society.[2] From a linguistic point of view, chutnification refers to the active application of language obtained through code-mixing that involves linguistic interaction between more than one language code. This implies not only the integration of the domestic vocabulary into English syntax but also the creation of new English terms and playing with the vernacular lexical and syntactic units. Such a method of communication is designed to serve both foreign and domestic interests alike and requires "mutual satisfaction"[3] in the transfer process. As Biljana Romić rightly points out, "Rushdie, who primarily seeks out his identity in language, concurrently adopts both cultural contexts equally and feels good in both—but only in both parallelly, without one of them, it is entirely irrelevant which one, he would be left without himself and home".[4] In *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie is not only cautious to balance his binary models but also seeks to transgress them by introducing intentional mistakes and by using hybridity as an ironic tool. That does not suit the Croatian translator of the novel. The incongruencies result from overlooking and misinterpreting domestic inscriptions that form an essential part of Rushdie's language. This paper will focus on lexical and syntactic aspects of Rushdie's hybridity by contrasting Croatian and Czech versions of the novel to illustrate the biases of a unilateral linguistic approach that relies exclusively on the predominance of the English language. Rushdie's text suffers from such a model and requires a dual system where languages are seen as a joined entity.

2 In "The Riddle of Midnight", Rushdie explains what he, as an author, finds the most fascinating about India: "its ideas of multiplicity, pluralism, hybridity" and to him, "the defining image of India is the crowd, and the crowd is by nature superabundant, heterogeneous, many things at once" (Rushdie 1992: 32).

3 Venuti 2004: 488.

4 Romić 1997: 95. Translation from the Croatian is mine.

1 Critical approach to the choice of language

In the initial phase of Indian English writing, precedence given to a non-Indian language was perceived as a threat in literary and political terms. Indian critical circles for literature, between the 1930s and 1960s, considered a foreign language inappropriate for conveying Indian topics. The complexities surrounding the integration of English in Indian settings had constructive linguistic consequences resulting in language manipulation that became a distinctive mark of Indo-Anglian writing. Recent studies have challenged the image of English perceived throughout the twentieth century as a superior language and the sole linguistic medium of modernity. In "Introduction: Modernity and the Vernacular", Amit Chaudhuri draws attention to the opposite sociolinguistic phenomenon that took place in parallel with the increasing incorporation of English in Indian linguistic spheres. In contrast to the general consensus, Chaudhuri argues that in the twentieth century, when English was already established as the prime vehicle in all public spheres, for the growing Indian middle class it was not the expansion of English but rather the rise of the vernacular that played a vital role in the process of modernisation.[5] His argument aligns with the misconceptions of regional Indian literatures discussed by Nicola Pozza in his article "Translating from India and the Moving Space of Translation". Pozza opposes the assumptions that the translations of *bhasha* literatures are rare or non-existent and that the minor literatures are highly dependent on tradition.[6] These misrepresentations resulted from Eurocentric methods inappropriately applied to Indian literatures composed in regional languages. By shifting the issue to the Indian context, Pozza displays the prolific tradition of translating the vernacular literatures into English and other languages in India. He also shows that hybridity was an essential component of Indian texts even it started to be perceived as one of the most characteristic features of Indian English texts.[7]

Applying inappropriate unilateral methods to evaluate Indian texts is not peculiar to the *bhasha* literatures. According to Romić, since they are written in English, Indian English texts often risk being read exclusively from the Anglophone perspective.[8] Her claim refers to the narrating process, but from my viewpoint it manifests in the translation as well. The unilateral translation in the code-mixing

5 Chaudhuri 2001: xxi.

6 These claims contradict the way the reception of the Indian English texts was understood. It was perceived in contrast to the texts composed in the vernaculars during the same time. See Rushdie 1992: 50; Mukherjee 2006: 382.

7 Pozza 2010.

8 Romić 2006: 312. The topic is discussed by Kirpal in "Je li Indijski roman shvaćen?" (2006: 314–329). In Rushdie's case, it becomes especially relevant when observed in the light of the mythical dimension of the text. For concrete examples, see Zrnić 2018: 128–142.

case is an asymmetrical act that fails to render the heterogenous cultural folds and is unsuitable for a hybrid text. Walter Benjamin suggests returning to the origin: "Particularly when translating from a language very remote from his own he [the translator] must go back to the primal elements of language itself and penetrate to the point where work, image, and tone converge."[9] The "immanent hybridity" discussed by Chaudhuri in his text "Lure of the Hybrid" is worth mentioning in this context. Referring to the critics' simplified interpretation of the language, Chaudhuri notices that hybridity can also be hidden and thus reflect the innovations introduced by the author.[10]

2 Rushdie's relation to language

Rushdie's engagement in the language choice-oriented debates demonstrates the purpose of language in his creative writing. In his collection of essays *Imaginary Homelands*, he refers to the matter in the following terms:

> One of the changes has to do with attitudes towards the use of English. Many have referred to the argument about the appropriateness of this language to Indian themes. And I hope all of us share the view that we can't simply use the language in the way the British did; that it needs remaking for our own purposes. Those of us who use English do so in spite of our ambiguity towards it, or perhaps because of that, perhaps because we can find in that linguistic struggle a reflection of other struggles taking place in the real world, struggles between the cultures within ourselves and the influences at work upon our societies. To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free.[11]

