

# Language Change and Variation in Gibraltar

David Levey

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## Language Change and Variation in Gibraltar

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### **Volume 23**

Language Change and Variation in Gibraltar  
by David Levey

# Language Change and Variation in Gibraltar

David Levey  
University of Cádiz

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*In memory of my father*



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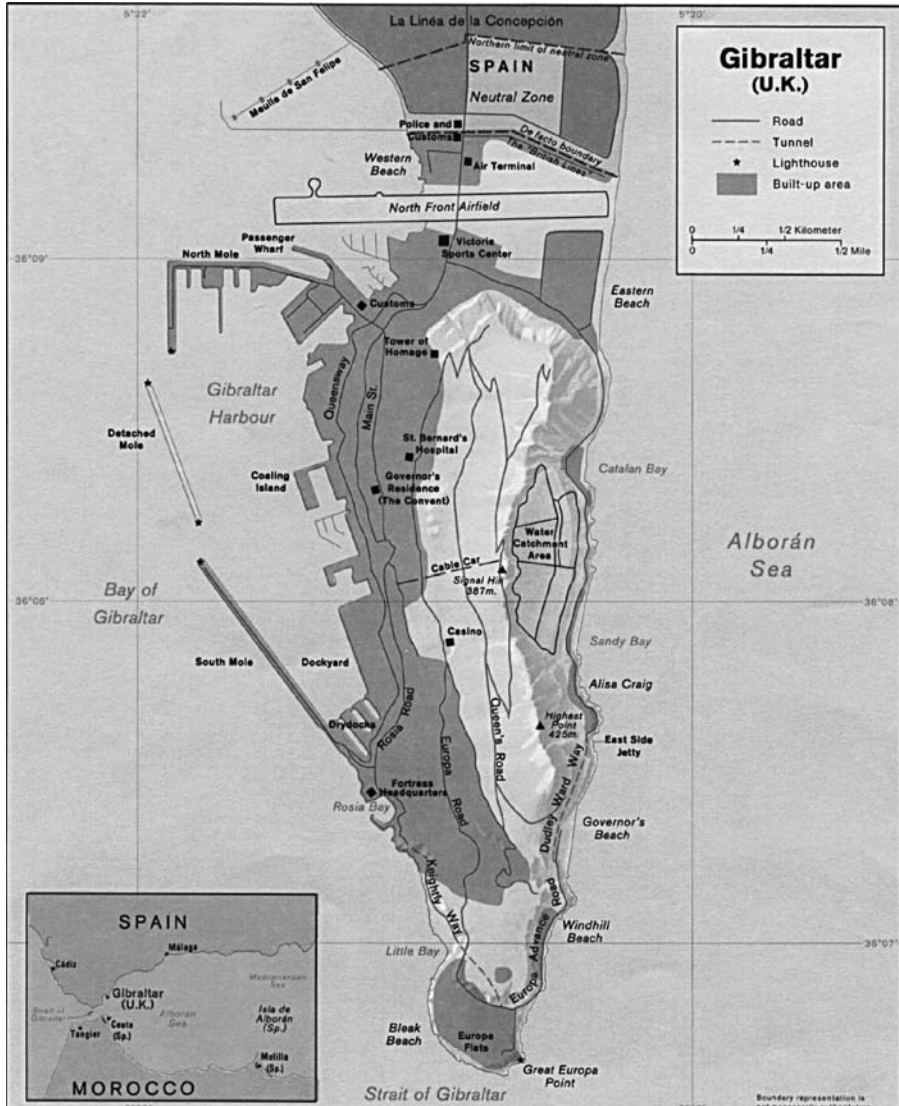


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# Maps





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## Abbreviations

AndSp	Andalusian Spanish
BEST	Best English speaker in the nuclear family
BrE	British English
CofG2001	Census of Gibraltar 2001
CC	Casual conversation
CV	Cardinal Vowel
GibE	Gibraltarian English
GibM	The autochthonous Gibraltarian majority
GL	Grandparent Language (language used with grandparents)
HL	Home Language (language used in the home domain)
IndE	Indian English
ISL	Inter-student language (language used when speaking to class mates)
LMC3	Lower middle class
MC2	Middle class
MCL	Most comfortable language (language informants feel most at ease speaking in)
N	Number of informants
p	Degree of probability
PL	Inter-parental Language (language used by parents to speak to each other)
RP	Received Pronunciation
RW	Reading Word (test)
SIBL	Sibling language (language used when speaking to brothers / sisters)
StCast	Standard Castilian
TW	Translation Word (test)
UMC1	Upper middle class
WC4	Working class

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

© 2005 IPA

Table with 13 columns (Bilabial, Labiodental, Dental, Alveolar, Postalveolar, Retroflex, Palatal, Velar, Uvular, Pharyzeal, Glottal) and 13 rows (Plosive, Nasal, Trill, Tap or Flap, Fricative, Lateral fricative, Approximant, Lateral approximant).

Where symbols appear in pain, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

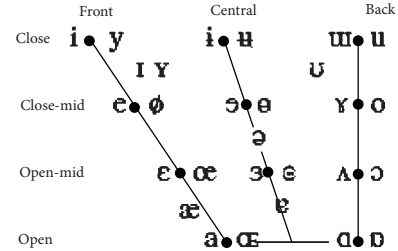
CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Table with 3 columns (Clicks, Voiced implosives, Ejectives) and 6 rows (Bilabial, Dental, (Post)alveolar, Postalveolar, Alveolar beveral, Bilabial, Detttsisevece, Prical, Velar, Urrular, Ecomplex, Bilabial, Detttsisevece, Velar, Alveolar festive).

OTHER SYMBOLS

- Altogether symbols and their descriptions: Voiceless isbil-velar fricative, Voiced isbil-velar approximant, Voiced isbil-palatal appoinment, Voiceless epigiottal fricative, Voiced epigiottal fricative, Epigiottal placeve, Alveolar-paised fricative, Voiced alveolar lateral flap, Sinutheous, Affrieden send double soulation can be represented by two symbols jointed by a tie if necessary.

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

- Primary stress, Secondary stress, Long, Half-long, Extra-short, Minor (foot) group, Major (intonation) group, Syllable break, Linking (absence of a break)

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS LEVEL CONTOUR

- Extras high, High, Mad, Low, Extras low, Downlepl, Uplepl, Rising, Falling, High rising, Low rising, Rising-falling, Global rise, Global fall

DIACRITICS Dincritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g.

Table with 3 columns (Voicelan, Voiced, Aspirated, More rounded, Less rounded, Advanced, Retrased, Centralised, Mid-centralised, Syllble, Non-syllble, Rhaticity) and 3 columns (Breathy voiced, Creaky voiced, Linguelalibial, Labialized, Palatalized, Velarized, Plearyngcatized, Velarized of plearyngealized, Raisal, Lowered, Advanced Tanguer Root, Retracted Tanguer Root).

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## CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

## English, Spanish . . . and Yanito

### 1.1 Language in Gibraltar

Gibraltar, or *the Rock* as it is commonly known, has been a British-governed territory since 1704. It is situated on the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula, connected to the neighbouring Spanish town of La Linea de la Concepción by a narrow isthmus. Measuring just 6 km<sup>2</sup> in all, and stretching just 4.8 km from North to South, habitable space is limited, particularly as much of the land mass is precipitous rock and cliffs which reach a height of 426 metres.

The most recent figures reveal a total population of 28,875, divided for census purposes into three distinct categories: *Gibraltarians*, who make up 81.2% of the population, *UK British* (11.4%) and *Non British* (7.4%).<sup>1</sup> Apart from the mainly Catholic autochthonous majority, the principal ethnic groups living on the Rock are Jews (600 approx.), Indians (350 approx.) and Moroccans (1000 approx.).

Although English is the only official language, due to historical ties and geographical proximity, Spanish has traditionally been widely spoken in Gibraltar.<sup>2</sup> This is still the case today. Many Gibraltarians speak Spanish with a marked regional accent, similar (although not identical) to that of the neighbouring Andalusian town of La Linea, although certain Canary Island and South American phonetic features have also been noted in the local pronunciation (Lipski 1986: 417–9; Ballantine 2000: 119). Most Andalusians and many Gibraltarians themselves, however, would say that, rather than English or Spanish, the principal language of the Rock is *Yanito* (or *Llanito*).<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Figures are taken from the 2006 Abstract of Statistics (Statistics Office, Government of Gibraltar). The full census is carried out every ten years, the next being due in 2011. The last full census (2001) presents the “usually resident” population under six headings: *Gibraltarians, Other British, Moroccans, Spanish, Other EU and Other*.

2. There is no official data regarding the home languages of the local population.

3. *Yanito* (or *Llanito*) is the name popularly given to the native of Gibraltar as well as the local vernacular he/she speaks. Various theories exist as to its etymology. Cavilla (1990: 1) claims that it is Italian in origin, deriving from the common diminutive of the Italian boy’s name *Giovanni* (*Gianni*). Dating from the early or mid-nineteenth century, it came to be used to refer to the people of Gibraltar who, at that time, were predominantly Genoese. Cavilla argues, therefore,



Yanito is not easy to classify since it may mean different things to different individuals and generations. Language forms are often so intertwined in Gibraltar that it is sometimes difficult to decide where one ends and another begins, and speakers may also be unaware of the language or vernacular they are using at a given time, or at least may not be able to put a label to it. Although English is generally classified as a language apart, there is considerable overlap between Yanito and Andalusian Spanish. According to Ballantine:

In everyday life, Gibraltarians can communicate amongst themselves in English, Spanish or in Llanito. Llanito has certain similarities with Andaluz although one can also detect phonetic elements akin to those of speakers from the Canary Islands and from South America. It has its own phonetic, syntactic and lexical characteristics. (Ballantine 2000: 118–9)

Although there may be three forms of communication in Gibraltar, I do not feel that Yanito can be considered as an autonomous language as such. Although for some it is a reflection of local identity, its linguistic proximity to Spanish gives it, to use Haugen's (1966) terminology, heteronomous status in that it is a language

---

that *Yanito* (rather than *Llanito*) is the correct derivative pronunciation and spelling. This theory would appear to be the most likely, although Kramer (1986) rejects it on the grounds that the original immigrants, being predominantly Genoese, would not have pronounced the name Gianni as [ˈdʒanni] as in literary Italian, but in their local dialect [ˈzani] and argues that an initial [z] becoming [y] (I assume the palatal semi-vowel [j] is being referred to) would be inexplicable. Although, in theory, he admits the possible shift to [dʒ] as “there are some remote Ligurian dialects which preserve this sound”, he argues that [tʃ] would be more likely “as there is no voiced [dʒ] in Spanish, one normally substitutes its voiceless counterpart [tʃ]” (Kramer 1986: 94).

Lipski (1986: 417) considers the possibility that *Yanito* or *Llanito* has its origins in the English name *Johnny*. Weight may be added to this argument by the tendency in certain areas such as the Canary Islands to refer to Englishmen or Northern Europeans in general as *chone* or *choni*. It is also feasible, although unlikely, that *Llanito* is Spanish in origin coming from the Spanish adjective *llano/a* meaning ‘plain’ or ‘simple’ or alternatively from the noun meaning ‘plain’ or ‘flat land’.

Vallejo (2001: 6–7) offers two creative, albeit dubious, explanations. He suggests that the word may date back to the time of the Spanish reconquest when Gibraltar was susceptible to attacks from pirates and only *gente llana* (‘common people’) were prepared to settle there. Alternatively, Vallejo considers a later origin when the fortifications needed rebuilding after the Great Siege in 1779–83 and Spanish labour was called on. In order to house this workforce, according to Vallejo, “. . . a shanty town sprung up at the foot of Sierra Carmonera, in a depression on the isthmus called “El Llano. . . they were therefore classified as ‘Llanitos!’”. This hypothesis, as Kellermann (2001: 9) amongst others have pointed out, is somewhat incongruous as it would imply that the term refers to the Spanish workers rather than to the Gibraltarians themselves. Kellermann (2001: 9), for her own part, speculates that *Llanito* may be Arabic in origin, derived from the Arabic word for ‘mountain side’ which she transcribes as [ˈdʒani].

variety which is socially or culturally dependent on an autonomous one. It rarely appears in written form and can perhaps best be described as an Andalusian Spanish-dominant form of oral expression which integrates mainly English lexical and syntactic elements as well as some local vocabulary.<sup>4</sup>

For most people the most striking and distinguishing feature of the language of the Yanitos is their tendency to switch with apparent ease between Spanish and English, both inter-sententially or intra-sententially. Code-switching in Gibraltar is subject to social, situational and equivalence constraints with the grammatical rules and conventions of both languages usually being respected (Moyer 1993: 251; Levey 2006b: 724–5).<sup>5</sup>

Moyer, comparing Spanish-English code-switching and code-mixing tendencies in Gibraltar with those found in Puerto Rico, finds certain similarities between the two speech communities:

Both use fluent or skilled code-switching patterns and no hesitations or false starts. In addition, both communities display intra and inter-sentential patterns

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4. Several published and unpublished studies and articles, ranging from the anecdotal to the academic, have commented on Yanito and the linguistic situation in Gibraltar. The most pertinent of these are: Álvarez Callejo 1988; Ballantine 1983, 2000; Becker 1970; Cal Varela 1996, 2001; Cavilla 1990; Chincotta 1980; Enriles 1992; Fernandez Martín 2003, 2005, 2006; Fierro Cubiella 1997; García Martín 1996, 1997, 2000; Kellermann 1996, 2001; Kramer 1985, 1986, 1998; Levey 2006a, 2006b; Lipski 1986; Modrey 1998; Moyer 1990, 1993, 1998a, 1998b; West 1956.

5. Although interest has increased in recent years, surprisingly little in-depth academic research has been carried out into the mechanisms of code-switching in Gibraltar and its constraints. The most complete field study and analysis to be carried out to date is Melissa Moyer's PhD dissertation "Analysis of Code-Switching in Gibraltar" (1993) and three other articles based on her doctorate research (Moyer 1990, 1998a, 1998b). Moyer (1993: 247) identifies four code-switching patterns in Gibraltar: (1) Alternate use of two languages by different participants in verbal exchange. (2) Combination of different syntactic constituents within the sentence. (3) Insertion of individual lexical items. (4) Insertion of ritualized expressions with culture specific content. Attempts to predict the language in which the constituents of a sentence occur proved inconclusive and leads Moyer (1993: 251) to reservedly suggest that "the language of lexical (or constituent) insertion is truly random".

While intra-sentential Spanish-English code-switching in Gibraltar tends to be viewed from variationist perspectives (Pfaff 1979; Poplack 1982, 1993), generative grammatical approaches have been attempted. In an as yet unpublished experiment, Ruiz-Sánchez (2005) tests whether Belazi et al.'s (1994) theory that code-switching is subject to Functional Head Constraint (FHC), a constraint grounded in Chomsky's (1986) system of categories, is applicable in the case of Gibraltar. Her findings suggest that, while FHC plays a part in determining the acceptability of certain switches, intra-sentential code-switching in Gibraltar can not be completely explained from a generative perspective and other factors such as locally specific switch patterns and conventions need to be taken into account.

even though linguistic constraints apply in each case. The use of code-switching in informal situations and with family is also a shared characteristic.

(Moyer 1993: 245)

However, she points to important differences in their social functions which condition their ultimate survival. Whereas the future of code-switching amongst Puerto Ricans is “undoubtedly tied to the pressure they receive to integrate which is strong, and moreover to the other Hispanic immigrant groups”, the case in Gibraltar is somewhat different. Since language contact in Gibraltar has lasted now for more than 300 years, Moyer suggests that code-switching as a form of communication may be more stable and has a better chance of survival “as long as political and economic ties are maintained with Great Britain” (1993: 245–6).

While Spanish syntax forms the backbone, Yanito is peppered with borrowings from other languages.<sup>6</sup> Although most come from English, reflecting the immigration trends of Gibraltar in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, there are also words originating from Italian/Genoese (*pompa*, ‘pump’; *pavana*, ‘seagull’), from Maltese/Arabic (*flus*, ‘money’; *zup*, ‘penis’) and from Hebrew (*ha ham*, ‘boss’; *bezim*, ‘eggs’ or ‘balls’). However, while still used by older speakers, the lexical legacy of these languages in Gibraltar has been reduced today to a handful of words. In an interview with Gibraltar’s free weekly newspaper *7 Days* (20 March 2007), Mary Chiappe, the ex-Minister of Education in Gibraltar, talking from personal experience, remembers that borrowings from Caló (the language of Spanish Gypsies) also formed part of the local vernacular and laments the loss of the variety of foreign borrowings which once gave Yanito a unique colour: “Nowadays it is losing many of the Italian, Gypsy and other odd words that set it apart from the varieties of Spanglish now spoken so widely”.

English borrowings are commonly used in Gibraltar, particularly where no direct Spanish equivalent exists, or cultural or social nuances cannot be easily or succinctly conveyed (e.g., *voy a comprar una caja de Christmas crackers*, ‘I’m going to buy a box of Christmas crackers’). Much of the Yanito lexicon is related to foodstuffs which were originally imported to satisfy the tastes of the British military and which were mostly unknown or at least unusual in Spain during the dictatorship. The pronunciation of many of these words became distorted through Andalusian Spanish

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6. There are two locally produced short Yanito lexicons. Cavilla’s (1990) *Diccionario Yanito* is a Yanito-Spanish dictionary with an introduction in Spanish. Vallejo’s (2001) *The Yanito Dictionary*, on the other hand, is written in English and also includes a list of Gibraltar place names and their origins as well as the authors own comments, anecdotes and theories on Gibraltarian history and etymology. The website [www.llanito.net](http://www.llanito.net) also offers a list of Yanito words. Besides these sources, Yanito lexicon and code switching examples have been taken from Ballantine (2000); Chiappe (2005) and from my own recorded corpus.

(AndSp) transfer (*chinga*, ‘chewing gum’; *rolipó*, ‘lollypop’; *liqueribá*, ‘liquorice bar’; *chinchibia*, ‘ginger beer’; *arishu*, ‘Irish stew’; *quecaró*, ‘porridge/Quaker Oats’; *pisup*, ‘pea soup’; *grevi*, ‘gravy’). Interestingly, some of these words have crossed the border and can also be heard in the neighbouring Spanish towns of La Linea and San Roque (see Gómez Fernández 1977).

As the population becomes increasingly proficient in English, the use of English borrowings takes on a different slant. Rather than simply being a case of adopting words which have no equivalent in Spanish, many English borrowings are used in Gibraltar today, even though direct Spanish translations exist, for the sake of language convenience or succinctness. Ballantine (2000: 19) notes the Gibraltarian preference for English gerunds (*hoy no tenemos training*, ‘we don’t have training today’; *Mañana vamos shopping*, ‘we’re going shopping tomorrow’).<sup>7</sup> I would add that English gerunds are commonly employed after the Spanish verb *hacer*, ‘to do’ (*hacer knitting*; *hacer shorthand and typing*; *hacer book-keeping*; *hacerle parking al coche*, ‘to park the car’; *hacerle changing el nappy al baby*, ‘to change the baby’s nappy’).

It is common to incorporate formal English lexicon into Spanish structures (*han subido el income tax*, ‘income tax has gone up’; *tengo un appointment*, ‘I’ve got an appointment’). This can largely be explained by the fact that English is the official language, the language of government and the language of the press. Similarly the fact that English is the language of education conditions the vocabulary of school children and adolescents (*tengo mucho homework*, ‘I’ve got a lot of homework’; *lo tengo que hacer en rough*, ‘I have to do it in rough’).

Ballantine (2000: 119) notes the tendency of “attributing a meaning to Spanish words which they do not have, but which English words with similar appearance do have. In Gibraltar this usage is quite extensive”. This forms part of what may popularly be termed Spanglish, where literal (mis)translations of English are Hispanicised or transferred or modified to Spanish e.g., *dame un ring* (‘ring me’), *darle una apologia* (apologise to him), *ella siempre saca buenas marcas*, (she always gets good marks), *¡nunca voy a pasar el examen!* (‘I’m never going to pass the exam!’), *ella es muy chitera* (‘she’s a real cheat’). In each case the underlined English borrowing or derivation either does not exist in Spanish or is a *false friend* with a different meaning.

This use of language may, in some cases, be unconscious and spontaneous, and might be interpreted by some as the result of ‘lexical deficiency’ or ‘semi-lingualism’. However, particularly today amongst younger speakers, the employment of false friends or the Hispanicisation of English words is often done consciously and with

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7. It should be noted that the use of English borrowings and derivatives of this type (e.g., *footing*, *pressing*, *parking*, *marketing*) is an ever common trend in Spain as well. The more established borrowings may be adapted to Spanish orthographic and phonetic norms (e.g., *mitin*, ‘meeting’).

the full awareness of the effect they are creating on the listener. Speakers with bilingual competence are often simply having fun with language, creating or playing with Spanish and English for humorous purposes or as a statement or demonstration of group identity. This can be seen in the emergence of new words and hybrid expressions used in Gibraltar such as *it's a cachonfinger* which could be described as an Andalusian Spanglish rendering of the Spanish *cachondeo* ('joke, farce'). The final syllable of the Spanish word which in reality does not have a "d" has been hypercorrected to *dedo* and then translated as 'finger' for humorous effect. Only those with linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of both Standard and Andalusian Spanish as well as English would get the joke. While Yanito is not considered to be a prestigious form of expression, it is not necessarily frowned upon. It is regarded with certain affection by many Gibraltarians who may see it as a unique expression of local identity (Kellermann 2001: 134–5, Fernández Martín 2003: 190–1, Levey 2006b: 725).

Although most Gibraltarians, if asked, would rightly and truthfully claim to be bilingual, the term is subjective, deceptive and open to misinterpretation.

A typical misunderstanding regarding bilingual or multilingual communities is that all members speak two languages with a high level of proficiency. In Gibraltar as in other multilingual communities this is not the case; different sectors of the society have varying degrees of proficiency in English and Spanish.

(Moyer 1993: 85–6)

While Gibraltar is fundamentally a functional bilingual (or multilingual) community, its full potential, largely for political reasons, has arguably not been fully exploited. The Gibraltarian education system mirrors that of Britain, following the *National Curriculum* where Spanish is taught as a second language. Although some local educationalists (see Ballantine 1983; Britto 1993) have argued for the implementation of a bilingual education system in local schools, this would appear to be impossible at present. Particularly in the light of recent tensions, there is resistance within the wider population as well as the local teaching staff, to give equal standing to Spanish (see Britto 1993: 106 & 124).

English is the language of the press, media and publicity. Crossing over the border (or 'frontier' as it is commonly referred to locally) from La Linea into Gibraltar, a visitor would be struck by the sudden language change reflected in the street and traffic signs as well as billboards, menus and shop names. In 1968, when writing his official government report on Gibraltar, *Informe sobre Gibraltar*, Antonio Figueruelo complains of the impossibility of finding Spanish reading material of any kind within the British colony.

El destierro de todo lo español de los centros culturales de la colonia me impresionó vivamente. En las bibliotecas públicas [. . .], en las librerías, en los quioscos

de periódicos, no encontré ni un ejemplar, ni un libro, ni una revista o diario en español. (Figueruelo 1968 quoted in Kellermann 2001: 232)

[‘The Banishment of all things Spanish from the cultural centres in the colony shocked me. In all the public libraries, bookshops, newspaper kiosks I could find not one book, nor magazine or newspaper in Spanish.’]

Today, Spanish newspapers are on sale in Gibraltar, but numbers tend to be limited as demand for them is not as great as English language ones. Besides the British press which is available on the Rock at import prices, Gibraltar has its own English newspapers and news magazines. The most well established of these is the *Gibraltar Chronicle* which is sold not only in newsagents and kiosks but can also be obtained from various other outlets including grocery stores and corner shops. It has a daily circulation of about 3000, although given that it can be found on counters in most bars and cafés in the town, actual readership is considerably higher. The *Gibraltar Chronicle*, which claims to be the second oldest English language newspaper in Europe behind *The Times* of London, originally began as an army gazette in 1801. On 24 October 1805 it enjoyed a world “scoop”, being the first newspaper to report Nelson’s victory at Trafalgar.

Apart from the *Gibraltar Chronicle* broadsheet, several local weekly publications in magazine format are available. Arguably the most important of these is *Panorama*, which in 2002 changed from being a weekly publication to a daily one.<sup>8</sup> *The New People* is a predominantly English news magazine, but at least one page

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8. One of *Panorama*’s most popular regular items is a humorous and often satirical feature called *Calentita*. This takes the form of a telephone conversation in Yanito between two fictitious characters called Cloti and Cynthia. It is an interesting caricature, albeit stereotypical and exaggerated, of the innovative local lexicon and code-switching which form part of Yanito. The episode cited below, which appeared in the 7 May 2002 issue, serves as an example of this vernacular as well as reflecting the local sentiment at the time towards Anglo-Spanish bilateral talks on the question of possible joint sovereignty. In the wake of Jack Straw’s unsuccessful visit to Gibraltar, which aimed to reassure Gibraltarians of the British Government’s good intentions but was met with a hostile reaction from the local population, *Calentita* began:

- Blimey, que chaparrón le cayó al Hombre Paja, y eso que it is not the rainy season.
- Estoy segura que, as he flew back, he told his advisers: Si lo sé, no vengo.
- It made the news everywhere and also showed, like my darling husband says, que the visit fue un fracaso.

- [‘Blimey, the Straw Man got showered on, even though it’s not the rainy season.
- I’m sure as he flew back he told his advisers “if I’d known I wouldn’t have come”.
- It made the news everywhere and also showed, like my darling husband says, that the visit was a failure.’]

every week is written in Spanish. *Vox*, until recently, claimed to be “Gibraltar’s Bilingual Newspaper” and published several articles in Spanish; however, it now advertises itself as “the Truly Independent Gibraltar Newspaper” with articles appearing almost exclusively in English.

The linguistic make-up of Gibraltar is complex and partially linked to social and political allegiance. Political events and social and educational policies, particularly in recent years, seem to have pushed the local population further from Spain towards Britain. The general local sentiment is summed up by the words of one of the interviewees: “We feel Gibraltarian first, British second . . . and Spanish not at all. If Britain doesn’t want us, we will be independent . . . but Spanish never!” This strength of national feeling was reflected in the referendum called by the local Government in response to the initiation of talks between Britain and Spain in 2002 over the possibility of joint sovereignty, where the overwhelming majority (98.5%) voted against this proposal.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to analyse the role and use of English within the speech of young Gibraltarians and to gauge whether attitudes, preferences and phonetic realisations differ from those of previous generations. Starting from the premise that an appreciation of a community’s social structure is fundamental to an understanding of the possible causes of language change as well as maintenance, this study adopts a variationist sociolinguistic approach.

Although a limited number of linguistic studies have dealt with phonetic aspects in Gibraltar (Enriles 1992; Kellermann 2001; Cal Varela 2001), it was felt that in the light of recent developments in phonetic and sociolinguistic methodology

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The article/conversation finishes with:

- Bueno hija, until the next spectacle.
- Eso. Y que traigan al Pica-pica next time. Adios mi alma.
- [‘Well dear, until the next spectacle
- Yes. And next time let them bring on Pica-pica (Josep Piqué, the Spanish Foreign Secretary).  
Bye my love.’]

9. In the light of these talks, resentment towards both British and Spanish governments ran high, particularly as it was felt that the opinion of Gibraltarians was not consulted. As a demonstration of local sentiment, a referendum was called by the Gibraltarian Chief Minister Peter Caruana on the 7th November 2002. Although the legality of this referendum was not recognised by either the British or Spanish governments, the strength of feeling was unmistakable. Of a total of 18,176 voters, 17,900 voted against joint sovereignty.



and theory, as well as socio-political changes in the local speech community, there was a need for a large scale investigation into the language attitude and phonology of a new generation of Gibraltarians. Whereas both Kellermann (2001) and Cal Varela (2001) analysed the adult population of Gibraltar, this study concentrates on the language of young Gibraltarians aged 9 to 19. The difference in generational focus, combined with the fact that fieldwork for the aforementioned studies were carried out in the early 1990s, means that the age gap, in real terms, is in some cases more than 50 years.<sup>10</sup>

Two distinct yet complementary areas of sociolinguistic and sociophonetic research were undertaken. Chapter 4 focuses on linguistic attitudes, competence and the preferred language choices of young Gibraltarians in different domains and contexts. By comparing the results against previous findings the aim is to determine whether the linguistic climate in Gibraltar is undergoing a change. Chapters 5 and 6 analyse how possible language change is reflected phonetically through a description of the vowel and consonant systems of the young speech community in Gibraltar; findings are compared and contrasted against data found in previous studies as well as against my own observations and analysis of older speakers.

The principal objectives of this present study are to observe and gauge:

1. Whether there is any change in the Spanish/English linguistic balance of power in the home and school environment, and whether there is evidence to suggest that a generational shift in language choice, preference and competence is taking place.
2. Whether, and to what extent, the Spanish language still exerts an influence on the linguistic and phonetic behaviour of the younger generations.
3. Whether there are any noticeable changes in the pronunciation of Gibraltarian pre-adolescents and adolescents compared with that of older generations.
4. Whether possible phonetic changes occurring in Gibraltar follow similar patterns to those occurring in Britain.
5. Whether, and to what extent, variables such as age, sex, ethnicity, social class and schooling condition speech patterns in Gibraltar
6. Whether, and to what extent, language maintenance or change is proportional to the degree of contact with Spain or Britain

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10. Although Kellermann and Cal Varela's works were published in 2001, the fieldwork research in both cases was carried out in the early 1990s. Of the six informants used by Kellermann for phonetic analysis, two were born in the mid 1940s, two in the 1950s, one in the 1960s and one in the 1970s. Cal Varela (2001: 169) does not specify the exact ages of his sample, dividing them into three broad groups. Those aged 51 or older, i.e., those born in 1942 or before, those aged 36 to 50 (born 1943–1957) and those aged 35 or younger (born after 1958).



7. What factors (linguistic, social and political) affect or have a bearing on language shift or maintenance.

In order to study why changes occur in language it is also important to consider why changes *do not* occur. As Weinreich, Labov & Herzog (1968) suggest, the fact that language changes is arguably not surprising and absence of variation would be “dysfunctional”. On this matter James Milroy is categorical:

. . . uniform states of language are idealizations and . . . variable states are normal; furthermore, variation in language may itself be structured and regular. Languages are not in reality completely stable or uniform, and there is absolutely no reason why they should be. (1992: 3–4)

In the case of Gibraltar, where English has been the official language for more than three hundred years, it is interesting to consider why, in spite of an often antagonistic attitude towards their Spanish neighbours, the Spanish language has remained so prevalent amongst the local population. Although speaking Spanish but feeling British (or non-Spanish) is not considered necessarily incompatible or paradoxical within the local community, there appears to be increasing pressure to reflect identity and allegiance in linguistic terms.

### 1.3 Underlying socio-political contentions: the effects of the Spanish blockade (1969–1982)

While English has enjoyed official language status since the early eighteenth century, it was, until fairly recently, mainly confined to formal domains. Although, as shall be discussed in the next chapter, a gradual increase in English language competence has been noted throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the contention of this study is that a more rapid shift appears to be taking place and that political events have served as a catalyst for language change, accelerating a process already in motion. Spanish policies during the Franco era arguably did more, both directly and indirectly, to push the local population towards English and away from Spanish than internal or British government policies had achieved during the previous 300 years. The breakdown of Anglo-Spanish relations over the sovereignty question culminated in the complete closure of the border between Spain and Gibraltar during the years 1969–1982. This effectively isolated Gibraltar from her Spanish neighbour, and in turn accelerated the shift away from the Spanish language. The principal linguistic manifestations of this singular event are briefly outlined below.

*Decline in Spanish language influence*

1. As a reaction to Spanish policies general hostility grew towards Spain; this led in certain circles to the rejection of the Spanish language, although such actions were often subject to English language competence.
2. The sudden loss of the Spanish labour force which used to cross the border daily reduced the need and opportunity to speak Spanish in the workplace.
3. At home, the loss of Spanish domestic help, child minders and nannies who had traditionally provided an important Spanish language input in the home environment, had important consequences for the linguistic education of the young children, particularly in households where both parents worked. Regular contact between Gibraltarian housewives and Spanish domestic servants had hitherto also contributed to Spanish language maintenance.
4. In the area of commerce, the breaking off of trade relations between Spain and Gibraltar meant that Spanish was suddenly no longer important as the language of business.
5. The closing of the border meant that regular contact with family and friends in Spain suddenly stopped; informal cross-border speech exchanges, which had implied daily Spanish language contact, also ceased overnight.
6. The blockade also had a direct effect on Gibraltarian leisure activities and meant the loss of Spanish linguistic contact through holidays, day excursions and shopping trips to Spain.

*Increase of English language influence*

1. While dissociative attitudes towards Spain and the Spanish language grew, integrative attitudes towards Britain and the English language increased; language choice for many became a declaration of allegiance.
2. Although English had always been the official language of education, the severing of ties with Spain added a further motivation to learn English and to insist on its being spoken on school grounds.
3. A rising number of Gibraltarians, aided by government grants, began furthering their studies at British universities and colleges during this period. This undoubtedly led to increased English language competence and confidence which could then be passed on to the next generation. The effects were particularly noticeable in both primary and secondary schools where a new generation of British university-educated teachers was better prepared to insist on and sustain the use of British English in the classroom.
4. With the way to Spain cut off, the Spanish language no longer had the practical importance for the local population that it once had. This coincided with the rise of English as a world language and many parents began using English at home to help their children's future career possibilities at home or abroad.

5. The tourist boom, heightened by Gibraltar's unique status, led to an influx of English-speaking tourists. By contrast, the blockade inevitably meant that the sound of Spanish-speaking visitors disappeared.
6. Given its position of confinement during the blockade, trips to Britain, particularly amongst the middle classes, became increasingly popular.
7. Exposure to English-speaking media and the advent of satellite TV meant that Gibraltarians increasingly began watching English rather than Spanish TV programmes.

To summarise, although it could be argued that language shift in Gibraltar forms part of a continuing process which has been ongoing since the Second World War, the underlying contention of this study is that this process was noticeably accelerated as a result of the closure of the border. Although initiated by those who lived through the blockade, whether as a declaration of allegiance or through decreased contact with Spanish, the result of this will arguably be more clearly seen and consolidated in the linguistic make-up of their children.

#### 1.4 Outline of the book

The next chapter offers a brief overview of the history of Gibraltar and the events which led up to the British occupation. Attention is then turned to the demographic and sociolinguistic make up of the population during the 300 years of British rule, with special emphasis being placed on those factors which have shaped the linguistic development of the colony.

Having outlined in chapter 3 the methodology used and the procedures adopted for sampling and data analysis, chapter 4 presents the empirical research findings regarding language preference, competence and attitude in various domains, as well as analysing endogenous and exogenous factors which might influence language choice. A quantitative analysis based on various social variables is undertaken in order to reach conclusions regarding diachronic language shift. As well as comparing findings with previous research, established sociolinguistic and socio-psychological theories and approaches are applied to explain the possible reasons for language change or maintenance.

Chapters 5 and 6 systematically analyse Gibraltarian vowel and consonants, establishing the actual GibE phonetic system of young speakers. Special attention is placed on those areas where Spanish transfer is most likely, and the present data is compared and contrasted with previous research findings in order to assess the extent of language change in Gibraltar. Phonetic findings are correlated

with the social variables to see if, and how, language change is conditioned by age, sex, ethnicity, class and schooling and whether stratification patterns coincide with those revealed in the self-report findings in chapter 4. In the final chapter, the most important findings of this study are summarised and conclusions are drawn.



## CHAPTER 2

# The speech community of Gibraltar

## Past and present



### 2.1 From the Phoenicians to the British occupation in 1704<sup>1</sup>

Ever since the early Phoenicians, races, nations and ethnic groups have been drawn to the Rock. Carthaginians, Romans (to whom Gibraltar was known as Mons Calpe and was one of the two Pillars of Hercules), Goths, Visigoths, Vandals and Iberians have all left their mark. Strategically placed at the only entrance to the Mediterranean from the Atlantic Ocean, Gibraltar forms a natural sentinel to control and guard the straits. Seeing its mercantile and military potential, the Berbers, led by Tarik-ibn-Zeyad, took the Rock in 711 AD which they were to occupy for 750

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1. The principal sources for the historical and political data used in this chapter, unless otherwise stated, are: Benady, T. 1991, 1997, 1999, 2001; Dennis 1990; Hills 1974; Howes 1991; Jackson 1990; Uxó Palasí et al. 1996; Valle Gálvez & González García 2004.

years. It became known as *Djebel al-Tarik* (Mountain of Tarik) in honour of the conquering Berber leader from which the name Gibraltar is derived.

Over the next centuries several attempts were made to reclaim the coveted fortress before it was eventually captured in 1462 in the name of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. After the long period of Moslem rule, Gibraltar was to undergo a radical religious and cultural metamorphosis. The Arabs as well as the large and influential Jewish population were officially expelled, and although some remained as “conversos”, the Rock was almost completely repopulated by Spanish Christians.

The Dukedom of Medina Sidonia was initially unwilling to relinquish its prize, and it was only on December 22 1501 that Gibraltar was finally incorporated into the Crown when, through Royal Decree, Queen Isabella appointed a Governor to take possession of the Rock in the name of her husband King Ferdinand. The fact that Isabella’s last will and testament specifically charged her successors to hold and retain Gibraltar is testimony to the strategic and symbolic importance that the Rock had acquired (Howes 1946: 30). Despite the constant threat of Moslem invasion during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Gibraltar remained under Spanish control until the early eighteenth century when events in Europe were to change its destiny.

The War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1713) provided the backdrop for the British occupation. When Charles II died in 1700 without a direct heir, two contenders to the throne emerged: Duke Philip of Anjou (the grandson and protégé of Louis XIV of France) and Archduke Charles of Austria (the son of Leopold II, the Holy Roman Emperor). Given the potential threat to the hegemony of Europe and their own interests, Britain, allied with the Netherlands and Austria, opposed the French protégé and, as the lesser of the two evils, supported the Habsburg claimant Charles III.

On his deathbed, Charles II named Philip as his heir and stipulated in his will that the French and Spanish crowns should remain independent. Although this condition was accepted by Louis XIV, the Alliance was wary of French intentions. Tensions increased when French merchants were granted the sole right to trade in African slaves with the Spanish Indies – a trade monopoly which directly affected British interests. Thus, when on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1704 an Anglo-Dutch fleet led by Admiral Sir George Rooke took the Rock of Gibraltar in the name of Archduke Charles of Austria, the action had wider underlying motives. Britain saw an opportunity to seize a strategic naval base from which the Mediterranean trade routes could be controlled.

After more than a decade of power struggle, a negotiated peace put an end to the hostilities in 1713. Although Philip V was confirmed as the ruler of Spain and the Indies, there was a high price to pay. By the terms of the treaties of Utrecht (1713) and Rastatt (1714), Spain lost the Netherlands and her Italian possessions

including Naples, Milan and Sardinia to the Empire. Britain, on the other hand, as well as securing considerable trading rights in the Americas and strengthening her position as the prime sea power, gained control of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia as well as Minorca and Gibraltar.

Article X of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) still forms the statutory justification for the British presence on the Rock today, and Gibraltar and Britain consider the document to be legally binding.<sup>2</sup> The counterargument is that the treaty was signed under duress and that Spain was clearly an unwilling participant in the transaction. Ever since Philip V signed Gibraltar's fate, Spanish legal experts have scoured the Latin text in search of possible loopholes, pointing to the wording in certain areas of the text which they argue throw doubt on the rights to permanent ownership (see Kramer 1986: 11).

## 2.2 The eighteenth century: the birth of a new population

There are no reliable figures which attest to the demographic situation of Gibraltar at the beginning of the eighteenth century; Howes (1946: 46) estimates that 6000 people were living in Gibraltar on the eve of the British occupation in 1704, while Benady, T. (2005: 69) puts the figure at 5000. Although the British offered the right of residence to all those who wished to stay, on condition that they swore allegiance to Charles III, the majority of the Spanish population (an estimated 4000 civilians) chose to leave with the Spanish soldiers. Many set up temporary residence in San Roque, expecting the period of exile to be short and anticipating that the Spanish forces would soon recapture the Rock. However, after the signing of the treaty of Utrecht (1713), hopes of returning to their homes rapidly evaporated.

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2. The opening paragraph of Article X reads:

Rex Catholicus pro se, Haeredibus, & successoribus suis, hisce cedit Coronae Magnae Britanniae plenam, integramque Proprietatem Urbis & Arcis Gibraltar nuncupatae, una cum Portu, Munitionibus, Fortalitiisque eodem pertinentibus, dictamque Proprietatem habendam, fruendamque dat absolute, cum Jure omnimodo in perpetuum, sine ulla exceptione, vel impedimento quolibetcunque.

['The Catholic King does hereby, for himself, his heirs and successors, yield to the Crown of Great Britain the full and entire propriety of the town and castle of Gibraltar, together with the port, fortifications, and forts thereunto belonging; and he gives up the said propriety to be held and enjoyed absolutely with all manner of right for ever, without any exception or impediment whatsoever.']

(English translation from Valle Gálvez & González García 2004: 461)



Some Spaniards, particularly single women, remained in the Garrison town, seeing potential profit in the new situation (see Dennis 1979: 53). However, Of the 30 or so families who chose to stay, most were of Genoese stock living on the eastern side of the Rock around the area known today as Catalan Bay which remained relatively unaffected by the occupation.

The ethnic make-up of Gibraltar was to change considerably over the century through immigration from Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Catalonia, Minorca, Morocco and Malta, but in the first years of British occupation the new civil population was principally made up of Genoese, Jews and Spaniards. Although Gibraltar had fallen into British hands, their numbers were minimal. The first detailed account of the Gibraltarian population in 1721 reveals that of the 310 citizens “able to bear arms”, 169 were Genoese, 96 were Spanish and only 45 were British (Howes 1991: 2).

