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UNIVERSITY OF
GIBRALTAR

Language in Gibraltar - Past and Present

Date: May, 11th 16:15-17:45

Place: Zoom*

Online conference in English (Q&A/Discussion in English/Spanish)

The aim of this lecture is to underpin how Gibraltar has increasingly become a mono-lingual society, a fact that defies expectations of bilingualism, code-switching and the so called *llanito*, a register generally considered as a genuine Gibraltarian linguistic expression. It is the case that English has now become the main language for Gibraltarians, that is opposed to Spanish, a language which was predominant up till the first half of the 20th century but which has been in decline since. English has additionally become the first, if not only, language of a younger generation of Gibraltarians, and while it has been suggested that the border closure with Spain in 1969 may have had some impact on language, a key point of consideration is that Gibraltar was originally a polyglot society; one that has over time evolved into a bilingual, and now, increasingly monolingual society. It is not the case that code-switching is not a regular feature in casual exchanges and in literature, as a stylistic choice, but questions nevertheless remain as to how language has evolved at Gibraltar. Most compelling is where have all these other languages gone and why? This lecture will be structured around key historical events together with societal drives which have invariably driven linguistic change.

Organiser: MA. Marta Rodríguez García (marta.rodriuezgarcia@unibas.ch)

*Those interested in attending please send an email to the organiser to receive the link to the Zoom meeting.