Rushdie argues that Indian writers who choose English as their language of expression do not succumb to British imperialism but interfere with the language by challenging its linguistic assumptions through the infusion of the rhythm, syntax, and vocabulary of native languages. In his novel *Shame*, he goes on to sharply point out the contradiction between the domestic term and its English equivalent by underlying the limits and inappropriateness of the latter to convey the same meaning:

> This word: "shame". No, I must write it in its original form, not in this peculiar language tainted by wrong concepts and the accumulated detritus of its owners' unrepented past, this Angrezi in which I am forced to write,

9 Benjamin 2000 [1923]: 22.
10 Chaudhuri 2006: 364–365.
11 Rushdie 1992: 17.

> and so for ever alter what is written. . . *Sharam*, that's the word. For which this paltry "shame" is a wholly inadequate translation. [. . .] A short word, but one containing encyclopaedias of nuance. It was not only shame that his mothers forbade Omar Khayyam to feel, but also embarrassment, discomfiture, decency, modesty, shyness, the sense of having an ordained place in the world, and other dialects of emotion for which English has no counterparts.[12]
>
> To unlock a society, look at its untranslatable words.[13]

In *Midnight's Children*, the author materialises his theory allowing us to observe these two arguments in practice.[14] In "Resisting Power in Language", Pilapitiya uses two terms—deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation—to describe the act of writing in Rushdie's text. The terminology is taken from Deleuze's and Guattari's language theory that involves the reversed roles of "major" and "minor" languages. The process of deterritorialisation refers to a disruption of basic components of a "major" language, such as conventions of syntax and grammar, to deprive it of its hegemonic power. Reterritorialisation, on the other hand, consists of incorporating words from "minor" languages and a fusion of varied elements in order to enrich the dominant language with experimentation and play.[15] In Rushdie's case, these processes complement each other and should be examined together.

3 Translator's relation to the text

Lia Paić's 2000 translation of *Midnight's Children* continues to be the only form in which Rushdie's novel is known to Croatian readers.[16] The text's translation, which I find problematic from the linguistic point of view, has not been revisited or updated since. The omissions are acute in the domain of code-mixing, which can be divided into English and Indian variants. The former is characterised by the equal-

12 Rushdie 1983: 38–39.

13 Rushdie 1983: 104.

14 The figure of Reverend Mother in *Midnight's Children* can be seen as supporting the point Rushdie is making in his novel Shame. A distinctive mark of her speech is the repetitive expression "whatsitsname". Her insistence upon vernacular terms and the persistent refusal to use English terms replaced by "whatsitsname" shape her personality and emphasise her unwillingness to accept the Western influence.

15 Pilapitiya 2008: 52–53. Compared to Elleke Boehmer's "double bind" ("cleaving to and cleaving from Europe"), the deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation provide a more precise picture of Rushdie's language transfer. See Boehmer 1995: 105–106.

16 Lia Paić has translated another Rushdie novel, *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008, translated by Paić in 2011), as well as his autobiographical *Joseph Anton: A Memoir* (2012, trans. Paić 2014). From the Italian, she has also translated Umberto Eco's novels *Il nome della rosa* (1980, trans. Paić 2008), *Il pendolo di Foucault* (1988, trans. Paić 2003), *Baudolino* (2000, trans. Paić 2001), and *La misteriosa fiamma della regina Loana* (2004, trans.

isation of syntactic relations whereby the lexical items taken from Hindi-Urdu are subdued to standard English's morphological and phonetic rules. Conversely, the Indian variant introduces a disbalance into the English syntax by allowing syntactic features proper to Indian languages to distort its conventional function. Simply put, the Indian variant manifests as Indian English. The Croatian version does not correspond to either variant. Instead what we find is exactly the opposite of the original text's objectives and function in relation to both code-mixing processes. The Czech translation (first published in 1995) by Pavel Dominik[17] differs from the source text and the Croatian version in that it contains a glossary with domestic vocabulary, added at the end of the book. Dominik took a different approach to Paić, as will be explained further in the sections that follow. Using selected examples, I will demonstrate how Rushdie's variants are reflected in the Croatian and Czech versions of the text by approaching them from a broader narrative context and looking at the difficulties they create in the transfer process.

4 Lexical alignment in English variant

Rushdie's language presupposes a polyglot reader familiar with both codes involved in the code-mixing process. Hence the lexical transplantation is without an explanation of the selected borrowings. The vernacular terms integrated into the English text are subdued to the equalisation of the syntactic relations, primarily manifested in morphological inflexions of English applied to the borrowed terms. The purpose of including loanwords in the text is not simply to evoke an exotic atmosphere but to point towards the historical and political background of the novel.

Paić 2006). Among her recent translations from the English into Croatian is the novel *When I Was Invisible* by Dorothy Koomson (2016, trans. Paić 2017).

17 Pavel Dominik is a renowned Czech translator from English and Russian. In 2016 he received the Czech State Award for Translation for his translation of Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada or Ardor: A Family Chronicle* (1969, trans. Dominik 2015). Dominik's work focuses primarily on the novels of Rushdie and Nabokov. Besides *Midnight's Children*, he has translated *Shame* (1983, trans. Dominik 2004), *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995, trans. Dominik 2013), *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999, trans. Dominik 2001), *Fury* (2001, trans. Dominik 2003), *Shalimar the Clown* (2005, trans. Dominik and Zuzana Mayerová 2008), *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008, trans. Dominik 2010), and the compilation of short stories *East, West* (1994, trans. Dominik and Stanislava Pošustová 2006). In 1991 Dominik's translation of Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955, trans. Dominik 1991) brought him the Jozef Jungmann Award. He has translated more than ten works by Nabokov from English and Russian, including *Pale Fire* (1962, trans. Dominik and Jiří Pelán 2011), *Speak, Memory* (1966, trans. Dominik 1998), and *Dar* (1937, translated from Russian by Dominik in 2007). He has also translated theatre plays, such as *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde (1895, trans. Dominik in 2012), and film dialogues for dubbing.