Italians, and Genoese in particular, who had been present in the province of Cádiz since the sixteenth century, enjoyed considerable economic privileges within Spain (see Benady, T. 2005: 70). By the first half of the eighteenth century they formed an important and well-established community (see Pradells Nadal 2000). By 1791 there were 6951 immigrants from Italy settled in Spain, 3488 of whom lived in the province of Cádiz (Salas Ausens & Jarque Martínez 1988: 90). The first Genoese settlers in Gibraltar were fishermen and their families (Howes 1991: 2; Kramer 1986: 10), many of whom were transient. However, wine and food merchants were soon to follow. The unskilled labour was supplied by immigrants from other parts of Italy, often working in the service of the British troops and in building and construction.

The other important group who were to make their presence felt during the formative years of the new Gibraltar was the Jews. Like the Genoese, as well as catering for the immediate needs of the British forces, they were quick to see the wider commercial and trading potential of Gibraltar which was declared a free port in 1706. Their existence was not reflected in the earliest official figures, since by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht neither they nor the Moors were permitted to live on the Rock.<sup>3</sup> According to Vallejo (2001: 3), however, “the British turned a blind eye to such matters and the Jews were allowed to settle in the Europa area

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3. The fifth paragraph of Article X of the Treaty of Utrecht states:

Majestas autem Sua Britannica, rogatu Regis Catholici, consentit, convenitque, ut nec Judaeis, neque Mauris, facultas concedatur in dicta Urbe Gibraltaria, sub quocunque praetextu commorandi, aut Domicilia habendi; utque nullum Perfugium, neque receptaculum pateat Maurorum Navibus bellicis quibuscunque in Portu dictae Urbis, quo Communicatio ab Hispania ad Septam civitatem impediatur, aut Orae Hispaniae Maurorum excursionibus infestae reddantur.

away from the town itself". In 1725, when figures actually give testimony to their presence, the Jewish community consisted of some 137 people – 12% of the total population (Benady, T. 1979: 89–94, 2005: 70). They were Sephardic in origin, coming from Morocco, Italy and Portugal as well as some “secret Jews” from Spain who took the opportunity to practice their religion openly in a comparatively tolerant environment. By 1753, they formed the second most important ethnic group in terms of numbers.

After the failed attempt by Spanish forces to regain Gibraltar in 1727, the Spanish population decreased rapidly. Perhaps foreseeing the inevitable, many of Gibraltar’s original Spanish residents had already sold their houses before the hostilities began (Benady, T. 2005: 70). In 1725, of the 1113 Gibraltarian inhabitants, 400 (36%) were Spanish, but by 1753 the combined Spanish and Portuguese population numbered just 210 - 12.75% of the population (Benady, T. *ibid.*). In terms of numbers, they were the third most important community in Gibraltar, behind the Genoese and the Jews, but ahead of the British. Many were female house servants, kitchen maids and seamstresses who served the predominantly male population. Inter-marriage took place, marking the start of an important ongoing social phenomenon which has undoubtedly contributed to the preservation of cultural and linguistic links with the Spanish hinterland.

One of the earliest accounts of Gibraltar under British rule is provided by Robert Poole who stopped off on the Rock in 1748 on route to the West Indies. His diary, the cited excerpts of which are found in Benady, T. (1996), offers a valuable eyewitness account of various aspects of life in Gibraltar, from descriptions of the town and landmarks to the local food and customs. He also gives testimony to the early multi-cultural and linguistic make up of the Rock:

The town is said to contain about 1,500 houses, and 6,000 inhabitants, of which number, 1,000 are said to be Roman Catholics, and 600 Jews.

(October 16, Sunday)<sup>4</sup>

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[‘And Her Britannic Majesty, at the request of the Catholic King, does consent and agree, that no leave shall be given under any pretence whatsoever, either to Jews or Moors, to reside or have their dwellings in the said town of Gibraltar; and that no refuge or shelter shall be allowed to any Moorish ships of war in the harbour of the said town, whereby the communication between Spain and Ceuta may be obstructed, or the coasts of Spain be infested by the excursions of the Moors.’]

(English translation from Valle Gálvez & González García 2004: 461)

4. Benady points out that this figure must have included the soldiers in the Garrison. Of the soldiers Poole writes: “It is said there are four regiments of soldiers belonging to the garrison, each of which ought to consist of 700 men; but, at present, they fall considerably short of that compliment” (Benady, T. 1996: 89).

The shops are but small, they make but a mean appearance, and are mostly occupied by Genoese, Jews and Turks, and but very few by the English. It is a complaint here, that foreigners meet with more encouragement than those of the English nation.  
(October 18, Tuesday)

The city abounds with inhabitants, of different nations and habits. The Spanish women generally wear black, and are covered with a black veil, when they attend their church; but, at other times, they may be seen walking the streets without either veils or caps on. The Barbary Jews generally wear a kind of loose cloak, or cloth, cast about them with white trowsers, and sandals on their feet, but no stockings. These sort of people are the principal that keep shop, and do the portage, or other laborious work in this place.  
(November 5, Saturday)

What becomes clear from Poole's descriptions is that English is very much a secondary presence, with Spanish being the most widely used language on the Rock. On Tuesday October 18th, for example, Poole, talking of the fruit of the Locust Tree (the carob tree, *ceratonia siliqua*) writes that "they are said to be used only as food for asses, here called *Borekers*" – the author's spelling of *borricos* ('donkeys').

The first surviving full census (1753) shows a total population of 1816 people: 597 Genoese, 575 Jews, 434 British, 185 Spaniards and 25 Portuguese.<sup>5</sup> By the next census (1767) the population had increased to 2710. Rather than being categorised ethnically, the population was now classified by religious denominations: 1460 Roman Catholics, 783 Jews and 467 British and Protestants. More than 50 years after the Treaty of Utrecht it was possible to begin to talk of a consolidated native population. In the 1777 census, in addition to the three religious categories, further divisions are included which distinguish "British Blood" from "Alien Blood", and "Natives" from "Not Natives". Of the total population of 3201, 1334 were natives. There were 506 Protestants (all of "British blood") and 863 Jews (all of "Alien blood") with Roman Catholics (all except 13 of "Alien blood") making up the large majority of the population (1832 people). As the place of birth of each inhabitant is recorded in the census, we are given an interesting insight into the immigration tendencies and ethnic make-up of the fast growing population of Gibraltar. The Catholic majority was made up of the following nationalities:

English and Irish:	13
Minorkeens:(Minorcans)	62
Natives:	845
Genoese and Savoyards:	672

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5. Historical census information is taken from the introduction to *The Census of Gibraltar 2001* (CoG2001: vii–xxviii) published by the Government of Gibraltar.

Portuguese:	93
Spaniards:	134
French:	13

(1777 figures appear in the introduction to the 2001 Census of Gibraltar:  
CofG2001: vii)

Although in the 1777 census British Protestants are listed first ahead of Catholics and Jews, it is clear that on the eve of the Great siege, the Anglo-Saxon contingent is far outnumbered by Latin elements. Spanish was the main linguistic force, acting as a common denominator between the various ethnic groups. The Sephardic Jewish community would have spoken the Spanish-based variant Ladino,<sup>6</sup> however due to their involvement in international trade and commerce they tended to also be conversant in English. As Howes (1991: 168) notes: “The Jews have always been a most British section of the population. . .As regards language, the Jews had led the population in speaking English wherever possible, realising the value of bilingualism in a British Fortress Colony at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula”. The Portuguese and Genoese communities, with their Latin roots, would have found it relatively easy to communicate in Spanish, or at least to understand it.<sup>7</sup>

Invaluable testimony is given by Don Ignacio López de Ayala (1782) whose *Historia de Gibraltar* includes a contemporary account of Gibraltar in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Ademas de la guarnacion habitan en tiempo de paz como tres mil personas de ambos sexos i de todas edades: quinientos son ingleses, como mil Judios, i hasta mil cuatrocientos Catolicos Portugueses, Italianos, algunos Españoles, i la mayor parte Ginoveses. (López de Ayala 1782: 373)

[‘Apart from the garrison, in peace time there are some three thousand inhabitants of both sexes and of all ages: five hundred are English, about a thousand are Jews and up to one thousand four hundred Catholics – Portuguese, Italians, some Spanish and the majority Genoese.’]

He goes on to give a brief socio-economic commentary on some of the principal ethnic groups. The English, despite being in the minority, are shown to have generally occupied the positions of power.

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6. For Ladino (also known as Judeo-Español or Judezmo) see Alvar 1996: 341–59; Hassán 1995; Lleal Galceran 1992; Penny 1991, 1992, 1999).

7. Kramer (1986: 16) argues that the Genoese dialect diverges considerably from standard Italian and is closer to Western Romance languages. The fact that numerous dialects exist in Liguria may have meant that it was preferable or necessary to use Spanish as the *lingua franca*.

Las casas mas ricas son Inglesas, i ademas de los militares, i otros empleados por el gobierno, hai Ingleses de varios oficios, i con casas de posada.

[‘The English have the richest houses, and besides military personel and other government employees, there are English of various trades including innkeepers.]

The Genoese were predominantly fishermen, sailors, and grew fruit and vegetables; the Jews are presented in anti-Semitic terms as deceitful landlords and usurers and the author’s dislike for them is hardly concealed.

Los Judios son por la mayor parte tenderos ó corredores, tan puntuales allí en engañar, i prestarse á las logrerias mas enormes. Tienen su sinagoga, profesan su religióni observan públicamente sus ritos, aunque reclaman abiertamente el tratado de Utrech(t). (López de Ayala 1782: 373)

[‘Most of the Jews are shop owners and dealers, so cunning in deceit and in search of the greatest profit. They have a synagogue and practice their religion and openly observe their rites, although this clearly violates the Treaty of Utrecht.’]

Both Jews and Genoese were also merchants who, like many others were quick to see the international trading benefits of Gibraltar.

Es un puerto franco para todas naciones: entran, desembarcan, compran i venden sin pagar casi derechos. Su excelente situación la hace un emporio el mas proximo al Africa, medio entre el mediterraneo i el océano, con rumbo facil al mundo viejo i nuevo. (López de Ayala 1782: 374)

[‘It is a free port for all nations: they enter, they disembarque, they buy and sell hardly paying any duties. Its excellent location makes it the closest trading post to Africa between the Mediterranean and the Ocean, a straightforward route to both the old and new worlds.’]

The Spanish writer, astronomer and historian also gives one of the earliest, albeit brief, commentaries on the linguistic situation on the Rock. As well as indicating that both English and Spanish were spoken to varying degrees of proficiency, he refers to the use of an international vernacular apparently understood by Europeans and North Africans alike.

tanto éstos (los Genoveses) como los Judios hablan bien ó mal el Castellano é Inglés, i un dialecto ó jerga común a todas las naciones, sin excluir las Africanas. (López de Ayala 1782: 374)

[‘Both the Genoese as well as the Jews speak Castillian and English well or badly as well as a dialect or jargon common to all nations including Africans.’]

Kramer (1986: 53) interprets this as “the so-called *lingua franca*, a sort of Romance-based pidgin used in the Mediterranean up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century”. The possible existence of a widespread Mediterranean *lingua franca* remains an enigma.

Since it was not a written language, but apparently used as a trading vernacular by sailors and merchants, its structure and content is largely speculative (see Camus Bergareche 1993; Kahane & Kahane 1976; Kahane et al. 1958; Wansbrough 1996; Whinnom 1977).

While it may be possible and even likely that a structured Romance-based pidgin or *lingua franca* was initially widely spoken in Gibraltar, there is little hard evidence to support this conjecture. Rather than a uniform language common to all local inhabitants, it would seem likely that, in the early days at least, more than one inter-speaker pidgin was used. In some cases, where sufficient linguistic overlap existed, speakers of different nationalities may have spoken in their own mother tongues, adapting lexicon as necessary.

During this period there were three dominant languages: English, Spanish and Italian, and until 1830 all important announcements or proclamations were given in all three of these languages (Chiappe 2004: 44). Various Latin-based dialects as well as Maltese (an Arabic variant) were also spoken. Although English was heard on the streets of Gibraltar, it was very much a second or secondary language acquired and spoken for international trade and commerce purposes. A *laissez-faire* attitude to rule and the fact that English was not enforced undoubtedly allowed this multicultural and multilingual environment to flourish. Education at that time was not compulsory and in the first century of the British occupation the various communities took care of educating their own.<sup>8</sup>

Geographical connections were stronger than political ones and the proximity of Spain arguably made a Spanish-based language a natural choice, especially as there was always an air of uncertainty hanging over the Rock with constant attempts by Spain to regain possession of Gibraltar.<sup>9</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century the majority of the local population, most of whom were first or second generation immigrants, arguably felt no strong patriotic allegiance to either Spain or Britain. They were principally commercial traders and small businessmen

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8. Evidence of this is gleaned from various sources. Robert Poole notes in his diary (October 16, 1748) that the Genoese have their own school. Amongst the occupations given in the 1777 census were a French teacher, an Italian teacher and an English school mistress. There was also a Jewish *Yeshiva* (seminary) at this time in the old synagogue in Irish Town (see Serfarty 1958). The British military had their own schools. In 1733, 178 boys received tuition from army sergeants on regimental pay and 129 girls received instruction from contracted schoolmistresses (Traverso 1980: 17).

9. The most serious and sustained attempt by Spanish forces to regain the Rock is known as the *Great Siege* and lasted from 13 September 1779 to 12 March 1783.

looking to carve out an economic future and for most, a British Gibraltar served these interests.

At a time when the language and rhetoric of religion was an important unifying force, it is significant that no attempts were made to impose British Protestantism on the local population. The appointment of Catholic priests depended upon the Spanish diocese of Cádiz, and the fact that Spanish speaking clergy held religious services in Latin and Spanish undoubtedly contributed to the linguistic direction that Gibraltar would take over the next two centuries.

### 2.3 The nineteenth century: consolidation and growth

The beginning of the nineteenth century was a period of demographic fluctuations. The ravages of war and devastating Yellow Fever epidemics at the turn of the century would reduce the population by 60%. However, when the first census of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was carried out in 1814, it revealed a flourishing population of 10,136. This apparently miraculous recovery can be largely explained by the arrival of new immigrants escaping the Napoleonic Wars and attracted by Gibraltar's status as the only trading port and outlet for the export of British goods to the rest of Europe.

The occupation of Genoa by Napoleon led to an influx of new Genoese immigrants eager to build a new future and to avoid the obligatory conscription to the French Army. Although in fewer numbers, there was also immigration from British-controlled Malta and also from Minorca, which had only recently been ceded to Spain at the Treaty of Versailles (1783), as well as from Sicily, Portugal and France.

After the French Revolution (1789), there was a wave of French emigration to several European countries and a small number settled in Gibraltar, setting up trade and commerce. During the Napoleonic period, the French presence increased and by 1844 their numbers stood at 53, dropping to 37 by 1891. Although forming only a small percentage of the population they were nevertheless influential. It is interesting to note that in the first editions of the *Gibraltar Chronicle* in 1801, under the editorship of the French immigrant Charles Bouisson, the leading articles appeared in both English and French.<sup>10</sup> In the following years some also appeared in Spanish, but by the end of the decade articles were published in English only.

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10. It has been argued that the fact that the French language was so prominent in the press, particularly as Spanish was not, suggests that French was an influential in initially shaping Gibraltar's linguistic make-up. Benady, S. (1994) argues that "the use of the French language cannot have been just because the editor was a Frenchman; the *Chronicle* must have had a significant



While English enjoyed official language status, at street level Spanish remained dominant. Indeed, a new political climate was to indirectly help consolidate its role as the prime inter-community means of expression. The Peninsular War (1808–14) marked a period of closer Anglo-Spanish collaboration. This was born out of the political need to present a united front against the Napoleonic forces and in 1810 the fortifications that separated Gibraltar and Spain were demolished.

Improved Anglo-Spanish relations and the opening of the border coincided with an economic boom. As Gibraltar thrived, Spanish labour became increasingly necessary and day workers began to cross over from Spain. With limited living space on the Rock, the Spanish border town of La Linea de la Concepción emerged and developed to house these migrant workers. Although Gibraltar remained a thorn in the Spanish side, relationships between the local authorities were good. Except when a clampdown was politically expedient, a blind eye was usually turned to smuggling and contraband activities since there was profit to be had on both sides of the border.

Since young men greatly outnumbering women in the garrison town, Spanish wives were in demand and intermarriage once again helped to preserve and reinforce the linguistic presence of Spanish on the Rock. The British, however, tended to keep to themselves and associations between British and non-British locals were less common, particularly as such liaisons were officially forbidden by military law at the time.

Throughout the nineteenth century the population of Gibraltar expanded, particularly after 1830 when it was officially declared a Crown colony. As the population grew, overcrowding became a problem and in turn facilitated the spread of epidemics during this period.<sup>11</sup> By 1871 the population of Gibraltar had risen to 18,695, and in order to stem this trend measures were taken to restrict immigration and residence on the Rock. In 1873 “The Aliens Order in Council” allowed free access to the Rock only to “British persons” and established that the children of foreign

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number of French-speaking readers to justify the time and paper expended.” (1994: 7). Will and census records suggest, however, that the native French community was not particularly large. One should not forget that at a time of great illiteracy the newspaper-reading public would have been small and limited to elite sectors of society. As Sloma (1994: 31) points out, French was the language of the European aristocracy and speaking it was a mark of education and breeding. The French language really had little direct influence on the speech of Gibraltar as a whole, especially since the small native French community formed a self-contained unit and tended to keep to themselves (Benady, S. 1994: 9).

11. The 1891 census reveals that in 37 households seven people lived in one room, in 58 households six people lived in one room, in 88 households seven people lived in two rooms and in 118 households six people lived in two rooms (CoG2001: xi).



parents could not be born within the city walls (Uxó Palasí 1996: 19). The 1878 census reveals that “Aliens” were allowed onto the Rock with “1st or 2nd class permits” and with “Fisherman’s badges” (CofG2001: x). The “Immigrants and Aliens Order” was introduced in 1885, defining and restricting the requisites for the concession of citizenship. This was followed in 1900 by an even more restrictive “Order in Council” which stated that being born in Gibraltar was no longer a guarantee of Gibraltarian status (Uxó Palasí 1996: 19).

These measures did not, however, stop immigration. They did, though, change the colour and creed of the immigrants. Instead of Italians, Genoese and Portuguese, other British subjects from other British colonies such as Malta and India began to arrive, adding new colour to an already cosmopolitan society (Dennis 1979: 106; Kramer 1986: 18).

By 1901, the population of Gibraltar had risen to 20,355 (CofG2001: 1) and its cultural and linguistic balance was changing. Whereas previously the use of Spanish could be justified by the fact that the mother tongues of the original settlers shared similar Latin roots, new immigrants were arriving for whom this language was unintelligible. Although this might have potentially threatened the linguistic situation, the fact that Spanish was by now firmly established ensured its survival. More importantly, Spanish was kept alive and sustained through language contact with Andalusians from over the border. Gibraltar continued to depend on imported labour, and the numbers of Spanish day workers crossing the border had increased steadily since 1875, reaching 7000 by the end of the nineteenth century (Uxó Palasí 1996: 31).

At the same time, however, the local population was, being increasingly exposed to English, particularly through education. Although private schools existed and the families of the British military had their own schools, it was not until after 1830, when Gibraltar became a Crown Colony and therefore received a civil rather than military administration, that education became more widely available.<sup>12</sup> In 1832 the local authorities set up the first free school for children of all classes and denominations with tuition given in English. By 1833 it was providing education for 181 boys and 99 girls (Traverso 1980: Appendix 6c).

Religion and education during this period went hand in hand. At a time of missionary zeal, education was not only a means of serving the community but also a way of attracting followers and converts. The Methodist missionary Dr. W.H. Rule, seeing the potential of spreading the doctrine and attracting converts, set up a charitable

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12. Traverso’s unpublished dissertation *A History of Education in British Gibraltar 1704–1945* (1980) offers an invaluable account of the progression and development of education in Gibraltar under British rule from its beginnings though to the end of the Second World War.

school in 1832, following general guidelines laid down by the Methodist Educational Committee in England. By 1839 it had 91 boys and 56 girls (Traverso 1980: 32). It was soon apparent, however, that the imposition of English as the sole vehicle of instruction was counter-productive. Rule justified the use of Spanish in the classroom “as it is most generally understood and spoken by the native inhabitants” (Rule 1844: 101), but the bilingual approach owed more to missionary fervour than to educative innovation. Rule was the first to realise the benefit of not alienating the Spanish speaking Catholic majority. In his memoirs of this period he writes:

There is an un-Christian prejudice among persons against all that is Spanish, of which the natives themselves unhappily partake; and while the easier way might be to use our language to those who cannot well understand it, the consequences would be a strengthening of the prejudice of caste which ever injured the cause of God there. And, by the attempted substitution of a foreign instead of the vernacular language, the bulk of the native inhabitants who chiefly correspond with their relatives, friends and general connections from Spain proper, would be cut off from communication with the Missionary, who cannot Trouble themselves to listen to his jabbering in a broken dialect. (Rule 1844: 367)

The Catholic Church was soon spurred into action. In 1835 missionaries from the Order of the Irish Christian Brothers arrived in Gibraltar to cater for the educational needs of Catholic boys. Initially, as the Irish missionaries did not speak Spanish, instruction was given only in English, although bilingual approaches were later adopted (see Traverso 1980: 23–28). The influence of the Christian Brothers was to be noted in Gibraltar well into the twentieth century; their last school closed in 1977.<sup>13</sup> Loreto Nuns from Ireland provided education for girls from 1846; the private “Loreto Convent School” still exists today.

In 1880 the local authorities adopted the English Elementary Code which had been introduced in England ten years earlier. The implementation of this standard curriculum which demanded “reading with fluency and expression” and “easy composition or paraphrase in English” was problematic since the standard of English amongst the local population was generally low. Although, in theory, classes were to be conducted in English, in practice, Spanish was allowed, especially at lower levels.

By the end of the century, over 2500 children were receiving a basic English education in one form or another. However, it is important to remember that there were a further 1500 children (37%) who received no education at all (Traverso

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13. The Christian Brothers are still remembered by older Gibraltarians with varying degrees of affection. For a personal account of life at the Christian Brothers’ school in Line Wall Road see Gareze (1998).

1980: 59–61 & 71).<sup>14</sup> Although the first steps had been taken, the impact of education on the linguistic orientation of Gibraltar was limited. The basic English grounding that the majority did receive was not enough to change linguistic habits, especially as most children rarely used English outside the classroom. This was compounded by the fact that only very few went on to further their education. Although higher education was conducted exclusively in English, it was not an option for most Gibraltarians as these schools were generally fee-paying establishments which only the wealthier members of society could afford.

#### 2.4 The first half of the twentieth century: war, evacuation and identity

The industrial revolution altered Gibraltar's traditional mercantile role. With sail giving way to steam, Gibraltar lost some of its economic importance at the end of the nineteenth century. Although the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 was to give her a new role as a coaling station on the Eastern sea route to India and the Far East, it was the political events of the first half of the twentieth century which were to give the strategically placed outpost a new prominence. During the two World Wars, Gibraltar and her people were made to feel that they had an important role to play within the British Empire, and a new sense of national pride grew amongst the local population.<sup>15</sup> As the local historian H.W. Howes (1946), in a demonstration of unconcealed pride and patriotism, writes:

Twice during the first half of the twentieth century has the value of Gibraltar been proved, in the first great wars of 1914–18, and 1939–45. In both these, not England alone, but all freedom loving nations have benefited from our possession of the first Outpost of the Empire. (Howes 1946: 79)

While British national sentiment undoubtedly grew, it did not begin to affect the social and linguistic behaviour of the colony until after the Second World War. For most of the population in the early part of the century, feeling proud to be British was not incompatible with speaking Spanish, nor did it imply a lessening of cultural affinity with their neighbours. Isaac Benyunes, writing of his childhood in 1930s, describes the atmosphere and mentality of the inter-war period.

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14. School attendance did not become compulsory until 1917 when the “Compulsory Education Ordinance” decreed that all children had to be sent to school from the ages of 5 to 14.

15. Only 76 Gibraltarians were enlisted in the British armed forces during the First World War (Uxó Palasí 1996: 20). However, because of its strategic location, the Rock was important for the war effort. As well as being a coaling station, it served as a refuge and repair station for sea vessels damaged by enemy fire (Hill 1974: 287; Howes 1946: 79).

As a young child I was very aware that we Gibraltarians felt very proud of the British connection, and of our British institutions and passports, the military and naval presence, and so on [. . .] Nevertheless the lifestyle of people in Gibraltar reflected our geographical connection with the Iberian Peninsula. Spaniards accepted the political situation as part of the established order - unlike today. Gibraltar was British and that was that! [. . .] Yes, Gibraltar did have a Spanish flavour in those days punctuated by visits from the Home and Mediterranean Fleets when they called on their joint exercises and the Bay would be full of ships and Main Street, its bars, cafés and Indian shops, would be full of sailors. A reminder to us kids of British power and where our allegiance lay.

(Benyunes 1994: 49–50)

In those days national and political allegiance was separable from social and ethnic identity and behaviour, and this is still largely true today. While respecting the phlegmatic and less chaotic British mindset, the average Gibraltarian felt, and arguably still feels, more affinity with the Andalusian character, sharing a similar Mediterranean mentality, culture and outlook on life.

This ambivalence was also reflected in our cultural life. In spite of the fact that our schooling was in English most people preferred to read Spanish. The *Gibraltar Chronicle* was really just an official gazette run by the Army, but the other local papers were Spanish, *El Anunciador* and *El Calpense*, and many read the Madrid newspapers, *El Sol* and *Ahora*. Intellectuals held their tertulias, Spanish style, at Sacarello's newspaper shop or at the Commercial Library, which is now the House of Assembly. They were intensely interested in literature and discussed Shakespeare and Dickens, but, more often, the great Spanish writers - Galdós, Blasco, Ibañez, Maeztu. There was always something going on at the Theatre Royal, but more often the works of Spanish dramatists - Benavente, Echegaray, Valle Inclán rather than Shaw or Oscar Wilde. Spanish repertory *zarzuela* and opera companies arrived for a week at a time and they were the highlights in the town's social and cultural life in winter. (ibid.: 50)

The close relationship which had existed between Gibraltar and her neighbours for many years was to be considerably damaged by the Spanish Civil War (1936–9). Gibraltar witnessed the struggle at close quarters and provided political refuge for both Republicans and Nationalists. Given that no official records exist, it is difficult to know exactly how many Spaniards sought safe haven in Gibraltar, with estimates varying between 5000 and 10,000 (see Rodriguez 2001: 5). It is perhaps indicative however that when Malaga fell to the Communists on July 21 1936, *The Gibraltar Chronicle* published the first of a series of special war editions written in both English and Spanish, presumably for the benefit of the numerous Spanish refugees on the Rock.

Initially support was split between the two factions, but when Franco sided with Hitler the balance tilted and Gibraltar adopted an anti-Nationalist stance.

Whereas Gibraltar had for a long time managed to enjoy the benefits of being British while retaining close ties with its Spanish neighbours, political events during the first half of the twentieth century obliged them to take sides.

The Second World War marked an important watershed in the social and linguistic development of Gibraltar since the local population was forced to uproot and leave their homes en masse. Evacuation was compulsory for women, children under the age of 17, men over the age of 45 and those considered physically unfit. Initially, the whole population was evacuated except for 4000 men. By the summer of 1941, 1000 of these had joined their families, thus leaving only about 3000 men to continue essential services in Gibraltar. In all an estimated 16,500 were obliged to leave Gibraltar.<sup>16</sup> About 1200 left Gibraltar by their own means, mostly to Tangiers or Spain. Approximately 2000 were evacuated to Madeira, 1500 to Jamaica while the vast majority (11,800) went to the United Kingdom, initially staying in London with friends and relatives or at official centres in Kensington and the West End. However, during the Blitz, many were re-evacuated to Northern Ireland where they lived in 16 camps in County Antrim and County Down, (London) Derry and Belfast.

Experiences and conditions varied greatly from country to country and from camp to camp, from the relative warmth and comfort of Madeira to the sometimes Spartan existence in some of the camps in Northern Ireland. For many it was the first time they had left the confines of their homes and for most it was the first time that they had been exposed to a native English-speaking environment.

However, the degree of linguistic immersion and integration varied. While some of those who went to London lived, worked and mingled in the city, others lived in self-confined Gibraltarian ghettos. As so often occurs with communities in exile, there was a tendency to seek refuge in a common culture and language. Talking of his experience as an evacuee, Manolo Rodríguez writes:

Very few of us acquired an English accent as most of the time we used to speak in our habitual Spanish at the centres, and also whilst outside, if working with our own people. This was a usual practice specially amongst our women who preferred to work in groups. (Rodríguez 2001: 68)

This was particularly true in the case of those who went to Jamaica and Northern Ireland where evacuees lived together in camps, often with limited contact with the local population. Living in adversity in these artificial environments

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16. A full account of the evacuation of Gibraltarians during World War II can be found in Finlayson's (1991) book *The Fortress Came First: The Evacuation of the Civilian population of Gibraltar in World War II*. For personal accounts and experiences see Benady, S. 1993; Galliano 1996, 1997; Rodríguez 2001. There is also a locally produced documentary video called *Evacuation - cause and effect* (Strait Vision Productions) which contains interesting testimonies.

served to strengthen the sense of community and helped promote an independent Gibraltarian identity.

The evacuation also had the effect of knotting the Gibraltarians into a closer community than ever before. Be they in London, Northern Ireland, Jamaica or Madeira, they were made much more aware of the fact that they were “different”, a community, indeed almost a nation! (Finlayson 1991: 228)

What many Gibraltarians thought would be a short stay away from home stretched out for longer than expected. Although repatriation began in 1944, due to shortages in shipping as well as housing it was not completed until 1951, by which time a total of 15,700 Gibraltarians had returned to the Rock.

Although evacuees first and foremost brought back a strengthened sense of local identity, this was closely linked to a new sense of “Britishness”. Having suffered for their mother country and having contributed to the war effort, Gibraltarians now felt they were entitled to feel British and had earned the right to celebrate VE Day along with all other Britons. As Lourdes Galliano recalls in her memoirs of the war years:

It was then that we discovered that things could never be the same again, that Gibraltar had changed, each and every one of us had changed. The old ways were to be no more. We began to realise then what a key role Gibraltar had played in the war as guardian to the entrance of the Mediterranean. But this had only been made possible by the Gibraltarians who sacrificed their homes, their families and their way of life for four very long years. (Galliano 1997: 128)

As this sense of British patriotism increased, anti-Spanish feeling grew. There was little ill-feeling towards the Spanish people themselves, but rather animosity and mistrust was aimed at the Spanish governing bodies and Franco’s Fascist regime who had sided with Britain’s enemies during the war.

As regards language, Gibraltarians returned to the Rock with a new-found confidence in their English and with it the potential to start bringing about a change in the linguistic balance of power in Gibraltar. Writing at the end of the Second World War, Howes (1946: 17) describes the linguistic situation:

English and Spanish are spoken, although until very recent years Spanish was completely dominant. In most homes, Spanish is still spoken, and the casual visitor finds it rather confusing to find so much Spanish conversation in a British Fortress Colony.

Before the war, Andalusian Spanish had been the home language in most families and the average Gibraltarian woman, traditionally tied to the home, generally spoke considerably less English than her male counterpart. The fact that the whole female population was evacuated, in many cases without their men-folk, could have had an important effect on the linguistic future of Gibraltar. After an extended period of exposure to English, local mothers, the prime educators and carers, were

potentially better prepared linguistically to bring up the new generation of children in an English-speaking environment. Whether English was adopted or not varied from household to household. However, what seems clear is that a radical linguistic upheaval did not take place in the immediate post-war years.

Given that the local Spanish variant had been dominant for so long it is perhaps not surprising that language behaviour did not change overnight. Although for many the evacuation period seemed like a lifetime, linguistic exposure in real terms, particularly in a ghetto or camp environment, was not sufficient to bring about lasting change. For older speakers who had passed the language acquisition threshold, the experience was often one of L2 acquisition, and thus speaking English in a Gibraltarian context at home would have seemed somewhat artificial.

More permanent language acquisition was more likely amongst the younger evacuees who, due to their age, were better able to adapt and absorb new linguistic forms. In evacuation camps, considerable efforts were made to provide an English-speaking environment for children. In Madeira, for example, the evacuee children who studied at the British School were forbidden by their Gibraltarian teachers to speak Spanish within the school grounds or on the school bus. Those doing so were severely reprimanded. In Jamaica, in an attempt to ensure an English atmosphere, the members of staff were chosen primarily for their English fluency above and before their pedagogic ability (see Finlayson 1991: 70–2; 123–4). But despite these efforts, complete immersion did not take place. Living in a camp environment, traditional linguistic forms were inevitably maintained in family environments.

Although the war experience did not bring about a linguistic revolution, an important foundation had been laid on which possible future language change could be built. There was new hope in certain circles that the population would now take up the English language. As H.W. Howes, the then Director of Education in Gibraltar noted: “More English is being spoken than was the case before the war, and the more the schools can develop English speech, the quicker will spread an interest in British culture and cultural heritage” (1946: 86). For change to take place the education system would have to be overhauled and the authorities were quick to seize the opportunity.

In 1943 a committee was set up under the supervision of Colonial Secretary Clifford to review the state of education in Gibraltar and to set out guidelines for change. As a result of these recommendations a local Government Department of Education was formed, and in 1944 a new education system was developed. This system finally came into force in 1950, offering the post-war generation free secular education based on the UK model.

Traverso (1980: 102) points out that “there was no wish to oust the Spanish language from the colony. The aim was that the young people should be perfect



bilinguals". However, in practice the underlying aim of the *New Educational System for Gibraltar* was clearly to redress the balance and to favour English over Spanish. Teachers were now UK-trained and better prepared to enforce the norms of British English in the school environment.<sup>17</sup> But although English could be imposed in the classroom, its use could not be enforced or controlled at home or on the street where Spanish forms and the increasingly common code-switching variant Yanito remained widespread in everyday situations.

## 2.5 The post-war period: tension, referendum and blockade

Partly in recognition of the sacrifices made and the trials and tribulations endured by the local population during the War, constitutional changes were implemented during the post-War years which effectively granted Gibraltar more powers of self-government. In 1950, the Legislative Council was established with an elected majority, albeit with executive authority being maintained by the British Governor (Dennis 1990: 53). These measures antagonised the Spanish regime and relations rapidly began to deteriorate. Thus, when the recently crowned Queen Elizabeth II arrived on an official visit in 1954, Spanish protests ensued and the Spanish Consul was withdrawn. In 1964, a new constitutional order was introduced which, while preserving Gibraltar's dependent territorial status, effectively endowed the colony with fuller control in the managing of her internal affairs by granting her majority representation on all councils.

From before 1960, Spain had begun to call for Gibraltar to be returned. In 1964 the United Nations Committee on Decolonization (also known as the Committee of Twenty-Four) started discussing the problem and adopted a resolution which urged Spain and Great Britain to begin negotiations on the status and future of the colony. However, there was little mutually acceptable middle ground between the two entrenched positions, and discussions were based on justifying the respective stances, with the wording of the UN resolution providing substance for diplomatic claims and counter claims. The British based Gibraltar's right to self-determination on paragraph 2 of the UN Resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 which declared that "all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development". The Spanish, however, argued that the Gibraltarians did

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17. Several Gibraltarians educated during the 1950s and 1960s spoke to me of punishments (detention, lines and caning with a ruler) given to boys and girls caught speaking Spanish in class or at break time.



not constitute a separate people but formed part of Spain and cited paragraph 6 of the same resolution: “any attempt at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and the principles of the Charter of United Nations” (see Dennis 1990: 57).

Although understandably frustrated by the impasse, the unsubtle handling of the situation by the Spanish Government arguably contributed more to unifying the Gibraltarian population under the British banner than any sense of nationalism they might have felt. What was considered Spanish hostility pushed Gibraltar further towards Britain, and the famous 1967 Referendum which asked the Gibraltarian population to express their preference on the sovereignty of the Rock was a foregone conclusion. Although the result of the referendum, commissioned by the British Government, was never in doubt, the overwhelming margin was unexpected and was particularly insulting and damaging to Spanish pride. A total of 12,138 Gibraltarians voted “voluntarily to retain their link with Britain with democratic local institutions and with Britain retaining its present responsibilities”, while only 44 voted “to pass under Spanish sovereignty in accordance with the terms proposed by the Spanish Government to Her Majesty’s Government on 18th May 1966”.

National leanings or loyalty aside, Spanish nationality at that time was not an attractive option for most Gibraltarians for various reasons. Accustomed to civil liberties, few were prepared to live under a dictatorship. The Second World War was still fresh in the memories of many, and Franco was remembered as an ally of Hitler and Mussolini, and the very word “Fascism” and its associations filled many, especially those who had lived through the war years, with abhorrence. However, perhaps the most important underlying incentive to vote to stay British was economic. Spain, and Andalusia in particular, was one of the poorest parts of Europe and Gibraltarians were naturally unwilling to relinquish the higher standards of living they were used to.

Any previous thoughts of wooing the Gibraltarian population with a “softly softly” approach were now rejected and a more severe stance was adopted. Spain considered the referendum illegal, and when the United Nation’s request in December 1968 “to terminate the colonial situation in Gibraltar no later than 1 October 1969” was ignored by the British Government, tensions escalated. The last straw came on May 30 1969 when a new constitution came into force which granted Gibraltar further autonomy under British sovereignty and protection. Humiliated and frustrated, Spanish retaliation was not long in coming.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Spain put pressure on the British Government and the Gibraltarian people by restricting the movement of people and goods crossing over the border. From 1951, the regime limited the number of passes issued to those Spaniards wanting to work on the Rock. After the Royal

visit in 1954, they were stopped altogether and the number of Spanish workers crossing the border dwindled from 12,500 in 1953 to 4899 in 1969 (Uxó Palasí 1996: 32–3). The hard-line policies which aimed to force Gibraltar and the British Government into submission intensified during the 1960s. On October 24 1966 the border was closed to road traffic, however it was June 8th 1969 that marked a dramatic turning point in Gibraltar's contemporary history. At 11.30pm, *la verja* (the name given to the 'gate' or 'fence' that separates Gibraltar from Spain) was definitively closed to both cars and pedestrians, thereby effectively isolating the local population.<sup>18</sup>

This dramatic action was to have immense political and social repercussions. Overnight, the few metres that physically separated Gibraltar from Spain became impassable, physically cutting the British colony off from mainland Europe and leaving families torn apart by a political wire fence. The blockade was to last 13 years. In order to get to Spain, Gibraltarians now had to take a ferry to Tangiers and then another one to Algeciras. The other possibility was to take the BEA flight to London which made a brief stop in Madrid. However, this on route stopover was withdrawn in the mid 1970s as it was not considered financially viable.

The bitter memory of this sad chapter in Gibraltar's history still lingers today, particularly amongst those who suffered the consequences of this period of externally imposed confinement at first hand. Manolo Rodríguez (2001) offers an insight into the personal tragedy of the years of border closure.

The saddest sight was seeing people behind the wire fences on both sides of the land frontier yelling at the top of their voices across the wide dividing space to enquire about the state of relatives, as telephone communications had been cut by the Spaniards. Local housewives with Spanish relatives in the Campo area kept their radios tuned to the nearby Spanish stations for news of family members who were gravely ill. In critical cases the parties concerned would rush to Spain via Tangiers but unfortunately sometimes the patient was dead and buried by the time they arrived. The Spanish authorities would not allow access across the land frontier even on compassionate grounds. (Rodríguez 2001: 97–8)

The blockade, or the Fifteenth Siege as it became known, did not have the desired effect. Gibraltar did not fall "like ripe fruit" as Castiella, Franco's foreign secretary, had famously predicted. Aided by the British Government, Gibraltar not only survived but actually thrived, and it was the local Andalusians on the other side of the frontier who were arguably hardest hit by the blockade. Neighbouring towns such as La Linea and San Roque, which had grown and prospered from

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18. Howes (1991: 7) points out that the strategy of closing the border was nothing new and similar actions had been taken on various occasions throughout the eighteenth century.

Gibraltar's status, soon fell into depression; Spanish workers, who used to cross the border daily, suddenly found themselves jobless, adding to the rising number of unemployed in the surrounding Campo area.

In Gibraltar, the labour vacuum was quickly filled by Moroccan workers, although the arrival of this new workforce was not without its problems. Whereas previously Spanish workers had simply crossed the border in the morning and returned to their homes in the evening, the new immigrants needed to be housed, and this inevitably put a strain on the already overcrowded colony. Although there was a new community to add further cultural colour, in practice the Moroccan population remained on the margins of mainstream society. Whereas before the blockade, labour was cheap and plentiful, suddenly it became a valuable commodity. Workers and Trades Unions were in an advantageous position to negotiate better wages and parity with the UK, which was eventually achieved in the mid seventies. Nevertheless, because of their often precarious legal situation, Moroccans were open to exploitation.

The labour shortage provided many second job opportunities and "moonlighting" was common. Gibraltarian women were encouraged to abandon their traditional domestic roles and fill part or full-time posts outside their homes. With a rising economy and better credit facilities, there was more money to be spent on homes and holidays abroad.

As will be argued in detail later, the blockade had important consequences for the linguistic future of Gibraltar. Not only did a strengthened sense of British identity bring about the motivation to speak English, but simultaneously the need and opportunity to speak Spanish was cut off at source. Cross-border linguistic exchanges between Spaniards and Gibraltarians ceased. Gone were the Spanish workers on the docks and shop floors. Gone were the Spanish cleaners, child minders and domestic helpers who had previously been influential, not only in the linguistic development of children, but also in providing Gibraltarian housewives with Spanish conversation.

Although after Franco's death Spain did not give up their claims to Gibraltar, a more conciliatory approach was adopted. Talks between Britain and Spain were re-established in Strasbourg in 1977 leading to the restoration of telephone links in Gibraltar. Under the 1980 Lisbon Agreement, Britain and Spain agreed to start negotiations to overcome differences, but the respective positions were irreconcilable. Diplomacy during this period was strained and not helped by the fact that in July 1981 Prince Charles and Princess Diana embarked on their honeymoon cruise from the port of Gibraltar. This event, whether merely tactless or a clear declaration of British intentions, understandably antagonised the Spanish authorities and population. The granting of Gibraltarians full British citizenship in the same year confirmed suspicions that the sovereignty of Gibraltar was not open to discussion.

