

"midnight's children" by salman rushdie essay sample

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, the day of India's independence from British rule, Saleem's life is a microcosm of post-Independent India. The Title of this text, *Midnight's Children*, gives the reader a broad idea of what the text is about: It gives the time and where the setting may play off. This text dominates the theme of identity that breaks down colonial constructs of Western dominance over Eastern culture, hence Salman Rushdie position as a prominent Anglo-Indian postcolonial writer. In this paragraph of *Midnight's Children*, we are able to see the psychological effects of colonial domination. An author is often influenced by his or her historical and cultural context. The text explores the ways in which history is given meaning through the retelling of individual experience "I was born..." History is seen subjectively through the eyes of the protagonist Saleem Sinai, therefore the retelling of history is fragmented and, at times, erroneous. For Saleem, born at the instance of India's independence from Britain, life becomes inextricably linked with the political, national, and religious events of his time; his life parallels that of postcolonial India.

By paralleling Saleem's life with the events following India's independence, Rushdie ties the identity of the postcolonial country directly to the individuals that are products of it. In this text Rushdie's main character states about the time of his birth that he "was left entirely without a say in the matter" yet only a few make an input in history, have the ability to manipulate or change the course of History. Anglo-Indian relationships worked as an immense moveable force affecting all the Indians' live; they also gave rise of great figures such as Gandhi, who taught his people to stick to their own roots and values. Salman writes this paragraph on a casual and

relaxed way " No, that won't do," the reader then feels intricate towards the writer and lightened. One of Rushdie's many attractive qualities as a writer is his clever use of humorous images and metaphors to describe and discuss incredibly controversial and painful issues " Snotnose... – at the best of times a dangerous sort of involvement. And I couldn't even wipe my own nose at the time."

Midnight`s Children is a complex novel narrating the story of Saleem Sinai, an Indian who is born at the stroke of midnight on August 15th 1947, at the precise time of India`s independence. The time of Saleem`s birth connects him closely with his country, making him " mysteriously handcuffed to history" with his " destinies indissolubly chained to those of [his] country.". In Rushdie`s novel the development of India as an independent and therefore ' new' country is compared to the development of a new-born baby, Saleem Sinai. The reader is convinced that what happens to India is heavily influenced by Saleem's birth and therefore that Saleem has a major impact on India`s development. The story is told retrospectively by grown-up Saleem, who writes a piece of his life-story Depicting the major historical event of Indian history, this paragraph in Midnight`s Children can be recognized as a historical proofread. Yet, it combines the features of realism with a historical fact, and so it could be read as either fantasy or a history piece.

Being a fiction, this text cannot be seen as a standard text on history, because it is narrated from an Indian point of view and although the author tries to remain objective, he cannot completely avoid his subjective opinions

and feelings. Rushdie's writing style questions the existence of a single, correct way of using the English language. As a typical representative of the post-colonial literature, *Midnight's Children* is written in English. Yet being an Indian author, about the Indian past, the choice of language is very unusual. One might suppose that it would be written in Hindi, Urdu or some other vernacular language of India and not in English. The fact, that *Midnight's Children* is written in English manifests that the imperialism left an inerasable trace in the Indian history, both cultural and political. In India, Standard English still functions as a medium, a language that everyone can understand, and as a language that is closely connected with power and the upper-class.

Although in the English language the occurrence of compound nouns is a common phenomenon and the compounds are used quite frequently in order to avoid inconsistency and ambiguity, Rushdie uses compound nouns as a substitution for clauses "Piece-of-the-Moon". Rushdie's distinctive style of writing is here evident. It is hard to say to which degree this style is a 'product' of post-colonial experience and therefore a desire for a slight difference in the colonizer's language in order to show that the Indian texts and the English ones are not the same although written in the 'same' language, or whether it is purely the author's way of writing and playing with the language. This text from *Midnight's Children* is fragmented, making frequent and abrupt transitions of place, time, and character. Far from being a careless mistake of the author, the fragmentation in this text serves vital psychological functions, reflecting the divisive experiences of colonialism

and post-colonialism. The extreme fragmentation may cause difficulty for the reader, thrusting him or her into the same feeling state experienced by exiles and the characters Rushdie portrays.

B. Persuasive Prose

1. Advertisements

"Dulcia Vitality" by L'oreal. Advertisements have been undeniably powerful and most effective medium of information transfers throughout the world. The effectiveness of the advertisements is not limited to information transfer but also it serves as one of the powerful weapons to influence and persuade readers to the ideology brought along behind the outstanding presentation of the advertisements.