If we approach the translated versions from this angle, the distinctions between the original and the rendered text are remarkable.

One of the primary challenges the translator of Rushdie's novel encounters is to determine whether the domestic vocabulary should be kept in its original form or rendered into the target language. The Croatian and Czech versions offer two distinctive points of view in this respect. In her translation into Croatian, Paić retains the vernacular items in their original form. It can be argued that such a decision contributes to the preservation of the dialectical link between Eastern and Western cultures. Nevertheless, the domestic elements are an integral part of the (foreign) English syntax, which requires their adjustment to the target language. Thus, even if preserved, a domestic term is subject to a radical change and needs to adapt to its new syntactic environment and simultaneously retain the objectives it has in the original text. The Croatian translation, however, does not follow these requirements. Beyond that, by changing the gender and number, and meaning and function, of loanwords Paić introduces additional grammatical mistakes, resulting in incomprehension of the lexical units and the narrative context to which they are associated. On the other hand, Dominik opted for a different strategy in his Czech translation and decided to render the vernacular items into the target language, raising the question of hybridity's erasure from Rushdie's text. The following example illustrates the type of modification in which changing the domestic term's form leads to the extinction of the rich and multiple connotations of the original text. It also shows how a loanword can be rendered to the point of unrecognition.

Example 1[18]

Original: And in all the cities all the towns all the villages **the little dia-lamps** burn on window-sills porches verandahs, while trains burn in the Punjab, with the green flames of blistering paint and the glaring saffron of fired fuel, like **the biggest dias in the world**.

Croatian: A u svim velikim gradovima i u svim malim gradovima i u svim selima **male svjetiljke** gore na prozorskim daskama, trijemovima i verandama, dok u Panjabu gore vlakovi, mjehurićastim plamenovima zelene boje i zasljepljujućom šafranastom bojom zapaljena goriva, poput **najvećeg *diasa* na svijetu**.

Czech: A ve všech městech, městečkách a vesnicích hoří na okenních parapetech, nade dveřmi a na verandách **malé hliněné lampičky**, zatímco v Paňdžábu hoří zelenými plameny zpuchýřovatělé barvy a planoucím šafránem spalovaného paliva vlaky, podobné **největším lampám na světě**.

18 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 155 / trans. Paić 2000: 129 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 138. Boldface mine throughout.

This extract is part of a paragraph that describes the central moment in the novel—the simultaneous birth of Saleem and Shiva and, at the same time, the proclamation of Indian independence. This explains the emphasis on saffron and green, which explicitly point to the Indian flag. Central to this ambience are the little oil lamps—*dias* (f.)—that appear twice in the sentence but are used in two different forms and convey different symbolic meanings. When introducing the term, Rushdie provides its translation into English ("the little dia-lamps"), doubling the information. In its reappearance at the end of the sentence, the term *dia* adopts the English ending for plural because here it stands alone and refers to the trains that burn in the Punjab ("the biggest dias in the world").

In Paić's version "the little dia-lamps" are rendered as "male svjetiljke", which means that the translator overlooked the domestic term and rendered only the English components (the little lamps). The translator introduces the loanword at the end of the sentence but misinterprets the English inflexion applied to it. The plural form of the term *dia* ("dias") is misunderstood as a masculine noun in the singular, to which the translator applied an additional ending for the genitive singular ("dias-a"). Her choice is supported by the adjective preceding the loanword, which follows the same morphological rule ("najvećeg" taken as the equivalent of "biggest").[19] Since the term *dia* is omitted in the first part of the sentence, the form "diasa", suddenly appearing at the end of the sentence as a masculine noun in the singular, remains entirely incomprehensible to readers, who cannot connect the word to the little oil lamps, nor to the burning trains in the Punjab.[20] In his Czech translation, Dominik offers a different solution and decides to render the term into the target language on both occasions. Unlike Paić, who reduces the doubling by omitting the term *dia* in the first case, Dominik amplifies the information by introducing the adjective "hliněné", which corresponds to oil (adj.)—[lamps]. In this way, Dominik retains the sense of doubling we find in the original. The reader of the Czech version will also notice the nuanced distinction between the diminutive "lampičky" (which corresponds to "the little dia-lamps")

19 Unlike in English, the adjective is in Slavic languages variable and should, in this case, be read as najveće.

20 Misconceptions of gender and number in the transfer process of the borrowed lexical items have a high frequency of occurrence in the Croatian version of the text. They appear in the transmission of loanwords and with terms associated with the intertextual background of the text. Take, for instance, the misrepresentation of the demon Ravana from Valmiki's Ramayana, which serves as an important intertextual layer to Rushdie's narration. Ravana is transformed into a feminine figure in the Croatian translation. The translator misinterprets the last sign of the demon's name as a typical female ending in the Croatian language. Such transfer provides inaccurate information about the Indian epic and introduces ambiguity into Rushdie's relation to the oral tradition. This is important since Rushdie's intertextuality includes intentional inversions of epic and puranic elements included in the novel. See Zrnić 2008: 132–138.

and "lampám" (which corresponds to "dias"). The latter and the adjective specifying it ("největším") are correctly adapted to their plural forms, allowing the reader to understand the metaphoric function of *dias* in correspondence with the burning trains of the Punjab.