The fact that democracy in Spain was seen as unstable helped the British Government justify its stance to the wider world, particularly in the light of Tejero's attempted military coup d'état in February 1981. A further blow to Spanish hopes was dealt by the unexpected outbreak of the Falklands (Malvinas) War with Argentina in April 1982 which, despite opposition in certain circles, led to a crescendo of imperialistic fervour in Thatcher's Britain. With political parallels drawn between the two British possessions the question of the sovereignty of Gibraltar fast became untouchable.

Nevertheless, in 1982, after thirteen years of closure, the border was finally opened.<sup>19</sup> The local population emerged from their years of isolation strengthened economically and more "British" than ever. Although certain pre-blockade cross-border activities were resumed, the situation had altered. The fraternal relationship had been damaged and the close contact which had once existed would take time to rebuild.

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19. The planned opening of the border on April 20 1982 was initially delayed due to the Falkland crisis. On December 15 1982 the border was finally opened to pedestrians (but not tourists), but it was not until 26 months later, on February 5 1985, that free access to all pedestrians and cars was permitted.



## Fieldwork, methodology and analysis

### 3.1 Sampling considerations and criteria

Surprisingly few sociolinguistic studies have been carried out in Gibraltar to date, and even fewer have covered phonetic aspects. In the light of recent political and social changes as well as the development of new phonetic, sociolinguistic and socio-psychological approaches and techniques, it was felt that a fresh, modern and above all large-scale study of a new generation would be of value. By choosing to study a relatively wide ethnic cross-section of the local population I was conscious from the start that a degree of sample homogeneity would inevitably have to be sacrificed (see section 2.3). However given the fact that previous phonetic findings have been based on a very small sample in which women and ethnic divisions have hardly featured, it was considered important to carry out extensive fieldwork so as to lay foundations for future study. This work forms part of a wider ongoing research project being carried out at the University of Cádiz.

A total of 72 Gibraltarians were interviewed and recorded over a seven month period (April–October 2003), making up a total of more than 40 hours of taped material. This sample consisted of 38 adolescents (13–19 years) and 34 pre-adolescents (9–12 years) who had been born in Gibraltar or had lived there since the age of three or before. Since birth or arrival, none of the informants had lived outside Gibraltar.<sup>1</sup>

Three middle schools (Sacred Heart, St Joseph's and the Hebrew School) and two secondary schools (Bayside and Westside) were chosen as research sites.<sup>2</sup> For the middle school sample, schools were selected from two different catchment areas, and the third middle school (the Hebrew School), which caters primarily (although not exclusively) for the Jewish community, was potentially very different again in terms

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1. All six Moroccan informants were born in Morocco but came to Gibraltar as babies or as young toddlers.

2. Gibraltarian children receive primary education until the age of 12 in what are locally called *middle schools* which are co-ed. Afterwards the majority go to one of the two single sex secondary schools.

of its social as well as its ethnic make-up.<sup>3</sup> At secondary school level, the selection was facilitated by the fact that there are only two government secondary schools in Gibraltar: Bayside School for boys and Westside School for girls.

**Table 3.1** Research sample (by sex, age/educational level and school)

		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Middle School (aged 9–12)	Sacred Heart	6	6	12
	St Joseph's	6	6	12
	Hebrew School	6	4	10
	<b>Middle School TOTAL</b>	18	16	34
Secondary School (aged 13–18)	Bayside (Boys)	18	–	18
	Westside (Girls)	–	20	20
	<b>Secondary School TOTAL</b>	18	20	38
<b>ALL SCHOOLS</b>		36	36	72

### 3.2 Social variables

Four independent social variables were chosen for variationist linguistic analysis: age, sex, ethnicity and class.

#### 3.2.1 Age

As discussed in the first chapter, one of the problems of studying language use in Gibraltar is that two languages are used independently or simultaneously to varying degrees. Whereas most literature on language acquisition and language change tends to distinguish between first and second language acquisition, in the case of Gibraltar, these distinctions are far from easy and considerable overlap exists. In previous generations, English was frequently learnt as a second language with the first real sustained contact with English taking place at school. One of the main reasons for focussing on the language behaviour of pre-adolescents and adolescents was to see whether this is changing.

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3. Permission to enter the schools was granted by the local education authorities in Gibraltar and full cooperation and help was given by the head teachers and staff of the respective schools. Information on catchment areas and academic performance gleaned from conversations with local parents as well as teachers and staff suggested that academic reputations varied amongst the local schools. This extra-official view, however, is not shared by the local education authorities, according to whom, “there is no such thing as catchment area discrepancies in school related performance. All schools do equally well and we monitor literacy and numeracy results closely” (email correspondence with the Department of Education).

It is commonly held in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature that there is an age after which it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to acquire an L2 to native levels of proficiency. The limit of what is known as the *Critical Period* (CP) is usually placed at the age of puberty (Penfield & Roberts 1959; Lenneberg 1967; Scovel 1969, 1988; Lamendella 1977; Patkowski 1980; Long 1990). Although some studies (Birdsong 1992; Bongaerts et al. 1995; Moyer 1999) suggest that this is not a hard and fast rule and exceptions exist, it seems fair to say that an L2 is learnt more easily at younger ages: “Younger learners acquire second languages automatically from mere exposure, while older learners have to make more conscious and laboured efforts” (Hyltenstam & Abrahamson 2000: 152).

Sociolinguistic studies stress the important role that age plays in language change (Trudgill 1986; Romaine 1989; Chambers 1992; Kerswill 1996a). Although adults do have a capacity for innovation, language innovation tends to be most prevalent amongst younger speakers (Eckert 1997: 163; 2000: 16).

In the case of Gibraltar, the generation in question is of particular interest for the socio-political reasons previously discussed. All subjects were born after 1982, the year the border reopened after 13 years of isolation from Spain. As pilot studies suggested that there were grounds to suspect that rapid language shift towards English was taking place among younger members of the speech community, it was considered pertinent to observe and gauge the nature of the ongoing changes in language preference, competence and pronunciation.

A further incentive for studying the language of young Gibraltarians lies in the fact that, since Gibraltar does not have its own university, those wishing to further their education are encouraged to study in the UK.<sup>4</sup> This study seeks to record and analyse the state of language and pronunciation before young Gibraltarians leave for Britain and come into sustained contact with mainland British English features which may ultimately colour their future pronunciation. The data collected in interviews and controlled tests will be of use in ongoing real time projects.<sup>5</sup>

The sample was divided into pre-adolescents (9–12 years) and adolescents (13–19 years), which not only reflect two different levels of education (middle and

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4. According to the local Department of Education, approximately 600 students study in the UK at any one time (200 per year). They are supported by the local government who pays tuition fees, flights and a maintenance allowance. No Gibraltarians were studying at Spanish universities when I carried out my research, except as part of an exchange programme (e.g., Erasmus/Socrates) operated from the UK university they were attending. This is in part due to the fact that the British qualifications are not automatically recognised in Spain and the recognition process is lengthy and costly and invariably involves taking adaptation exams.

5. Whereas apparent time studies assess linguistic change by comparing the speech of younger speakers of a given community with that of older speakers, real time *studies* investigate changes



secondary school), but are also representative of two key stages in linguistic development.

*Pre-adolescents (aged 9–12)*

At this age, the speaker's phonological system, having been acquired at 6 or 7, can be considered to be fairly stable. According to Kerswill (1996a: 191–2): "At the pre-adolescent stage, we can assume that most areas of language are fully mature, with the exception of the command of an adult range of speech styles".<sup>6</sup> Following Chambers (1992), Kerswill holds that "it is at this stage that children begin to assert themselves outside the home (if they have not done so already)". The local vernacular is acquired during this period although acquisition may be variable depending on the linguistic orientation of the caregivers.

*Adolescents/teenagers (aged 13–19)*

In terms of language acquisition capacity, this stage fundamentally marks the departure from "the critical age of second language acquisition" (7–14 years) to adulthood (Kerswill 1996a: 196 following Chambers 1992). It is at this age where innovation may potentially be greatest. As well as attaining a high degree of language maturity, it is the time of "declarations of adolescence" (Chambers 1995: 169) which may be manifested in terms of language innovation as a means of marking distance between old and new generations and/or as an expression of rebellion. Whereas researchers have found that the language of children resembles that of their parents, adolescents tend to follow peer-based models (Wolfram 1969; Macaulay 1977; Eckert 1988, 1997, 2000; Kerswill 1996a; Kerswill & Williams 2000).

### 3.2.2 Sex

Modern gender studies have often shown that in many societies where social stratification is revealed through speech, women tend to use standard or prestige variants significantly more than men. Men, in turn, are more prone towards

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in actual time, by recording the speech of given individuals at different times in their lives. One of the lines of future investigation is to carry out what Labov termed a "panel study" which attempts "to locate the same individuals who were the subjects of the first study, and monitors any changes in their behaviour by submitting them to the same questionnaire, interview or experiment" (Labov 1994: 76). This type of research methodology has been used by Mees (1983, 1987, 1990) to observe language change in Cardiff. In the case of Gibraltar, it is felt that it would be of particular interest to re-interview some of the informants when they eventually return from university in order to assess the effects of extended exposure to British English and society on their accent and language identity.

6. In Kerswill's (1996a) study "pre-adolescent" encompasses speakers aged 6 to 12.

stigmatised features (Wolfram 1969; Trudgill 1974a, 1983; Cameron & Coates 1989; Labov 1990; Chambers 1992; Cheshire et al. 1999; Watt & Milroy 1999; Watt 2002; Dyer 2002). This is often explained by the fact that women are more prestige-conscious (Trudgill 1972, 1974a, 1983; Lakoff 1973; Chambers & Trudgill 1980; Labov 1990). The stronger tendency on the part of men to use non-standard or vernacular variants is often explained in terms of perceptions of “masculinity” and “toughness” which may be valued positively in certain male circles resulting in “covert prestige” (Trudgill 1983).

It has been argued that as women have traditionally had less power and social position than men, they are more conscious and insecure of their social status and consequently feel the need to reflect their social status linguistically. Females may use standard forms as an expression of “symbolic capital” since these features are associated with the groups in society who possess socioeconomic power (Eckert 1989a: 256).

Gordon (1997: 48) argues that rather than constituting a strategy of “self-promotion”, women tend to adopt standard forms as a “matter of avoidance”. By this, women do not seek to achieve or aspire, but rather to avoid negative judgements by others. Her research in New Zealand revealed a correlation between language, class and gender-based moral judgements, and confirmed her hypothesis that women were “especially likely to style-shift to more prestigious language in situations where she might be judged by people who don’t know her” (ibid.: 50).

The present study sought to observe whether the language use of male and female adolescents and pre-adolescents in Gibraltar varied, and if so, whether this variation could be explained in terms of language prestige or whether there were other contact-based explanations to be considered (see Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 1998: 192–5). Network studies have also shown that women and men tend to socialise differently and this may be reflected in language variation.<sup>7</sup> Woolard’s (1997) study into bilingual children in urban Catalonia, for example, revealed that whilst boys tend to have broad networks of friends, girls preferred smaller cliques. This is significant since language change is arguably more probable through wider network contacts, for it is the speakers with more contact with people from outside the community who are most likely to absorb external linguistic features (Milroy & Milroy 1985). Woolard (1997: 546) found that whereas boys crossed ethnic and

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7. The Milroys’ findings in Belfast showed that gender as well as class conditioned the pronunciation of the speech community. Back variants of /a/, for example, were found to be principally a male working-class feature, while the lengthening and raising of /e/ proved to be a female middle-class prestigious feature (Milroy, J. 1992; Milroy, L. 1987a; Milroy & Milroy 1985, 1992).

linguistic lines (Catalan and Castilian) with relative ease, girl groups were ethnically and linguistically fairly homogeneous.

### 3.2.3 Ethnicity

The last full Government census (2001) divides the resident population into six broad groups (“Gibraltarian”, “Other British”, “Moroccan” “Spanish” and “Other EU” and “Other”), but information about the ethnic communities living in Gibraltar is limited.

While ethnic background does not necessarily imply linguistic variation from the speech community’s norms, a different shared social, cultural and linguistic background may undoubtedly exert an influence on young speakers, particularly when the home language is different from that of the community as a whole. Social networks and socio-psychological orientation are important factors affecting possible linguistic divergence or convergence.

Although making distinctions between Gibraltarian residents on ground of ethnicity may be met by some with a certain degree of disapproval, from a sociolinguistic point of view it seems justifiable and ethical. Previous literature (Moyer 1993: 244) and my own personal social and linguistic contact with the local population over several years supports the view that there are differences in language orientation among the different ethnic groups in Gibraltar. While a high degree of interaction and integration undoubtedly exists, tight-knit networks are often preserved through linguistic, cultural or religious ties and intra-marriage. Besides what I uncomfortably call, for want of a better term, the autochthonous Gibraltarian majority (henceforth GibM), the three most numerous ethnic minorities were considered in this study: the Jewish community, the Indian community and the Moroccan community.

Finding willing participants from these ethnic communities who fulfilled the necessary study requirements proved problematic. It was particularly difficult to find Moroccan and Indian informants who had lived all their lives in Gibraltar. As this selection pre-requisite was considered essential in order to gauge the actual state of Gibraltarian English, it meant having to accept lower samples than I would ideally have liked. This, although unavoidable, meant that a degree of caution must be applied when drawing conclusions, particularly in the case of the Moroccan and Indian informants. However, this having been said, the ratio between ethnic informants is not disproportionate (see population figures on page 1).

Although the Moroccan community numbers approximately 1000, it should be noted that the majority (60% approx.) are adult males, many of whom have come to Gibraltar in search of work, leaving their families behind in Morocco. According to official census figures (CofG2001: 6–7) there are only 73 Moroccans

aged 9–19 residing in Gibraltar. Thus, the sample of six Moroccan pre-adolescents and adolescents studied represents more than 8% of the total population within this age group. As Jews and Indians are classified as “Gibraltarians”, or in some cases as “Other British”, the total pre-adolescent and adolescent populations of these communities can not be computed accurately.<sup>8</sup> The ethnic stratification of the sample studied is given in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2** Research sample (by sex and ethnic groups)

	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL
Autochthonous Majority (GibM)	24	24	48
Jewish	6	6	12
Indian	3	3	6
Moroccan	3	3	6
TOTAL	36	36	72

The tight-knit, yet mobile, Jewish community in Gibraltar has traditionally been more Anglophone than the autochthonous majority (Howes 1991: 168). As this particular Jewish community is predominantly Sephardic rather than Ashkenazi, the transfer from Yiddish is unlikely. The Indian community also appears to have a more English orientation due to historical links with Britain and weaker ties with Spain. The language behaviour of the socio-economically marginalised Moroccan community may vary depending on individual language competence and the level of integration. In general terms, this ethnic group would seem to be the most distanced from standard British English due to limited contact with this model and closer historical and geographical ties with Spain.

The English of second generation immigrants may show signs of transfer from Sindi or Hindi in the case of the Indian community, and Moroccan Arabic in the case of the Moroccan community. These features are diffused through

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8. GibM is employed here as a cover term to refer to a Gibraltarian national who is not of Jewish, Indian or Moroccan descent. GibM informants were all locally born and of at least one Gibraltarian parent and would fall under the census heading of “Gibraltarian”. They are usually Catholic, although this was not a selection criterion. It should be noted, however, that the Jewish informants were also Gibraltarian with some family trees traceable to the early days of eighteenth century British rule. For the purposes of this study they are different from the GibM only in their religious orientation (and the cultural manifestations that go with it). The Indian informants were either “Gibraltarian” or “Other British”, but were all from families who are firmly established on the Rock. None of the Moroccan informants were “Gibraltarian” but were permanent residents.

inter-ethnic networks where importance is given to group identity. Language maintenance or divergence strategies may also be employed as a form of cultural preservation. Alternatively, the absence of inter-ethnic ties will tend to lead to the decline or loss of distinctive vernacular features. As Milroy & Milroy (1992: 4) argue, “the level of integration of any given group into the wider society is likely to be inversely related to the extent to which it maintains a distinctive vernacular”.

The socio-psychological theories of Giles (1973, 1984) and Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985) suggest that linguistic behaviour is a reflection of the speaker’s self-identity in relation to the community around him/her. Whether speakers adopt or avoid certain speech forms may be dependent on attitudes towards the group that uses them. The children of recent immigrants may accommodate or converge towards the sociolinguistic norms of the wider speech community or an attractive peer group as a means of seeking acceptance by their adoptive community. As well as being a strategy of integration, rejection of ethnic vernacular forms may be an act of rebellion against parental or ethnic group norms.

#### 3.2.4 Class

Ever since Labov’s (1966a) seminal New York City study demonstrated the importance of social stratification in language variation, the social (or socio-economic) class variable has been a mainstay of modern sociolinguistics. In this particular study, however, I had not originally contemplated this variable since my initial impression was that class identity in Gibraltar did not appear to be clearly defined, particularly as, given its size and the limited habitable space available, a high degree of social mobility exists on the Rock. Another reason for my initial reluctance was that, rather than fully class-conscious adults, I was interviewing adolescents and pre-adolescents who would have to be categorised on the basis of a class label inherited from their parents.

Furthermore, while finding a balanced social cross-section of the GibM was possible, it soon became apparent from official data, as well as extra-official information from reliable sources within the various communities, that this was far more complicated in the case of the three other ethnic groups. Whereas Jewish and Indian informants fell predominantly into the higher social brackets, Moroccan informants were working or lower middle class. This was unavoidable, and although clearly problematic for accurate sociolinguistic analysis, the sample breakdown is arguably a reflection of Gibraltarian society. Although in the case of the first two communities mentioned this is difficult to demonstrate using official data for the reasons discussed above, in the case of the Moroccan community, census figures show that of the 758 Moroccans in full or part-time

employment, only 16 could potentially be classified as UMC1 or MC2 following the SC scale given below.<sup>9</sup>

As it seemed possible that the education received and the degree of contact outside the speech community had a possible bearing on language change/maintenance in Gibraltar, and as this appeared to be class-related, I decided, with reservations, to include a class analysis in the study. However, given the high degree of overlap between the variables ethnicity and class, social stratifications patterns found in the wider community were always compared and contrasted with those found in the more socially diverse GibM.

Four social groups were established on the basis of parental occupation and education. These divisions were based on National Statistics “Social Class based on Occupation” (SC) scale (formerly “Registrar General’s Social Class” RG) and the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification Operational Categories (NS-SEC). However, for the purposes of this study, the five class SC stratification was reduced to four and adapted to the occupation categories and headings which appear in the Census of Gibraltar 2001 (CG2001: 27–30).<sup>10</sup> The distribution of the sample across class categories is given in Table 3.3.

#### UMC1 (Upper middle class)

- **Managers and Senior officials** (e.g., company director, senior managers, government ministers)
- **Professionals** (e.g., accountants, architects, dentists, doctors, surveyors, lawyers, teachers)

9. Amongst the Moroccans in full or part-time employment listed in the 2001 Census of Gibraltar (CofG2001: 18–41), there are 8 Managers and Senior Officials, 3 Professionals: 1 Associate Professional and Technical and 6 Administrative and Secretarial workers.

10. The SC scale (see [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)) classifies people in five groups using roman numerals with one of the groups subdivided:

Social Class		NS-SEC Operational Categories
I	Professional, etc. Occupations	3.1, 3.3
II	Managerial and Technical occupations	1, 2, 3.2, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 5, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 9.2
III N	Skilled occupations – non-manual	4.2, 4.4, 6, 7.1, 7.2, 12.1, 12.6
III M	Skilled occupations – manual	7.4, 9.1, 10, 11.1, 12.3, 13.3
IV	Partly skilled occupations	11.2, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 12.7, 13.1, 13.2, 13.5
V	Unskilled occupations	

## MC2 (Middle class)

- **Associate and Professional and Technical** (e.g., building inspectors, IT technicians, journalists, legal, business and finance associate professionals, nurses)
- **Administrative staff** (e.g., public servants, financial clerks)
- **Small business owners and managers**

## LMC3 (Lower middle class)

- **Skilled Trades** (e.g., electricians, painters, mechanics, carpenters, plumbers, construction foreman)
- **Personal Service** (e.g., caretakers, hairdressers, receptionists)
- **Sales and customer service** (e.g., sales assistants, checkout operators),

## WC4 (Working class)

- **Process, Plant and Machine Operatives** (e.g., construction operatives, machine operatives, factory workers, transport drivers)
- **Elementary** (e.g., bar staff, cleaners, couriers, labourers, porters)

Table 3.3 Research sample (by class and sex)

Social class	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL
Upper middle class (UMC1)	8	6	14
Middle class (MC2)	10	12	22
Lower middle class (LM3)	12	12	24
Working class (WC4)	6	6	12
TOTAL	36	36	72

### 3.3 Test and interview procedure

Written questionnaires were considered inappropriate for this particular study of children and teenagers. It was felt that the conceptual subtleties of language choice, identity and attitude were potentially complex and difficult to assess accurately and honestly. Previous research has shown that concepts such as *mother tongue* in Gibraltar, for example, can elicit varying and apparently contradictory responses (compare Barberá et al. 1992: 25; Britto 1993: 81; Kellermann 2001: 121), and it was felt that children's responses to binary or continuum-based questionnaires might prove particularly unreliable. Rather than placing the onus on the informants to read, understand and explain potentially grey area concepts on paper, it seemed more productive and effective all round to elicit responses orally. This approach allows the interviewer to ask for clarification if and when necessary. In this way, rather than interpreting written responses, the interviewer can satisfy any possible doubts there and then, and have them recorded for future reference.

The main disadvantage of this type of methodology is that it is clearly far more time-consuming and can therefore only contemplate smaller samples.

While accepting that the 'observer's paradox' (Labov 1966a) is ultimately unavoidable, certain measures were taken to try to maximise the possibility of obtaining authentic linguistic responses and to reduce the impediments to natural and effective communication. Rather than a formal structured 'interview', the aim was to create the non-intimidating atmosphere of an informal chat (see Labov 1972a, 1984; L. Milroy 1987a: 60–64). Friendly contact was initially established with all informants outside the classroom before interviews took place and a series of general questions were put to all informants to break the ice before recording started. Although the informants knew they were being recorded, the microphone, although not hidden, was not conspicuous. Nothing was written down during the 'chat' which followed a memorised scripted outline, thus allowing important eye contact to be maintained throughout.

Although the interviews were carried out mainly in English (except when giving Spanish cues to be translated), a combination of Spanish and English was deliberately used 'off the record' during the initial contact and informants. This was principally done to gain informant confidence and to reduce possible language insecurity. Previous research (Modrey 1998; Kellermann 2001) and personal experience have shown that despite their bilingual status, Gibraltarians may feel under-confident and uncomfortable when speaking monolingual Spanish or English to native speakers. In Gibraltar, where language and identity are closely linked, research has shown that informant responses may vary depending on the nationality and the mother tongue of the interlocutor (see Modrey 1998: 77–8).<sup>11</sup> In this light it was felt that the use of both English and Spanish in ways that approximated the local vernacular, without attempting to emulate it, could put informants at ease and elicit more authentic linguistic responses.<sup>12</sup>

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11. Some Spanish researchers claim to have experienced a certain degree of hostility and noted a defensive attitude on the part of the local community, particularly when dealing with sensitive questions that might have political connotations. This mistrust perhaps owes something to feelings of being misrepresented by the Spanish media.

12. Although I was born and brought up in an English-speaking environment in the UK, I have lived in Andalusia for more than 25 years, ten of which have been spent in the province of Cádiz, near Gibraltar. I have acquired the local accent when speaking Spanish and I feel I have sufficient local linguistic knowledge and experience to pass from one language to the other with relative ease. Collaborating teachers were requested not to reveal information about the nature of the research or the researcher prior to the interviews; clearly, however, in a relatively small community such as Gibraltar, my 'outsider' status was never in doubt.



From the outset care was taken to mask the purpose of the study, cloaking it under the guise of a study of bilingual lexical competence. This was considered justified in the circumstances as it was felt that informants might produce forced or unnatural pronunciation features had they been aware of the true aims of the study, thereby diminishing the reliability of the findings.

Linguistic exchanges lasted 30–40 minutes and contained four distinct tasks, although the order in which they were carried out varied from interview to interview, depending on the direction of the conversation and the attention and interest of the informants at any given moment.

1. Personal information questions
2. Reading Wordlists
3. Translation Wordlists (TW)
4. Interview on language attitude, preference and competence

The interview served a dual purpose. As well as consisting of a structured oral questionnaire which served as the basis for self-report findings on language attitude and preference, these interviews provided material for Casual Conversation (CC) phonetic analysis. Although these interviews or chats were more representative of natural speech, by their very nature they had the drawback of varying in length and content and offered no guarantee that all object phonetic features would occur naturally and spontaneously. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to also introduce controlled tests to ensure that a homogenous phonetic sample was produced by all 72 informants.

Clearly, phonetic realisations obtained from word lists will be less spontaneous than those occurring in casual speech and may in some cases result in guarded pronunciation and even hypercorrection. In order to reduce this possibility and to see whether pronunciation was subject to style variation, two different methods were employed: reading word lists and translation word lists.

### *Reading Wordlists (RW)*

Part of the test consisted of a traditional reading list, following the key words established by Wells (1982) and later expanded by Foulkes & Docherty (1999:7).<sup>13</sup>

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13. Wells (1982: xviii) establishes 27 keywords “intended to be unmistakable no matter what accent one says them in”. These are:

KIT	BATH	THOUGHT	NEAR	<i>happY*</i>
DRESS	CLOTH	GOAT	SQUARE	<i>lettER *</i>
TRAP	NURSE	GOOSE	START	<i>commA.*</i>
LOT	FLEECE	PRICE	NORTH	

A second set of lexical items was designed to cover all the segmental vowel and consonant features of English, with particular emphasis being placed on phonemes which might cause difficulty for Spanish speakers of English.

### *Translation Wordlists (TW)*

The translation word (TW) methodology differs markedly from that of the traditional reading list. Making use of the bilingual status in Gibraltar, subjects were asked to respond in English to quickfire Spanish prompts. Thus, the interlocutor gave a word or phrase in Castilian (e.g., *mi abuelo es muy viejo*) and the informant had to respond automatically in English (e.g., *my grandfather is very old*). Care was taken to ensure, as far as possible, that all words had a direct and unequivocal translation. As informants were under the impression that it was their bilingual knowledge that was being tested, they focussed their attentions on the translation tasks at hand and were less conscious of their pronunciation, thus hopefully resulting in more spontaneous phonetic realisations. From the outset I was aware that asking informants to think and react in two languages had its dangers and might potentially taint the pronunciation of the target language. For this reason, although TW served as the principal basis for vowel and consonant analysis, findings were always corroborated against RW results. Ultimately, however, the different methodological approaches had little bearing on vowel and consonant articulations.

### 3.4 Recording and analysis

The possibility of using a phonetic laboratory for recording purposes was rejected from the outset. Apart from the impracticalities of transporting a sizeable sample

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STRUT	FACE	CHOICE	FORCE
FOOT	PALM	MOUTH	CURE

\* Reference vowels appear in capital letters.

Foulkes and Docherty adopt Wells' keywords as a standardised format for the collected works in *Urban Voices* with one addition, that of the word *horsES* "to represent the vowel typically used in e.g., *-es* plural forms and the *-ed* past tense suffix." (1999: 7)

This lexical set has been incorporated into the present study for reference purposes and also so as to contribute to a process of methodological standardisation; it is felt that the use of universally recognised shared references will facilitate future comparative studies in phonetics and accent variation. The option of using phonetic symbols was rejected at the outset, as it was felt that it would have implied unwanted codification. The use of CURE rather than /ʊə/ as a point of reference, for example, allows for both monophthong and diphthong realisations, without prejudging or implying a *standard* or *norm*.

to a phonetic laboratory in Spain, it was deemed undesirable, as a clinical environment was not considered conducive to the production of natural language. In order to obtain an effective and reliable sample, a relaxed and familiar environment was preferable, and thus it was decided, wherever possible, to record the sample *in situ*. The two possible environments were interviews at home or at school, of which the latter was by far the most practical, given the relatively large target sample. Interviews were digitally recorded using a Sony MZ-N707 Walkman mini-disc recorder and a laptop computer with a Sony ECM-ZS90 Stereo/Zoom microphone.

Ever since Labov established his methodological framework, acoustic analysis has been an important mainstay of quantitative sociolinguistics, particularly in vowel analysis where first and second formants (F1 and F2) have been measured and plotted graphically to indicate vowel height and frontness. However, as various writers have noted, this type of analysis is not without its problems, particularly when dealing with vowel descriptions (Labov et al. 1972: 31; Labov 1986: 415ff; Watt 1998; Docherty & Foulkes 1999). Important factors such as vowel duration and lip rounding cannot be represented on a simple F1-F2 graph. Furthermore, Docherty & Foulkes (1999: 53), amongst others, have also pointed out that for certain vowels, particularly close front ones, the third formant (F3) adds valuable additional information.

A further difficulty in using instrumental techniques is that formant readings are affected by voice quality and F1 and F2 values will vary considerably between male and female and between adult and child voices. A cursory look at Hillenbrand et al.'s (1995) average formant readings for American vowels (see Table 3.4) is evidence of this fact. As can be seen, considerable divergence exists between male, female and children formant measurements with no apparent fixed ratio between them. An F1 of 500 and an F2 of 1300, for example, would correspond to [u] if produced by a boy yet in the mouth of a man it would correspond to an advanced or centralised [ø].

The researcher using such points of reference is faced with important grey area questions which are difficult to resolve: When does a child become an adult? Should an adolescent in his late teens be considered a child or an adult? And then there is the problem of adults with high-pitched voices. Given these difficulties, it seems clear that although instrumental phonetic techniques are undoubtedly useful when measuring language variation, established formant measurements must be treated with a degree of caution. For this reason, researchers have stressed the importance of sample homogeneity as a prerequisite for accurate formant analysis (Labov et al. 1972: 264, Labov 1986: 415ff). Most studies of this type tend therefore to concentrate on adult males, largely staying clear of female and child voices because of the technical and analytical difficulties they imply.

**Table 3.4** Comparative formant readings for American vowels for male, female and child voices (from Hillenbrand et al. 1995)

	Male		Female		Children	
	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2
i	342	2322	437	2761	452	3081
ɪ	427	2034	483	2365	511	2552
e	476	2089	536	2530	564	2656
ɛ	580	1799	731	2058	749	2267
æ	588	1952	669	2349	717	2501
ɑ	768	1333	936	1551	1002	1688
ɔ	652	997	781	1136	803	1210
o	497	910	555	1035	597	1137
u	469	1122	519	1225	568	1490
ʊ	378	997	459	1105	494	1345
ʌ	623	1200	753	1426	749	1546
ɜ	474	1379	523	1588	586	1719

However, even if analysis is limited to the male voice, considerable discrepancies invariably arise as to what constitutes a *standard* realisation. This can be clearly seen in Table 3.5 which shows the typical F1 and F2 values for two Standard American front vowels (/i/ and /æ/) according to three different studies of different generations.

**Table 3.5** Comparative formant readings for /i/ and /æ/ American vowels (adapted from Peterson & Barney 1952; Ladefoged 1993; Hillenbrand et al. 1995)

	Peterson & Barney (1952)		Ladefoged (1993)		Hillenbrand et al. (1995)	
	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2
i	270	2300	280	2250	342	2322
æ	660	1700	690	1660	588	1952

In this study two computer programmes were used to carry out instrumental analysis: COOL EDIT 2000 and PRAAT 4.0.16. However, for the reasons given above, problems of homogeneity were inevitably encountered. Whereas some informants could easily be categorised as *children* or *young adults*, others were more difficult to classify. In the case of males, although voice-breaking might serve as a possible child/young adult dividing line, several informants were in the throes of voice change, which often made the comparison of formant values tricky. In this light, it was felt that formant measurements should be complemented and checked against auditory analysis.

Once data had been collated and analysed, quantitative conclusions were reached based on statistical analysis using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 14.0 for Windows. As sociolinguistic and phonetic findings were crossed with age, sex, ethnicity, class and school variables, contingency tables were used in which Pearson's  $\chi^2$  test was applied based on a margin of error of 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ) unless otherwise stated. The results will be discussed in the following three chapters.

## Language choice, competence and attitude

### 4.1 Introduction: *mother tongue* in Gibraltar

In a multilingual environment, the concept of a *mother tongue* is often complex. This is particularly true in the case of Gibraltar, where it is not simply a matter of language proficiency, but can also be an act of identity or a statement of allegiance. What some speakers consider to be their *mother tongue* may not necessarily coincide with their *dominant* or *preferred* language. Neither will it necessarily be the language first acquired, nor that spoken on a daily basis.

In research carried out in Gibraltar in 1992, Kellermann (2001) found a considerable discrepancy between the local population's stated *mother tongue* and their stated *first language*. Whereas 54.3% of her informants claimed English as their *mother tongue*, less than 10% felt it was their *first language* (2001: 121).<sup>1</sup> This discrepancy is partially explained by a "dissociate attitude" towards Spain and a declaration of British national allegiance: "Granting English the status of 'mother tongue' is therefore a statement about identity: it makes the Gibraltarians 'British' and 'proves' them **not** to be 'Spanish'" (Kellermann 2001: 122).

All the informants in Kellermann's study were born during, or lived through, the blockade which left the Rock effectively isolated (see Chapter 2). Under these conditions resentment understandably grew, and with it a desire on the part of many Gibraltarians to distance themselves from the Spanish mainland. For some, but by no means all, this was reflected linguistically. As contact with Spain and the Spanish language diminished, ties with Britain and the English language intensified.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Britto's (1993: 81) survey of local secondary school teachers reveals a different picture. In response to the question: "What, in your opinion, is the mother tongue of the majority of the students you teach?", only one out of the fifty-five teachers felt it was English (1.9%).

2. Several interviewees spoke of the resentment felt by older family members towards the Spanish authorities. Some have not set foot on Spanish soil for almost 40 years while others, such as m27's mother, refuse to speak Spanish although it is their first language.

This study focuses on the post-blockade generation, with all informants being born after the opening of the border in 1982. As contended in Chapter 3, this generation differs significantly from previous generations. Whereas for many of those living through the blockade, the adoption of English may have been in part a reaction to a political situation, the target sample is, to a certain extent, the linguistic product and consolidation of this politico-linguistic statement. This chapter aims to assess the linguistic orientation of this new generation and to ascertain how far natural language choice, competence and linguistic allegiance differ from those of previous generations.

Previous questionnaire-based studies in Gibraltar (e.g., Modrey 1998; Kellermann 2001; Fernández Martín 2003) have shown that caution must be exercised when assessing informant responses. Following Fasold (1984), Fernández Martín (2003) stresses the need to take into account cognitive, affective/evaluation as well as conative factors when considering the language attitude and behaviour of the individual. As there may be a difference between stated attitude and actual linguistic behaviour, this conative component, which refers to the behavioural disposition of the speaker to act, should not be overlooked.

Language behaviour in Gibraltar is rarely a case of either/or, and there has often been a popular as well as academic tendency in the past to oversimplify a complex situation and to make judgements and reach conclusions based on clichés and stereotypes. Past research findings and an earlier pilot study drew attention to certain important considerations which were borne in mind when designing and conducting interviews, analysing responses and drawing conclusions:

1. Most Gibraltarians tend to communicate in a combination of languages; clear-cut either/or binary responses to language can therefore not be expected.
2. Language choice may be dependent on context and speaker/listener relationships.
3. With code-switching so common in Gibraltar, informants may not be aware of the language they are speaking at any given moment.
4. Responses may be conditioned by what the informant might feel the interviewer wants to hear.
5. Responses may be conditioned, consciously or unconsciously, by historical or political allegiance or loyalty.

A series of lines of questioning were followed to establish, as accurately as possible, the language behaviour and the intergenerational linguistic relationships

of the subjects, and to determine to what extent language choice was affected by situation and domain. The question areas are summarised below.<sup>3</sup>

- A. Home Domain
  1. *Home Language* (HL).  
The principal language<sup>4</sup> used to communicate at home within the family unit.
  2. *(Inter) parental Language* (PL).  
The principal language used by the parents of the informants to communicate with each other.
  3. *Grandparent Language* (GL).  
The principal language used by informants to communicate with their grandparents.
  4. *Sibling Language* (SIBL).  
The principal language used by informants to communicate with their brothers and/or sisters.
  5. *Best English Speaker in the nuclear family* (BEST).  
Who speaks English better, informant or parents?
- B. *School Domain*
  1. *Teacher Language* (TL)  
The principal language used when speaking with teachers.
  2. *Inter-student Language* (ISL)  
The principal language used to socialise with class-mates outside class.
- C. *Most Comfortable Language* (MCL).
  1. The language informants feel most comfortable speaking.

## 4.2 Findings

As expected, in many cases two or more languages featured to varying degrees in the various domains analysed. However, although the option of giving equal weight to more than one language was offered, all informants ultimately claimed to use one language more than the others in most contexts. In all cases  $n = 72$  unless otherwise stated.

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3. Certain lines of questioning proved inconclusive, either because informants were not sure or the obliging responses sometimes given were deemed unreliable. The contexts and domains that proved inconclusive and therefore not included in the final analysis were:

- Language(s) used in restaurants, shops, temples (church/ mosque/ synagogue)
- Language(s) used when telling jokes, arguing, swearing/insulting.

4. The *principal language* was the language used by the informants most of the time and more than any other in each of the given contexts.



#### 4.2.1 Language choice in the home domain

Findings appear to confirm initial suspicions that an intergenerational linguistic shift is taking place in Gibraltar. Statistical analysis revealed significant variation between the general *Home Language* (HL) and the (*Inter*) *parental Language* (PL) ( $p = 0.000$ ).<sup>5</sup> Whereas English was the HL in 37.5% of the households, only 23.61% of parents used English when speaking together. Monolingual Spanish was the principal inter-parental means of communication in 44.44% of the households, yet only 25% of parents spoke to their children in this language (see Figure 4.1).<sup>6</sup>

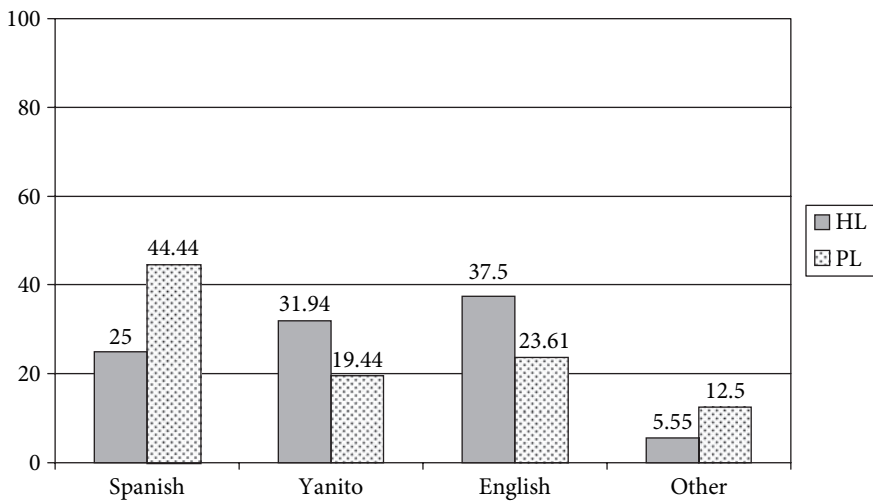


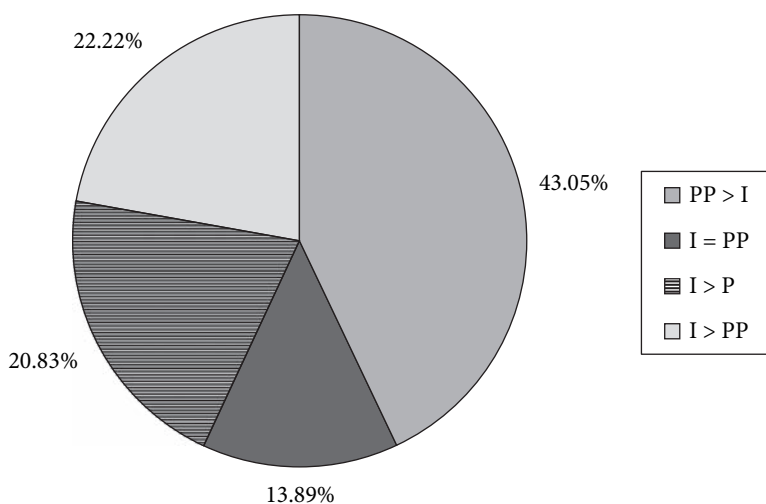
Figure 4.1. Home language (HL) compared with the inter-parental language (PL).

Language choice is undoubtedly partly conditioned by language competence. In an attempt to ascertain whether the standard of English in Gibraltar was improving, informants were asked to assess whether they felt that their level of English was superior or inferior to that of their parents. The overall results showed that 33.05% of the sample felt that their level of English was better than that of

5. In 8 households the principal means of inter-parental communication was not English, Spanish or Yanito, with Moroccan Arabic, Hindi, Sindi or Hebrew being used in these cases. These languages were only transferred to the children as the general *Home Language* in four of the cases. There was no inter-parental contact in the case of informant f48.

6. The tendency for parents to increasingly speak more English to their children has also been reported in other multilingual communities such as Malta (Mazzon 1993: 183).

one or both parents, with a further 13.89% stating that the family language levels were about the same (see Figure 4.2). This data must be treated with a certain degree of caution since linguistic competence is an imprecise concept and subject to different criteria and interpretation. Nevertheless, when taken in conjunction with other tests and data, the BEST findings would seem to add further weight to the contention that there is a shift towards English language preference and competence in Gibraltar.



**Figure 4.2.** Self-report BEST findings. PP > I: Both parents have greater English language competence than informant. I = PP: Informant and parents have similar levels of English language competence. I > P: Informant has greater English language competence than one of the parents. I > PP: Informant has greater English language competence than both parents.

