

The languages of Gibraltar through the lens of the Extra- and Intra-Territorial Forces (EIF) model

Sitting at the crossroads of Europe and Africa, the essence of Gibraltar has always been multicultural and multilingual. However, its current linguistic demography indicates a rapid shift towards English monolingualism. In this presentation we examine the language dynamics in Gibraltar, with a focus on those social and historical factors that have shaped speaker attitudes in recent decades. Adopting Buschfeld and Kautzsch's (2016, 2020) Extra and Intra-Territorial Forces model, the analysis reveals that the decline of Llanito and the loss of Spanish constitute a Labovian change from below, whereby a complex interplay of factors, including, among others, language policy, globalization and the ramifications of Brexit, act in synergy to push younger Gibraltarians towards the exclusive use of English. We will also discuss the role of linguists in recent attempts to encourage interest in Llanito, this in the hope that it will lead to its resurgence and preservation.

References

- Buschfeld, Sarah and Alexander Kautzsch 2016. Towards an integrated approach to postcolonial and non-postcolonial Englishes. *World Englishes* 36(1): 104–126.
- Buschfeld, Sarah and Alexander Kautzsch. 2020. *Modelling World Englishes: A Joint Approach to Postcolonial and Non-Postcolonial Varieties*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.