The semantic weight of the loanword is noteworthy in this particular example. *Dias* complete the image of the novel's historical background, taking place in parallel to the description of Saleem's birth. Their complementary function is expressed in two different ways, which is why they are used twice in the sentence. On one level, through their association with light, *dias* complete the colouristic ambience emphasised in the text and can be read as the white middle band in the official Indian flag, believed to symbolise light or the path of truth. On the other level, through their association with fire, the writer reuses *dias* to expand their interpretative space. Supported by hyperbole (the burning of the "biggest dias in the world"), the loanword starts to function as a filter of intolerance and alludes to the conflicts that erupted in the Punjab between Hindus and Muslims immediately after India gained independence. The loanword thus establishes a tension between an ideal of freedom and the negative repercussions it may have on the nation. In correspondence to the double aspect, the *dias* also encompass the antagonistic nature of the two boys exchanged at birth—Saleem and Shiva—one of which will by mistake grow up in a Muslim family and the other in a Hindu one. None of these associations is comprehensible in the Croatian version of the text.

Another type of lexical discrepancy noticeable in the Croatian version concerns the translator's misconception of the origin of certain Hindi-Urdu words. As mentioned earlier, the vernacular items incorporated into English syntax are not visually marked in Rushdie's text. Langeland notes Rushdie's intentional elusions of typographical emphasis when introducing domestic vocabulary into his writing and construes it as one of the strategies that distinguishes him from his predecessors. By this means, the loanwords naturally fit into the English syntax.[21] The two translations discussed in this paper differ in this respect. Paić's version, where the domestic terms are mostly retained in their original form, introduces typographical emphasis to distinguish them from the rest of the syntactic elements. This rule does not apply to the Czech translation, where the translator is inclined to render the borrowings into the target language. Equalising the syntactic relations through the visual aspect of the text can be challenging for any translator, especially when languages share the same term conveying different meanings in each language. The following example illustrates the lexical confusion resulting from the misconception of the word's origin and the absence of typographical emphasis in the original text.

21 Langeland 1996: 18.

Example 2[22]

Original: "Tomorrow I'll have a bath and shave: I am going to put on a brand new kurta, shining and starched, and **pajamas** to match."

Croatian: "Sutra ću se okupati i obrijati, obući sasvim novu sjajnu i uškrobljenu *kurtu* i **pidžamu** koja tome pristaje."

Czech: "Zítra se vykoupu a oholím; vezmu si na sebe zbrusu novou, zářivou a naškrobenou kurtu a barevně ladící **pádžáma**."

Only one word in the Croatian version appears in italics (*kurta*), yet the same rule is not applied to the equivalent of the word *pajamas*. The translator renders the latter as "pidžamu" (acc. sing. of pidžama), a term adopted from Persian, corresponding to nightwear. Yet, in the above example, *kurta* and *pajamas* belong to the same category of lexicon and are borrowed from the same language. The syntactic and narrative frames indicate that the word *pajamas* in the original text refers to loose linen or cotton trousers mainly worn by men in North India. Hence, it does not cover the same meaning the Croatian translator ascribes to it. The distinction between the term's two connotations is evident in the Czech translation, where the term "pádžáma" corresponds to the meaning of the original text. This is corroborated by its explanation in the glossary at the end of the book.[23] By rendering Saleem's outfit as "pidžamu" the Croatian translator converts the traditional Indian clothing into Western sleepwear that the main character is unlikely to combine with his *kurta*.[24] The term in question appears several times in the novel and is persistently interpreted in the Croatian language as sleeping clothes, creating a distorted image of Indian culture.

Phonetical anglicisation forms another appealing aspect of Rushdie's creative hybridity. The following example illustrates how the translator's unrecognition of a phonetically disguised vernacular term can mislead the target audience. It also demonstrates the translator's incompatibility with Rushdie's ironic twists.

Example 3[25]

Original: "Let me help, let me help, Allah what a man I've married, who goes into **gullies** to fight with **goondas**!"

22 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 141 / trans. Paić 2000: 118 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 126.

23 pádžáma, pájdžáma (z per. páj = noha, džáma = oděv), volné plátěné nebo bavlněné kalhoty, běžný oděv severoindických mužů (trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 533).

24 As the text subsequently describes, Saleem completes his outfit with a pair of sandals, also misinterpreted in the Croatian version. The translator renders the term as "papuče", which corresponds to slippers and thus misrepresents the whole attire of Saleem.

25 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 39 / trans. Paić 2000: 36 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 46.

Croatian: "Daj da pomognem, daj da pomognem, Alahu, za kakvog sam se to čovjeka udala, koji ulazi među **cijevi** kako bi se borio s ***goondasima***!"

Czech: "Dovol, pomůžu ti, Alláh mě netrestej, co jsem si to vzala za chlapa, který se chodí rvát na **ulici** s **darebáky**!"