When Kellermann carried out her sociolinguistic study of Gibraltar in 1992, her findings revealed a generational shift away from Spanish monolingualism towards English and Spanish bilingualism (see Kellermann 2001: 91–3). The findings of this present study suggest that amongst young Gibraltarians the linguistic focus is now moving even further away from Spanish along the continuum towards English.

As previously stated, the generation studied here are the children of those who lived through the blockade. This generation (henceforth *Generation 3*) reflects the consolidation of the linguistic shift initiated by their parents (*Generation 2*), partly as a socio-political reaction to Spanish policies at that time. Kellermann's study revealed that the 1938–1957 Generation, which approximately corresponds to *Generation 1*, although moving towards English and Spanish bilingualism, is still closer on the continuum

scale to Spanish than to English.<sup>7</sup> This study revealed that 41.27% of young informants spoke only Spanish to their grandparents (see Figure 4.3).<sup>8</sup> It was notable, however, that figures were considerably higher amongst adolescents ( $p = 0.011$ ) (see Figure 4.4).

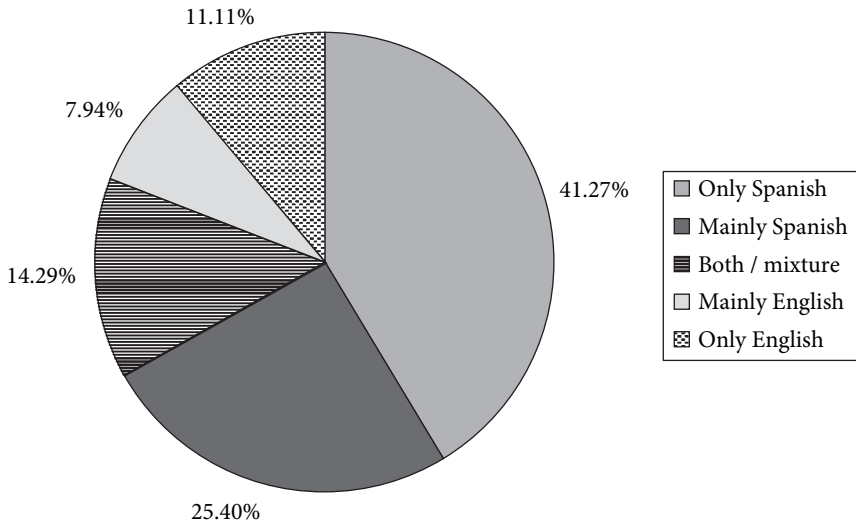


Figure 4.3. Language spoken by informants with grandparents (GL) ( $n = 63$ ).

Nine of the informants had no contact with their grandparents, thus the above statistical analysis is based on a reduced sample ( $n = 63$ ). As most of these informants were from the Indian or Moroccan communities it was felt that the reliability of overall figures was possibly weakened. However, when the homogeneous GibM sample ( $n = 48$ ) was analysed in isolation (see Table 4.1) similar shift patterns were revealed ( $p = 0.052$ ).

Table 4.1 Language spoken by informants with grandparents (GL) in the GibM by age ( $n = 48$ )

	Spanish (only)	Spanish (mainly)	Both / a mixture	English (mainly)	English (only)	TOTAL
GibM (9–12 yrs)	9	6	6	2	1	24
GibM (13–19 yrs)	16	7	0	1	0	24

7. The oldest of Kellermann's informants was born before the First World War and the youngest in the mid 1970s. Chronologically, the present study deals with the next generation, with informants having been born between the mid 80s and early 90s. What I term *Generation 1* corresponds in approximate chronological terms to Kellermann's "Generation II". Similarly, *Generation 2* more or less equates to her "Generation III" (see Kellermann 2001: 91).

8. GL figures are computed from the language(s) used by informants to communicate with each of the four possible grandparents.

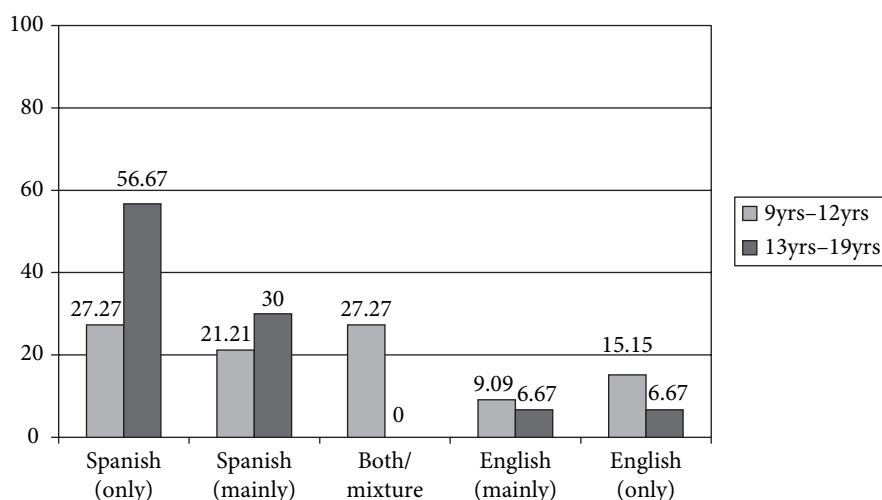


Figure 4.4. Language spoken by informants with grandparents (GL) by age ( $n = 63$ ).

By combining the present data with that of Kellermann, it is possible to build up the general pattern of language change in Gibraltar over the last four generations (see Figure 4.5).<sup>9</sup> Many informants' great great-grandparents would have been predominantly monolingual Spanish speakers, with their speech being coloured by occasional English lexical items. By the next generation, more English was being spoken. This was partly due to factors such as an increased use of English in schools as well as the important evacuation during the war years which, as discussed in chapter 2, placed many in an English-speaking environment for the first time.<sup>10</sup>

In *Generation 2*, with the closing of the border, English language use intensified. Furthermore, aided by government grants, increasing numbers of young Gibraltarians attended universities in Britain during this period. Amongst these was

9. The early generational data has been adapted from Kellermann's 1992 findings which charts both gender and class lines (see Kellermann 2001: 91). An interpretive 'classless' and 'genderless' reading is presented here which, it is felt, does not distort Kellermann's original unduly.

10. It is widely accepted that women, as the principal caregivers, play a vital role in early language development (Roberts 1997: 267; Aitchison 2001: 210). The evacuation years proved particularly liberating for the female population in many senses, and their experience arguably had long-term consequences for Gibraltar. In Gibraltarian pre-war society, where the woman tended to stay at home, there was little need for women to learn English. Furthermore, in middle-class homes, the fact that female household servants (maids, dressmakers and nannies) tended to come from Spain helped maintain Spanish dominance in domestic situations. Although today the social structure and the economic climate have changed, in a few households employees from over the border continue to provide an important source of Spanish language contact. Informant f31, aged 10, for example, never speaks Spanish in her daily life except to her maid.

a new generation of school teachers who returned to Gibraltar better prepared to implement and sustain the use of English in the Gibraltarian classroom.

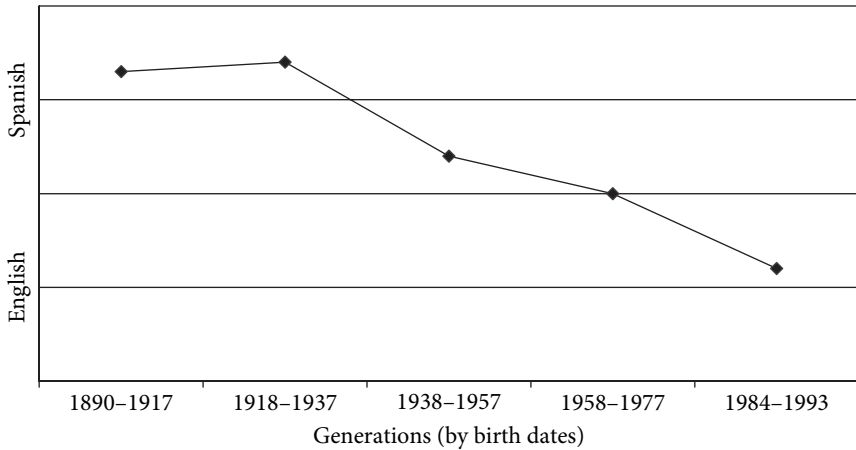


Figure 4.5. Development of language preference/competence in Gibraltar 1890-1993 (based on findings of Kellermann 2001 combined with data from this study).

4.2.1.1 Age

The GL findings discussed above suggest that, even within the narrow age sample studied, variation in language orientation is present. This became more evident when the Home Language was analysed, with pre-adolescents being found to use English in the home domain considerably more than adolescents ( $p = 0.054$ ) (see Figure 4.6). This pattern was confirmed and accentuated when the autochthonous majority (GibM) was examined (see Figure 4.7), with 9-12 year olds proving three times more likely to speak English than teenagers ( $p = 0.051$ ).

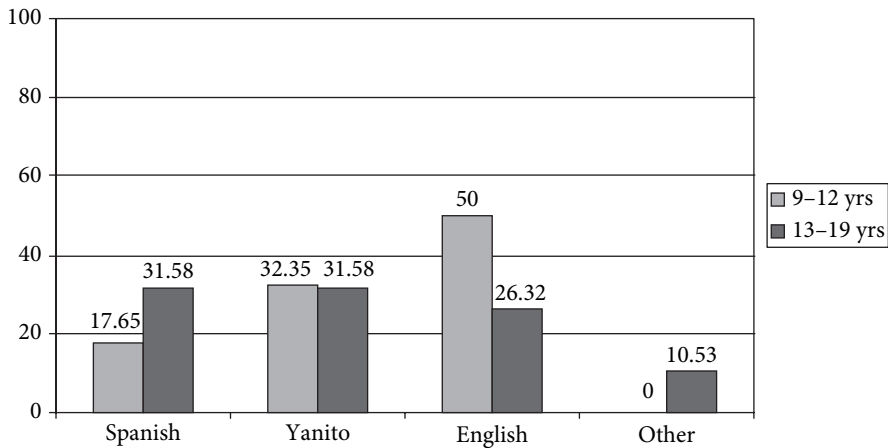


Figure 4.6. Home language (HL) by age.

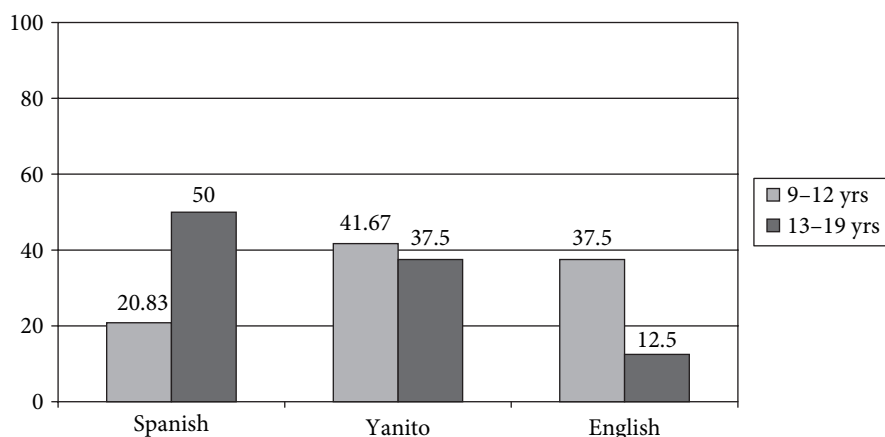


Figure 4.7. Home language (HL) in the GibM by age ( $n = 48$ ).

Language choice frequently differed from sibling to sibling. There were several cases (9 of 72) of subjects speaking to elder brothers and sisters in Spanish or Yanito, while preferring English to communicate with younger ones. This is often done out of a sense of responsibility to ensure that a firm English base is given to the younger generation. Informant m60 (aged 13), for example, explains: “I speak to my older sister in Yanito and my brother and younger sister in English ‘cos they’re younger than me so I have to teach them. . . I talk to them properly”.

If the parents are not linguistically capable of offering this grounding, the onus may fall on the elder brothers and sisters to do so. This is the case, for example, of informant f42 (aged 15) who, despite having a low level of English herself (her mother, a single parent, speaks no English at all), always talks to her little brother in English to prepare him for school: “. . . porque como tiene que aprender inglés cuando le vaya a la escuela (sic). . . para que vaya aprendiendo ya” (‘As he will have to learn English when he goes to school, he’d better start learning now’).

Although it is not unusual for members of the same nuclear family to vary their language behaviour depending on which family member they are speaking to, this is not to say that there is a *Tower of Babel* effect; the fact that a speaker chooses to speak English does not necessarily imply that he/she cannot speak Spanish. Informant m13 (aged 10) is fairly typical of a diachronic pattern, speaking Spanish to his grandparents, Yanito to his parents and English to his little brother. The slightly older informant f43 (aged 16), on the other hand, speaks only in English to her brothers but a mixture of English and Spanish to her parents, who in turn speak only Spanish to each other.

Whereas Gibraltarians traditionally acquired Spanish first at home and then learnt English later at school, there seems to be an increasing number of young Gibraltarians whose first linguistic contact and early language development takes

place in English rather than Spanish. Whereas in *Generation I* and before, there were numerous examples of monolingual Spanish speakers who were not able to communicate effectively in English, this is increasingly rare today, although isolated cases still exist. Indeed, amongst the younger generations, the opposite phenomenon seems to be happening, with some younger speakers having difficulties expressing themselves freely in Spanish.

By their own admission, eleven of the informants (5 pre-adolescents and 6 adolescents) could be classified as weak Spanish speakers. Informant f41 (aged 15), for example, speaks very little Spanish although her Spanish-speaking parents and grandparents were born and bred in Gibraltar. Her parents often have to act as “interpreters” between her and her grandparents. Similarly, informant f7 (aged 12), despite having been born to a Spanish mother, has difficulties communicating in that language: “it’s hard for me to speak Spanish. I can understand it but can’t speak it”. My own Spanish language assessment confirmed these claims.

#### 4.2.1.2 *Ethnicity*

Research findings revealed that English language competence varied significantly from community to community. Perhaps not surprisingly, the greatest generational divergence was observed between first and second generation immigrants. Amongst the Moroccan community, 4 of the 6 informants felt that their English was better than that of both parents, with the remaining 2 stating that their English was better than that of one parent (usually the mother). Most Moroccan parents had emigrated in the last 20 years and spoke little English, and were often not well integrated into the Gibraltarian community as a whole. This was particularly true of adult females who usually had limited contact with Spanish or English.

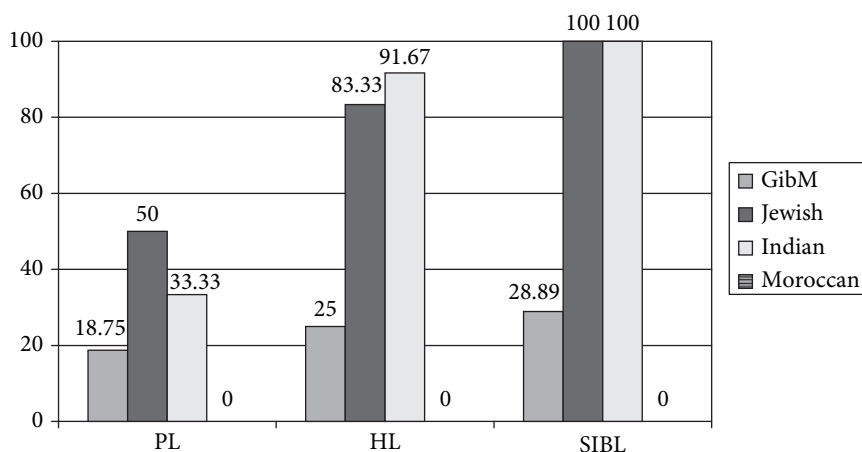
By contrast, two thirds of Jewish and Indian informants claimed that both parents spoke English better than they did (BEST \* ethnicity:  $p = 0.05$ ), reflecting the fact that English appears to be well established in these communities as the principal means of communication. Gibraltarian Jews are perhaps the most Anglophone of the communities, with English generally being the preferred first language, although not necessarily at the expense of Spanish.<sup>11</sup>

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11. Since the Diaspora, Jews have had to adapt to new cultures and societies. Partly for this reason, great importance has been given to multilingualism as a means of assimilation as well as an essential vehicle for international trade and commerce. The Jews of Gibraltar are no exception and are firmly established and integrated into most areas of society. The anthropologist Dieter Haller (2003) draws comparisons between the Jewish and Sindi communities of Gibraltar and suggests that the key to their economic success lies in their capacity to adapt to new environments.

Interviews did suggest a comparatively stronger tendency on the part of the Jewish community to avoid the Yanito hybrid forms, placing greater importance on *correct* Spanish or English at home as well as at school. This is not to say that code-switching and mixing does not occur in the speech of Jewish Gibraltarians, its use, however, is arguably less tolerated than in other sectors of Gibraltarian society.

PL ( $p = 0.00$ ), HL ( $p = 0.00$ ) and SIBL ( $p = 0.00$ ) \* ethnicity all proved revealing.<sup>12</sup> In the case of the Moroccan community, English did not feature in home domains. All three other groups showed a shift towards English preference, albeit to varying degrees. Whereas English would appear to be practically categorical in Jewish and Indian home domains, in the case of the autochthonous majority (GibM), Spanish language maintenance was still strong (see Figure 4.8).



**Figure 4.8.** Percentages for English as the inter-parental language (PL), home language (HL) and inter-sibling language (SIBL) by ethnic groups.

#### 4.2.1.3 Class

Scrutiny of HL \* class ( $p = 0.002$ ) disclosed that a gradual sliding scale existed from English through to Spanish via Yanito, with English dominance at home being largely proportional to social class. Whereas none of the children of working-class families spoke English at home, amongst the upper middle classes (UMC1), it was the Home Language in the considerable majority of the cases (see Figure 4.9).

12. In the case of the SIBL analysis, as 6 of the informants had no brothers or sisters,  $n = 66$ .



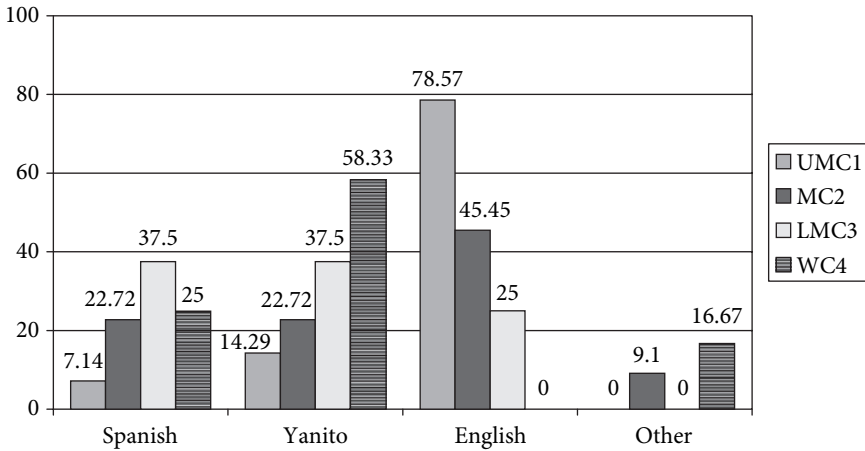


Figure 4.9. Home language (HL) by class.

A comparison between PL ( $p = 0.010$ ), HL ( $p = 0.002$ ) and SIBL ( $p = 0.010$ ) findings once again suggests a generational increase in the use of English, except amongst the working classes, where Spanish and Yanito remain the principal means of communication for both parents and children (See Figure 4.10).

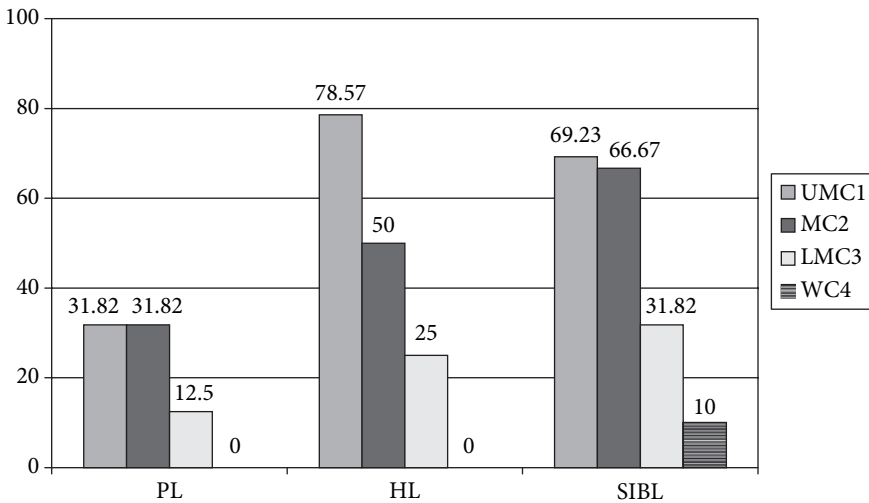
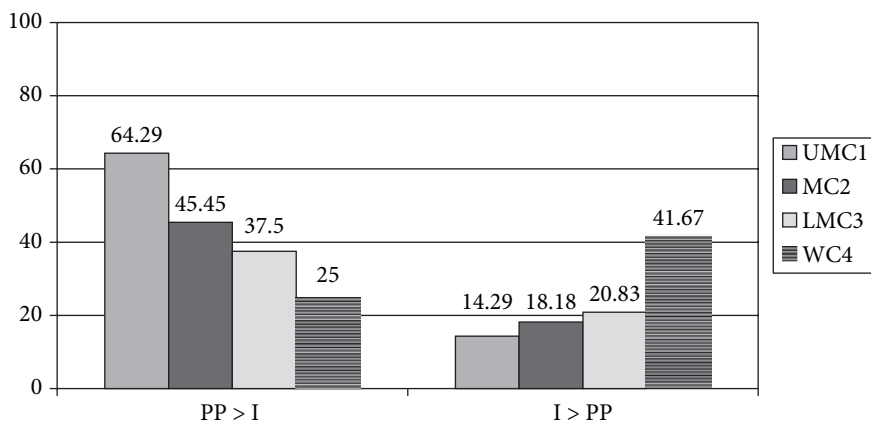


Figure 4.10. Percentages for English as the inter-parental language (PL), the home language (HL) and the inter-sibling language (SIBL) by class.

The increased use of English in home environments amongst younger speakers would seem to imply that the level of English in Gibraltar is improving, and that the degree of improvement is related to social background. BEST \* class (see Figure 4.11) revealed that whereas 14.29% of the upper middle-class informants

felt that their English was superior to that of either or both their parents, the corresponding figure for young working-class Gibraltarians proved almost three times higher (41.67%).



**Figure 4.11.** Self-report BEST findings by class. PP > I = One of both parents have greater English language competence than informant. I > PP = Informant has greater English language competence than one or both parents.

These findings suggest that in *Generation 2* speakers, a greater degree of English language competence already exists amongst the higher classes. As the professional classes tend to study in Britain, it is understandable that their level of English will be greater than those who have not done so. Fluency and English language confidence will tend to be transferred and consolidated in the next generation through the increased presence of English at home. Thus, while it would appear that amongst many of the higher classes, a process of English language consolidation is taking place, amongst the lower classes the process is one of language departure. The fact that a higher percentage of lower-middle and working-class children claimed to have a higher level of English than their parents suggests, therefore, that these groups are currently undergoing a stronger language shift.

#### 4.2.1.4 Sex

Although gender differences were found in other domains, at home, where most parents will, by and large, use the same language with sons and daughters, no significant gender variation was noted.

#### 4.2.2 Language choice in the school domain

Given the fact the British education system has been implemented in all schools in Gibraltar, it was perhaps not surprising that over 90% of the

informants affirmed that English was the sole language of communication used with teachers and authority figures in the school domain. However, whereas all middle school pre-adolescents claimed that English was used all the time, 18.42% of secondary school pupils stated that while English was the predominant means of teacher-student communication, Spanish or Yanito were used occasionally.

Although informants generally spoke English with authority figures, surveys revealed that Spanish and Yanito were widely used as an inter-student means of communication before and after school and during break times (see Figure 4.12).<sup>13</sup>

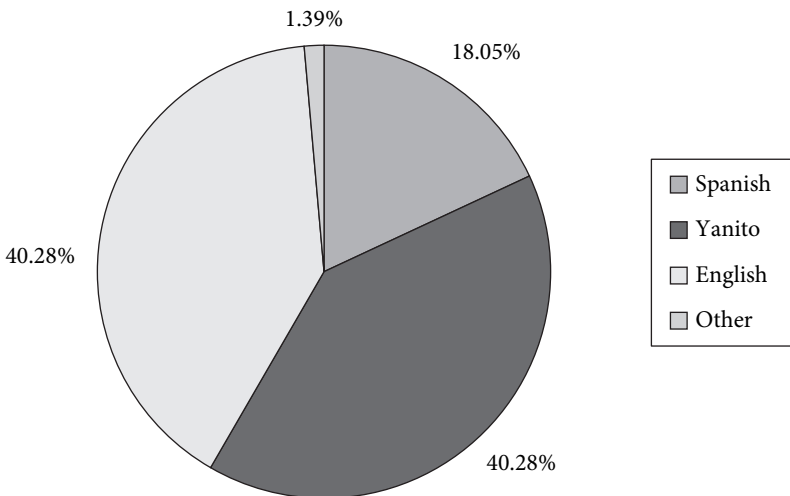


Figure 4.12. Distribution of the inter-student languages (ISL) of the sample.

#### 4.2.2.1 Age

Whereas 52.94% of middle school pre-adolescents spoke English outside the classroom, the corresponding figure for secondary school adolescents was considerably lower (28.95%). This divergence may be the consequence of a more relaxed attitude to language and its enforcement at secondary school, coupled with what Chambers (1995: 169) termed “declarations of adolescence”. Whereas children tend to be parent-centred, adopting language orientations suggested by their elders (see Chapter 3), teenagers tend to claim more language autonomy

13. Moroccan Arabic was the ISL in the case of informant f65.

and may adopt language forms with which they are either more comfortable and/or which are considered covertly prestigious. In some cases the adoption of these forms may facilitate access to peer groups with which they wish to identify.

This implies that English is, to a certain extent, artificially enforced, with many speakers reverting to more comfortable language forms at a later stage. This contention is supported by some interview data. Informant m49 (aged 16), for example, having spent his childhood years speaking English at home, has now started speaking Spanish with his parents: “Now I mainly speak to them in Spanish, but up to a couple of years, I always spoke English”. When asked about the reasons for this language switch he replies: “I don’t really know. Maybe it’s because I’m beginning to go out more than before and in the streets they normally speak Spanish”. Informant m55 (aged 17) offers similar explanations:

We speak English in class. . .all Gibraltarians learn English while in school. But in the break we tend to speak Gibraltarian. . .Spanish mixing it with a bit of English [. . .] Why? I don’t know – it’s easier, it’s our language, it’s what we speak in the street. We have got our special words and all that [. . .] yeah before when I was younger I only spoke English with my parents. . .I mostly still do but less than before.

There would appear to be a concerted effort on the part of some parents, particularly those who are not natural Anglophones themselves, to encourage young children to speak and perfect their English. This is the case, for example, of m18 (aged 12) whose mother discourages the use of Spanish and Yanito at home:

She always speaks with us in English but her English is not very good. . .her pronunciation is funny [. . .] she doesn’t like it when we speak in Yanito. But she’s a bit hypocrite (sic) – she always speaks Spanish with my Dad.

In some cases this effort may gradually diminish, particularly when the language choice is somewhat forced. By this, I refer to those carers and educators who may naturally feel more comfortable speaking Spanish or Yanito, yet for various reasons choose to give their charges or offspring an English grounding. National allegiance aside, the importance of English proficiency for the job market, both within and outside Gibraltar, is undoubtedly an important contributory factor. This having been said, there does appear to be an increasing number of Gibraltarians learning English at home from parents who are at least as comfortable, if not more comfortable, speaking English.

While the differences found between the language behaviour of the two age groups may be explained, in some cases, by a progressive use of Spanish and/or Yanito as the informant reaches adolescence, this does not necessarily invalidate a second complementary or parallel diachronic reading which argues that through increased confidence and competence, English is becoming increasingly favoured.

There is also the possibility that stated language preference/choice was subject to socio-psychological factors, and that the younger interviewees *over-reported*, consciously or unconsciously exaggerating the amount of English they speak.<sup>14</sup> It can be argued that pre-adolescents may falsely admit to following the prestige language norms which are expected of them. Thus, it could be claimed that the fact that more linguistically independent adolescents *admit* to speaking more Spanish or Yanito than their younger counterparts, is a more honest reflection of the true linguistic situation. This, however, is a problematic conjecture since by a similar argument, the stated language of adolescents may also be called into question on the basis that peer-group pressure and prestige language values (whether covert or overt) may also consciously or unconsciously condition responses. This possibility was rejected. Using direct interview techniques whereby informants were repeatedly asked to clarify their statements, there was no fundamental reason to doubt the honesty and reliability of informant responses.

#### 4.2.2.2 *School*

Statistical analysis revealed that the ISL figures varied considerably from school to school ( $p = 0.014$ ), suggesting that language may be relayed through social networks or cliques. At Sacred Heart, which is situated in a less prestigious catchment area, only 25% of informants spoke English with school friends, whereas at St Joseph's, which is, by popular consensus, in a better catchment area, figures were twice as high (50%). At the state-run Hebrew School, 90% of pupils used English as their prime means of social communication within school grounds (see Figure 4.13). Although officially open to children of all religions, the overwhelming majority of pupils at the Hebrew School are Jewish. Thus, the fact that figures for English use are considerably higher than the middle school average is arguably as much a reflection of community language orientation as of language enforcement policies at school.

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14. In self-report tests, *over-reporting* is said to occur when respondents claim to use more standard or higher status linguistic forms than they really do, thereby revealing favourable attitudes to such forms. *Under-reporting* is the opposite phenomenon, whereby respondents claim to adopt more non-standard or lower status language than is actually the case.

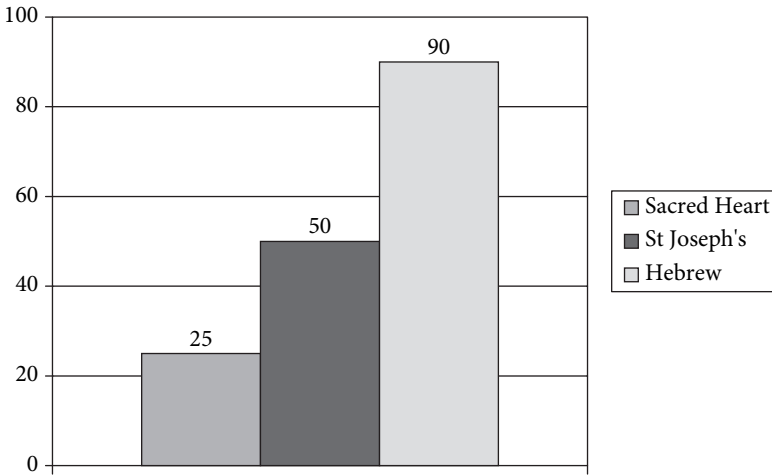


Figure 4.13. English as the inter-student language (ISL) in middle schools ( $n = 36$ ).

The school variable could not be applied independently to the older age group as the only two secondary schools in Gibraltar are single sex and therefore school and sex variables coincide.

#### 4.2.2.3 Ethnicity

As was the case in the home domain, Jewish and Indian informants were most likely to use English in social interactions ( $p = 0.000$ ), with 91.67% and 83.33% of the respective informants claiming to use English in the school environment. The GibM, on the other hand, tended to use Spanish or Yanito, with only 25% of informants using English as their ISL (see Figure 4.14).

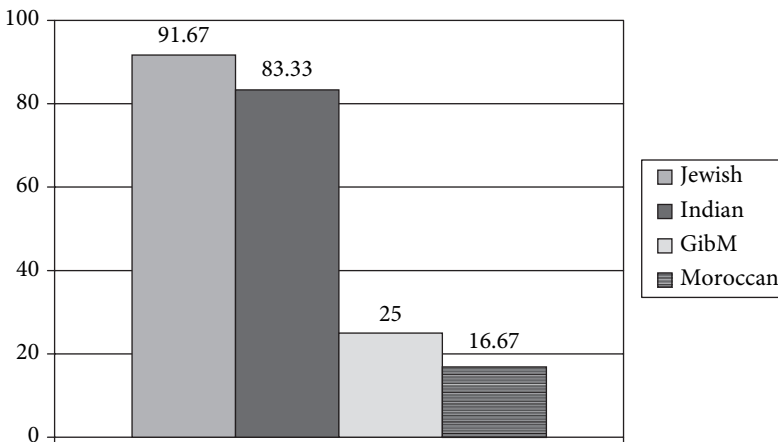


Figure 4.14. English as the inter-student language (ISL) by ethnic groups.

Unlike many Moroccan and Indian informants whose linguistic preferences might be influenced by their respective parents' countries of origin, the GibM and Jewish communities are, by and large, well established in Gibraltar with some informants coming from families who have lived there for several generations. In this light, and given the high degree of integration, it is striking how much language choice would appear to vary between these two communities (see Figure 4.15).

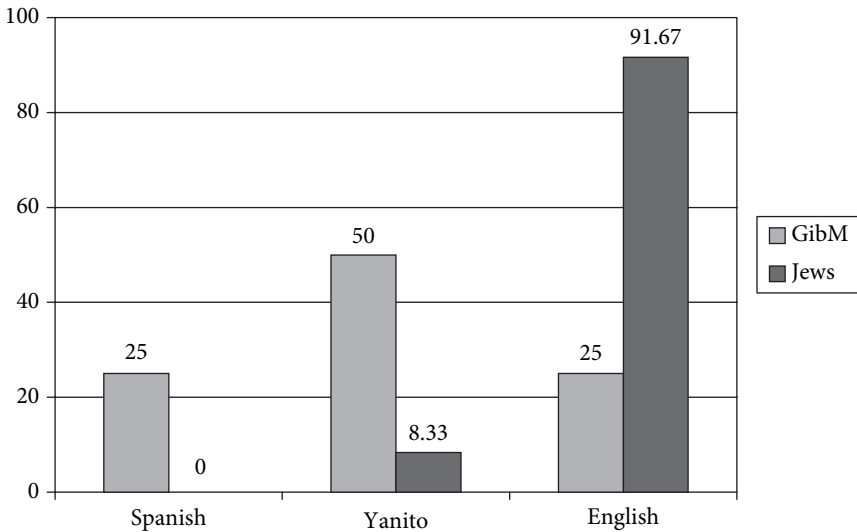


Figure 4.15. Inter-student language (ISL) in the GibM ( $n = 48$ ) and Jewish community ( $n = 12$ ).

In the case of the Jewish informants, it should be emphasised that ethnicity merges with other important variables which strengthen their English language orientation.

1. Most Jews in Gibraltar attend the Hebrew School where education standards are, by consensus, higher than the local average and where the use of English is categorical.
2. Most Jewish informants fell into the higher social class brackets. Most parents have studied in Britain, and their higher incomes permit greater demographic mobility and contact with Britain and other English-speaking countries.

#### 4.2.2.4 Class

Reiterating the stratification patterns found in the home domain, a strong correlation between the ISL and class ( $p = 0.006$ ) was noted. Whereas English was never used as the ISL amongst the working class (WC4), its presence was increasingly evident further up the social strata (see Figure 4.16). Educational values are, of course, not exclusive to any one class, but affluence can affect language competence and choice through, amongst other things, travel and study opportunities abroad.

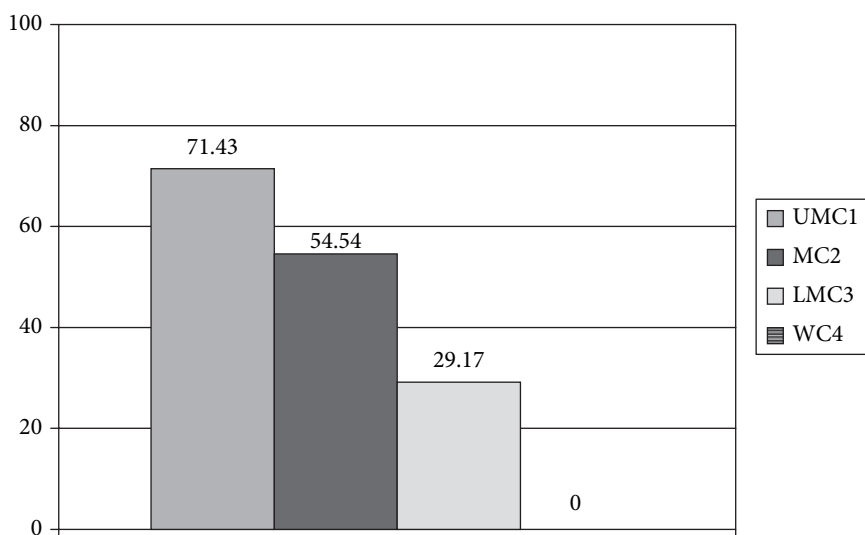


Figure 4.16. English as the inter-student language (ISL) by class.

Given that the Indian and Jewish informants fell predominantly into the higher social class brackets, and Moroccan informants were predominantly working class, it was felt that a specific examination of the autochthonous majority (GibM) was warranted in order to see whether the same social stratification for the ISL was maintained. Although less marked than those found in the Gibraltar community as a whole, similar patterns emerged (see Figure 4.17).

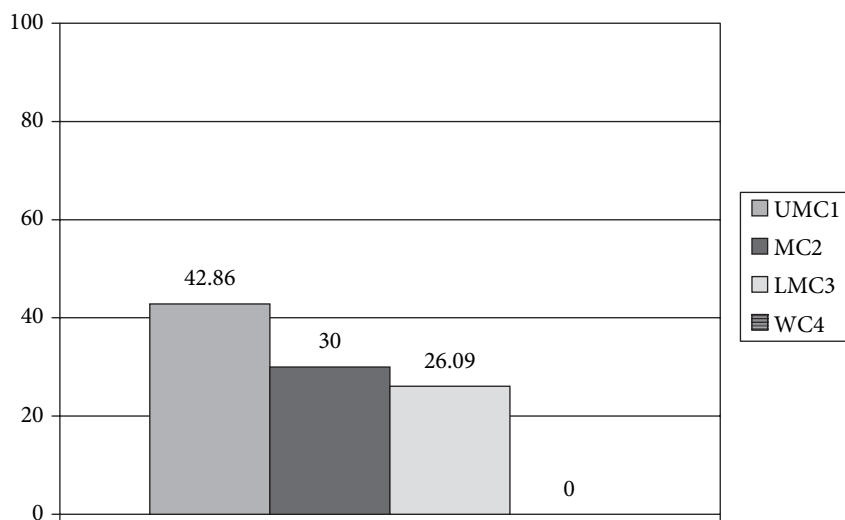


Figure 4.17. English as the inter-student language (ISL) in the GibM by class ( $n = 48$ ).



#### 4.2.2.5 Sex

Crossing ISL with sex revealed that boys spoke slightly more English than girls in school environments (44.4% v 37.14%), although differences were not statistically significant ( $p > 1$ ). The fact that English was practically categorical in all Indian and Jewish informants of both sexes was largely responsible for narrowing the percentage gap between the two sexes. A specific analysis of the inter-student language (ISL) of the autochthonous majority (GibM) revealed a high degree of gender divergence ( $p = 0.014$ ). English was used by three times more males (37.5%) than females (12.5%).

Combining age and sex variables, a significant pattern emerges ( $p = 0.026$ ). While females at middle school maintained the similarly high level of Spanish and Yanito spoken at school as secondary school boys and girls, a considerably increased presence of English as the ISL was noted amongst middle school boys (see Figure 4.18).

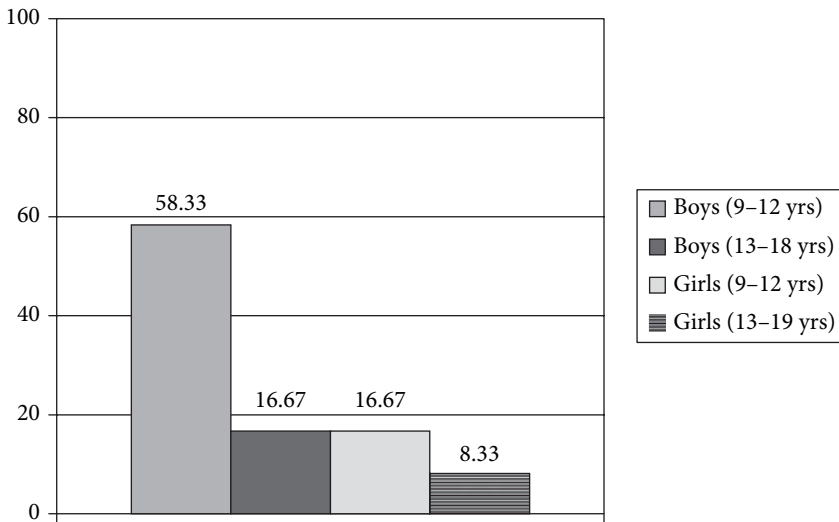


Figure 4.18. English as the inter-student language (ISL) in the GibM by age + sex ( $n = 48$ ).

The fact that 58.33% of the GibM pre-adolescent males spoke English at school, while only 16.67% of their female contemporaries and older male counterparts did so, would suggest that the weight of English language shift is primarily borne by this age + sex group. This argument, however, is significantly tempered by the fact that the considerable majority of male informants preferring English as their ISL were concentrated in one middle school (St Joseph's).

It would appear that the school variable might condition language choice, and the fact that considerably more St Joseph boys chose English as their ISL than their Sacred Heart counterparts initially suggests that English may be relayed through social networks, encouraged, directly or indirectly, by the language orientation of

the particular school environment. This contention, although likely, proved difficult to demonstrate satisfactorily.

### 4.2.3 Most comfortable language (MCL)

As discussed, discrepancies may exist between language use, language choice and language preference. Although one language may be encouraged or selected through enforcement, or adopted as a declaration of allegiance or as an act of identity, it may not necessarily coincide with the language the speaker feels most at ease with. In order to establish whether one language or another might be unnaturally imposed at home, at school, or by peer pressure, a line of questioning was designed to establish the informant's most comfortable language (MCL) so as to ascertain whether these external pressures are ultimately effective.