The brand name takes up about 15% of the advert, which highlights its importance. 'L'OREAL' is written in large bold, block letters so as to familiarize the customer with the brand name immediately.

The use of colors, fonts, different shades and powerful vocabulary in both adverts, all put weight onto the persuasion on the customer to buy the merchandise. The brand is always clearly presented and important information is always brought to the reader and so this is why I came to believe that both adverts are successful in advertising and selling their products to their own specific target groups with the use of various different techniques. The use of the second-person personal and possessive pronouns such as 'you' and 'yours' seek to address the readers directly and personally. When people are addressed individually rather than as part of

mass audience it is considered highly valued. This handling of people on an individual basis is referred as 'synthetic personalization'. By using questions and imperatives the advertisers are trying to establish a closer relationship with the readers. Such informality can signify equality between advertisers and readers. Another type of strategy to simulate conversational style is the use of disjunctive syntax, that is, sentences without verbs or subjects.

These sentences consist of one or two grammatical items only. In terms of formality, most of the vocabulary in the advertisements comprises a mixture of formal and informal words. Another important means to express ideological meanings in text is grammar. The types of verbs used, tenses, active or passive sentences, parallelism, pronouns, modality, nominalizations have an important function in representing 'reality'. There are repetitions through synonyms or near synonyms and parallelism which intensify meaning of the advertisements. For example, in this study synonyms such as 'restore' and 'rejuvenate'. Parallelism which is repeated use of similar grammatical structures is another device in the advertisement. The sentences in the advertisements are simple and declarative type. The tenses used are mainly present tense. There are also future tenses where suggestions or recommendations are given on the benefits of using the product. In addition most of the sentences in the discourse are active sentences.

However, passive voice is also used in the advertisements as shown below: Advertisers also use technical and scientific sounding words to attract readers. By using such words they hope to reflect an image of professionalism and advancement in technology. In order to impress the

consumers, advertisers resort to scientific words and information to create an impression that they are up-to-date with technology. The main audience of the beauty products advertised are women. The advertisers manipulate women by giving facts about their beauty products. For example, "The Body Shop is known for using natural ingredients".

Based on the data analysis of the advertisements, it can be concluded that advertisers use various linguistic devices such as direct address, positive vocabulary, headlines, and catchy slogans to attract women. In addition, the vocabulary used in the beauty product advertisements in this study are ideologically contested. Such vocabulary carries certain ideology of what constitutes beauty such as having less wrinkles or 'free wrinkles' eyes or lips that are 'plumped' or eye lashes that are double in length or thicker. The advertisements portray what a beautiful woman as one with certain features such as long lashes, no wrinkles around the eyes, lips that shine and so on. Advertisements that appear in magazines show how one should look in order to be acceptable as part of this ideal woman.

Use of direct address or pronoun "you" carry certain message that the customer is of utmost importance. Thus consumers can be influenced directly towards the product. Intertextuality also occurs in advertising when advertisers use words from other discourses to attract readers such as words from science. Hence another way to attract customers is the use of technical words. Technical words in advertisements helps convince the reader that the product is of value. The technical vocabulary reflects expertise which is the source of power. Furthermore, the use of scientific information in the beauty

product advertisements reflects authority. the scientific information or words can be a way to convey expertise, which in other words reflect power.

As promised by beauty advertising, women need to appear beautiful. The terminology beautiful as lies figuratively in this phrase, " beauty is in the eye of the beholder" has been widely used and accepted. In fact, it is true that beauty can only be described depend upon the individual's perspective and world view. Obviously, it is very much depending on the exposure of the viewer towards the concept of beauty promoted by the surrounding in which it is referred to the society.

2. News Reports

" Global warming is bubbling under" a news article from mg. co. za. Global Warming is the increase of Earth's average surface temperature due to effect of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels or from deforestation, which trap heat that would otherwise escape from Earth. This is a type of greenhouse effect. But during scientific research people might think that global warming has stopped. This article reminds the audience that that is not entirely true. This article would be recognized to catch national audiences. This issue " Global warming" is affecting the whole world and would not only be seen to target local audiences. Even though this issue – Global warming, would affect the whole nation, this report would interest local communities.

The headline is prominent and bold. The first two words " Global warming" introduces the main idea of the article and the reader immediately knows

what the text is about. The next three words " is bubbling under" directly connects with the sentence " More heat means more energy being pushed into the ocean" but it implies to the idea that everyone may think global warming has paused – this gives special character to the content. The lead of the article gives the reader a broad introduction of what the content contains. " Climate-change sceptics would have you think..." the use of the word " you" draws the reader closer and catches more attention. The lead gives the reader the sense of the story to follow.