In example 3 the ideal reader of the English text instantly perceives two borrowings (gullies and goondas), whereas, in the Croatian version, the reader finds only one (*goondasima*). The first omission in Paić's version is the translator's misconception of the word *gullies*, associated with Aadam Aziz, Naseem's husband. The term is rendered into Croatian as "cijevi", indicating that the translator most likely perceived it from the Anglophone perspective (Eng. gully), even though "cijevi" (Eng. pipes) does not correspond to the English meaning of gullies. Yet the narrative context shows that the donor language in this case is not English but Hindi-Urdu, where we find a homophone *gālī* (f.), which is here phonetically anglicised. The term, read from the Indian perspective, refers to a small, narrow street and, as such, has a strong historical connotation. The incident to which this instance refers is the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which occurred in Amritsar in April 1919 during the Baisakhi festival, right after the British government banned all forms of gathering. A peaceful crowd of Hindus and Sikhs had gathered to protest the arrest of two pro-Indian independence leaders who were partisans of Gandhi's *satyagraha*. The governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, interpreted it as a conspiratorial sign of an upcoming revolt of Indians, so in response General Reginald Dyer blocked the exit of the Bagh with his troops and ordered his men to open fire without warning on the unarmed crowd, which included women and children. Rushdie retrospectively places his characters in this contextual frame and uses a term that can involve historically oriented possibilities of meaning. Since the term *gālī* is phonetically anglicised in the source text (gully), the Croatian translator does not recognise it and subsequently misleads her readers by choosing a meaning with no connection to the original text. The inverted meaning makes it impossible to follow the logic of Naseem's argument. Cross-examined with the Czech translation, we can see that the term *gullies*, rendered in Czech as "ulici", corresponds to the loanword taken from Hindi-Urdu (*gālī*). This example shows that only when both language codes are considered can the reader grasp the meaning and connect it with the historical dimension of the text.

The next loanword offers a different point of view. Unlike gullies, the word *goonda* is in Paić's version retained and clearly distinguished from the rest of the syntactic components. The term appears several times in the novel with different semantic connotations. It counts among those lexemes the author plays with to introduce ironic twists between Eastern and Western cultures. This is best demon-

strated in Rushdie's explanation of the term in the text: "young goondas, that is to say hooligans or apaches".[26] The author's explanation of the loanword (*goonda*) consists of two terms taken as synonyms ("hooligans or apaches"), but only one corresponds to the meaning of the word *goonda*—hooligans. The other term, apaches, refers to Latino-Americans, intentionally introduced to ironise Western misconceptions of the Indian nation. In example 3 Dominik renders the term *goonda* by selecting the appropriate meaning, in Czech "darebáky", which corresponds to hooligans. In Paić's version, where the vernacular item is retained in the original form, its integration into Croatian syntax does not fit the required inflexion. Paić duplicates the ending for plural by inappropriately adding to its English form an ending that is already there ("goondas-ima") and thus reveals her unfamiliarity with the term's meaning. Through such transfer, she confirms the irony Rushdie points to when he explains *goondas* as "hooligans or apaches".

The examples selected to illustrate the English variant of code-mixing show how insisting upon an interpretation limited to one linguistic code evacuates the cultural exchange, essential for understanding the text in its linguistic, historical, and political aspects.

5 Syntactic disturbance in Indian variant

In the so far cited examples, we have seen that the original text aims to adjust the imported lexicon to the English language system. This is achieved mainly by subordinating the domestic vocabulary to the morphology and phonetics of standard English. In Rushdie's novel, code-mixed language types are not limited to the lexical level of a language. Besides the English variant, the text abounds in a subversive linguistic strategy in which the elements of the English syntax are subject to the syntactic features peculiar to Indian languages. The result is deviations from standard English, typical for Indian speakers, evincing as inscriptions of Indian English. Cases of extended borrowing from Hindi-Urdu, which involve the reorganisation of English syntactic units, are more demanding from a translatological point of view. The idiosyncratic Indianisms appear in dialogues and are, in most cases, repeatedly applied to the same characters forming a distinctive mark of their identity. When referring to Rushdie's different registers, Neelam Srivastava notices that the protagonists' characterisation, except Saleem's, almost exclusively relies on dialogues made "to be as expressive of each character's individuality as possible".[27] Consequently, the reader of the English text is constantly reminded of

26 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 570.
27 Srivastava 2005: 225.

a substantial distinction between the highly stylised British used by the narrator of the novel (Saleem) and different registers used by other characters.

Deviant syntactic forms reflecting the idiosyncratic Indianisms have induced some scholars to requestion Rushdie's use of language. In her article "Postcolonial Literature and The Magic Radio", Gillian Gane raises the following question: if English is the main language of the text, is it at the same time the first language of the characters, or do they rather speak in their native Indian languages, which the writer translates into English? [28] We can distinguish two types of strategies used by Indo-Anglian authors that justify her question: language-naming and its active application. On the example of Saleem's interaction with the Pakistani soldiers, Gane underlines the first type (language-naming) because it shows that Saleem sometimes speaks in Urdu even though his speech is presented in English, and most importantly "eliminates the possibility that all otherwise unattributed dialogue in the novel is in English".[29]

Naming a specific language most likely will not create an obstacle in the process of translating into any target language. On the contrary, its active application can be rather challenging for the translator. In "Writing Translation", Prasad upholds the view that Indian English writers do not translate texts from vernacular languages into English as much as they use different strategies to make their works look like translations.[30] If we approach Rushdie's novel from the perspective of formal manifestation of code-mixing, discussed by Braj B. Kachru in "Toward Structuring Code-Mixing", we notice that the mentioned formations all appear in Rushdie's text.[31] They reflect Rushdie's impressive concern with language hybridity and show English in all its variety, which is lost in the rendered text, so the Indian variant disappears. The following examples aim to demonstrate some of the most characteristic deviations from standard English and what it means to lose them. They also raise an important question: how should a translator deal with intentionally introduced syntactic impurities, and what if such linguistic constructions have no equivalencies in the target language?