Figures revealed that just over 50% of the informants felt most comfortable speaking in English (see Figure 4.19). These figures, particularly when contrasted with home language (HL) and inter-student language (ISL) findings, would appear to confirm a move away from Spanish-based language towards English.

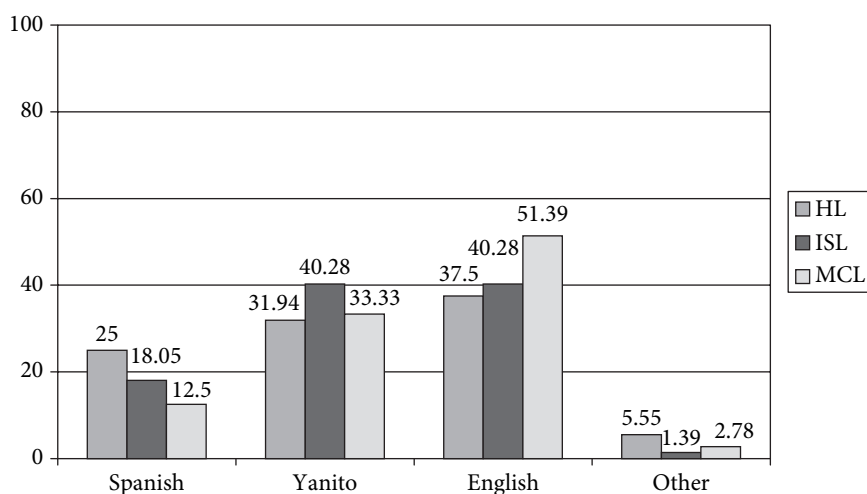


Figure 4.19. Comparisons between the home language (HL), inter-student language (ISL) and most comfortable language (MCL) of the sample.

#### 4.2.3.1 Age

Statistical analysis ( $p = 0.054$ ) once again confirmed that it is amongst the younger age group that language shift is most evident. Whereas the majority of secondary school adolescents felt most comfortable speaking in Spanish or Yanito, more than two thirds of middle-school pre-adolescents felt most at ease speaking in English (see Figure 4.20).

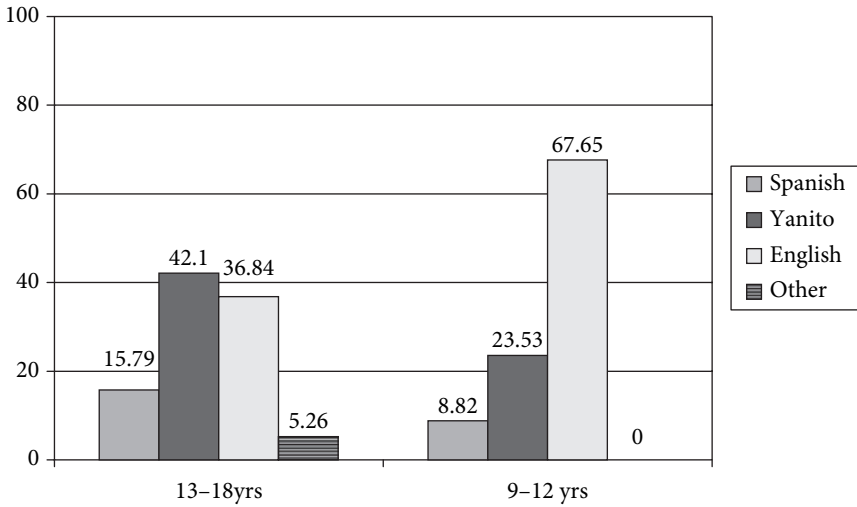


Figure 4.20. Most comfortable language (MCL) by age.

4.2.3.2 Ethnicity

Analysis of MCL \* ethnicity ( $p = 0.000$ ) reiterated previous language patterns within the 4 communities studied. Whereas all Jewish and Indian informants, without exception, felt most comfortable speaking English, most of the autochthonous majority (GibM) preferred Spanish or Yanito with only 35.42% choosing English (see Figure 4.21). The Moroccan community findings must be treated with caution. In some cases, levels of both English and Spanish were low and two of the six informants felt most comfortable speaking in Arabic.

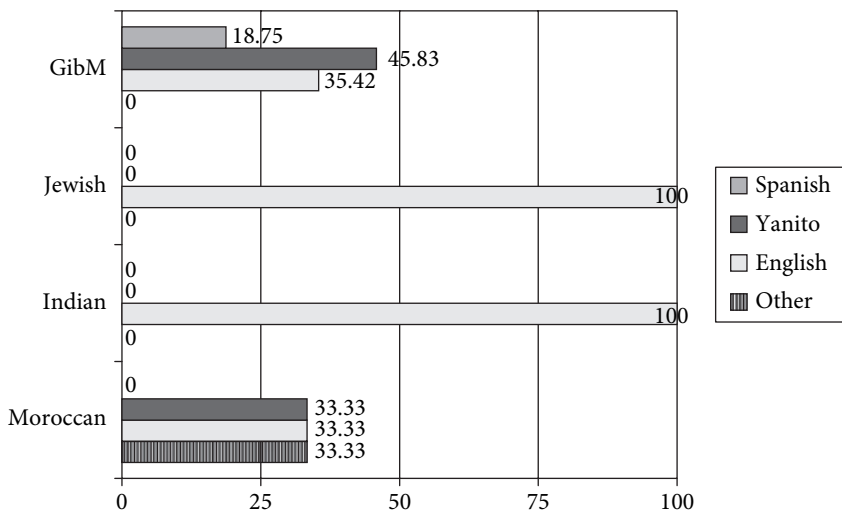


Figure 4.21. Most comfortable language (MCL) by ethnic groups.

If, as findings would suggest, a language shift towards English is currently in progress, it is not so much taking place within the Indian and Jewish communities where English would appear to be already fairly firmly implanted, nor in the Moroccan community where language competence is still unstable, but rather amongst the autochthonous majority (GibM). Analysis of this community in isolation confirms this contention, revealing notable variation between the MCL of pre-adolescents and adolescents (see Figure 4.22). English was preferred by more than half the informants from the younger age group, while only one in six teenage informants felt most comfortable speaking English ( $p = 0.025$ ).

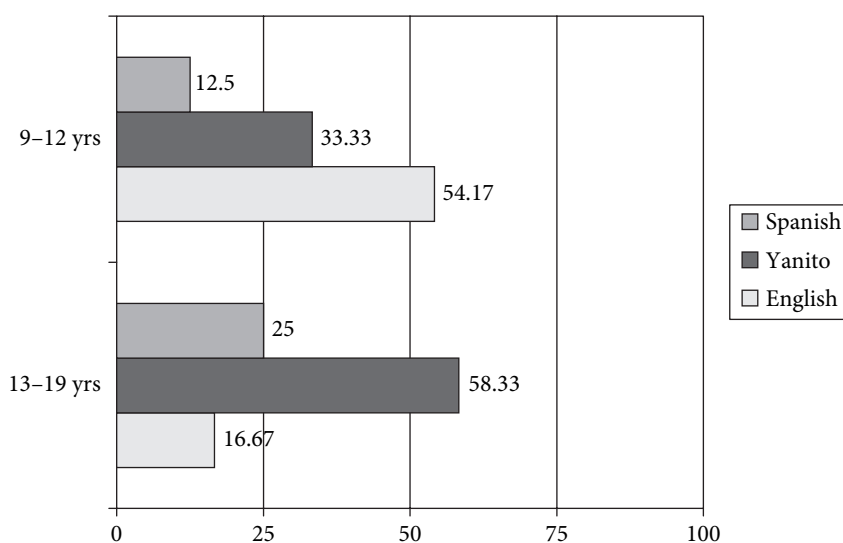


Figure 4.22. Most comfortable language (MCL) in the GibM by age ( $n = 48$ ).

#### 4.2.3.3 Class

English as the MCL appears to show a high degree of social stratification. This, however, could not be statistically demonstrated using the present data ( $p > 0.1$ ).<sup>15</sup> Figure 4.23 shows that English preferences rose on a sliding scale between WC4 (25%) and UMC1 (78.57%), thereby suggesting that language maintenance is strongest amongst the lower classes.

15. The equation was undoubtedly complicated by the fact that the MCL of two Moroccan informants was Arabic. An analysis limited to those informants whose MCL was Spanish, Yanito or English ( $n = 70$ ) was statistically significant ( $p = 0.055$ ) and revealed stratification patterns similar to those exhibited in Figure 4.23.

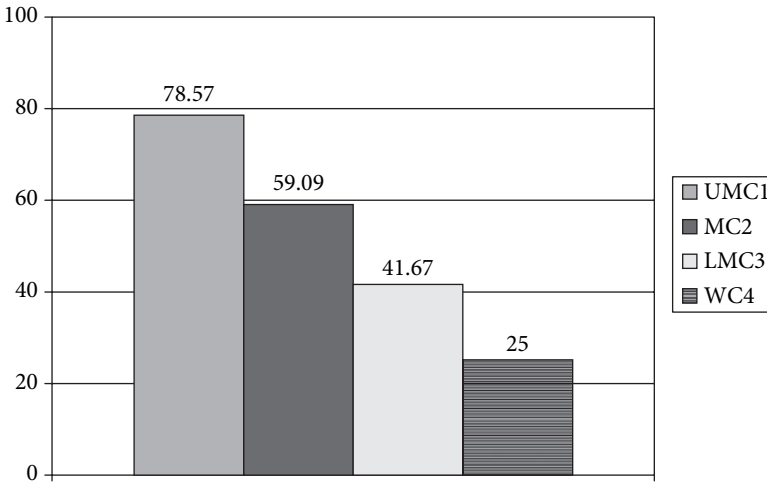


Figure 4.23. English as the most comfortable language (MCL) by class.

4.2.3.4 Sex

Gender analysis revealed that males felt more comfortable speaking English than females did ( $p = 0.04$ ). Whereas 63.89% of pre-adolescent and adolescent males chose English as their MCL, the female figures were 50% lower.

A combined analysis of age and sex variables ( $p = 0.006$ ) revealed that, although the latter is influential, the former is a stronger conditioning factor. In both age groups, there was a similar gender percentage divergence, with pre-adolescent and adolescent males approximately 60% more likely to adopt English as their MCL than their respective female counterparts. However, it was 9–12 year old boys who, once again, showed by far the strongest preference for English (see Figure 4.24).

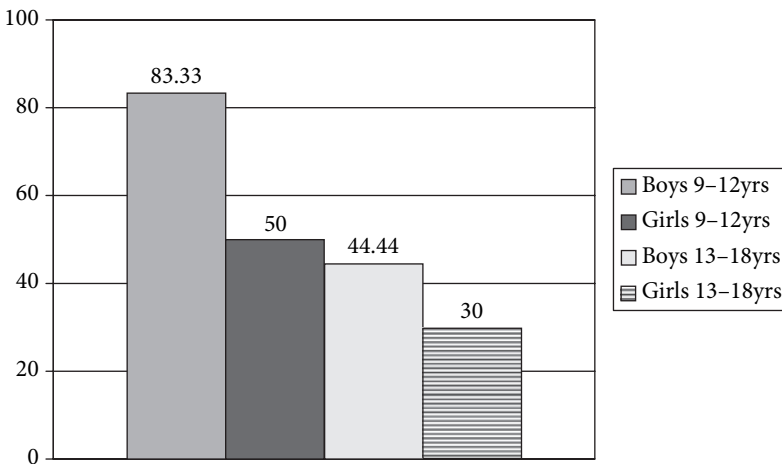


Figure 4.24. English as the most comfortable language (MCL) by age + sex.

Gender divergence was accentuated when the GibM was analysed in isolation ( $p = 0.002$ ), with 50% of males feeling most comfortable using English compared to 20.83% of females. When age and sex variables were combined, a similar pattern to that described previously emerged ( $p = 0.002$ ). As was the case with the ISL, the MCL findings once again showed that Spanish language maintenance in the GibM was most evident amongst teenage girls, whereas English language shift was strongest amongst pre-adolescent boys (see Figure 4.25).

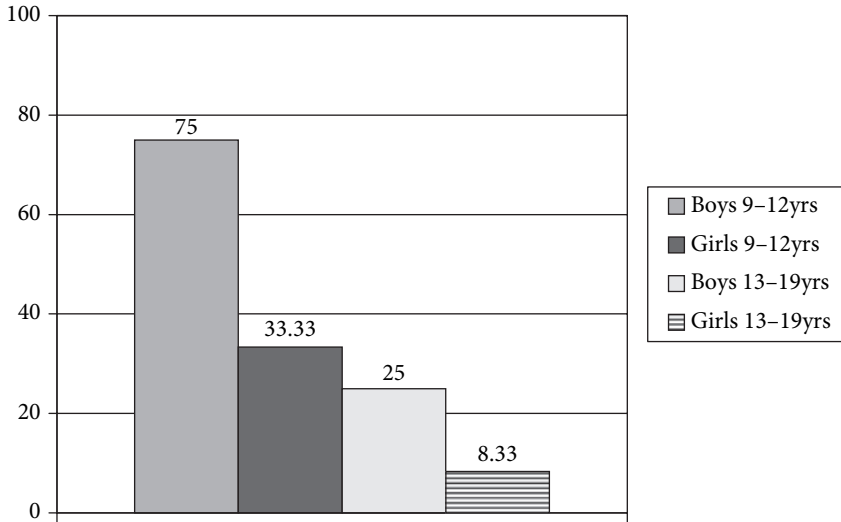


Figure 4.25. English as the most comfortable language (MCL) in the GibM by age + sex ( $n = 48$ ).

#### 4.2.4 Factors influencing language choice and behaviour

##### 4.2.4.1 *Communication accommodation*

In a speech community such as Gibraltar where there are various possible and acceptable means of communication, language choice may be subject to a combination of cognitive, affective and conative factors. In this respect, the inter-speaker relationship and the language competence and orientation of the individuals taking part in the speech act will influence language choice. There is a natural tendency to adapt our language, accent and pronunciation to suit our needs and that of our audience.

Speech Accommodation theory, or Communication theory as it subsequently became known (see Giles 1973, 1984; Giles & Smith 1979; Giles et al. 1991; Beebe & Giles 1984; Beebe & Zuengler 1983), holds that the speaker/listener relationship is fundamental to language variation and possible language shift. It has been used to explain processes of first as well as second language acquisition and, more recently, has also been influential in Jenkins' (2000, 2003b) research into L1 transfer,

interlanguage and English as an international language (EIL). According to Beebe & Giles (1984), convergence towards or divergence away from the listener may take place for any of three principal reasons:

1. to gain the approval of our interlocutor(s)
2. to maintain a positive social identity
3. to promote communicative efficiency.

Underpinning these fundamental motives are four broader socio-psychological theories summarised by Jenkins (2000) as follows:

Firstly, the theory of similarity attraction, which claims that people are more attracted to those who share similar beliefs and attitudes than to others. Secondly, social exchange theory, according to which people weigh up the rewards and costs of alternatives before they act, usually selecting the alternative which will result in the greatest reward and the smallest cost. Thirdly, the theory of casual attribution which suggests that people evaluate one another's behaviour according to their interpretation of their motives underlying that behaviour. And fourthly, inter-group dependence, according to which people attempt to maintain their group identity by retaining their distinctiveness from other groups.

(Jenkins 2000: 168)

All three of these fundamental motives are potentially relevant in Gibraltar. An English-dominant speaker may, for example, adopt Yanito to facilitate social integration especially within peer groups. This accommodation strategy is known as downward convergence (i.e., adapting one's speech away from a prestige model). The opposite phenomenon might also take place, whereby a Spanish-dominant or Yanito speaker might speak English in certain social situations and contexts. The third possible motive for accommodation (promoting communicative efficiency) is potentially the most common strategy used by Gibraltarians who, in a multicultural and multilingual community, often simply view language in pragmatic terms as a vehicle of communication. This was clearly reflected in the present sample, with several informants, such as f41, claiming to vary their language depending on the linguistic strengths of their interlocutors: "I've got about two or three different groups of friends and some of them speak just English and some of them speak a mixture but I think that does tend to happen a lot [. . .] I have no problems with Spanish or English, I just adapt."

While *convergence* is a strategy to identify and show affinity with the interlocutor, *divergence*, by contrast, is often an external statement of in-group identity and a way of distancing oneself from the interlocutor. This often occurs in communities where a minority language or dialect is repressed or subjugated to a majority language or acrolect. In this environment the minority speaker might

deliberately maintain or even accentuate his speech patterns when coming into contact with a speaker of the dominant language as an expression of linguistic or cultural allegiance or defiance.<sup>16</sup> Both strategies imply that the speaker has a choice of language forms.

#### 4.2.4.2 *Language confidence and competence*

Although English has been the official language of Gibraltar since the eighteenth century it has, until fairly recently, been confined to official or formal contexts. While efforts have been made to encourage its wider use, Spanish and Yanito continue to predominate in many informal environments, and although the situation would appear to be changing, still for many Gibraltarians, the first real contact with English takes place at school. The fact that some speakers lack confidence when speaking a certain language, may logically affect inter-speaker language choice.

The findings of this study suggest that the standard of English is improving and that the number of non-English speaking Gibraltarians appears to be diminishing considerably. While interviews and tests revealed that English language competence varied, only four informants had difficulties completing the tasks.

Nevertheless, although change is taking place, in the speech community as a whole, Spanish remains the dominant linguistic force. It is therefore, at first sight, somewhat paradoxical that some Gibraltarians may feel uncomfortable speaking Spanish to native Spanish speakers. There is often a feeling that the particular Spanish spoken on the Rock, although adequate for everyday chat, may lack the resources and lexical depth to maintain a more complex or formal conversation. Informant m49 (aged 16) is typical of the attitude of many. Although he speaks Spanish most of the time he says, "I feel most comfortable speaking in English. My vocabulary is a lot bigger in English". He goes on to explain that his language choice is largely dependent on the familiarity, register, content and level of conversation.

it depends what we're arguing about . . .if it's silly argument or whatever. . .about football or any other sport, I tend to speak in Spanish but if it's something more complex, like maybe politics or something that's going on in school or something I tend to use English because I can express myself that much better.

(m49, aged 16)

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16. Within the Iberian Peninsula, this may occur in autonomic regions such as the Basque Country, Galicia, Catalonia or Valencia, where local speakers might insist on speaking their regional language or dialect when coming into contact with a Castilian speaking visitor as a social or political statement. Similarly in accent terms, whereas, for example, some Andalusians may consciously or unconsciously *converge* towards a standard accent in certain contexts, others may choose to accentuate their speech forms as an assertion of local identity.



Some local speakers, therefore, although apparently bilingual, in fact do not feel completely at ease in either of the two languages, and tend to communicate in the local dialect Yanito which allows them to code-switch and alternate syntactically and lexically between languages. However, faced with the choice of having to give a formal speech in Spanish to a native audience or having to give one in English, most interviewees stated that they would feel more comfortable in English: “I feel a bit unconfident because I speak Yanito. . .but to speak proper English or proper Spanish I prefer English” (f43, aged 16).

#### 4.2.4.3 *Acts of identity*

The general picture that emerged was that although language choice may be an expression of identity, amongst young informants at least, it was fundamentally seen as a functional vehicle of communication and accommodation strategies were regularly used to facilitate this end. Attempts to establish whether one language had more prestige than another proved unrevealing. Asked whether they felt English was *cooler* or sounded better than Spanish or vice-versa, most informants did not hold either of the languages in positive or negative esteem.

Yanito was, however, a slightly different case. Although many informants freely and without shame admitted to using this hybrid form, most did not consider it to be a legitimate dialect as such, but saw it, rather, as a local code or *argot*.<sup>17</sup> Although there is an undeniable affection towards this local form, the general feeling was that it did not carry weight of prestige, and a mild derisory self-mocking attitude was noted. When asked what she thought of the way languages are spoken in Gibraltar, informant f38 (aged 17) switched to Spanish and replied: “haciendo el indio. Vamos siendo unos chala(d)os porque ni hablamos inglés ni hablamos en español” which roughly translates as: ‘we make fools of ourselves. We’re off our heads because we don’t speak in English or in Spanish’.

According to Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985), all speech acts are acts of identity. Faced with a choice, the individual speaker will select from the language varieties at his/her disposition in order to reflect his/her personal or social identity:

the individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behaviour so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished  
(Le Page 1968: 192; Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 181).

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17. Previous research (e.g., Britto 1993: 85–6; Kellermann 2001: 131–9 and Fernández Martín 2003: 188–191) has noted similar ambivalent affection/evaluation attitudes towards the local language form.

When speakers initially modify their speech patterns towards that of an attractive reference group, they will initially be variable (diffuse). However, depending on the reception and the degree of acceptance by the model group, speakers may modify their speech patterns further, thereby making their speech more regular (focussed).

Kellermann (2001: 120) has identified various language strategies used by the local population to express integrative attitudes towards Gibraltar and Britain and dissociative attitudes towards Spain.

1. Integrative orientation to Britain and dissociative orientation to Spain.
  1. adoption of English as mother tongue
  2. acceptance of English as official language
  3. stressing differences between English and Spanish
  4. (a) upgrading of English spoken in Gibraltar  
(b) downgrading of Spanish spoken in Gibraltar
2. Integrative orientation to Gibraltar
  1. glorification of Yanito
  2. (a) rejection of Standard English (and RP)  
(b) recognition of a Gibraltarian English

However, as Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985: 181–2) note, the adoption or modification of language behaviour is conditioned by one or more factors:

We can only behave according to the behavioural patterns of groups we find it desirable to identify with to the extent that:

- i. we can identify the groups
- ii. we have both adequate access to the groups and ability to analyse their behavioural patterns
- iii. the motivation to join the groups is sufficiently powerful, and is either reinforced or reversed by feedback from the groups
- iv. we have the ability to modify our behaviour.

These conditioning factors are particularly relevant to this study. According to Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, the third point is possibly the most important, since it is here where the individual appears to have the greatest degree of choice, although this may be conditioned by group feedback and the degree of acceptance by the group. In Gibraltar, however, the motivation to modify language behaviour may depend on the individual's language ability and awareness.

#### 4.2.4.4 *Language awareness, attitudes and norms*

In an attempt to establish the attitudes of young Gibraltarians towards English language use in Gibraltar, GibE and the local accent, three lines of questioning were followed.

1. *Is there a good way to speak English and a bad way? Do you think Gibraltarians speak English well? Why/why not?*
2. *Can you distinguish between different English accents? Which ones? Which do you prefer?*
3. *What do you think of the Gibraltar accent? Which do you prefer, the way Peter Caruana speaks English or the way Joe Bossano speaks? (see discussion on the following pages)*

While most informants from the 9–12 age group were unable to give a reliable or coherent opinion on the matter, an impression of language attitude could be gleaned from the views of older teenage informants, although these findings could not be quantified.

English language competence was felt to be directly related to level of education: “if it’s a person who hasn’t had much of an education for example, I mean, hasn’t progressed to the A-levels, they tend not to speak English in a fluent manner” (m54, aged 17). Similarly, informant m50 (aged 17) feels his level of English is better than that of his father because of better educational opportunities: “I mean my father didn’t get as much education as I have so I suppose that’s the main factor there.” Further study abroad was felt to be a fundamental factor, and a clear difference emerged between those who had studied in Britain and those who had not.

Amongst most of those who expressed an opinion, it was felt that the standard of English in Gibraltar has improved considerably in recent years as the result of better education. Several informants expressed the opinion that in terms of grammatical and phonetic accuracy, in many cases, the English spoken in Gibraltar today is superior to that spoken in parts of Britain.

I think they (Gibraltarians) do speak well, I think they have been educated well, it’s just their accent and their tendency to speak Spanish and not practise their English as often as they should. . . I consider many Gibraltarians to speak better English or clearer English than the English. (m49, aged 16)

As regards accent, interviews and tests aimed to establish whether young Gibraltarians could distinguish and differentiate between various accents and dialects and whether they were aware of their potential social implications.<sup>18</sup> This was particularly relevant for the subsequent sociophonetic analysis since, as Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) argue, in order for language change to take place, speakers

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18. This was based on playing recordings of various speakers who were considered representative of certain regional accents. These included well-known personalities such as Queen Elizabeth II, David Beckham, Billy Connolly, Liam Gallagher, Cilla Black, Paul Gascoigne, Paul Hogan, Peter Caruana and Joe Bossano.

must first recognise the object language group they wish to emulate and must be positively disposed towards it.

Although exposed to a wide variety of English accents through cable TV as well as through the large numbers of British tourists who visit Gibraltar, only a small minority of middle school informants were sure of being able to distinguish between different English accents. Amongst the teenage population, however, there was a higher degree of accent recognition. Although a general air of accent tolerance prevailed, a clear preference was expressed for British accents (as opposed to American). Within Britain, Cockney, Geordie and Northern English accents were generally the least favoured accents while RP and southern prestige accents were most favoured: "I like the posher accent like the ones the politicians use because of the clarity and their vocabulary. . . that's the way I'd like to speak" (m56, aged 17).

The Gibraltar accent, although clearly discerned, was not generally considered a true regional variant, but rather seen as English heavily influenced by local Spanish and, as such, was often seen as a reflection of the linguistic limitations of the speaker.

(There is) not really a Gibraltar accent it's more of a lack of having the ability to speak proper English rather than the accent itself. It's probably like a Spanish person talking very advanced English. (m56, aged 17)

Many informants, however, did not include themselves within this bracket. Distance was often placed between the pronunciation of parents' and grandparents' generations and their own, with informants such as m52 (aged 19) and m54 (aged 17) using *they* rather than *we* when referring to stereotypical Gibraltarans. The impression given, which is discussed in detail in the following chapters, is that in general terms, there appears to be a notable shift in pronunciation amongst many of the younger informants away from the traditional Spanish infused speech towards a Southern British model.

As concepts of "norm" and "standard" were not universally recognised by all informants, particularly the 9–12 age group, lines of questioning were placed in a local context. Informants were asked whether they preferred the way Joe Bossano or the way Peter Caruana spoke English. Both are local Gibraltarans whose distinctive and contrasting forms of speech were universally recognisable. Peter Caruana, the present Chief Minister and leader of the Gibraltar Social Democrats (GSD), has an educated standard pronunciation which has certain RP or near RP features, whereas the English of Joe Bossano of the Gibraltar Socialist Labour Party (GSLP), although grammatically correct, has many of the stereotypical Gibraltar pronunciation features.

All the informants who expressed an opinion, with the exception of two, preferred Peter Caruana's accent. Although it was felt by some that Bossano's pronunciation was more representative of the community as a whole, Caruana's

English was generally considered more fitting to a politician representing Gibraltar on the world stage.

...it seems Caruana's way of speaking is better, more suited to a chief minister. It seems more correct. Joe Bossano's way of expressing English is somewhat Gibraltarian. . . Yes Caruana does sound posh to me and Joe Bossano doesn't at all. I think Caruana sounds more intellectual and more attractive in that sense, although I suppose lots of Gibraltarians can relate to Joe Bossano in the sense that they speak in the same way. (m50, aged 17)

Bossano's form of expression was often seen to be both typical and stereotypical of the older generation, and there was a sense that this form of speech is becoming less common amongst younger Gibraltarians. Informant m50, who feels his English pronunciation is better than that of his father, explained: "my Dad, when he speaks English, he does sound like sort of like Joe Bossano. . . that type of English accent [. . .] I think I speak English in a different way, in a more posh way. . . the more Caruana way?"

Most teenagers had a clear concept of *correct* English, and the BrE (or RP) model was considered the most prestigious and had no negative class associations. It was generally viewed positively, and a standard against which good or bad English was judged. Little evidence was found of the strategies of integrative orientation to Gibraltar described by Kellermann (see section 4.2.4.3). Standard British English was generally preferred or considered to be more "correct" than the local accent/dialect which, although looked on with a certain degree of fondness, was fundamentally seen as a functional means of expression. On this matter, the comments of one forty-eight year old Gibraltarian interviewed during the pilot study proved enlightening.

I'm not ashamed or proud of my accent. It's simply the way I speak. I would like to speak better but I think it's too late. . . but you can understand me, no? That's the most important. I never studied in England you see. . . the youngsters speak better today, they have more opportunities. . . they copy the accents from the television. (mA5)

#### 4.2.4.5 *Reading habits*

As the media plays an increasingly important role in our lives, it was considered opportune to investigate the reading and viewing habits of pre-adolescent and adolescent informants as a possible factor in the language change/maintenance equation. Although an in-depth study into this undoubtedly important source of linguistic influence fell outside the parameters of the present study, a brief survey was carried out and the findings were compared and contrasted against those of previous studies.

In the broad context of this study, which fundamentally aims to assess spoken English, it should be stressed that reading competence is not necessarily a reflection of oral competence, and the fact that a Gibraltarian reads predominantly in English does not necessarily imply that he or she will choose to speak it.

Surveys showed that most young informants, perhaps not surprisingly, did not read newspapers on a regular basis. When they did, it was almost invariably the local English newspaper (*The Gibraltar Chronicle*) they read or browsed through. This was principally due to the fact that it was easy to come by, bought by parents and found in most bars and cafés.

Adolescent and pre-adolescent reading material consisted mainly of sports and hobby publications, pop and gossip magazines, teenage photo stories and comics. Whether they chose to read or browse in English or Spanish often depended on their particular interests; English if, for example, they were interested in British football or entertainment or Spanish if they followed Spanish football or Spanish reality shows such as *Operación Triunfo* or *Gran Hermano*. However, due to limited economic resources, many informants claimed never to buy magazines, and therefore their language choice often depended on the reading material lying around the house, in the doctor's or dentist's waiting room, or at the hairdresser's or barber's.

Findings showed that only two of the seventy-two informants read exclusively or predominantly in Spanish. Just over 18% of the sample claimed that they read as much in Spanish as they did in English. The considerable majority (73.61%) read books only in English. This data is not altogether surprising since Gibraltarians first learn to read in English, and except when studying Spanish language, all their school textbooks are in English. Analysis of the age and sex variables (see Figure 4.26) suggests that pre-adolescents read more in English than their teenage counterparts, and that boys read more in English than girls ( $p = 0.001$ ).

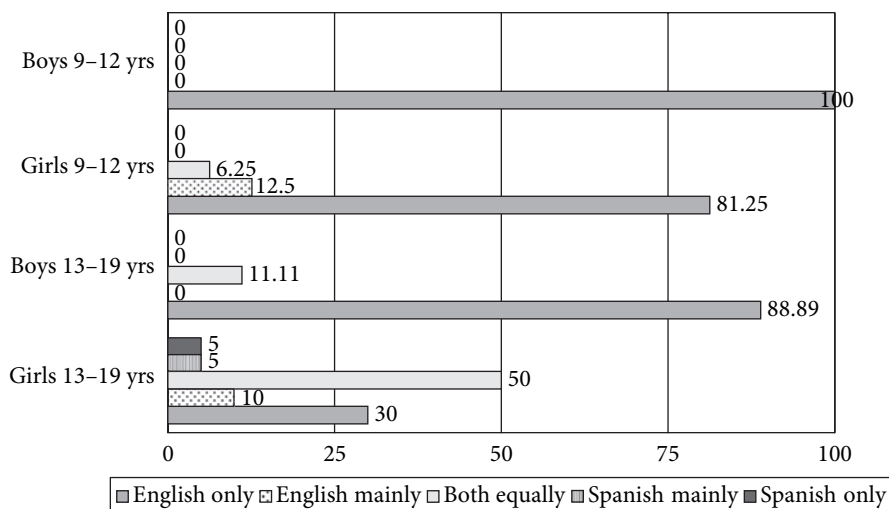


Figure 4.26. Reading language preferences by age + sex.

Although the data presented suggests that the young local population continues to read more in English than in Spanish, it is hard to assess whether the pendulum is swinging or will swing any further than previous studies have indicated. Attempts to compare and contrast the findings of this study against those of past studies proved difficult since criteria and definitions vary. When Kellermann (2001: 233–236) carried out her research in the early 1990s, she found that although only about 10% of the local population read Spanish newspapers, 50% read Spanish magazines. Ten years later Fernández Martín's (2003: 183) research into the adult population offers a global figure, finding that 83% of the local population read only in English.

#### 4.2.4.6 *Television viewing habits*

As has been argued, oral language shift has been taking place gradually over several generations aided by educational policies, accelerating after the Second World War and finding new impetus during the Spanish blockade from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. However, in recent years the rapid changes and advances in the worlds of communication, technology and the media have possibly contributed as much, if not more, to linguistic change than historical events and government policy.

The advent of satellite television in particular has served to revolutionise language input. Whereas previously, Spanish television was the principal source of home entertainment available to the local population, Gibraltarian households now have access to a wide range of satellite and cable channels offering numerous programmes in English as well as other languages. Although it is difficult to assess accurately the effect of this development, it seems safe to say that constant exposure to English is bound to influence language competence and accent acquisition.

Surveys revealed that of the 71 informants who watched TV,<sup>19</sup> only one watched no programmes in English (see Figure 4.27). Findings showed an overwhelming preference for English language channels such as *Sky*, *The BBC*, *Cartoon Network*, *Disney Channel* and the local station *GBC*. Cartoons, News and Sports programmes, teenage series and soap operas were the most popular programmes.

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19. As Informant f31 (aged 10) did not watch any television at all,  $n = 71$ . Two Moroccan informants watched Arabic channels very occasionally as well as English and Spanish ones.

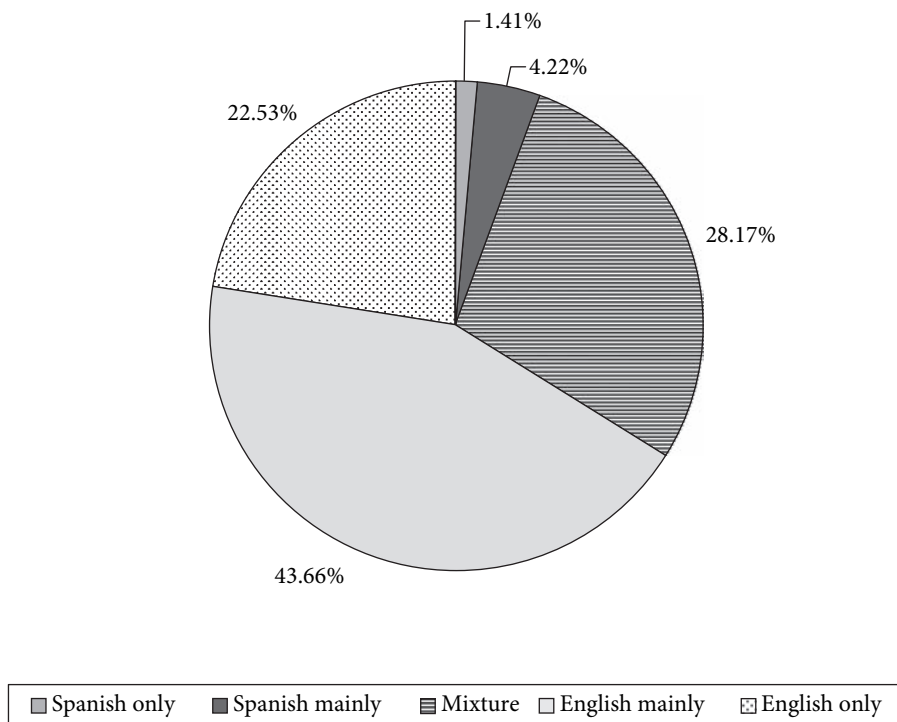


Figure 4.27. TV language preferences ( $n = 71$ ).

The main reasons given for not watching Spanish television were the poor quality of programmes available, the excessively long commercial breaks and the fact that films were always dubbed. The Spanish programmes most watched were reality shows such as *Gran Hermano* and *Operación Triunfo*, and, particularly in the case of boys, football matches. Spanish football has a strong following in Gibraltar and teams such as Real Madrid or Barcelona are as popular as English teams such as Manchester United, Liverpool or Arsenal, if not more so.

Figures suggest that teenagers watch more Spanish television than the younger age group ( $p = 0.1$ ). Whereas only 7.58% of pre-adolescents claimed to watch a certain amount of Spanish TV, the percentages for adolescents were somewhat higher (25%). A partial explanation for this divergence is that several teenagers preparing for GCSE Spanish exams said they watched Spanish news programmes in order to build up vocabulary. Others claimed to only watch Spanish programmes because their parents or grandparents were watching them.<sup>20</sup>

20. In her survey carried out in the early 1990s Kellermann found that the oldest age group (age group I), which included the monolingual Spanish speakers of the pre-WWII generation, as



Neither sex nor class variables had a significant influence on the television viewing habits of the young Gibraltar population. Percentages did vary significantly, however, from one ethnic community to another ( $p = 0.039$ ). Indians (100%) and Jews (90.90%) were the communities who watched most English television. Amongst the GibM, adolescents watched considerably more Spanish television than pre-adolescents (see Figure 4.28).

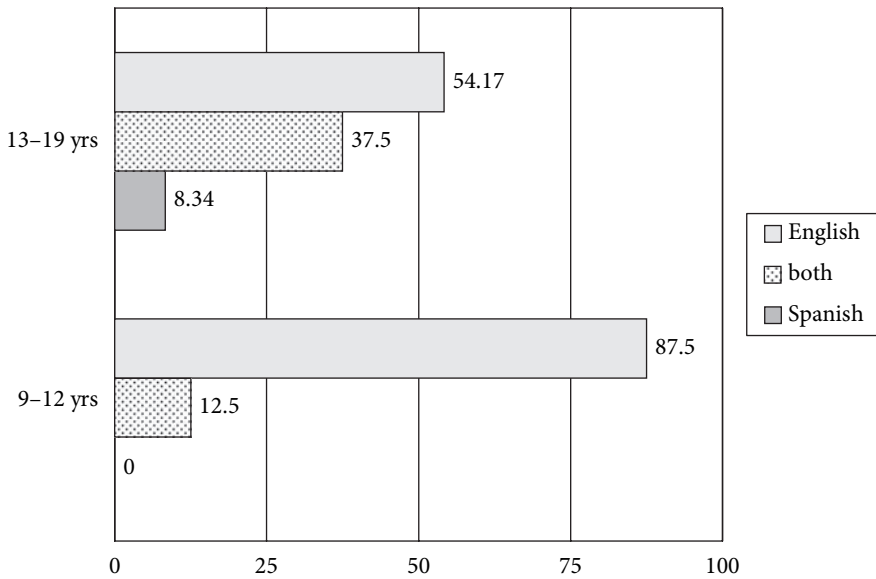


Figure 4.28. TV language preferences in the GibM by age ( $n = 48$ ).

Besides TV, the fact that English language programmes and films are now easily available on DVD from shops and on the Internet has undoubtedly contributed to the increase in English language consumption in Gibraltar. However, their possible direct influence on the local pronunciation, which will be discussed in the following chapters, is harder to gauge. Gibraltarians today are not only exposed to one type of English accent through these media, but rather a wide range of them from all over the world.<sup>21</sup>

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was to be expected, regularly watched Spanish television. However, she found that the youngest generation (Age group III) watched slightly more Spanish television than their parents' generation (Age group II); although in both cases English TV was preferred. According to Kellermann, these figures "confirm the strong anti-Spanish stance of Age Group II, a stance which is easing off slightly among younger members of Age Group III" (2001: 227).

21. Radio as a possible source of language input was investigated, but findings were unrevealing as this form of entertainment and information was not generally favoured by the informants. In addition, language choice was conditioned by the fact that the vast majority of stations that can

#### 4.2.4.7 Contact with the UK

Language in Gibraltar is largely influenced by two very different external linguistic forces: Andalusian Spanish on one side and British English on the other. While all informants had been born or had lived all their lives in Gibraltar, one of the research aims was to gauge the extent to which contact with the UK on the one hand, and Spain on the other, affect language behaviour in Gibraltar.

While it seems probable that frequent visits to the UK (with the language contact it supposes) will affect English language competence and potentially influence language choice in Gibraltar, this proved difficult to demonstrate in real time. Statistical analysis did serve, however, to corroborate the correlation between class and ethnicity and language behaviour in Gibraltar. As was expected, contact with the UK was greater amongst the higher classes (see Figure 4.29) whose parents are presumably better able to afford trips abroad.<sup>22</sup>

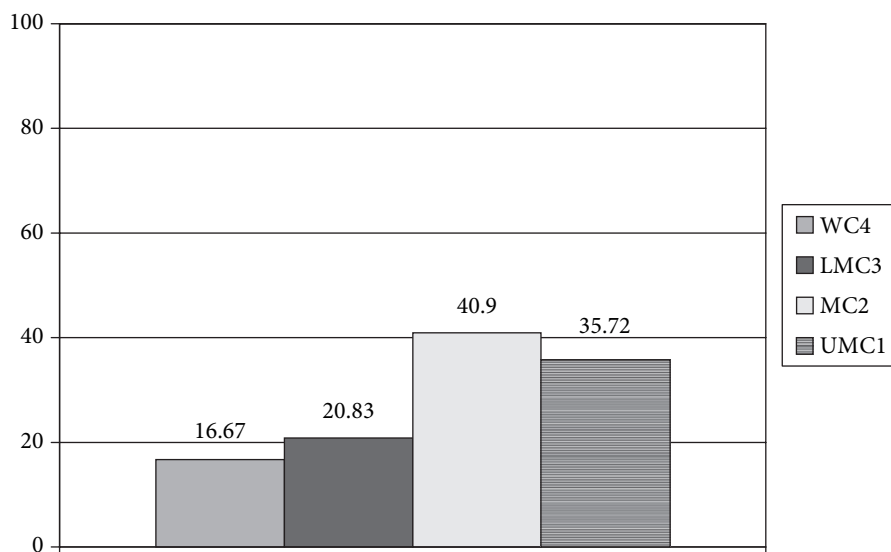


Figure 4.29. Frequent contact with UK by class.

be picked up in Gibraltar are Spanish-speaking. This may at least partly explain why Fernández Martín (2003: 183) found that Yanitos prefer to listen to the radio in Spanish but watch television in English. In this study, those informants who did tune in to the radio mainly listened to music stations such as *Los 40 Principales* where the spoken language was of secondary importance.

