

Publication

El Uso de los Marcadores Discursivos en el Discurso Bilingüe Gibraltareño

Thesis (Dissertationen, Habilitationen)

ID 4511130

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Year 2019

Title El Uso de los Marcadores Discursivos en el Discurso Bilingüe Gibraltareño

Pages 88

Type of Thesis Masterarbeit;

Start of thesis 01.01.2019

End of thesis 10.05.2019

Name of University New Mexico State University

Name of Faculty Philosophisch-Historische Fakultät;

Supervisor(s) / Fachvertreter/in Waltermire, Mark ;

Keywords Language contact, discourse markers, Gibraltar, Llanito, sociolinguistics, bilingualism, Spanish, English

Gibraltar is a British 2.5 square-miles rock located at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula in which a unique language contact situation has emerged. "Llanito" or "Yanito", the vernacular language used by thousands of Gibraltarians, is a result of the contact situation between British English and Andalusian Spanish and the influence of other languages such as Hebrew, Maltese, or Arabic.

The present study examines the use of Spanish discourse markers in bilingual Gibraltarian discourse. The focus is on analyzing the frequency of use, the function and the discourse context surrounding the appearance of Spanish discourse markers in Llanito discourse. The corpus comprises 30 bilingual oral narratives of personal experiences extracted for the corpus "Bordering on Britishness" (Canessa, 2017). The discussion considers the debates on the positive contributions of the analysis of bilingual discourse markers to language contact situations (Maschler, 1994; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Salmons, 1990; Torres, 2002) in order to apply this theory to the existing literature in Gibraltar (Kellermann, 2001; Lipski, 1986; Moyer, 1992) aiming to provide a new focus of analysis bases on discourse and functionality. This analysis is only possible through the study of multifunctional discourse elements that acts both on a sentence and discursive level.

Following the patterns of a recent study based on the analysis of bilingual discourse markers in Puerto Ricans in NYC (Torres, 2002), the author here argues that attention needs to be aimed at discourse elements to get a global conception of linguistic communication (López Serena, 2011). The author defines questions that aim at studying the use, function and context of the Spanish discourse markers in a variationist study that examines those questions by a differentiation of generation and sex of the participants. The study also contributes to the debate of bilingual discourse markers as part of code switching and stresses that an in-deep analysis of discursive and pragmatic elements can contribute to highlight patterns that point toward the importance of the Spanish language in Gibraltarian communication.

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