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28 Gane 2006: 570. The question is not peculiar to Rushdie's case but concerns many other Indian English texts and has been addressed by some authors as well. When referring to the Hindi translation of his novel *A Suitable Boy*, Vikram Seth noted: "A big part of the dialogue was reconstituted here in that language, where it had been playing in the ears of my mind. The political debates and arguments in the novel are more real in the Hindi. The Hindi-Urdu poetry that had been put into English in the novel has now returned to itself. Being a writer I am surprised to admit that in contrast to my original, this work in the Hindi translation has come out much stronger" (cited in Sadana 2012: 141).

29 Gane 2006: 577.

30 Prasad 1999: 41–57.

31 Kachru's examples of code-mixing formations include unit insertion, unit hybridisation, sentence insertion, idiom or collocation insertion, inflection attachment, and reduplication (applied to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). See Kachru 1978: 32–35.

Inaccurate use of verbal tenses, particularly of the present continuous in cases alien to English expectations (such as frequent actions, completed actions, or stative verbs), is one of the most distinctive marks of Indian English and a recurrent feature in Indian English texts. While this frequently occurs in Rushdie's novel, it cannot be seen in its translated versions.

Example 4[32]

Original: [Pia Aziz]: "that is what the Public **is wanting**!"

Croatian: [Pia Aziz]: "to je ono što Publika **želi**!"

Czech: [Pia Azízová]: "po tom dneska lidi **touží**!"

The reader of the novel in English will instantly recognise an echo of the Indian variant in this example. Croatian and Czech languages have only one way of expressing the present tense, which can correspond to the present simple or present continuous in English, depending on the context. In this example, the author's choice of verb tense is replaced with the tense expected in the target language ("želi" in Paić's version and "touží" in Dominik's version). As a result, Rushdie's characteristic use of Indian English is in both translations invisible.

In cases where the present continuous is expected to be used, Rushdie's characters (and Indian-native speakers of English) are inclined to simplify its use by dropping the auxiliary verb. The omission of the indispensable element appears in the declarative and interrogative clauses, where it manifests as an absence of the auxiliary forms *do* or *are*.

Example 5[33]

Original: And Mary: "**You talking** crazy, Joe, **why you worrying** with those so-bad things? We can live quietly **still,** no?"

Croatian: A Mary: "Ludo **govoriš,** Joe; zašto **si zabrinut** zbog tih tako loših stvari? Još **uvijek** možemo mirno živjeti, zar ne?"

Czech: A Mary: "**Mluvíš** jako blázen, Joe, proč **se trápíš** tak ošklivými věcmi? My **přece** můžeme žít v klidu, ne?"

Example 6[34]

Original: [Ahmed Sinai]: "**You coming** with me, son?"

Croatian: [Ahmed Sinai]: "**Ideš li** sa mnom, sine?"

32 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 336 / trans. Paić 2000: 276 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 280.
33 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 139 / trans. Paić 2000: 116 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 125.
34 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 420 / trans. Paić 2000: 344 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 348.

Czech: [Ahmad Sináí]: "**Půjdeš** se mnou, synu?"

There is no indication of the syntactic impurities in the translations of the above examples. The present tense of the auxiliary verb *to be* in example 5 and the auxiliary form *are* in example 6, lacking in Rushdie's text, are not applicable to the Croatian and Czech present tense forms. "You talking" is in Croatian rendered as "govoriš", and in Czech as "mluvíš", both corresponding to the standard present continuous forms. "you worrying" is in Paić's version reformulated in the participial adjective ("si zabrinut"), and in Dominik's version in the reflexive verb ("se trápíš"). Mary Pereira's utterance also contains reversed word order ("we can live quietly still"), which disturbs conventional English, and a colloquial tag question at the end of the sentence ("no?"). In both translations, the emphatic particle *still*, originally placed after the word it emphasises, is brought back to its proper position ("još uvijek" placed in front of the verbal form "možemo" in the Paić and "přece" placed in front of "můžeme" in the Dominik). The Croatian version endows the provided examples with formality and politeness, visible in the form of the tag question ("zar ne?") in example 5 and the intensifier "li" in example 6 ("Ideš li"). As a result, the Croatian reader gets the impression of sophisticated English used by Mary Pereira, which is exactly the opposite of Rushdie's intention. The Czech translation also eliminates the syntactic impurities but retains the informal style of the character's speech by using colloquial expressions ("jako blázen", "v klidu, ne?").

Even when the auxiliary verb is in Rushdie's text used with the present continuous, Rushdie will still not allow his characters' speech to pass unnoticed. He will then use the absence of inversion in interrogative clauses as another means to distort standard English.

Example 7[35]

[Picture Singh]: "**you are planning** to be married some day? [. . .] **You're telling** truth, captain? **Is a** medical fact?"

[Slika Singh]: "**planiraš li se ti** jednog dana oženiti? [. . .] **Govoriš li** istinu, satniče? **Je li to** medicinska činjenica?"

[Obrázek Singh]: "**máte v úmyslu** se někdy oženit? [. . .] **Mluvíte** pravdu, šéfe? **Je to** lékařsky potvrzený?"

Unlike in English, in Hindi-Urdu interrogative clauses do not require inversion of the usual subject-verb order. The subject can also be left out, as seen in the last clause of the above example ("Is a medical fact?"). Rushdie applies both these

35 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 563 / trans. Paić 2000: 459–460 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 459.