22. In response to the question: *How many times have you visited the UK? How long did you stay?*, informant responses were classified in 4 categories: 1. Never. 2. Seldom/occasionally (1–3 visits/maximum total of 6 weeks). 3. Frequently (4–6 visits/maximum total of 7–12 weeks) 4. Regularly (7+ visits/12 weeks+). Figure 29 and Figure 30 represent the findings for categories 3 and 4 combined.

UK contact varied considerably from one ethnic community to another ( $p = 0.069$ ). Indians had most contact with the UK, with 5 out of the 6 informants visiting Britain frequently, while Moroccans had the least contact. Amongst the two most established communities in Gibraltar, Jews had twice as much frequent contact with the UK as the GibM did (see Figure 4.30).

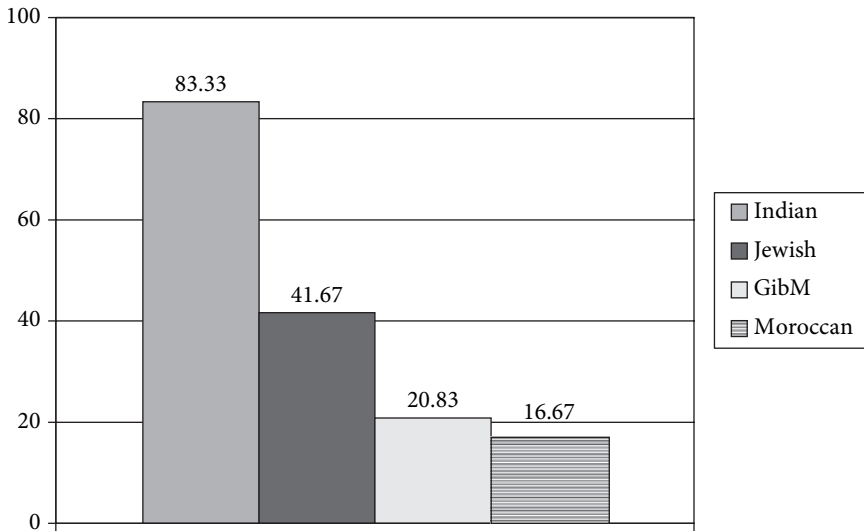


Figure 4.30. Frequent contact with UK by ethnic groups.

#### 4.2.4.8 Contact with Spain

While UK contact may potentially contribute to English language shift, it was initially contended that contact with Spain would be a contributory factor in Spanish language maintenance amongst certain sectors of the Gibraltarian speech community. This contention, could not, however, be demonstrated. What emerged from interviews was that, considering its proximity, contact with Spain proved surprisingly limited all round.

Although more than a quarter of a century has passed since the opening of the border, the re-establishment of a fluid cross-border linguistic relationship may be a slow process, especially when undercurrents of hostility or mistrust are present. The local population, in some cases, may avoid relationships with Spaniards as they feel that the mention of Gibraltar invariably leads to conversations of a political nature where postures have to be defended and entrenched stances ultimately hinder relationship development.

Interviews revealed that most informants rarely crossed the border for long periods (see Figure 4.31), and contact with Spain was largely restricted to day

trips. The motives most commonly given for visits were practical or leisure orientated (e.g., shopping, a day on the beach, Sunday lunch). School trips, camping and family weekend breaks were also cited amongst the reasons for crossing into Spain. Very few informants, however, claimed to have Spanish friends and most trips involved limited or no extended linguistic exchange or inter-community contact.

Given the problems of space and high house prices on the Rock, property ownership in Spain is an attractive proposition. Although some of the informants' families, particularly middle-class ones, have second homes in Spain for holiday or weekend use, this did not necessarily imply integration or local Spanish language contact.<sup>23</sup> There was a smaller group of Gibraltarians who preserve closer Spanish family contacts or own an inherited family home in Spain. Numbers, however, did not prove significant, nor could any correlation with language change or maintenance be proved.

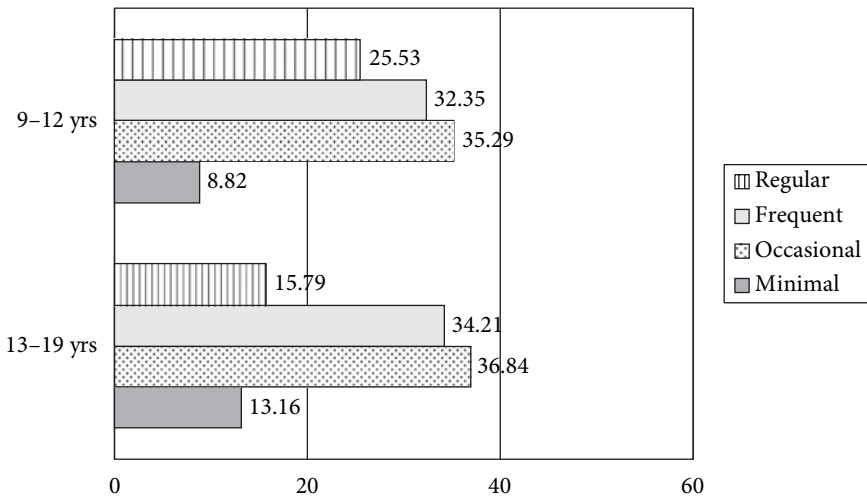


Figure 4.31. Degree of contact with Spain by age.

Although  $p > 0.1$ , it was noted that frequent contact with Spain appears to diminish as the child gets older. This is explained by the fact that whereas the young child may accompany parents on regular family outings to Spain, the more autonomous teenager, when freed from family obligations, tends to stay within the

23. Fernández Martín (2003: 184) found that 49.1% of her interviewees went to Spain at least once a week with a further 40.6% going monthly.

confines of Gibraltar where his/her social life is centred.<sup>24</sup> Although dissociative attitudes were largely absent, many adolescents did not feel a particular need or motivation to cross the frontier, except for practical shopping trips or to spend the day on a Spanish beach. The reasons most commonly given for not going to Spain are summarised below.

1. *Changing money is a hassle*

Different monetary systems mean that a certain degree of prior planning is necessary before crossing the border. As Sterling has to be exchanged for Euros, spontaneous decisions to spend an evening in Spain can be difficult as some group members may not have the local currency and banks and bureau de changes are closed at that time.

2. *The queues at the frontier are a pain*

Although foot access to La Linea does not involve queuing, it was generally felt that when going to Spain a car allowed greater freedom of movement. The fact that at peak times it can take more than an hour to leave or enter Gibraltar by car was cited as a prime reason for staying on the Rock where everything is in easy walking distance.

3. *My parents don't let me*

Gibraltar is considered to be a relatively safe place to walk at night and parents tend to allow their children more freedom if they know they are out on the Rock. However, they tend to be more restrictive of their children's movements if they are going to Spain, particularly at night. Certain coastal areas, particularly La Linea and Algeciras, are thought to be dangerous with a high degree of delinquency and drug-related crime.

4. *Films in Spanish cinemas are all dubbed*

Many teenagers stated that they would cross the border more often to go to the cinema in Spain if the films were not dubbed. Given these circumstances, many informants preferred to wait to see films on video or DVD unless the film was of particular immediate interest.

5. *All my friends are here. I don't have friends in Spain*

Practically none of the adolescent informants had friends on the other side of the border. This was not due to any overt rejection of Spaniards, but simply because paths did not cross.

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24. Informant m49 (aged 16) is fairly typical of this tendency. Although his parents continue going to Spain regularly, having gained a degree of independence, he no longer accompanies them. He now seldom crosses the border, preferring to stay on the Rock at weekends.

6. *Why? We have everything we need here*

There was no particular reason to cross the frontier since adolescents felt that they could find everything they wanted in Gibraltar. None of the interviewees expressed any feelings of claustrophobia which one might have expected when living in an area of less than 6km<sup>2</sup>.

### 4.3 Summary and conclusions

The overall findings of the study suggest that English is gaining ground on both Spanish and Yanito as the preferred form of expression in Gibraltar, with young Gibraltarians proving more comfortable and fluent speaking English than their forefathers did. The root and origin of change appears to lie in the home domain where increasing numbers of children are being brought up in an English-speaking environment. Although, to some extent, this can be seen as the continuation of a gradual historical shift, there appear to be political and sociological reasons for the acceleration of this change in recent years.

The closing of the border between 1969 and 1982 created a generation of Gibraltarians who were cut off from the Spanish hinterland. Partly out of necessity, and partly as a declaration of allegiance, this generation began to use English more in their daily lives, and many *learnt* to become fluent English speakers. However, it is in the generation which followed, the focus of this study, that English language consolidation is beginning to take place.

Clear differences were found between the language habits of middle school pre-adolescents (aged 9–12) and secondary school adolescents (aged 13–19), with the former considerably more likely to use English than the latter. This would seem to imply that language direction of the community is actually in the process of change. However, it is possible that this does not reflect a real permanent change, but is the consequence of parents and schools exerting short-term pressure on younger children, encouraging the use of English against natural language tendencies. Later, once a degree of competence has been reached, rules may be relaxed. At the same time, as the teenager asserts his/her independence and begins to follow peer-based speech models (Wolfram 1969; Macaulay 1977; Eckert 1988, 1997, 2000; Kerswill 1996a; Kerswill & Williams 2000), a reversal in language preference may take place.

Both readings can be used to explain the fact that in several cases different languages coexisted within the same nuclear family. Amongst siblings, it was not unusual to find Yanito spoken with elder brothers or sisters and English with younger ones. An instilled sense of responsibility was noted on the part of many youngsters to educate the younger generation to speak correct English. Although at present Yanito is the most widespread means of communication amongst adolescents, it is

not inconceivable that English will become the peer-based speech model in future generations.

Language use was, for the most part, socially stratified, with the upper middle class children (UMC1) and middle class children (MC2) generally favouring English, whereas those from lower class backgrounds preferred Spanish forms. Class identity *per se*, however, does not appear to be a strong enough factor to explain language variation in Gibraltar. Class in Gibraltar is fundamentally a question of education. The fact that a far higher percentage of UMC1 and MC2 parents than LMC3 and WC4 parents had gone on to further studies at British universities appears to be the crucial factor. Rather than being a statement of status, the stratification patterns which emerged appear to be essentially a reflection of the education received by parents and their own language capacity to implant and maintain the use of English at home. The socioeconomic factor of being able to afford travel outside the Iberian Peninsula is also important.

In many instances, ethnicity and class variables merged. This was particularly so in the predominantly middle and upper middle class Jewish and Indian communities, and in the predominantly working class Moroccan community. However, studying the more varied GibM community in isolation, similar class based patterns emerged although inter-class variation was less marked than in the Gibraltarian speech community as a whole.

While language behaviour may be partly conditioned by social class, more importantly, the speaker's language orientation seems to be channelled and strengthened through social networks. Those running along ethnic lines seem particularly influential. Although a high degree of integration exists, partially due to differences in religious and cultural make-up as well as education, the language choice patterns of Jews, Indians and Moroccans vary from that of the GibM. The fact that these ethnic groups have wider contacts outside the Gibraltarian speech community is clearly an important factor.

English language preference was most evident amongst Jewish and Indian informants. The figures for the Moroccan community, the least integrated of the four communities studied, were inconclusive; in many cases, low linguistic competence in English as well as Spanish was an important factor. While the highest levels of Spanish language maintenance were found in the autochthonous majority (GibM), it was notable that the generational shift towards English was also most marked in this community. Whilst English language preference and competence tends to be already firmly established in Jewish and Indian households, the younger GibM speakers appear to be speaking considerably more English than their parents do.

Although gender variation was not always strongly marked in Gibraltar, boys generally proved more likely to adopt English forms than girls. This, on the one

hand, could be seen to be in keeping with many variation studies which suggest that girls are slower to innovate and change than boys. However, on the other hand, given that English is generally considered to be the most prestigious language, this would seem to contradict traditional gender variation theories which suggest that females, due to social insecurity, tend to adopt prestige forms and strive to 'speak better' (see, for example, Trudgill 1972, 1974a, 1983; Lakoff 1973; Chambers & Trudgill 1980; Labov 1990), while avoiding non-prestige language which might prompt negative judgements (Gordon 1997: 48). The explanation for this apparent contradiction may lie in the high degree of language tolerance that reigns in the speech community and the special relationship it has with Yanito which, although not enjoying prestige status, is not overtly stigmatised either. Affection for this uniquely Gibraltarian speech form is a contributory cause of language maintenance in certain circles and helps explain why the active use of English in social contexts has been hitherto limited.

The possibility that language behaviour was channelled through school networks was contemplated. Although an analysis of the individual schools revealed that the use of English was 50% higher amongst school friends at St Joseph's middle school than at Sacred Heart middle school, the school network hypothesis is complicated by other overlapping factors and variables. The higher ISL figures coincide with the fact that the former falls into a better catchment area and, extra-officially, has a better academic reputation than the latter. Thus, class and education considerations inevitably come into play. Similarly the fact that by far the highest English ISL figures (85%) were found in the Hebrew School is inseparable from the fact that all the informants were Jewish, and thus, in turn, the figures are subject to ethnicity and class variables.

It was initially suspected that the degree of contact with the Spanish hinterland would be an important factor contributing to language maintenance amongst young informants. This, however, could not be demonstrated. What emerged was that most 9–19 year olds, considering its proximity, had surprisingly little contact with Spain. Visits were mainly confined to shopping trips, day excursions or short holidays which involved limited Spanish language exchanges.

After the opening of the border in 1982, the re-establishment of cross-border relations was not without its problems, despite efforts from organizations on both sides of the border. A period of thirteen years of isolation is not easily forgotten, and although more than 25 years have passed since then, mistrust and resentment linger, although it should be noted that grievances are generally held against Spanish governments and institutions rather than the Spanish themselves.

Although dissociative attitudes towards Spain were rarely overtly expressed, only a very small minority of informants had friendships or contact with Spanish speakers outside Gibraltar. Whereas previous generations had regular contact



with family and friends in La Linea and the neighbouring towns and villages, this is becoming less and less so. In addition to the fact that older family members are dying out, the high rate of unemployment in the area has meant that many family ties have moved away to look for work in other regions of Spain.

Diminishing contact with Spain could partially explain the apparent decline in Spanish language standards as revealed in this present study and attested to by several teachers and educators. The concerns voiced in many circles are that, rather than producing a logical bilingual environment where both languages cohabit, the use of English appears to be spreading at the expense of Spanish.

The next two chapters investigate whether, and if so how, this self-reported shift in language preference and competence is reflected phonetically. Previous research has shown that Andalusian Spanish transfer is noticeable in the English spoken in Gibraltar. The broad objective is therefore to see whether this is still the case, or whether a move towards British English pronunciation is taking place.

# Gibraltarian English

## Vowels and diphthongs

### 5.1 Gibraltarian vowel system

Although very little phonetic research has been carried out in Gibraltar to date, it was fortunate that three well-founded studies were undertaken some fifteen years ago. The fieldwork carried out by Enriles (1992), Kellermann (2001) and Cal Varela (2001) serves as valuable diachronic points of reference against which possible phonetic change can be measured. Each of the aforementioned studies provides different, yet complementary, information.<sup>1</sup>

Enriles' unpublished study is based on phonetic findings of a homogeneous sample of six 17 year-old pupils. Using auditory analysis and aided by his *insider* knowledge as a local Gibraltarian, Enriles plots, with considerable accuracy, the typical vowel realisations of "educated" Gibraltarians, i.e., "those whose occupation is of a professional nature or who are undergoing further or higher education" (1992: 11). This pronunciation model is, however, by Enriles' own admission, representative of only a certain section of Gibraltarian society rather than the speech community as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

Kellermann (2001), using Enriles' findings as a base, conducts further phonetic research using instrumental analysis. Once again the sample is small (six adults), however, the fact that the age of the informants studied cover a range of five decades offers a valuable diachronic overview of possible language change. Kellermann ambitiously tackles, not only vowel and consonant features, but also offers a general view of suprasegmental aspects of Gibraltarian speech.

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1. A token sample of six parents with ages ranging from 33 to 54 completed the same tests as the main sample. The sample was considered too small to be used for empiric research, but served to confirm and contrast some of the previous research findings. These recordings also served to verify their children's affirmations regarding HL, PL, GL and BEST. In addition, old recordings and videos such as *Evacuation: cause and effect (an account of wartime displacement of the people of Gibraltar)* provided an invaluable source of phonetic information for *Generation 1 speakers*.

2. I am very grateful to John Enriles for providing me with a copy of his dissertation.

Cal Varela (2001) studies a larger sample of the Gibraltar population (34 adults) which enables him to adopt a quantitative approach in his sociolinguistic analysis of three phonetic variables (/i/ /i:/ merger, aspiration of fortis plosives /p, t, k/ and possible loss of final /t/ and /d/). Cal Varela uses instrumental analysis and statistical scrutiny in order to show the extent to which Spanish transfer is conditioned by the social variables: age, occupation, level of studies, social network and family background.

In the following two chapters, new sociophonetic findings are presented based on an analysis of 72 local informants aged 9–19 years. This chapter discusses Gibraltarian vowels and diphthongs,<sup>3</sup> while chapter 6 will focus on the Gibraltarian consonant system. In both cases, special attention is given to those features where Spanish transfer may be present.

As well as establishing a complete phonetic inventory of modern GibE, in complementary terms, this study seeks to gauge the level of divergence/convergence from/towards Spanish/English pronunciation models, and to assess to what extent language behaviour is conditioned by age, sex, social class, school and ethnic background.

For reference purposes, vowels are presented using the key word system established by Wells (1982) and extended by Foulkes & Docherty (1999) (see page 50). The summary of the findings for GibE vowels is given in Table 5.1 below. This is followed by a more detailed analysis of phonological and phonetic features relevant to this particular study.

**Table 5.1** Gibraltarian English (GibE) vowel summary

KIT	ĩ ~ ɪ ~ ɪ̃ ~ ɨ̃	FLEECE	ɨ̃ ~ i > ɨ̃-	NEAR	iä ~ iɐ ~ iə > iə
DRESS	e ~ ɛ > ɛ̃ ~ ɛ̄	FACE	eɪ ~ ɛɪ	SQUARE	eɐ ~ eä > ɛə > ɛ̄
TRAP	æ ~ æ̃ ~ a ~ ä	PALM	ɑ > ä	START	ɑ > ä
LOT	ɔ̃ ~ ɔ̄ > ö̃	THOUGHT	ɔ̃ ~ ɔ̄ ~ ɔ̄+	NORTH	ɔ̃ ~ ɔ̄ ~ ɔ̄+
STRUT	ä̃ ~ ǟ ~ ʌ	GOAT	ɔ̄ɥ > əɥ > ɔ	FORCE	ɔ̃ ~ ɔ̄ ~ ɔ̄+
FOOT	ʊ+ ~ ʊ > ʊ̄	GOAL	ɔ̄ɥ > əɥ > ɔ	CURE	ʊɐ > ʊə > ɔ
BATH	ɑ > ä	GOOSE	ʊ ~ ʊ+ > ʊ̄+	happY	ɨ̃ ~ i
CLOTH	ɔ̃ ~ ɔ̄ > ö̃	PRICE	æɪ̄- ~ æĩ̄ ~ äɪ	lettER	ɐ ~ ə ~ a ~ ɛ̄
NURSE	ɛ̄ ~ ɛ̄- ~ ɜ̄ ~ ə̄	CHOICE	ɔ̄ɪ̄- ~ ɔ̄ɪ̄- ~ ɔ̄ɪ̄-	horsEs	ɨ̃ ~ i ~ e > ə̄
		MOUTH	ǟɥ̄ ~ ǟɥ̄ ~ ǟɥ̄	commA	ɐ ~ ə ~ a

3. Acoustic analysis is based, in each case, on the average formant readings of a minimum of five vowels realised by each of the 72 informants and subsequently verified using auditory techniques.

### 5.1.1 KIT/FLEECE

The distinction between KIT and FLEECE vowels is notoriously problematic for Spanish speakers of English; and the difference between minimal pairs such as ‘chip’/‘cheap’ or ‘bit’/‘beat’ may be particularly difficult to perceive.<sup>4</sup> Whereas most English accents and variants have two distinct vowels in the close front region (/ɪ/ and /i:/), which are distinguished by quality as well as length, Standard Castilian (StCast) has only one (/i/).<sup>5</sup> The StCast vowel is qualitatively closer to British English (BrE) /i:/, but in terms of vowel length it is a short vowel although audibly longer than English /ɪ/. Attempts by Hispanophones to differentiate between the two BrE vowels may involve stretching or shortening the same vowel (Levey 1999: 217–8).

Various studies dealing with language acquisition in bilingual English/Spanish communities in America have stressed the particular difficulties posed by this phonemic opposition (see Sawyer 1973; Amastae 1978, 1981). In Gibraltar, there are also several references to a KIT/FLEECE merger in both academic and popular literature. Transfer from Spanish is suggested by the orthography found in Cavilla’s (1990) and Vallejo’s (2001) respective Yanito dictionaries; English borrowings containing the FLEECE vowel tend to be spelt with a single ⟨i⟩ (e.g., *tisha*, ‘teacher’; *sepli*, ‘say please’; *tipa*, ‘teapot’; *liv*, ‘leave’; *pisup*, ‘pea soup’; *salti pina*, ‘salted peanuts’), *combi(f)* (‘corned beef’), *scrin* (‘screen’).

In 1937, Humphrey Bowman’s “Report on the State-Aided Elementary Schools of Gibraltar” noted that “the long vowel sounds ā, ō, ī and their corresponding diphthongs” were in need of correction (cited in Kellermann 2001: 323). Subsequent literature (West 1956: 153; Ballantine 1983: 49) has commented on the tendency to shorten the FLEECE vowel and the failure to discriminate between BrE /ɪ/ and /i:/.

Enriles (1992: 20) places the GibE realisation of the KIT vowel “somewhere between R.P. /i:/ and /ɪ/”, classifying it as a lowered and more retracted Cardinal Vowel (CV) 1 [ɪ̠], apparently identical in quality to the GibE FLEECE vowel. This leads him to conclude that “there is usually no quality distinction between the two.

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4. Standard Spanish has five short vowels /i, e, a, o, u/ which correspond to the five orthographic vowels, forming an inverted pyramid with two close vowels, two mid vowels and one open vowel (Quilis & Fernández 1972: 57–9, Quilis 1993: 151–2, Martínez Celdrán 1984: 300). The fact that the English vowel system is somewhat more complex inevitably causes quantitative and qualitative difficulties for Hispanophones. Average F1 and F2 formant values for the five Spanish vowels for the male voice, according to Martínez Celdrán (1995), are: /i/: F1 313/F2 2200, /e/: F1 457/F2 1926, /a/: F1 699/F2 1471, /o/: F1 495/F2 1075, /u/: F1 349/F2 877.

5. The term Standard Castilian (StCast) is used here to refer to the standard pronunciation model of Spain. The term Andalusian Spanish (AndSp) refers to the accent or dialect spoken in that autonomous region.

[...] vowel duration is probably the main acoustic cue used to distinguish them” (ibid.: 28).

Kellermann (2001: 335) notes considerable FLEECE vowel covariation with short, shortened and long realisations being present amongst her informants.<sup>6</sup> As regards the KIT vowel, the somewhat stereotypical lengthened Spanish realisation was generally found to be absent.<sup>7</sup> Using Kellermann’s fieldwork data, Gilles and Kellermann (1997: 74–7) argue that a shift is beginning to take place away from a Spanish-influenced basilect towards a “New English” variety which distinguishes [ɪ] and [i-].

The most complete study on KIT/FLEECE vowels in Gibraltar has been carried out by Cal Varela (2001) whose study, in general terms, reveals a closer approximation to BrE norms than previous studies had hitherto indicated.<sup>8</sup> He reports that the highest levels of KIT/FLEECE vowel differentiation were found amongst those who had benefited from higher education in Britain, while less-educated and older informants produced realisations closer in quality and length to those of the StCast close front vowel (Cal Varela 2001: 253–256 & 240–247). With respect to community and social network stratification, the small nucleus of speakers from the relatively isolated *Catalan Bay* area revealed the highest degree of Spanish transfer. The homogenous Jewish community was closest to British standard norms (ibid.: 250–253).

The findings of this study broadly coincide with those of Cal Varela. While KIT/FLEECE mergers were still present in the speech of a minority of young Gibraltarians (11.1%), it would appear that for the most part the presence of this phenomenon, which undoubtedly owes much to Spanish transfer, is diminishing considerably. FLEECE and KIT vowels were generally clearly distinguished qualitatively by both sexes and by both age groups, as can be seen from the average F1 and F2 values presented in Table 5.2. In most cases FLEECE and KIT were also clearly differentiated by vowel length. For FLEECE, 58.33% of informants produced a long vowel, 25% a half-long one, with only 16.67% of pre-adolescents and adolescents producing a short vowel.

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6. Kellermann (2001: 332) notes a “decidedly *e*-quality” for FLEECE in some of her informants with realisations ranging from [ɛ] to [e].

7. Kellermann (2001: 337) notes occasional “full length [e:]” for KIT amongst some of her older informants in words such as ‘sittin’, ‘knittin’, ‘British’, ‘live’, ‘this’ and ‘kids’.

8. Cal Varela’s /ɪ/ /i:/ findings are based solely on adult males. The decision not to include women in his study was taken for reasons of sample homogeneity (see Cal Varela 2001: 191).

Table 5.2 Average F1 and F2 formant readings for KIT and FLEECE vowels

	FLEECE		KIT	
	F1	F2	F1	F2
Males (aged 9–12)	373	2836	506	2217
Females (aged 9–12)	409	2859	525	2236
Males (aged 13–19)	365	2544	476	2059
Females (aged 13–19)	400	2501	506	2230

One in four participants produced a long close front vowel /i:/ similar to that of Southern BrE in terms of quality and length. As regards stratification, neither sex nor age variables proved significant, with standard realisations being equally spread between the sexes (males: 25%; females: 25%) and between the two age groups (9–12 year olds: 23.53%; 13–19 year olds: 26.31%). Analysis of the ethnicity variable revealed, however, that compared with the speech community average, standard realisations were almost twice as prevalent amongst the Jewish community.

As regards social class, although  $p > 0.1$ , it would appear that the adoption of standard BrE pronunciation norms becomes increasingly more evident further up the social scale, with UMC1 speakers showing the highest percentages (55.55%); standard BrE /i/ was largely absent from the speech of working-class (WC4) Gibraltarans.

KIT vowel quality varied from close to mid-close and from front to central. Although Spanish-coloured realisations were noted in a small number of informants, the strongest tendency was towards centralised variants such as [i̠] or [i̠̠].

In 8 of 72 informants, however, vowel convergence was considered sufficiently great for minimal pairs such as ‘live’/‘leave’ to be deemed homophonous. Although numbers were not sufficiently great to reach significant conclusions, it was noted that KIT/FLEECE mergers were principally confined to LMC3 and WC4 members of the GibM.<sup>9</sup>

### 5.1.2 FOOT/GOOSE and BULL/TOOL

As StCast has only one close back vowel, Hispanophones tend to produce FOOT and GOOSE vowels identically.<sup>10</sup> This was also traditionally the case in GibE;

9. The 8 cases of KIT/FLEECE mergers were distributed as follows: age: 5 pre-adolescents/3 adolescents; sex: 4 boys/4 girls; ethnicity: 7 GibM:/1 Jewish; class: 2 UMC1/0 MC2/2 LMC3/4 WC4.

10. While FOOT and GOOSE vowels are usually distinguished in England, vowel mergers are common in Scotland (Macaulay & Trevelyan 1973; Wells 1982: 401–2; Stuart-Smith 1999: 206–7).

Enriles (1992: 26 & 30) assigns the same phonetic annotation to both vowels: [ɥ+] and homophonous realisations of BrE minimal pairs ‘pull’/‘pool’ are noted.<sup>11</sup>

### FOOT/GOOSE

Although a certain degree of vowel overlap was recorded in some informants, FOOT was generally more open than GOOSE. While F1 values for GOOSE often coincided with StCast /u/, F1 readings for FOOT suggested a more mid-close [ɥ+]. FOOT/GOOSE vowel mergers were evident in 13 of the 72 informants (both vowels being produced as [ɥ+] or [ɥ+]), but in 6 of these cases the vowels were clearly distinguished by vowel length. Complete FOOT/GOOSE vowel mergers (quality and quantity) were therefore present in 7 cases (9.72%).<sup>12</sup> Largely due to the low percentages, the correlation between FOOT/GOOSE merger and the social variables could not be confirmed statistically (in all cases  $p > 0.1$ ). However, clear tendencies emerged which are worth noting.

The Merger was found to be more common amongst the older age group, and amongst girls. It was almost exclusively confined to the GibM (20.83% of informants) and the Moroccan community (33.33%). In the case of the former, bearing in mind that realisations tended to be close to the StCast /u/, it seems likely that Spanish transfer is in operation. In the case of the latter, influence from Moroccan Arabic may be a factor.<sup>13</sup>

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LOT/THOUGHT and TRAP/BATH vowels also tend to be neutralized, although Scottish vowels may vary in length depending on phonetic environment. For “Scottish Vowel Length Rule” or “Aitkin’s Law”, see Aitkin 1981; Wells 1982: 400; Scobbie et al. 1999: 323–3.

11. In Cavilla (1990) the English word ‘cruise’ is given as *crus*, suggesting a short vowel realisation in the Yanito vernacular.

12. The seven cases of complete FOOT/GOOSE vowel mergers were distributed in the following way: age: 2 pre-adolescents/5 adolescents; sex: 1 boy/6 girls; ethnicity: 6 GibM/1 Moroccan; class: 1 MC2/3 LMC3/3 WC4.

13. The Moroccan Arabic vowel system is based on three long vowels [a, i, u] and two short vowels [ə, u]. The short back close vowel is similar in quality to Spanish [u] except in pharyngealised, velarised, glottal or uvular environments where a more open allophonic variant [u] ensues. The long back vowel is of similar quality and has the same corresponding environment-dependent allophonic variants (Moscoso 2004: 37 & 41–2). Although in Southern Morocco (e.g., Casablanca and Rabat) long and short close back vowels may be differentiated by length, and this is also the case amongst the Muslim community in Ceuta (Vicente 2005: 108), length opposition does not usually occur in the northern and Jebli dialects of Tangiers and Chauen (Heath 2002: 189).

Class interacted closely with ethnicity, revealing familiar stratification patterns. Whereas 92.86% of UMC1 clearly distinguished FOOT and GOOSE vowels, the merger was present in 41.67% of working-class informants. Only one case of vowel merging was found in the Indian community; no cases were noted in Jewish informants, many of whom tended to adopt more centralised realisations which are increasingly common in modern BrE (see Cruttenden 1994: 113).

The absence of a long close back vowel in traditional GibE has been noted in previous literature (Enriles 1992: 30; Errico 1997: 141; Kellermann 2001: 362). The present findings suggest, however, that the situation is changing; 81.95% of informants produced long vowels in medial positions. When short or half-long realisations did occur, they were most evident before fortis plosives (e.g., 'suit', 'soup') and before lateral /l/ (e.g., 'pool', 'tool').<sup>14</sup>

### *BULL/TOOL*

The merging of BULL and TOOL, implying the homophonous realisation of minimal pairs such as 'pull/pool' and 'full'/'fool', occurred in 18.05% of informants.

The correlation between back vowel mergers and the social variables, which the previous analysis of FOOT/GOOSE had hinted at, was confirmed when BULL and TOOL were examined. The merger was again more evident amongst adolescents than pre-adolescents (23.68%/11.76%), and more marked amongst girls than boys (22.22%/13.89%); ethnicity and class, however, proved once more to be the strongest variables.

Whereas the two vowels were distinguished by all Jewish and Indian informants and by five of the six Moroccan informants, complete mergers (both quality and quantity) occurred in 25% of the GibM informants ( $p = 0.119$ ). This occurred almost exclusively in the lower classes ( $p = 0.006$ ), with all UMC1 informants and more than 90% of MC2 informants distinguishing BULL/TOOL by quality as well as length (see Figure 5.1).

It should be noted, however, that amongst pre-adolescents, the BULL/TOOL vowel merger was confined exclusively to Sacred Heart Middle School ( $p = 0.007$ ) (see Figure 5.2). The fact that this middle school is the least prestigious of the three studied would seem to strengthen the argument that the employment of the Spanish short vowel is, partly at least, linked to social class and education. An analysis of secondary school stratification is complicated by the fact that the two schools are single sex and thus sex and school variables coincide.

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14. 19.44% of informants pronounced TOOL with a short vowel, whereas GOOSE was short in 12.5% of the same cases.



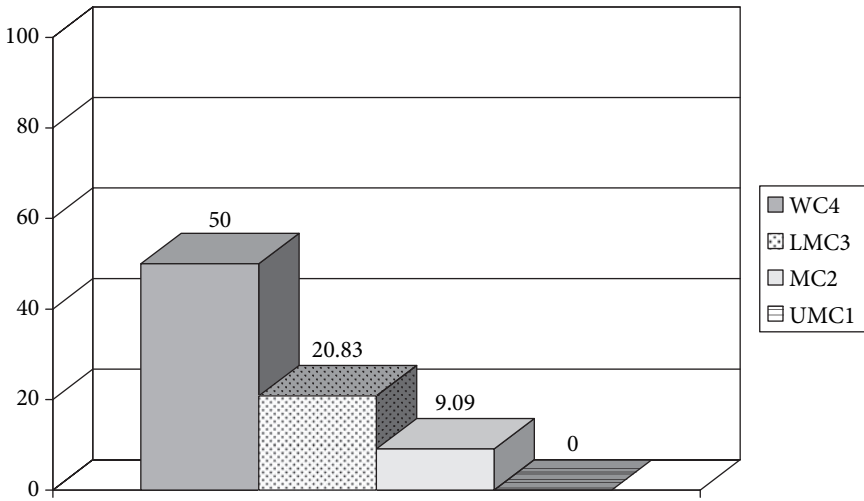


Figure 5.1 Percentages for BULL/TOOL merger by class.

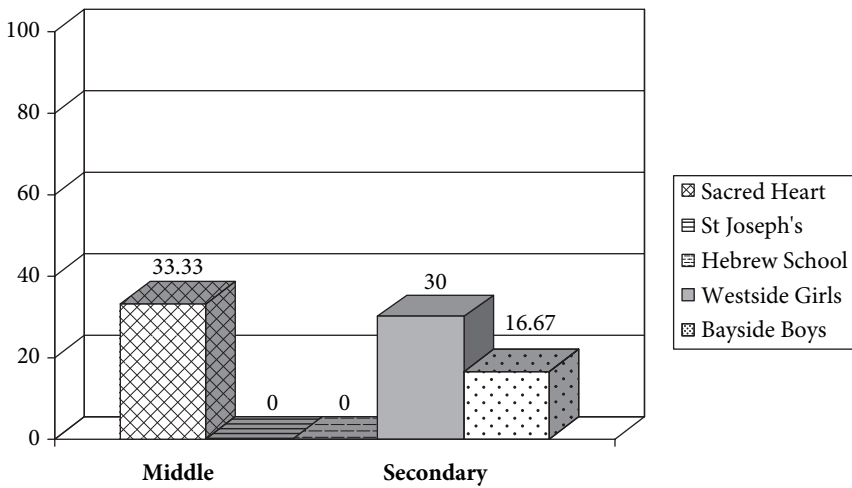


Figure 5.2 Percentages for BULL/TOOL merger by school.

### 5.1.3 DRESS

Both StCast and BrE have a short vowel between half-close and half-open, usually transcribed /e/. They are fairly similar although, as Sánchez Benedito (1995: 24) notes, in final positions, StCast /e/ tends to have a somewhat more open quality. Quilis and Fernández (1972: 38), following Navarro Tomás (1950), also note a more open allophonic realisation when adjacent to [r] e.g., *perro* [ˈpɛro] ('dog'), *reto* [ˈɾɛto] ('challenge'), and before velar fricative [x] e.g., *queja* [ˈkɛxa] ('complaint').

DRESS realisations in Gibraltar ranged between close-mid CV2 [e] and open-mid CV3 [ɛ], although incidences of slightly raised [e̞] and lowered [ɛ̞] were also noted. F1 and F2 values were generally in line with BrE norms, with slightly retracted variants [e̠] and [ɛ̠] commonly employed, although centralised [ɛ̠] was also noted.

#### 5.1.4 LOT/THOUGHT merger

The fact that StCast has only one vowel corresponding to the letter ⟨o⟩ often leads to LOT/THOUGHT vowel mergers in Spanish speakers of English; minimal pairs such as ‘cot’/‘caught’ or ‘cock’/‘cork’ are often not contrasted with short [o] often being used in both cases (Levey 1999: 221). StCast short /o/<sup>15</sup> and BrE /ɔ:/ are both between half-open and half-close vowels. However, besides being a long vowel, the BrE phoneme is more back and realised with a greater degree of lip rounding. The short English /ɒ/ is an open vowel.

The LOT vowel in Gibraltar ranged from half-open to open.<sup>16</sup> Although often realised as the lowered CV6 [ɔ̞] noted by Enriles (1992: 23), similar in quality to the corresponding StCast ⟨o⟩, more open BrE-type vowels (advanced [ɔ̞] or centralised [ö]) appear to be increasingly favoured by younger speakers.

Enriles (1992: 29) found the THOUGHT vowel in Gibraltar to be similar in quality to the LOT vowel, and in broader accents, where long vowels are absent, words such as ‘port’ and ‘pot’ tend to be homophonous. The present study findings revealed, however, that THOUGHT was produced as a long vowel by 72.22% of informants, with percentages slightly higher (79.17%) in ⟨or⟩ lexical sets (e.g., ‘north’, ‘horses’). Traditional short realisations, which are also implied by Cavilla’s (1990) orthography (e.g., *combif*, ‘corned beef’; *chok*, ‘chalk’), would therefore seem to be becoming less common.

While neither the age nor the sex of the informant had a significant bearing on the length of vowel produced, ethnolinguistic variation and social stratification were noted. Whereas all Indian informants produced a long THOUGHT vowel, and it was the overwhelming norm within the Jewish community, the percentages for the GibM were considerably lower (68.75%). The consistent use of short vowels by two of the Moroccan informants may be partly explained by the fact that neither classical Arabic nor the Moroccan dialects have a vowel of the type /ɔ:/.<sup>17</sup>

15. A lowered StCast allophonic variant occurs in [r] environments (e.g., *porra* [ˈpɔ̞rɔ]; *truncheon*; *ropa* [ˈrɔ̞pɔ], ‘clothes’) and before [x] (e.g., *hoja* [ˈhɔ̞xɔ], ‘leaf’).

16. No variation was noted between CLOTH and LOT vowels. As expected, no incidences of the somewhat old-fashioned [ɔ:] type CLOTH realisations, which are (stereo) typical of conservative RP, were present amongst young Gibraltarians.

17. For the phonology of Moroccan Arabic and its dialects see Heath 2002: 188–92; Moscoso García 2003a: 19–30, 2003b: 27–59, 2004: 33–71, 2005: 81–4, 2006: 185–92.

As indicated in Table 5.3, it was the lower classes who, once again, revealed the highest use of short and shortened vowels ( $p = 0.03$ ).

**Table 5.3** Distribution of THOUGHT vowel length by class

	LONG [ɔ]	HALF-SHORT [ɔ̃]	SHORT
Upper Class (UMC1)	92.86%	0%	7.14%
Middle Class (MC2)	86.36%	0%	13.64%
Lower Middle Class (LMC3)	54.17%	12.50%	33.33%
Working Class (WC4)	58.33%	0%	41.67%

As far as vowel quality was concerned, although the raised [ɔ̃] that Enriles appears to note for educated Gibraltarians<sup>18</sup> was employed by some informants, open-mid to open variants [ɔ] and [ɔ̃] and advanced [ɔ̃] and [ɔ̃+] proved more common. Open [ɔ] and advanced [ɔ̃] were also present in 16.67% of cases, thereby giving rise to possible LOT/THOUGHT vowels merger.

My own observations and analysis of adult speakers suggests that vowel mergers are clearly evident in *Generation 1* and *Generation 2* speakers; short THOUGHT vowels were particularly noticeable in lexical sets where ⟨r⟩ was absent (e.g., ‘thought’, ‘taught’, ‘caught’), making mergers more likely in lexical sets ‘cot’/‘caught’ than in ‘pot/port’. Amongst young Gibraltarians, however, the situation seems to be changing, and although overlap still exists, two distinct vowel realisations appear to be emerging. Overall, vowel quality and length mergers were present in 20.83% of informants, however statistical analysis of the age variable suggests that a clear shift away from Spanish-coloured realisations is in progress. Percentage findings showed that levels of LOT/THOUGHT mergers were significantly lower in pre-adolescents (11.76%) than adolescents (28.94%) ( $p = 0.073$ ).

As was the case with KIT/FLEECE and FOOT/GOOSE, statistical analysis revealed that the LOT/THOUGHT vowel merger was socially stratified ( $p = 0.055$ ), with Spanish transfer most notable amongst the lower classes (see Figure 5.3).

18. There seems to be an element of confusion as to Enriles’ intended phonetic annotation. Although he transcribes the THOUGHT vowel as [ɔ̃] which would correspond to a raised open-mid back vowel, this would appear to contradict his statement that the realisation is “nearer to that of the LOT, CLOTH vowel” which would suggest a lowered rather than a raised [ɔ̃].

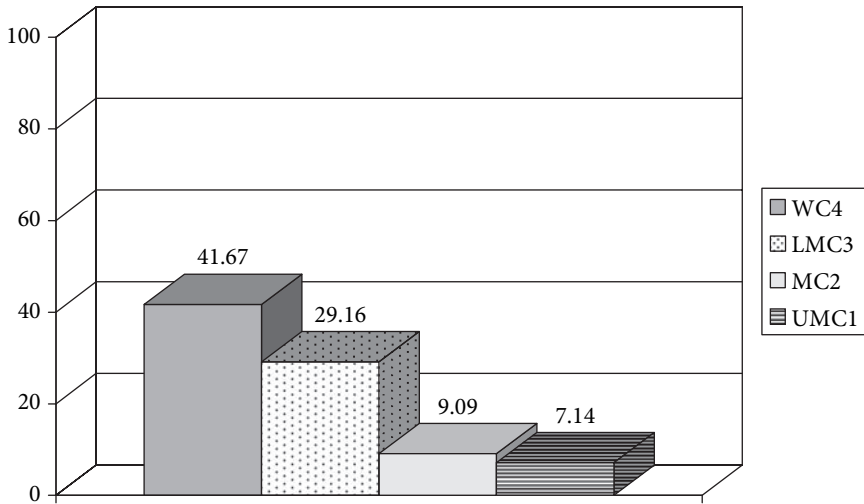


Figure 5.3 Percentages for LOT/THOUGHT merger by class.

Ethnolinguistic variation was also evident ( $p = 0.006$ ), with mergers once again confined to the GibM and Moroccan communities. Whereas all Jewish and Indian informants distinguished the two vowels by vowel quality and length, 22.92% of the GibM informants and two thirds of the Moroccan informants failed to do so.

In word-final positions, Enriles (1992: 23) notes the presence of diphthongization with a lowered first element in words such as ‘oar’ [ɔ̃ä] and ‘store’ [stɔ̃ë]. As evidence he cites Cavilla’s (1990) Yanito spelling of *doar* for ‘door’. However, while persisting in the speech of older generations, he suggests that this realisation is disappearing in the speech of “younger educated speakers”.

This present study revealed that 8 of the 72 informants produced a diphthong in MORE vowel sets (e.g., ‘more’, ‘store’, ‘bore’). Whereas monophthongs were always employed in the Jewish community, five GibM informants produced a diphthong of the type noted by Enriles, while three Indian informants produced [ɔə]. This realisation, which formed part of Daniel Jones’ RP of the 1950s (see Jones 1956: 24), is unusual today in BrE except in some older speakers. Historically, this diphthong evolved, in many words, to compensate for the loss of post-vocalic /r/, although in some non-rhotic dialects of the north of England, for example, /ɔ:/ /ɔə/ opposition may exist (see Cruttenden 1994: 110).

Post-vocalic /r/ was not evident in the speech of the adolescents and pre-adolescents who took part in this study with the exception of two Moroccan informants.

### 5.1.5 TRAP/STRUT merger

The distinction between Southern BrE TRAP, STRUT and BATH vowels is often challenging for Hispanophones. The differences between minimal pairs such as ‘hat’, ‘hut’ and ‘heart’ may not be perceived; Castilian /a/ may be used to cover all three (Levey 1999: 219–20). This also appears to have been the case in Gibraltar where commentators have reported that the TRAP/STRUT vowels tend to merge in the traditional local pronunciation (Ballantine 1983: 50; Enriles 1992: 24–25). This is also suggested by the spellings which appear in Cavilla’s (1990) and Vallejo’s (2001) Yanito dictionaries (e.g., *chakarau*, ‘bouncer’ i.e., ‘chucker out’; *chinga*, ‘chewing gum’; *dampista*, ‘dumper truck driver’; *lanche*, ‘lunch’).

When Enriles carried out his study in the early 1990s, he noted the beginning of a change in pronunciation amongst his educated Gibraltarian informants: “It seems to me that in educated speech there has been a shift from one single open vowel for both STRUT and TRAP to two closer vowels [a̟-] and [ä]. However since this is probably a relatively recent phenomenon the shift is not yet complete” (Enriles 1992: 25). The findings of this study would seem to suggest that the process of vowel separation continues, with 81.56% of informants clearly distinguishing TRAP and STRUT vowels.

As regards vowel height, the TRAP vowel in Gibraltar tends to be more open than the typical BrE realisation, with 50% of informants producing an [a] type vowel, 25% [æ] and 25% producing [ʌ].<sup>19</sup> On the horizontal axis, 47.22% of informants produced a centralised vowel with F2 values closer to those of StCast /a/ than to those of a standard BrE front BrE /æ/.<sup>20</sup> When TRAP \* age was analysed a clear pattern emerged. Whereas 73.68% of adolescents employed a Spanish-type centralised realisation, only 17.65% of younger pre-adolescents did likewise ( $p = 0.000$ ) (see Figure 5.4). The fact that 9–12 year olds showed a clear preference for fronted or slightly retracted front TRAP vowel realisations, whereas it was never produced as a front vowel by adolescent informants, would once again seem to suggest an ongoing shift towards standard British English norms.

19. Although GibE and BrE TRAP vowels are still markedly different, in terms of vowel height, they appear to be gradually sliding towards each other. This is not only due to vowel raising on the part of the local population but also as a result of vowel lowering within BrE. The close TRAP realisation around CV [ɛ], which was common during the early 20th century in Britain, particularly amongst the upper classes, is now increasingly rare. Today, standard realisations appear to be becoming progressively more open and are approaching CV [a] (see Cruttenden 1994: 82).

20. Enriles (1992: 22) notes that the vowel quality of the English word ‘mass’ and the Spanish word *más* (‘more’) may be identical in broader Gibraltarian accents, both being pronounced [mäs].

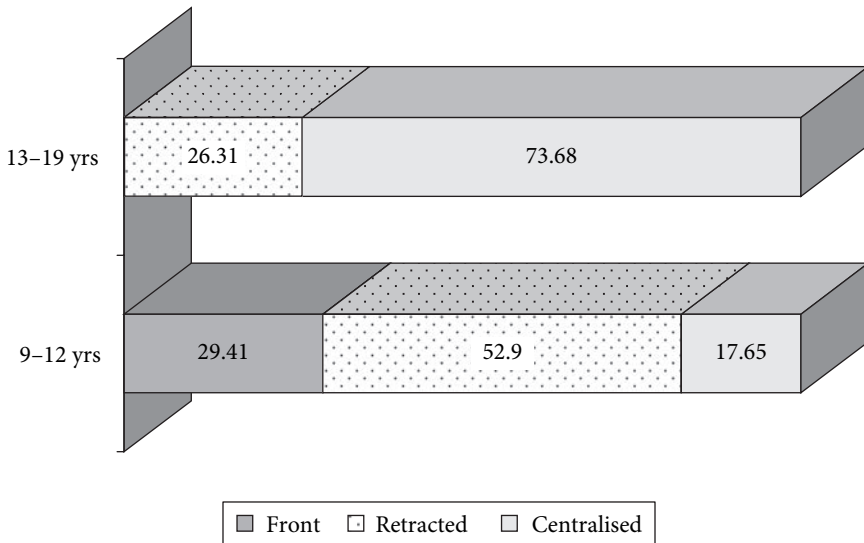


Figure 5.4 Distribution of TRAP vowel quality by age.

### 5.1.6 START and BATH

Enriles (1992: 27) describes the BATH or START vowel as “an open, front centralised, unrounded vowel” similar in some cases to the STRUT vowel: “in the broader accents where, according to my observations and personal experience, there is no long vs short opposition, there are homophones such as ‘hut’, ‘heart’ [hät]”.

Although F1 formant analysis found potential overlap between STRUT, TRAP and START vowel realisations in several cases, for the most part these vowels were distinguished either by a more back quality in the case of the START, and/or by vowel length.

As regards vowel length, 22.22% of the informants maintained a short START vowel realisation predominantly of the type [ä] or [ä̃], with a further 11.11% using a shortened or half-long variant. However, in contrast to the majority of *Generation 1* and *Generation 2* speakers, long vowel realisations are increasingly the norm amongst young Gibraltarians, accounting for two thirds of all START vowel realisations.<sup>21</sup>

Considerable quantitative divergence was found between the two age groups analysed, with short vowels almost three times more evident in adolescents (31.15%) than in pre-adolescents (11.76%) ( $p = 0.055$ ). There was also a significant correlation

21. Enriles 1992: 27; Errico 1996: 138–9 and Kellermann 2001: 349–50 found that short START vowel realisations predominate amongst older Gibraltarian speakers. Kellermann observed, however, that whereas short [ä] or a shortened [ä̃] was the norm for informants born during or just after the Second World War, there was a move towards longer vowel realisations amongst her younger informants (see Kellermann 2001: 350).

between START vowel length and the variable school ( $p = 0.045$ ). Whereas similar figures were found at the two secondary schools, notable variation was found at middle school level. A long START vowel was categorical at the Hebrew School and favoured by 75% of St Joseph's School informants. However, at Sacred Heart, short or shortened realisations predominated (see Figure 5.5).

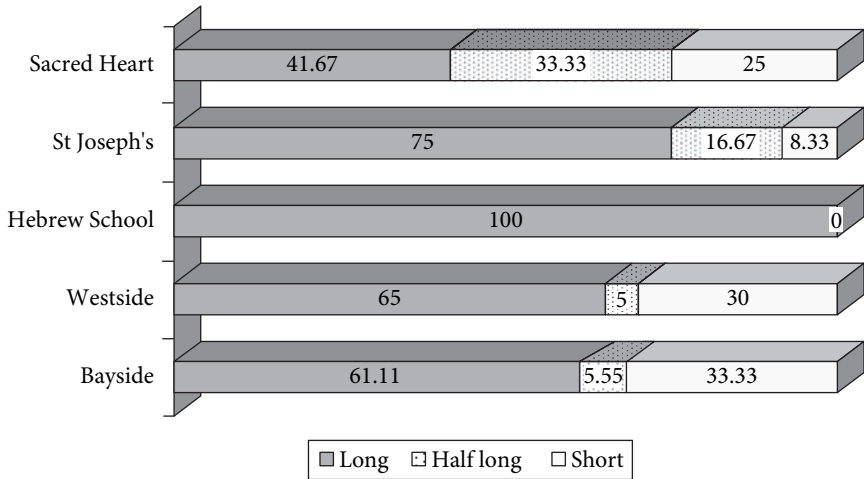


Figure 5.5 Distribution of START vowel length by school.

A clear correlation existed between START vowel length and social class ( $p = 0.002$ ), with the use of short vowels being almost exclusively confined to WC4 and LMC3 (see Figure 5.6).

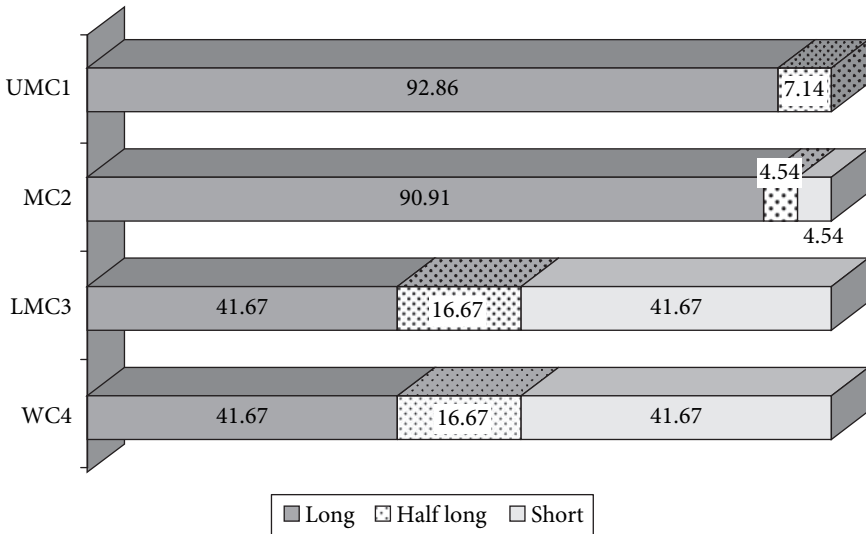


Figure 5.6 Distribution of START vowel length by class.

START vowel length \* ethnicity also proved significant ( $p = 0.036$ ). Whereas a long START vowel was categorical amongst Indian and Jewish informants, just under 30% of the GibM informants and one third of Moroccan informants used short vowels. As ethnolinguistic variation has not been discussed in previous phonetic studies to any great extent, it is difficult to judge whether the use of long vowels amongst Jewish informants is a recent phenomenon or not. My own observations of the adult population would seem to suggest the high percentage of long vowels used by Jewish informants is a continuation of norms already present in the speech of *Generation 2* and in some cases before.

Although the use of short vowels remains a marked feature of the English spoken by the GibM, there is evidence to suggest that a shift is currently in progress, with pre-adolescents increasingly adopting longer realisations ( $p = 0.094$ ) (see Figure 5.7). Amongst the GibM informants, as with the speech community as a whole, short vowel realisations were largely confined to the WC4 and LMC3.

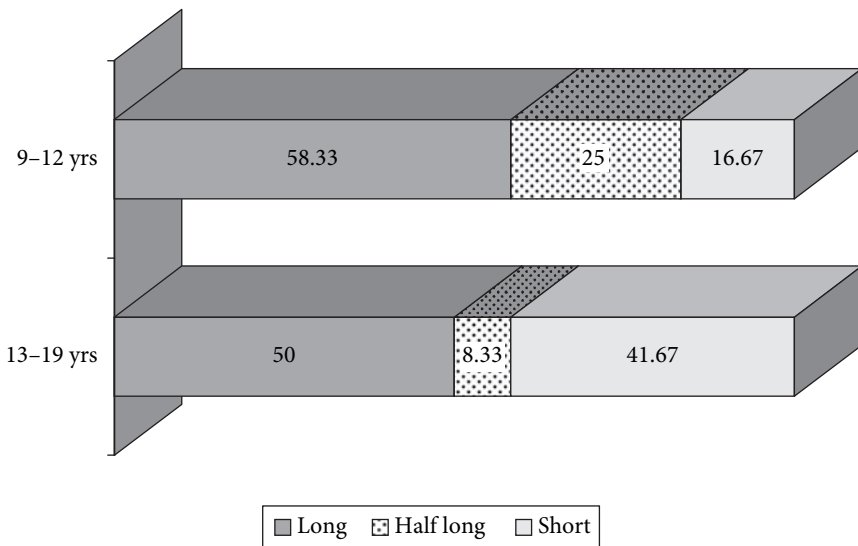


Figure 5.7 Distribution of START vowel length in the GibM by age ( $n = 48$ ).

In terms of vowel quality, although the central [ä] and [ã] noted by both Enriles and Kellermann were still present, analysis of BATH revealed that 56 of the 72 informants produced a back vowel of the type [ɑ] [ɔ] or [ɒ], contrasting clearly with STRUT and TRAP vowels. Taking both vowel quality and length into consideration, 43 of the 72 informants produced a Southern BrE long back vowel.

In general, three distinct TRAP, STRUT and BATH vowels were present in the speech of young Gibraltarians, with mergers evident in only 5 cases



(GibM: 4; Moroccan: 1). BATH merged with TRAP in three of these cases, BATH with STRUT in one case and a triple BATH/TRAP/STRUT merger was present in one case. Thus, although considerable inter-speaker variation still exists, it would appear that there is a continuing shift away from Spanish-influenced realisations.

### 5.1.7 NURSE

As no mid central vowel exists in StCast, NURSE is particularly difficult for Hispanophones and pronunciation therefore may be influenced by orthography. This may (stereo)typically give rise to four distinct vowels being employed in words such as ‘shirt’, ‘nurse’, ‘earth’, ‘word’ where post-vocalic /r/ may also be present.

Largely due to Spanish transfer, broad GibE realisations tend to be more front than in BrE (see Enriles 1992: 28). This tends to be particularly noticeable when ⟨i⟩ or ⟨e⟩ appear in the spelling (e.g., ‘bird’; ‘earn’). The present study revealed, however, that NURSE realisations were fairly constant and not usually conditioned by orthography.<sup>22</sup> Although retracted front vowel [ɛ̠] or slightly raised [ɛ̠-] were common, centralised variants of the type [ə] or BrE [ɜ] appear to be gaining ground (see Figure 5.8). With the exception of two Moroccan informants, post-vocalic /r/ was not pronounced.

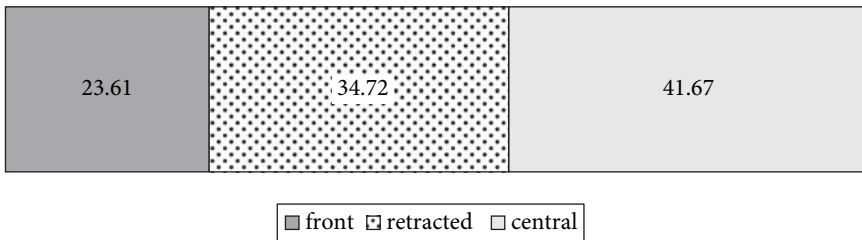


Figure 5.8 Distribution of NURSE vowel quality.

22. Variation was noted in certain specific lexical sets and environments. Whereas realisations of initial vowels (e.g., ‘earth’) were short in only 12.5% of the cases, with an average F1 formant reading of 652cps and F2 formant reading of 1656cps, realisations of the word ‘shirt’ were short in 52.78% of the cases, with formant readings revealing a more front open vowel closer to [e] (av. F1: 601; F2: 1655).

Central vowels were most prevalent amongst the UMC1 (64.29%), whereas 83.33% of working-class informants employed front or slightly retracted vowels of the type [ɛ] or [ɛ-] ( $p = 0.025$ ).

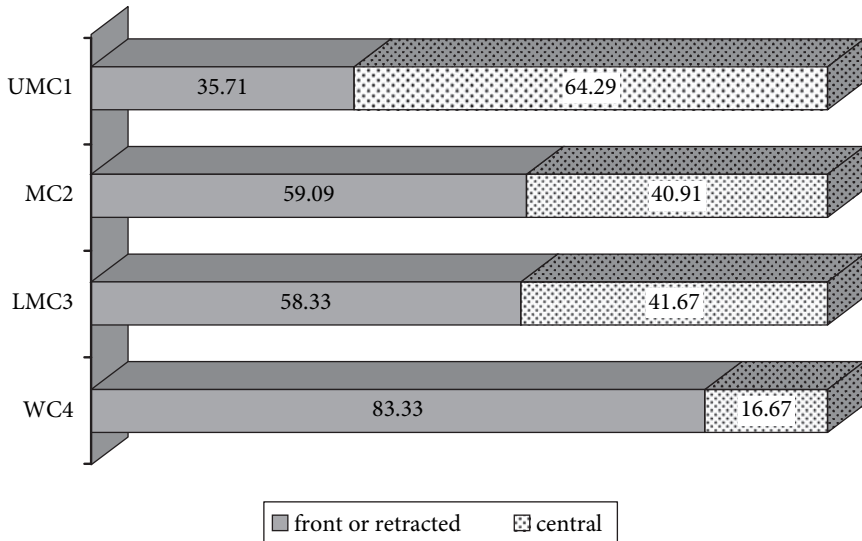


Figure 5.9 Distribution of NURSE vowel quality by class.

Analysis of the variable ethnicity revealed similar patterns to those seen previously ( $p = 0.016$ ). Jewish informants were most likely to adopt centralised variants similar to those found in BrE, while front vowels were most common amongst the GibM. Although it is clearly difficult to draw reliable conclusions based on the small sample, the fact that half the Moroccan informants produced a central NURSE vowel may partially be explained by the fact that /ə/ exists in Moroccan Arabic (see Heath 2002: 188–9, Moscoso García: 2003a: 20–1, 2003b: 29–39, 2004: 37).

Gender variation was also noted ( $p = 0.042$ ), with boys being 50% more likely to use centralised forms than girls (see Figure 5.10). Analysis of the age and sex variables combined reiterated the innovative role that pre-adolescent males appear to play in the process of accent and language change in Gibraltar ( $p = 0.001$ ). 61.11% of pre-adolescent males employed BrE type centralised NURSE vowel, 50% more than the speech community average.

Spanish speakers of English often produce NURSE as a short vowel and this is also frequently the case in broader Gibraltarian accents (Enriles 1992: 28). Although short vowels were still very much in evidence in the present study, almost 50% of pre-adolescents and adolescents produced full length realisations (see Figure 5.11).

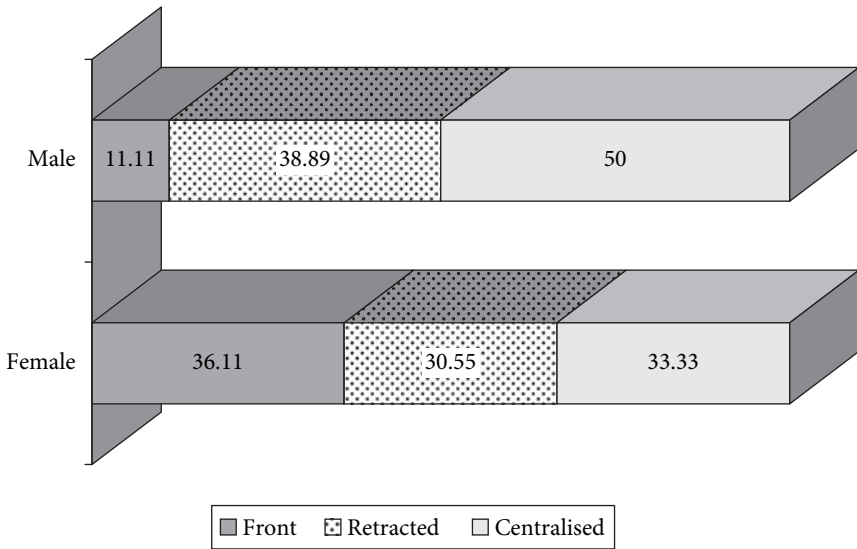


Figure 5.10 Distribution of NURSE vowel quality by sex.

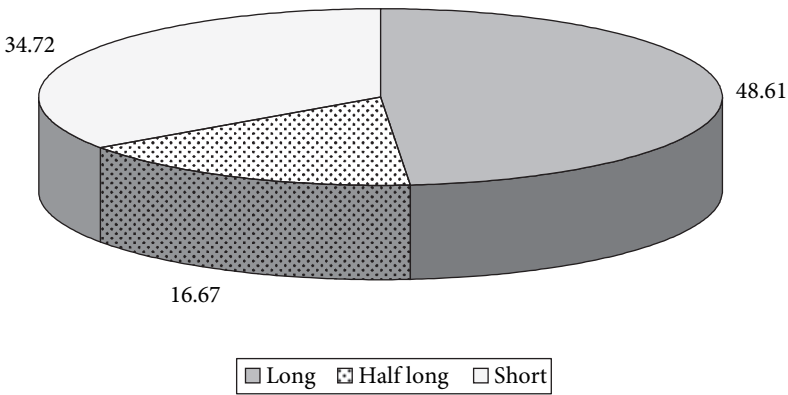


Figure 5.11 Distribution of NURSE vowel length.

NURSE vowel length proved to be socially stratified ( $p = 0.007$ ), with shorter vowels most notable in the speech of working-class informants, and longer realisations increasingly more evident higher up the social scale (see Figure 5.12). As regards ethnic distribution, whereas all Indian informants produced long vowels and 66.67% of Jewish informants did likewise, short NURSE vowels were most evident in the GibM ( $p = 0.015$ ) (see Figure 5.13).

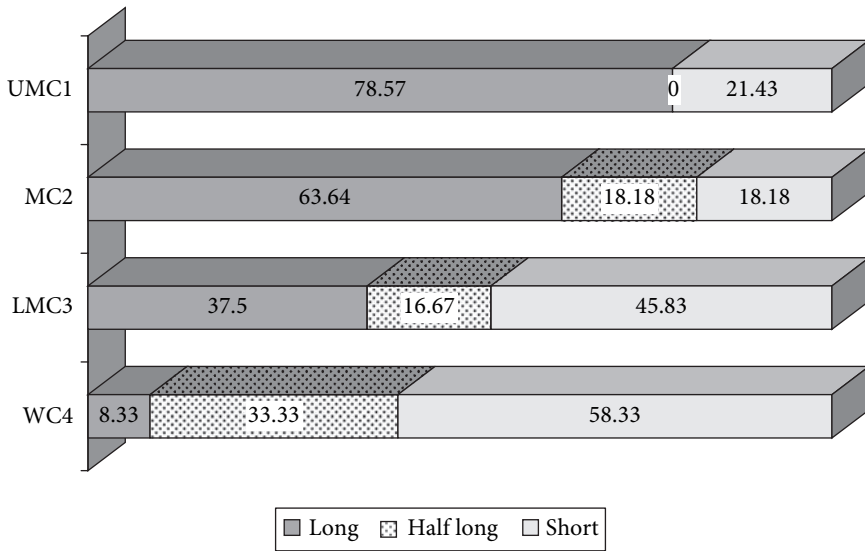


Figure 5.12 Distribution of NURSE vowel length by class.

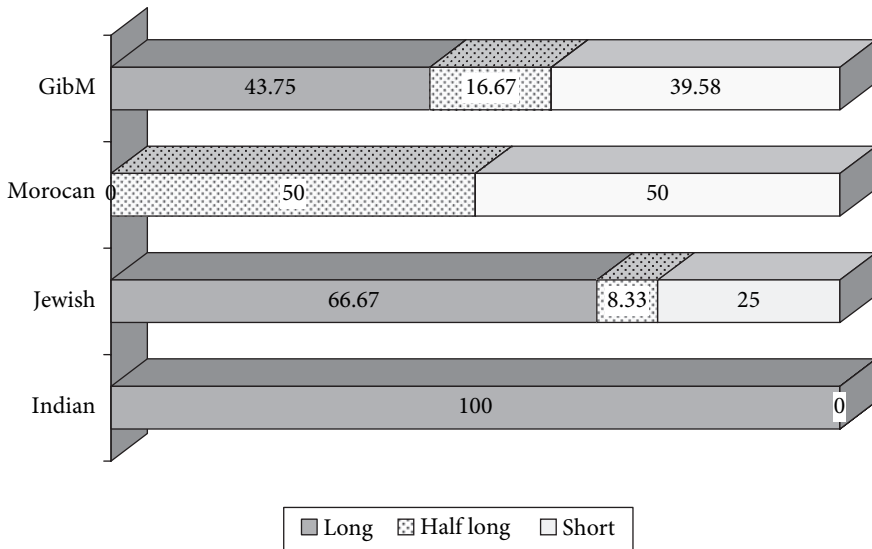


Figure 5.13 Distribution of NURSE vowel length by ethnic groups.

### 5.1.8 LETTER

In Gibraltarian English weak forms tend to be avoided in both individual word realisations and in connected speech. Prefixes such as *de-* or *re-* (e.g., ‘decide’, ‘reserve’)

are usually pronounced with a front KIT vowel, or sometimes with a DRESS vowel. A TRAP vowel is frequently used in ⟨a⟩ lexical sets where BrE would tend to use /ə/ (e.g., ‘America’, ‘about’, ‘alone’), and LOT or THOUGHT vowels are common in unstressed syllables containing ⟨o⟩ or ⟨or⟩ (e.g., ‘personal’, ‘forget’).

There is a tendency *amongst Generation 1 and 2* speakers to pronounce word-final ⟨er⟩ lexical sets with StCast /a/ or /e/. This is reflected in some of Cavilla’s (1990) dictionary entries (*craca*, ‘cracker’; *jumpa*, ‘jumper’; *stikin plaste*, ‘sticking plaster’) and also those found in Vallejo’s (2001) lexicon (*trupa*, ‘trooper’; *boila*, ‘boiler’). According to Vallejo (2001: 46) gender distinction is made in the Yanito word for ‘teacher’; *el tische* refers to a male teacher while *la tisha* refers to a female one.

In the 1990s Enriles (1992: 37) found no evidence of the central weak vowel /ə/ in GibE. Amongst “educated” Gibraltarians, LETTER tended to be realised as a pure centralised vowel between half-open and open. Although this study confirms the widespread presence of [ɐ] or [ɘ] in Gibraltar as a whole, the schwa was found to be making inroads amongst younger speakers, accounting for just under 50% of all centralised realisations (see Table 5.4). Quantitative analysis did not reveal any statistically significant stratification patterns.

**Table 5.4** Distribution of LETTER vowel variants

FRONT		CENTRALISED	
[æ] [æ̃] [a]	[ɛ] [ɛ̃]	[ɐ] [ɘ]	[ə]
25%	23.61%	26.39%	25%

### CLOSING DIPHTHONGS

English closing diphthongs do not tend to cause undue problems for Hispanophones as certain parallels exist in StCast.<sup>23</sup> Although there are slight differences in vowel positions and prominence, approximation is generally close enough for language transfer not to be noticeable. Thus, not surprisingly, in terms of language

23. By definition, two vowels in the same syllable constitute a diphthong. Although diphthongs do not enjoy official phonemic status, several vowel combinations are possible in Spanish (see Quilis & Fernández 1972: 65–73, Quilis 2002: 41–5). One of the fundamental differences between English and Spanish diphthongs lies in their respective articulatory force. Whereas in English the first element is always perceived to be dominant, carrying the principal articulatory energy, in Spanish, this is not always the case. There are two broad types of Spanish diphthongs:

1) *diptongos decrecientes* (‘decreasing diphthongs’) are those where the syllabic nucleus is found in the first element and the second element is considered a semivowel and transcribed phonetically as [i̯] or [u̯]. There are six such diphthongs: [aj̯] (e.g., *aire* [ˈaĩre], ‘air’), [ej̯] (e.g., *ley* [lej̯], ‘law’), [oj̯] (e.g., *soy* [soj̯], ‘I am’), [au̯] (e.g., *auto* [ˈaũto], ‘auto’), [eu̯] (e.g., *Europa* [eu̯ˈropa], ‘Europe’), [ou̯] (e.g., *bou* [bou̯], ‘type of fishing boat’).

change/maintenance, the local realisation of closing diphthongs did not prove particularly revealing.

### 5.1.9 FACE

According to Enriles (1992: 31), FACE is realised as [e̞i̞-] coinciding with the StCast non-phonemic diphthong, thus making the English word ‘say’ and the Spanish word *séis* similar in terms of vowel quality. Kellermann (2001: 369) notes slightly lower first and second elements [ɛɪ].

Although diphthongs of the type described by Enriles and Kellermann were still present amongst the informants who made up this study, an increased number of shorter diphthongs of the type [eɪ] or [ɛɪ] were noted. However, although realisations appear to be getting shorter, monophthongisation is not usual, with only very occasional incidences being noted in rapid connected speech (e.g., ‘same day’ or ‘Sunday newspaper’).<sup>24</sup>

### 5.1.10 PRICE

PRICE was produced as a diphthong by all informants. Whereas BrE often employs a back first element, the GibE PRICE diphthong usually has a slightly front retracted or centralised starting point. Present data found the average realisation to be slightly less open than that described by Enriles’ (1992: 32) for his educated Gibraltar informants. Whereas Enriles found [äi̞-] to be standard and [äi] to be typical in broader accents, the informants of this study tended to produce a slightly raised centralised first element followed by a lowered and retracted second element [æ̞ɪ̞-].

The tendency towards more raised realisations has also been noted by Kellermann (2001: 369) who records [aɪ] and [ɛɪ] as possible GibE pronunciation variants. Although similar open mid first elements were noted in the present study, these were few in number and slightly more open realisations predominate amongst young speakers, with retraction or centralisation also common.

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2) *diptongos crecientes* (‘increasing diphthongs’) are those where the syllabic nucleus is found in the second element and the pre-nuclear first element is considered a semi-consonant and transcribed phonetically as [w] or [j]. There are eight such diphthongs: [ja] (e.g., *piano* [ˈpjano], ‘piano’), [je] (e.g., *siete* [ˈsjete], ‘seven’), [jo] (e.g., *radio* [ˈraðjo], ‘radio’), [ju] (e.g., *ciudad* [ˈθjuðað], ‘city’), [wa] (e.g., *agua* [ˈaɣwa], ‘water’), [we] (e.g., *muerto* [ˈmwerto], ‘dead’), [wi] (e.g., *ruido* [ˈrwiðo], ‘noise’), [wo] (e.g., *antiguo* [anˈtiɣwo], ‘old’).

24. Monophthongal [ɛ(:)] is given by Kellermann (2001: 371) as a possible GibE pronunciation variant, leading her to consider the possibility of a chain shift, with possible [aɪ]/[ɛɪ] merger leading to a knock on shift [ɛɪ] → [ɛ(:)]. Although FACE lowering as well as PRICE raising were noted in some informants, movement was slight and, as Kellermann herself admits, there is little evidence to support this theory.

### 5.1.11 CHOICE

Enriles transcribes CHOICE as [ɔ̞i̞-] and states that it is similar to the non-phonemic StCast diphthong, noting that “The local pronunciation of ‘estoy’ is very often [tʰɔ̞i̞-] which is homophonous with Gibraltarian English ‘toy’ ” (1992: 33). Although Kellermann (2001: 368), for her part, notes no phonemic variation of [ɔɪ], formant analysis carried out for this study revealed a series of subtle phonetic variations with first elements ranging from open to mid-close and with off-glides ranging from front to centralised. While several Jewish informants favoured a more close realisation [ɔ̞i̞] with strong lip rounding, the most common realisations were [ɔ̞i̞-], [ɔ̞i̞-] and [ɔ̞i̞-].

### 5.1.12 MOUTH

Although a non-phonemic Spanish-type diphthong was often employed for MOUTH, with English ‘loud’ and Spanish *laudable* (‘praiseworthy’) being realised with similar vocalic quality, amongst younger speakers a slightly narrower realisation was preferred. First elements tended to be centralised [ä̞] or [æ̞] followed by an off-glide towards lowered and slightly advanced [ʊ+] or [ʏ].

The MOUTH diphthong in Gibraltar appears, therefore, to be shortening slightly, with [æ̞ʊ], [ä̞ʊ] and [æ̞ʏ] being increasing preferred to the wider Spanish-influenced [äv̞] which Enriles attests to.<sup>25</sup> However, although MOUTH realisations are getting shorter, diphthongs remain categorical, and a possible future shift towards monophthongisation, which has taken place in certain English accents (e.g., Cockney and Australian), seems unlikely, at present at least, in the case of Gibraltar.

### 5.1.13 GOAT/GOAL

Formant analysis revealed considerable GOAT vowel variation. Most realisations tended to have a slightly advanced back first element ranging between CV6 [ɔ] and CV7 [o], with a short off-glide towards slightly advanced [ʊ] or [ʏ], resulting in a range of diphthongs: [oʊ ~ ɔ̞ʊ ~ ɔ̞ʏ ~ ɔ̞ʏ].

Spanish transfer was evident in many realisations, making English ‘low’ and the Spanish *LOU* (Ley Orgánica de Universidades) potentially homophonous. Monophthong realisations of the type [ɔ] were also noted in casual conversation in words such as ‘open’, ‘close’, ‘old’ – a common occurrence in Spanish speakers of English.

There were, however, a certain number of young Gibraltarians who produce this diphthong from a centralised starting point in the region of [ə] or [ɘ], followed by a short regressive off-glide resulting in [əʏ ~ ɘʏ ~ ɘʏ]. Although these

25. Kellermann (2001: 368) transcribes [au] and notes no local variation.

realisations suggest a shift towards BrE norms, the high degree of GOAT/GOAL inter and intra-speaker variability makes it difficult to reach any firm conclusions on the present situation, or predict a future trend with any measure of certainty.

#### CENTRING/OPENING DIPHTHONGS

As Spanish does not have a mid central vowel, the English centring diphthongs do not have direct equivalents in the StCast phonetic system. CURE, NEAR and SQUARE tend to be produced by Hispanophones as opening diphthongs with strong second elements [ua], [ja] and [ea] rather than an off-glide. English diphthongs are invariably shorter than StCast ones. In fast speech, CURE, NEAR and SQUARE have all become or are becoming monophthongal in BrE.

##### 5.1.14 CURE and POOR

Enriles transcribes the GibE CURE as [ʊä] or [ʊø] describing it as:

a diphthong the first element of which is between close and half-close, advanced from back, rounded and the second element is between half-open, central and unrounded. The first element is approximately the same quality as the FOOT vowel. It is the longest and most prominent of the two. The second element is very similar in quality to R.P. /ʌ/. Although it can be more open than that.

(Enriles 1992: 36)

This present study found considerable inter-speaker variation for CURE. Although the “educated” Gibraltar realisation that Enriles’ describes was evident, it would appear now to cohabit with new emerging foci. Three broad areas of realisation were noted in the speech of young Gibraltarans:

CURE type 1: A broad opening diphthong of the type [ʊø] or [ʊɜ]

CURE type 2: A shorter centring diphthong of the type [ɔə] or [œə]

CURE type 3: A monophthong of the type [ɔ] or [ø]

CURE vowel realisations of the 72 informants were distributed in the following manner.

**Table 5.5** Distribution of CURE diphthong/monophthong variants by age

	Type 1 [ʊø] ~ [ʊɜ]	Type 2 [ɔə] ~ [œə]	Type 3 [ɔ] ~ [ø]	TOTAL
9–12 years	19	13	2	34
13–19 years	23	14	1	38
TOTAL	42	27	3	72



Although a broad opening diphthong (Type 1) remains the norm in the speech community as a whole, a shorter closing diphthong (Type 2) is becoming increasingly common in both age groups. Short realisations often had a notably weak second element although monophthongisation, which is standard practice in BrE, was only present in three cases.<sup>26</sup>

Spanish transfer was again more notable in girls than boys. Whereas 52.78% of Gibraltar males (9–19 years) adopted BrE Type 2 diphthongs, only 22.22% of females in the same age bracket did likewise ( $p = 0.016$ ). As regards ethnolinguistic distribution ( $p = 0.067$ ), whereas 75% of Jewish informants preferred the Type 2 CURE diphthong, the figures were inverted in the case of the GibM where 72.91% of informants employed [ʊə] or [ʊɜ]. This was also true for four out of the six Moroccan informants. The 6 Indian informants were equally split between the two diphthong realisations.

CURE \* class suggests that the use of Type 2 diphthongs is socially stratified, with BrE forms increasingly more evident further up the social scale (see Figure 5.14).<sup>27</sup>

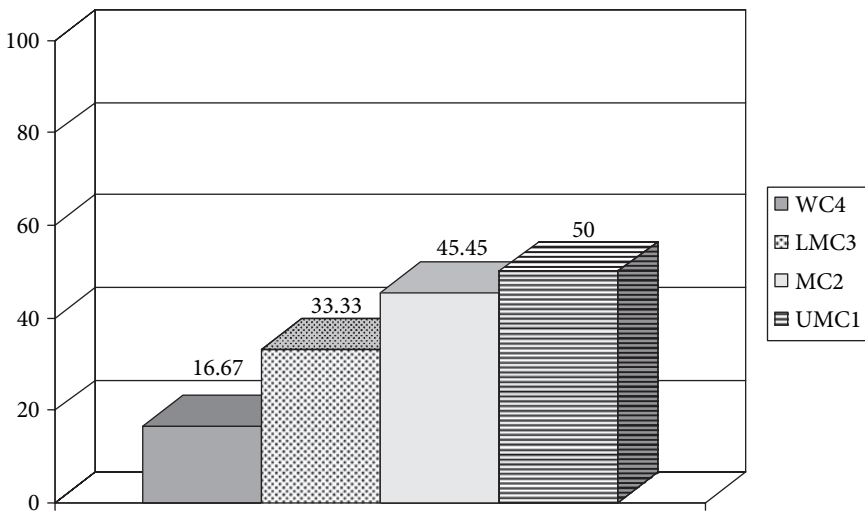
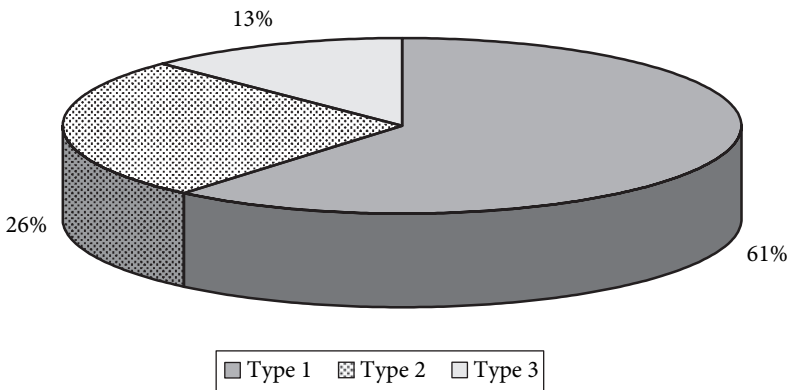


Figure 5.14 Distribution of Type 2 (short centring) CURE diphthong by class.

26. Both Roach & Hartman (1997) and Wells (2000) offer /kɜ:/ as well as /kɜə/ for CURE in their respective pronunciation dictionaries.

27. Largely due to the high Degree of Freedom (DF), initial statistical analysis of the class variable based on a four tiered social division found  $p > 0.1$ . However a second analysis based on a reduced DF, i.e., two social classes (upper and lower) \* two response categories (elimination of 3 cases of monophthongisation), gave  $p = 0.068$ .

The fact that only three cases of CURE monophthongisation were present makes any conclusions or predictions on the possible phonetic future of Gibraltar unsafe. However, given that Type 2 CURE diphthong realisations were increasingly favoured by younger speakers, and that several of these had notably weak second elements, it seems likely that in the not too distant future, as in BrE, monophthongisation could become increasingly evident. This contention was strengthened when an analysis of POOR confirmed the presence of monophthongisation in Gibraltar, with 12.5% of the young speech community producing a single vowel (see Figure 5.15).<sup>28</sup>



**Figure 5.15** Distribution of POOR diphthong/monophthong variants. Type 1 = broad opening diphthongs [ʊə] or [ʊɜ]; Type 2 = short centring diphthongs [ɔə] or [œə]; Type 3 = monophthongs [ɔ] or [ø].

Age ( $p = 0.028$ ), class ( $p = 0.035$ ) and ethnicity ( $p = 0.00$ ) correlation revealed similar patterns to those found for CURE. The use of Spanish-influenced opening diphthongs was least evident among pre-adolescents from MC2 and UMC1, and most common within the GibM (see Figure 5.16).

Whereas only one isolated case was found in the older age group, amongst pre-adolescents, monophthongs accounted for 23.53% of POOR vowel realisations. These were most evident amongst the higher social strata.