Hindi-Urdu features to Picture Singh's speech to outline his deviated talking style. The readers of both translations cannot discern this background evident in the English text. In Paić's version the subject of the first interrogative clause in English ("you"), placed in front of the verb tense ("are planning"), is shifted after the main verb ("planiraš li se ti") as required by standard Croatian syntax. In the following sentence ("You're telling"), the translator left out the subject "you" ("Govoriš li") but added the subject of the last sentence where Rushdie had excluded it (gender-neutral pronoun "to"). Picture Singh's speech is in Croatian formalised by the enclitic "li", applied to verbal forms ("planiraš li", "govoriš li", "je li"). Dominik rendered the utterance in a similar fashion. The use of personal pronouns with verbal forms is in Czech not in the spirit of the language. The translator thus left them out ("máte v úmyslu" and "mluvíte"). The subject is visible through verbal forms rendered in the second-person plural. The subject of the last sentence is, like in the Croatian version, added after the verbal form ("to"). The readers of both translations thus remain unaware of the idiosyncratic Indianisms embedded in Picture Singh's speech.

Besides avoiding inversion in interrogative clauses, the perturbed word order is also achieved by placing the enclitics *also*, *only*, *even*, *just*, and *still* after the words they emphasise (as seen in example 5). The two following examples highlight this type of deviation from conventional English.

Example 8[36]

Original: [Amina Sinai]: "I never believed, but it's true, my God, they wipe their bottoms with paper **only**!. . ."

Croatian: [Amina Sinai]: "Nikada nisam vjerovala, ali istina je, moj Bože, svoje stražnjice brišu **samo** papirom!. . ."

Czech: [Amína Sináiová]: "Nikdy jsem tomu nevěřila, ale je to pravda, panebože, utírají si zadky **jenom** papírem!. . ."

Example 9[37]

Original: [Saleem]: "Maybe she doesn't like me **even**."

Croatian: [Saleem]:"Možda joj se **čak** ni ne sviđam."

Czech: [Salím]:"Možná že se jí **ani** nelíbím."

In these two examples it would have been possible to preserve the original pattern of speech in both translations and adjust to this aspect of Indian variant to reflect the characteristic features of the characters. However, the displaced enclitics

36 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 127 / trans. Paić 2000: 107 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 115.
37 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 256 / trans. Paić 2000: 211 / trans. Dominik 2009 [1995]: 218.

stressed in the source text are in both translations placed in front of the terms they emphasise ("samo" in example 8 and "čak" in example 9 in the Croatian version; "jenom" and "ani", respectively, in the Czech version).

The purpose of the Indian variant in Rushdie's text is not simply to evoke comic effect. Deviant syntactic forms of English have deeper social connotations. We often find them attributed to the female characters in the novel, which can thus be read as reflecting the patriarchal social structure. In a similar vein, the male characters whose speech is marked by the same domestic influence appear in explicit contrast to their interlocutors, alerting the reader of their weaker position in social rank or their opposite worldviews.[38] Such linguistic distinctions come across in Ghani's interaction with the "Europe-returned" doctor, Aadam Aziz.

Example 10[39]

Original: [Ghani]: "And now our own lady doctor is sick so you get your opportunity. That woman, always sick these days, too old, **I am thinking**, and not up in the latest developments **also, what-what**? I say: physician heal thyself. And I tell you this: I am wholly objective in my business relations. Feelings, love, I keep for my family **only**. If a person is not doing a first-class job for me, out she goes! **You understand me**?"

Croatian: [Ghani]: "A sada je naša vlastita liječnica bolesna, tako da dobivaš svoju priliku. Ta žena, stalno bolesna ovih dana, prestara, **mislim**, nije dovoljno upućena u najnovija dostignuća, **što li**? Kažem: liječnik liječi sebe samog. I kažem ti ovo: ja sam posve objektivan u svojim poslovnim odnosima. Osjećaje, ljubav čuvam **samo** za svoju obitelj. Ako osoba ne obavlja za mene prvoklasno posao, odlazi! **Razumiješ li me**?"

Czech: [Ghaní]: "Naše doktorka je teď nemocná, a tak se vám nabízí příležitost. Ta ženská věčně věků marodí, je už asi moc stará, a o nejnovějších vymoženostech branže nemá **taky** ponětí, **tak co**. Já tvrdím, že doktor se má vyléčit sám. A něco vám povím: ve svých obchodních vztazích jsem zcela objektivní. Pocity, lásku, to všechno si šetřím **pouze** pro svou rodinu. Pokud pro mě někdo neodvádí prvotřídní práci, může jít! **Rozumíte mi**?"

In this example Rushdie reproduces a series of idiosyncratic Indianisms to shape Ghani's personality in front of Doctor Aziz. The inappropriate use of the present continuous ("I am thinking"), the absence of the indispensable auxiliary form *do*

38 There are different variants of Indian English, which vary depending on the region or the speaker's profession. Kachru 1986: 31 claims that Indian English spoken by educated people is only one of the variants in a range of others conditioned by their position in society and geographical location.

39 Rushdie 2008 [1981]: 19 / trans. Paić 2000: 20 / Dominik 2009 [1995]: 30.

in the interrogative clause ("You understand me?"), the displaced enclitics ("also" and "only"), and the archaic form of English ("thyself") are all invisible in Paić's version of the text. In addition, the Croatian translator softens the abruptness of Ghani's tone by turning the reduplication ("what-what?") into a politely formulated tag question ("što li?") and modernises the archaic form, which accentuates Ghani's conservative worldview. The example supports Rushdie's parody of Muslim orthodoxy. As we learn in the novel, Ghani sahib allows Doctor Aziz to examine his daughter exclusively through the overcovering body veil. Ghani's linguistic peculiarity stresses the contrast between him and the more liberal Doctor Aziz.[40] While Dominik managed to preserve Ghani's characteristic speech through archaic expression ("věčně věků") and informal way of talking ("ženská", "marodí", "nemá ponětí", "tak co"), his version, like Paić's, does not reflect the Indian variant. The static verb inappropriately used in the present continuous in Rushdie's text is in Czech version omitted, the truncated interrogative clause appropriately formulated, and Rushdie's displaced enclitics placed in front of the words they emphasise.

The Indian variant cross-examined with the translated versions shows a significant stylistic contrast between the original and translated texts. The alternation of codes is in the translated versions completely dismissed. By absorbing the deviant English as if the author had neatly structured it, the reader is constantly exposed to "aberrant decoding".[41] Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin appropriately accentuate thus: "We need to distinguish between what is proposed as a standard code, English (the language of the erstwhile imperial centre), and the linguistic code, english, which has been transformed and subverted into several distinctive varieties throughout the world."[42] By opening space for Indian English, Rushdie distances himself from conventions and the exclusive dominance of the ethnocentric language.[43] The anomalous forms of English are therefore indispensable elements of his narration. Such irregularities demonstrate how and why the protagonists

40 Contrasted with Ghani's impure English, we also find the opposite, where the English-native speaker persistently uses a distorted Hindi-Urdu expression applied to William Methwold, Saleem's biological father: "sab kuch ticktock hai". The unit insertion contains a deviant Hindi-Urdu expression whereby the correct *thik-thak* form is replaced with its anglicised "ticktock" variant, repeatedly used by the character in the novel. Methwold's incapacity to properly adopt the domestic expression (*thik-thak*) places him in opposition to Saleem's foster father, Ahmed Sinai, who, deliberately uses "the Oxford drawl" English. Their different ways of speaking reflect the conflict within the Indian and British colonial exchange.

41 According to Umberto Eco, "aberrant decoding" occurs when a message is read by using a code different from its specific source code. Throughout such a process the text is subject to incorrect interpretation (Eco 1972: 106).

42 Ashcroft et al. 1989: 8.

43 Dayal 1992: 433–434.

domesticise once colonised zones or, as Rushdie himself put it, "are carving out large territories for themselves within its frontiers".[44]

Concluding remarks

In *Imaginary Homelands* Rushdie explains his use of language in the following terms: "Having been borne across the world, we are translated men. It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling, obstinately, to the notion that something can also be gained."[45] The examples in this paper show that the translators made the narrative available to their reading audiences with rather different values from their English counterpart. The departures from the original text appear in both discussed variants (English and Indian) and differ between the Croatian and Czech translations of the text. The lexical and syntactic exchanges between English and Hindi-Urdu emerge as key concerns in Rushdie's text and align with his presentation of the plot. When juxtaposed with the Croatian translation, both variants are contradictory to the original text. The English variant, which aims to balance the syntactic relations between the imported lexicon and English elements, is in the Croatian version imbalanced. By overlooking the domestic inscriptions, the Croatian translation distances its readers from their meaning and disconnects the vernacular terms from their narrative context. On the other hand, the Indian variant, which is meant to be off-balance, is in Paić's version subjected to distillation. As a result, the cultural differences explicit at the linguistic level are made invisible to Croatian readers and peripheral to the central interests of the text. Contrastingly, the Czech translator considers both language codes of the English variant and selects the meaning which corresponds to Rushdie's loanwords. Even though Dominik retains different registers by using colloquial phrases and expressions, the Indian variant is lost.

Paić's version does not maintain a sufficient degree of lexicographical equivalence because the translator opts for an asymmetrical act of transmission. Her translation of the novel is conducted exclusively from the Anglophone perspective and thus joins the unilateral reading of the Indo-Anglian texts. As such, it is utterly incompatible with Rushdie's language collision. The oversimplified method of the transfer process contradicts the point Rushdie is making "in favour of a multilingual nation".[46] By applying code-mixing in his text, Rushdie enriches his narration with a sociopolitical density inexistent in previous Indo-Anglian forms and expands the characterisation of characters by developing new aspects of com-

44 Rushdie 1992: 64.
45 Rushdie 1992: 17.
46 Srivastava 2005: 228.

munication that are not confined to the anglicised upper-middle class.[47] The alternation of codes in *Midnight's Children* thus entirely corresponds to Kachru's definition of "language dependency", described as "role-dependant and function-dependant linguistic phenomenon".[48] Different variants of English (including its violated forms) used by Rushdie should therefore be visible in translation for they represent heterogeneous Indian society and engage in the political climate of the novel. As Langeland rightly remarks, Rushdie's language functions "as a textual reminder of the colonial past" and outlines aspects of contemporary Indian society after the colonial era has ended.[49] This explains Rushdie's preference for hybrid characters and oppositional standpoints they convey through a wide range of forms a language can take in the code-mixing process. In the Croatian and Czech translations, Hinglish lost its other half.

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47 On different registers in Rushdie's text, see Srivastava 2005: 221.

48 Kachru 1978: 29.

49 Langeland 1996: 17.

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