28. In BrE, monophthongisation is more common for POOR than CURE sets. The results of the 1998 opinion poll presented in *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (Wells 2000: 593) suggest that for those born before 1973 POOR, /pɔ:/ is the overwhelming norm (80+%) with diphthong realisations largely confined to older speakers.

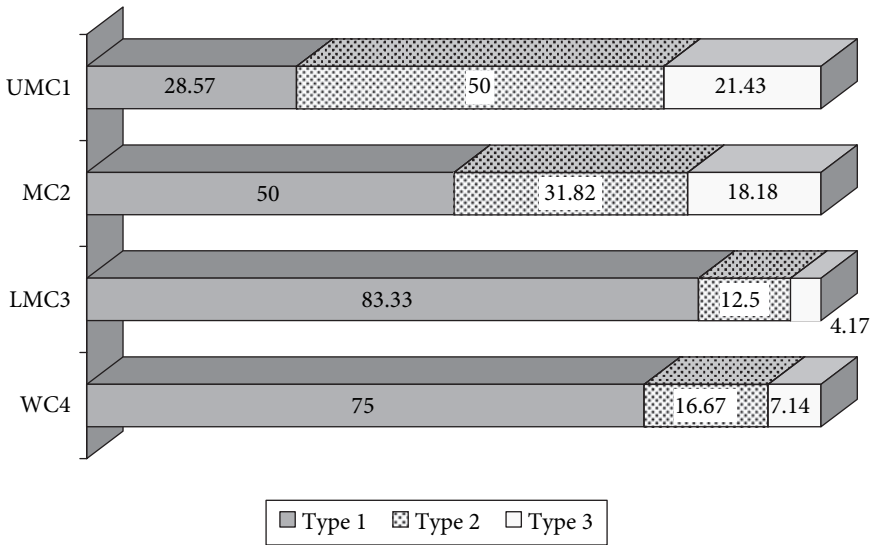


Figure 5.16 Distribution of POOR diphthong/monophthong variants by class. Type 1 = broad opening diphthong ([ʊə] ~ [ʊɜ]); Type 2 = short centring diphthong ([ɔə] ~ [əə]); Type 3 = monophthong ([ɔ] ~ [ə]).

Monophthongs were most evident in the Jewish community where one third of informants favoured this realisation, while the rest produced a short diphthong, often with a short off-glide. In both the Indian and Moroccan communities all realisations were diphthongised (see Figure 5.17).

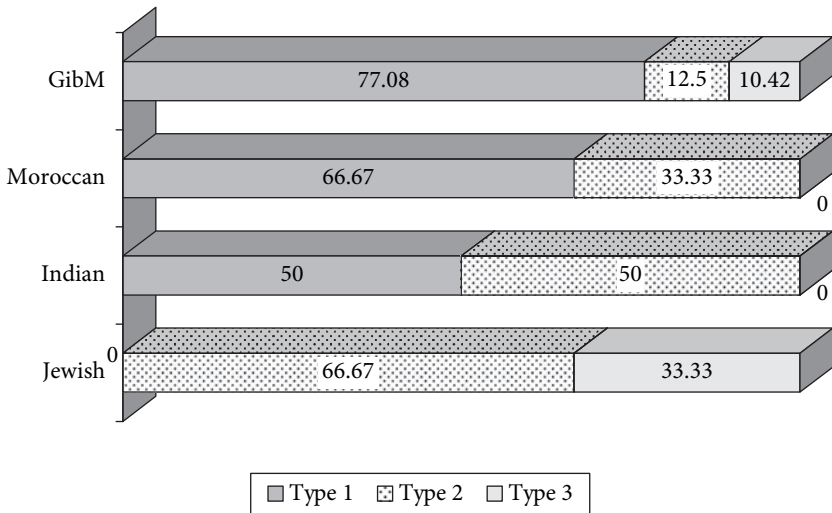


Figure 5.17 Distribution of POOR diphthong/monophthong variants by ethnic groups. Type 1 = broad opening diphthong ([ʊə] ~ [ʊɜ]); Type 2 = short centring diphthong ([ɔə] ~ [əə]); Type 3 = monophthong ([ɔ] ~ [ə]).

## 5.1.15 NEAR

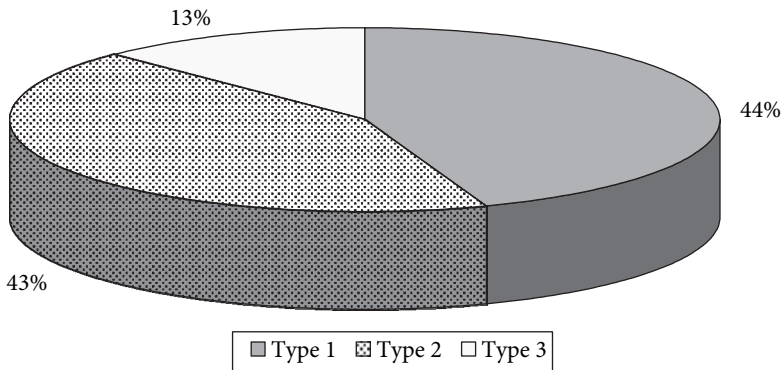
According to Enriles (1992: 34), NEAR is “in most cases realised as a diphthong which has its first element a vowel quality between close and half-close, slightly retracted from front and unrounded and gliding to a second element with a quality between half-open, centralised and unrounded”. He transcribes it as [i̠ä] or [i̠ø] and in broader accents as [iä].

Analysis of the present young Gibraltarian speech community reveals, however, a gradual move away from a broad opening diphthong, with many speakers preferring shorter and narrower realisations (see Figure 5.18).<sup>29</sup> As with CURE, a continuum of three broad areas of realisation was noted:

NEAR type 1: A broad opening diphthong of the type: [iø] or [iä]

NEAR type 2: A centring diphthong of the type [iə] or [iɤ]

NEAR type 3: A shorter centring diphthong / near monophthong with a very short off-glide of the type [iɤ] or [i̠ɤ].



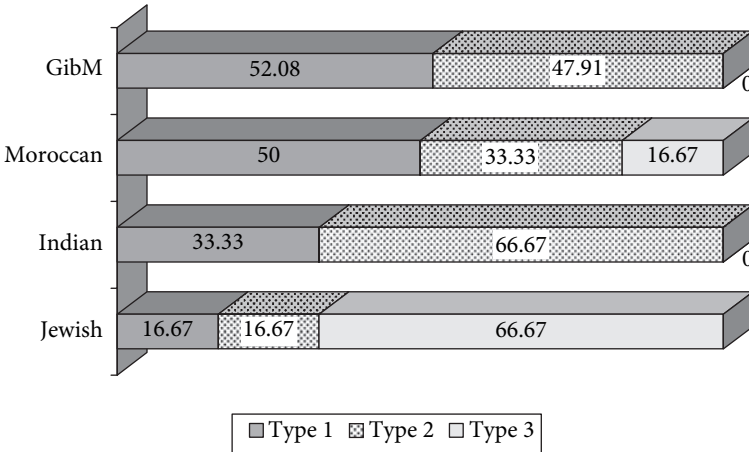
**Figure 5.18** Distribution of NEAR diphthong/monophthong variants. Type 1 = broad opening diphthongs [iø] or [iä]; Type 2 = centring diphthongs [iə] or [iɤ]; Type 3 = short diphthong/near monophthongs [iɤ] or [i̠ɤ].

Centring diphthongs (Type 2) are increasingly more common amongst young Gibraltarians. Although the Spanish-influenced opening diphthong with a dominant second element, which is common amongst older speakers, is still clearly present, there seems to be a clear shift towards shorter and weaker realisations. NEAR followed similar stratification patterns to those found for CURE.

Near \* age ( $p = 0.075$ ) showed that the shortest diphthongs and near-monophthong realisations (Type 3) were found amongst the younger age group (see Figure 5.19). The Jewish community was, once again, closest phonetically to BrE norms.

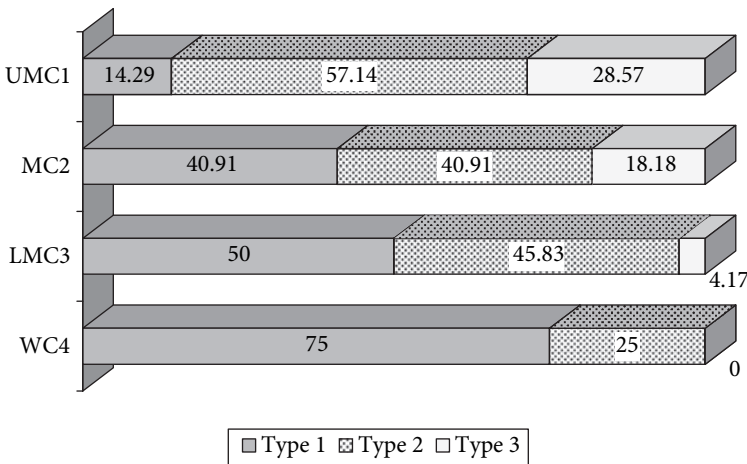
29. Traditional open realisations are suggested by spellings given in Cavilla's dictionary (e.g., *gingibía*, 'ginger beer'; *diar*, 'dear').

Maintenance of Type 1 diphthongs, on the other hand, was strongest amongst the GibM ( $p = 0.000$ ).



**Figure 5.19** Distribution of NEAR diphthong/monophthong variants by ethnic groups. Type 1 = Broad opening diphthong ([iɐ] ~ [iä]); Type 2 = Centring diphthong ([ɪə] ~ [ɪɔ]); Type 3 = short diphthong/ near monophthong ([ɪə] ~ [ɪʔ]).

As can be seen in Figure 5.20, the lower classes tended to use Type 1 diphthongs while the higher social strata showed a clear preference for BrE style shorter Type 2 and 3 realisations ( $p = 0.035$ ). An analysis of NEAR \* class in the GibM ( $n = 48$ ) revealed similar patterns, although social stratification was less marked than in the Gibraltar community as a whole ( $p > 0.1$ ).



**Figure 5.20** Distribution of NEAR diphthong/monophthong variants by class. Type 1 = Broad opening diphthong ([iɐ] ~ [iä]); Type 2 = Centring diphthong ([ɪə] ~ [ɪɔ]); Type 3 = short diphthong/ near monophthong ([ɪə] ~ [ɪʔ]).

## 5.1.16 SQUARE

Enriles (1992: 35) describes GibE SQUARE as “a diphthong, the first element of which is between half-close and half-open, front, unrounded, whilst the second element is between half-open central and unrounded”. He transcribes it as [e̞ä], or [e̞ä] in broader Spanish-influenced pronunciation.

As was the case with CURE and NEAR, analysis of the young Gibraltarian speech community revealed a gradual shift towards narrower and shorter SQUARE realisations, and the beginnings of monophthongisation was also noted (see Figure 5.21). Once again a continuum of three broad areas of realisation was apparent:

SQUARE type 1. An opening diphthong of the type: [e̞e], [e̞ä] or [e̞ä]

SQUARE type 2. A short centring diphthong of the type [eə] or [e̞ə]

SQUARE type 3. A monophthong of the type [e̞], [e̞:], [ε] or [ε:]

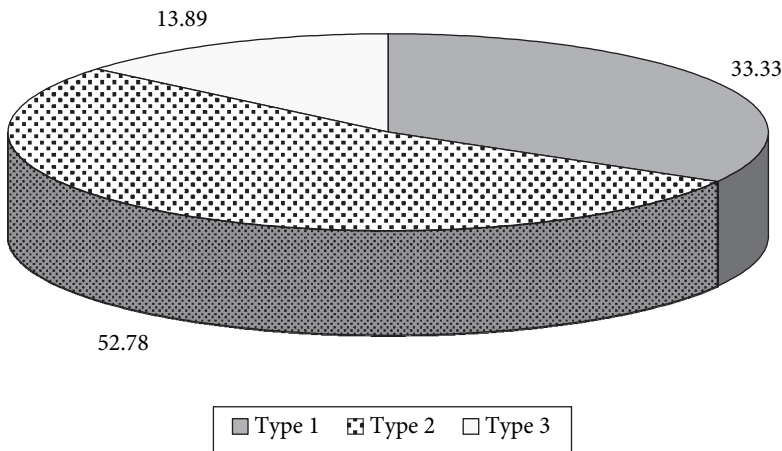


Figure 5.21 Distribution of SQUARE diphthong/monophthong variants. Type 1 = Opening diphthong ([e̞e] ~ [e̞ä] ~ [e̞ä]); Type 2 = Centring diphthong ([eə] ~ [e̞ə]); Type 3 = monophthong ([e̞] ~ [e̞:] ~ [ε] ~ [ε:]).

In the case of SQUARE, age did not prove statistically significant. However, although Type 1 percentages were similar for both age groups, monophthongisation was more common amongst pre-adolescents (20.59%) than adolescents (7.89%). Although  $p = 0.114$ , gender variation percentages suggest that maintenance is strongest amongst females (see Figure 5.22).

Ethnicity ( $p = 0.064$ ) and class ( $p = 0.069$ ) once again proved to be the strongest variables, repeating similar patterns to those discussed for CURE and NEAR (see Figures 5.23 and 5.24).

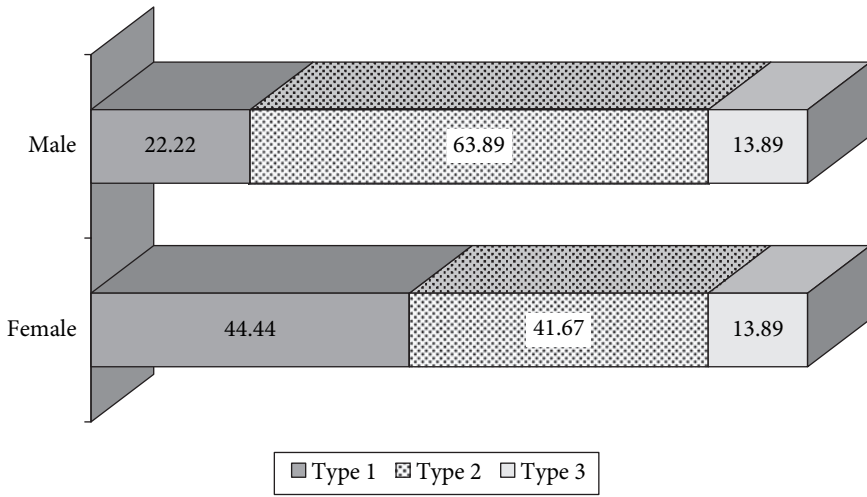


Figure 5.22 Distribution of SQUARE diphthong/monophthong variants by sex. Type 1 = opening diphthongs [eə], [eä] or [eǣ]; Type 2 = centring diphthongs [eə] or [ɛə]; Type 3 = monophthongs [ɛ], [ɛ:], [ɛ] or [ɛ:].

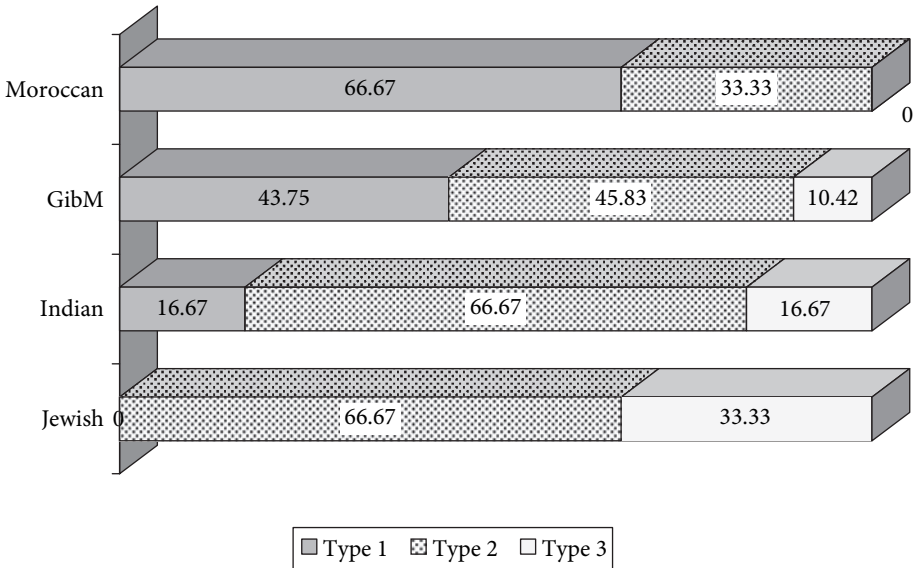
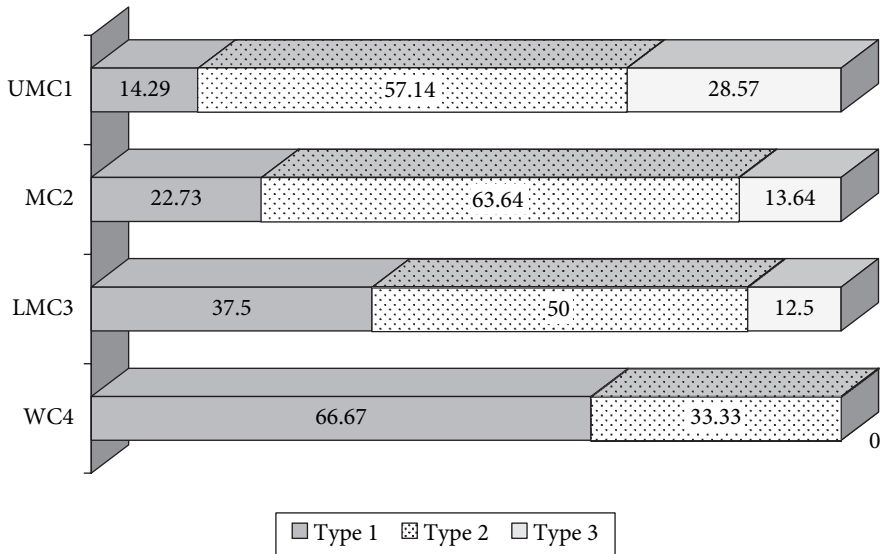


Figure 5.23 Distribution of SQUARE diphthong/monophthong variants by ethnic groups (N = 72). Type 1 = Opening diphthong ([eə] ~ [eä] ~ [eǣ]); Type 2 = Centring diphthong ([eə] ~ [ɛə]); Type 3 = monophthong ([ɛ] ~ [ɛ:] ~ [ɛ] ~ [ɛ:]).



**Figure 5.24** Distribution of SQUARE diphthong/monophthong variants by class. Type 1 = Opening diphthong ([eə] ~ [e̞ə] ~ [ẽ̞]); Type 2 = Centring diphthong ([eə] ~ [e̞ə]); Type 3 = monophthong ([e̞] ~ [ẽ̞] ~ [ẽ̞] ~ [ẽ̞]).

## 5.2 Summary and conclusions

Although transfer was apparent in some speakers, the Spanish-type vowel realisations which have traditionally coloured the local vernacular appear to be becoming less noticeable in the speech of the new generation of Gibraltarians. Most informants had an English phonological inventory of 12 pure vowels and seven or eight diphthongs.

Traditional vowel mergers, although still present in certain sectors of the community, are becoming considerably less common. Findings showed that this substrate-induced phenomenon affected a relatively small percentage of the young speech community ((KIT/FLEECE merger: 11.1%; FOOT/GOOSE merger: 9.72%; BULL/TOOL merger: 17.14%; LOT/THOUGHT merger: 20.83%; TRAP/STRUT merger: 19.44%; BATH/TRAP merger: 4.17%; BATH/STRUT merger: 1.39%).

Similarly, the short realisations of BrE long vowels, which previous research has shown to be characteristic of traditional GibE, although still present, appear to be diminishing (FLEECE: 16.67%; GOOSE: 12.5%; THOUGHT: 26.39%; START: 22.22%; NURSE: 34.72%), with longer realisations being favoured by the majority of 9–19 year olds.



As regards vowel quality, considerable inter-speaker variability was noted. English pronunciation in Gibraltar is undergoing change at present, and so it is difficult to talk about a stable GibE phonetic system. Whereas some speakers produced realisations similar to those found in BrE, others showed evidence of Spanish transfer. In broad terms, amongst 9–19 year olds, front vowels KIT, FLEECE, DRESS and TRAP tend to be slightly more open and less front than the equivalent standard British English realisations, although GibE/BrE divergence seems to be diminishing. BATH, which has been traditionally realised as a central vowel in Gibraltar, appears to be gradually moving further back. It is notable that BrE mid-central vowels are beginning to find their way into Gibraltar English. NURSE, which amongst older Gibraltar speakers is often realised as a front vowel, is increasingly being produced as a central BrE type vowel. Similarly, the mid-central /ə/ which has been traditionally absent in GibE is beginning to emerge in the speech of young Gibraltarians, accounting for one in four LETTER vowel realisations. However, front realisations or an open [ɐ] remain widespread, and weak forms are still largely avoided in connected speech.

Diphthongs of the type CURE, NEAR and SQUARE, which tend to be realised as broad opening diphthongs of the type [uɐ] [iɐ] [ɛɐ] by *Generation 1* and *Generation 2* speakers, are progressively being shortened. Young Gibraltarians are beginning to adopt realisations which centre towards a weak mid-central position and which, in some cases, are giving way to monophthongisation. However, although phonetic change is taking place, broad opening diphthongs still remain the norm.

A clear correlation existed between vowel realisations and the extra-linguistic variables age, sex, school, class and ethnicity, with the last two proving particularly significant. Speakers from upper or middle-class backgrounds proved most likely to adopt vowel forms closest to BrE norms, whereas maintenance of Spanish-influenced realisations was most common amongst the lower classes. The Jewish and Indian communities were consistently more likely to adopt vowel forms closer to BrE standard than the autochthonous majority (GibM).

Pronunciation norms may be reinforced and extended through middle school networks. It was notable that Sacred Heart, with a higher WC4 and LMC3 intake of pupils than St Joseph's or the Hebrew School, repeatedly revealed the highest levels of Spanish-influenced pronunciations. The speech of Hebrew School pupils proved to be closest to BrE norms.

Gender variation was not as marked as class and ethnolinguistic variation. Nevertheless, it was still noticeable that boys were generally more likely to diverge

from traditional marked GibE pronunciation, while language maintenance and Spanish transfer was more notable amongst girls.

Although a narrow age range was studied, the variable age proved surprisingly influential, with pronunciation shift consistently more evident in pre-adolescents than in adolescents. This would appear to confirm the hypothesis that language change is currently in progress in Gibraltar.



# Gibraltarian English

## Consonants

### 6.1 Areas of potential Spanish transfer

In the introduction to his dissertation, justifying his decision to focus exclusively on the Gibraltarian vowel system, Enriles states:

English accents tend to show greater differences in their vowel system than in their consonant systems and I believe this to be the case for this particular (Gibraltarian) accent as well. In fact, although it would be necessary to research the matter further, I would venture to say that there is little difference if any between the consonant phonemes of Gibraltarian English and a standard British accent such as RP

(Enriles 1992: 7).

Although this may be true, turning the argument around, the very fact that English consonant systems are considered less variable than English vowel systems implies that any sign of variation is particularly significant.

The next chapter deals with the GibE consonant system, with special emphasis being placed on those features which, through possible Spanish transfer, are potentially most likely to diverge from BrE norms. Although considerable overlap exists, Spanish and English consonant inventories do not coincide completely (see Table 6.1).<sup>1</sup> Besides phonological differences, certain English consonant realisations, due to variations in allophonic distribution, may be alien to Hispanophones in certain phonetic environments.

**Table 6.1** Standard Castilian and British English consonants

		Bi-	Labio-			Palato-			
		labial	dental	Dental	Alveolar	alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	StCast	p	b	t	d			k	g
	BrE	p	b		t	d		k	g
Affricate	StCast					tʃ			
	BrE					tʃ	dʒ		

*Continued*

1. For a detailed account of the Spanish consonant system see Quilis 1993: 194–359, 2002: 46–66; Quilis & Fernández 1972: 75–133.

Table 6.1 Continued

		Bi-labial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Fricative	StCast		f	θ	s		j	x	
	BrE		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
Nasal	StCast	m		n			ɲ		
	BrE	m			n			ŋ	
Trill	StCast				r				
	BrE								
Tap or Flap	StCast				ɾ				
	BrE								
Approximant	StCast				ɹ		j	w	
	BrE	(w)					ɹ		
Lateral approximant	StCast				l				
	BrE				l				

### 6.1.1 /b/ /v/ merger

Labiodental /v/ no longer has phonemic status in Standard Castilian and ⟨b⟩ and ⟨v⟩ are pronounced identically. As Spanish minimal pairs such as *basto* ('crude') and *vasto* ('vast') are usually not differentiated, Hispanophones may have difficulties distinguishing between English bilabial plosive /b/ and labiodental fricative /v/.<sup>2</sup>

In Standard Castilian (StCast), two clear context-dependent allophonic realisations exist. Plosive [b] is employed after a pause or a nasal (e.g., *baca*, 'luggage rack' or *vaca*, 'cow' ['baka]; *tumba*, 'tomb' ['tumba]), while bilabial fricative [β] is used in all other environments (e.g., *cabo*, 'cape' or *cavo*, 'I dig' ['kaβo]). Occurrence is unusual in word-final positions, and mainly limited to foreign borrowings such as *pub* [paβ] or *club* [kluβ].

The fact that Vallejo (2001: 38) gives two orthographic possibilities (*mobi* or *movi*) for the Yanito abbreviation for 'automobile' would appear to suggest that b/v merger, through Spanish transfer, is present in the English of Gibraltar. When Kellermann carried out her study, three possible variants of labiodental /v/

2. Labio-dental [v] may be heard in Andalusia as a variant of [β] in medial positions (Zamora Vicente 1979: 322). Although it never officially occurs in initial positions, except perhaps when orthographical clarification is needed or in cases of hypercorrection, I have observed that some Andalusians from Seville and Cádiz do produce the labiodental fricative in words beginning with both ⟨b⟩ and ⟨v⟩. This commonly occurs across syllable boundaries before vowels or aspiration. In Andalusia, where /s/ is frequently aspirated, *es vasto/es basto* ('he/she/it is vast/he/she/it is crude') may both be pronounced [e<sup>h</sup> 'vasto].

were noted. Her data suggests that, on average, [β] accounted for 4% of ⟨v⟩ realisations, [ʋ] for more than 33% and standard BrE [v] for approximately 62%.<sup>3</sup>

The findings of this study confirmed the presence of all three variants, and in addition, occasional use of the bilabial plosive [b] was noted in non-final positions. A comparison between these findings and those of Kellermann would appear to suggest that [v] is increasingly becoming the norm amongst the younger generation, now accounting for 83.61% of all ⟨v⟩ realisations (*n* tokens = 360).<sup>4</sup>

Kellermann found the variant [ʋ] to be present in her sample of six adult informants, with individual percentages ranging between 49% and 17%, leading her to venture the possibility of a “new intermediate form” (2001: 380). The findings of this study revealed that, although present, percentages were minimal in most environments. Kellermann writes of a “relatively stable covariation between the BrE fricative and the ‘new’ approximant”, principally citing intervocalic and word-final environments (2001: 381). This, however, was not the case in the present data which revealed very few examples of [ʋ] in intervocalic positions (2.78%), or word-final positions (4.22%). A certain concentration of [ʋ] was found after nasal sounds (e.g., *involve* [ɪm'vʊlv]), accounting for 16.67% of all realisations in this environment. Rather than a “new” form, [ʋ] may conceivably be, for a small minority, a transitional development form between StCast bilabial fricative /β/ and BrE labiodental fricative /v/. However, this intermediate realisation appears to have been bypassed by most informants.

Approximant [ʋ] as an allophone of /v/ is not a standard feature of BrE, although it does occur in fast speech, particularly intervocalically. It is, however, characteristic of some Indian speakers of English. The fact that the Indian community in Gibraltar revealed higher use of [ʋ] than the other ethnic groups may be partially due to IndE transfer, although even amongst this community frequency of use was low (10%). Use of standard BrE /v/ was most consistent amongst Jewish informants (89.67%).

Although age variation was small, as might be expected considering the high percentage of standard realisations overall, pre-adolescents were found to use standard /v/ more consistently than older teenagers. Combining age and sex variables, a familiar pattern emerged. Standard English /v/ was most common amongst boys

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3. These percentages are global adaptations of the Kellermann's findings which are presented in the original as a table of the individual frequency figures for each of her six informants (see Kellermann 2001: 380).

4. Findings are based on the analysis of 5 lexical items containing ⟨v⟩ produced by each of the 72 informants. Total number of tokens = 360.

aged 9–12, whereas teenage girls were most likely to maintain Spanish-influenced variants. Analysis of the class variable revealed that the lower social strata were most likely to use non-standard [b] and [β], however, given the fact that standard /v/ was the overwhelming norm in the speech community as a whole, percentage differences were small.

In ⟨b⟩ lexical sets, as expected, no divergence from BrE norms was noted in word-initial positions. Elsewhere, although in TW tests [β] was produced word-finally in ‘wardrobe’ by four teenagers and intervocalically by three teenagers in ‘rubber’, standard /b/ was the overwhelming norm in both controlled TW and RW tests as well as in casual conversation (CC).<sup>5</sup> The fact that [β] for ⟨b⟩ was absent from the speech of pre-adolescents, and was only occasionally present in speakers from the older age group, would seem to indicate that this Spanish type realisation is rapidly disappearing in Gibraltar.<sup>6</sup>

In word-final positions, however, 32 of the 72 informants produced fully devoiced [b̥] or released [p] rather than standard BrE /b/. These non-voiced realisations were most prevalent amongst the GibM ( $p = 0.00$ ), 56.25% of whom produced a voiceless plosive, possibly as a strategy to avoid the voiced fricative release which typically marks the pronunciation of Spanish speakers of English.

### 6.1.2 /ʃ/ /tʃ/ merger

The differentiation between fricative /ʃ/ and affricate /tʃ/<sup>7</sup> is notoriously problematic for Spanish speakers of English who often fail to distinguish between minimal pairs such as ‘share’/‘chair’ or ‘wash’/‘watch’. Both sounds exist in Spanish but only as regional allophonic variants. Thus, while *muchacho* (‘lad’) tends to be produced as [muˈtʃatʃo] in StCast, in regions such as the Canary Islands and Andalusia, there

5. Although intervocalic [β] is common in BrE in certain metrical contexts, and particularly in relaxed speech where consonant contact tends to be reduced (see Shockey 2003: 28), the use of bilabial approximants by the informants in question would appear to be due to Spanish transfer.

6. Present findings and conclusions contrast with those of Kellermann (2001: 375) who notes the use of [β] in 4 of her 6 informants in intervocalic and word-final positions and before ⟨l⟩ and ⟨r⟩. The fact that this variant was present in the speech of two informants whose “idiolects are generally quite focussed, tending towards the BrE acrolect end of the continuum”, leads her to suggest that there is “a persistence of the substrate-induced allophonic variation of *b*”.

7. The BrE voiceless affricate /tʃ/ is generally described as palato-alveolar (Cruttenden 1994: 160; Wells 2000: 15). The StCast affricate is similar but with a more palatal quality than its BrE counterpart.

is a strong tendency to use a fricative rather than an affricate release [mu<sup>1</sup>fəʃo]. This tendency is particularly marked in Cádiz.

In Gibraltar, the substitution of fricative /ʃ/ for affricate /tʃ/, due to Andalusian Spanish (AndSp) transfer, is evident in Yanito lexical items of English derivation. Vallejo (2001) lists several words spelt with ⟨sh⟩ which would suggest a fricative release (*el tisha/la tisha*, ‘teacher’; *bashe*, ‘batches’). Other entries, however, are spelt with ⟨ch⟩, suggesting the affricate /tʃ/ (*chakarau*, ‘bouncer’ or ‘chucker out’; *chingá*, ‘chewing gum’; *chitero/a*, ‘a cheat’). This would seem to indicate that both fricative and affricate realisations coexist and are at times interchangeable. The fact that ‘steam roller’ is given as *máquina chingle* (literally ‘shingle machine’) by Vallejo (2001), and Cavilla (1990) gives *administreichón* (‘administration’), might be the consequence of local hypercorrection or perhaps may simply be due to orthographic inconsistencies.

My own observations and the consensus of local opinion would seem to suggest that the above lexical sets tend to be stereotypically realised as fricatives rather than affricates. However, the findings of this study suggest that, for the most part, this stereotype is not applicable to the young Gibraltarian speech community. Although Yanito lexical items may be realised as fricatives when adopting a typical local accent for humorous purposes, when young informants spoke in English (rather than Yanito), /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ were differentiated in the vast majority of cases.

In both TW and RW tests all informants distinguished [tʃ] from [ʃ].<sup>8</sup> Although the word ‘picture’ was realised as [ˈpɪkʃɪv] by twelve of the informants, in this particular case, rather than AndSp transfer, it seems likely that fricative release is the consequence of cluster reduction, a process which is increasingly common in English.<sup>9</sup> Analysis of casual conversation (CC) revealed similar findings, with all informants consistently distinguishing between fricative and affricate realisations.

Considering that it is a common feature of the local AndSp accent, perhaps unsurprisingly, /ʃ/ realisations did not prove problematic for any of the informants and no cases of hypercorrection were noted. No cases of the /s/ /ʃ/ merger (‘sea’/‘she’) which affects some Andalusians were recorded either.

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8. The analysis of /tʃ/ was based on 9 possible realisations elicited from each of the 72 informants in various phonetic environments making a total of 648 tokens. For /ʃ/ five words were analysed making a total token sample of 360.

9. Although increasingly common in fast speech, this realisation is not reflected in either the 15th edition of *Daniel Jones English Pronouncing Dictionary* (1997) or *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (2000).



### 6.1.3 /ʒ/ /dʒ/ merger

Although StCast officially has only one affricate phoneme /tʃ/, lenis [dʒ] exists as a possible variant of palatal fricative /ʃ/. While fricative [ʒ] may exist in Andalusia as an alternative regional variant, the fact that one, but not both, may form part of a speaker's phonetic repertoire, makes it particularly difficult for Hispanophones to differentiate between the two distinct English phonemes /ʒ/ and /dʒ/. In medial and final positions /dʒ/ is often produced as /ʃ/ or /tʃ/. In Gibraltar, this tendency is reflected in the spellings of certain lexical items given in Cavilla's (1990) *Diccionario Yanito* (e.g., *achenda*, 'agenda'; *alchebra*, 'algebra'; *fridsh*, 'fridge'; *averesh*, 'average').

Although some participants in this study sometimes employed [ʒ] in place of /dʒ/, in most cases both phonemes were perfectly differentiated.<sup>10</sup> In controlled tests, eight of the seventy-two informants very occasionally produced [ʒ] or an affricate with a very light plosive first element. However, these realisations were only present in 1.94% of lexical items and were largely confined to word-final positions. Analysis of casual conversation revealed similarly low figures.<sup>11</sup>

The phoneme /ʒ/ did not cause undue problems. Although some cases of partial or complete devoicing were noted in lexical items such as 'television' and 'usual', this is not unusual in BrE. The word 'garage' was produced in various ways, although most informants favoured the current British trend, placing stress on the first syllable and producing a final Anglicised affricate, rather than the rapidly disappearing French-influenced pronunciation which puts stress on the second syllable followed by a fricative ending.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Kramer (1986: 84) argues that, whereas for Southern Andalusia the presence of [ʒ] may be the result of what Zamora Vicente (1979) terms 'rehilamento' (special vibration found in certain realisations of voiced consonants), in the case of Gibraltar "that development has gone one step further: the result is not a compromise sound, but an equivocal voiced fricative". He suggests that the fact that Genoese also has this sound might have something to do with this process.

11. Each informant produced 8 lexical items in which the phoneme /dʒ/ appeared once or twice in various word positions (*n tokens* = 720).

12. The results of the 1998 opinion poll which appear in *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (Wells 2000: 316) reveal that the pronunciation of 'garage' with second syllable stress is now a minority realisation (5%) in BrE. The most favoured realisation, particularly among younger speakers is ['gærɪdʒ].

Table 6.2 Different pronunciations of the word ‘garage’ in the sample

/ˈgɑrɪdʒ/	/ˈgɑrɪʒ/	/ˈgɑrɑtʃ/	ˈgɑˈrɑdʒ/	/gɑˈrɑːdʒ/	/ˈgɑˈrɑːʒ/
59 (81.94%)	1 (1.39%)	1 (1.39%)	5 (6.94%)	3 (4.17%)	3 (4.17%)

#### 6.1.4 /d/ /ð/ merger

In StCast the phoneme /d/ has two allophones in complementary distribution. It is produced as a dental plosive after a pause, nasal or lateral, but as a fricative in all other environments. Consequently, BrE /ð/ is often produced by Hispanophones with plosive quality and minimal pairs such as ‘there’/‘dare’ may not be differentiated. Similarly, in intervocalic environments, where AndSp tends to use a lightly fricative release, the opposition between ‘other’/‘udder’ may not be discerned. This having been said, ð/d mergers rarely affect intelligibility (Jenkins 2000: 137–8) and indeed, although /d/ and /ð/ are clearly distinguished in Southern BrE, in Southern Ireland, Merseyside and the Caribbean, for example, a partial or complete merger may occur (see Wells 1982: 428–31, 371 & 565–6).

In Gibraltar evidence of the traditional substrate-induced tendency to realise voiced ⟨th⟩ as a dental occlusive is suggested in the spelling of certain colloquial lexical items such as *ondikuaít* (‘on the quiet’ or ‘surreptitiously’). It is conceivable that the traditional presence of ð/d mergers in Gibraltar may be due, in part, to the influence of Irish English. The fact that the Irish Christian brothers were influential in the English education of the local population during the nineteenth and twentieth century (see chapter 1), may well have had a bearing on the local pronunciation. However, although /ð/ and /d/ are not contrasted in many Southern Irish accents, in the case of Gibraltar, it seems more likely that Spanish transfer is the prime source of the ð/d merger. Irish teachers may possibly have reinforced an already embedded tendency.

In 1992, Kellermann noted three voiced ⟨th⟩ variants in Gibraltar: standard [ð] which accounting for about 58% of all realisations, dental plosive [d] (12%) and a “new” form [ð̥] which she describes as “particular to Gibraltar” and which accounted for over 30% of all realisations. Kellermann describes this variant as identical to BrE [ð] in place of articulation “yet, in comparison to the BrE fricative, the aperture is minimally widened so that the airstream escapes without friction, and the sound acquires an approximant-like quality” (2001: 382). She suggests that its occurrence “may be accounted for by the more relaxed AndSp”.

The present study suggests that a notable shift towards BrE norms is taking place. Amongst young Gibraltarians, [ð] now accounts for over 90% of all realisations, while stopped [d̥] has diminished to less than 3%. The dental approximant [ð̥] referred to by Kellermann (which is interpreted as [ɹ̥]) is still

present, but in far fewer numbers (2%), and limited to intervocalic positions. Thus, as was the case with approximant [ʋ] (variant of /v/), this dental approximant would appear to be a transitional realisation which is becoming redundant as standard BrE /ð/ becomes more widespread. In addition to the variants observed by Kellermann, [dð] was also noted in the present study sample. This would appear to be another intermediate realisation between Spanish-influenced [d̪] and the BrE fricative [ð], but its presence was minimal. In word tests [ð] was practically categorical, and in casual conversation it accounted for almost 92% of all realisations.

**Table 6.3** Distribution of voiced ⟨th⟩ segments in casual conversation (n tokens = 2915)

	[ð]	[d̪]	[ɹ]	[dð]	[v]	[z]	∅
Number of tokens	2679	83	61	39	36	5	12
Percentage (%)	91.90%	2.85%	2.09%	1.34%	1.23%	0.17%	0.41%

As pronunciation stabilises, the first signs of non-standard variation within a British model begin to appear. Whereas the substitution of /ð/ with /d/ principally occurs through Spanish transfer, the use of /v/ instead of /ð/ (henceforth D TH-fronting) is very much a BrE-influenced phenomenon, and would be phonetically unnatural for Hispanophones.

#### 6.1.4.1 TH-fronting

##### *TH-fronting in Britain*

TH-fronting is the process of substituting standard dental fricatives /θ, ð/ with labiodental fricatives [f, v], resulting in the non-distinction of BrE minimal pairs such as ‘three’/‘free’ and ‘than’/‘van’. This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in the speech of English native infants who may find difficulty in producing the rather complex ⟨th⟩ segments. Although traditionally viewed in more conservative circles as a “speech error”, and usually corrected at an early age (by the speaker him/herself or by educators), for an increasing number, this feature may persist into adolescence and adulthood, either as a “speech defect” or as a regional variant (see Wells 1982: 96).

It should be stressed, however, that this type of substitution is not necessarily always ‘stigmatised’ *per se*. It depends largely on whether the realised [f] or [v] is articulated externally (i.e., with the teeth showing on the lower lip) or internally (i.e., with the teeth lightly approached to the base of the inner lower lip). While in the first case the ‘substitution’ tends to be noticeable, in the second case it may not be perceived at all. I am grateful to Gillian Brown for this clarification.

When perceived, TH-fronting is arguably still widely stigmatised in adult speech. It often has non-prestigious lower class connotations, and may be associated with poor standards of education. In recent years, however, attitudes have relaxed somewhat. In an increasingly accent-dispersed and multi-cultural society, greater phonetic tolerance allows alternative realisations to go unchecked and to gain in acceptance. Once associated almost exclusively with London Cockney, recent research has shown that the use of [f, v] for [θ, ð] is spreading both demographically and socially. TH-fronting has been noted, for example, in Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull (Williams & Kerswill 1999: 160), Derby (Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 51), the West Midlands (Mathisen 1999: 111), Norwich (Trudgill 1999: 137–8), Newcastle (Watt & Milroy 1999: 30), and as far as Glasgow (Macafee 1983: 38; Stuart-Smith 1999: 209).

#### *TH-fronting in Gibraltar*

It is significant that both (T)TH-fronting ([f] for /θ/) and (D)TH-fronting ([v] for /ð/) are practically unknown amongst Hispanophones. While both /θ/ and /f/ exist as StCast phonemes, they are very rarely confused, particularly as *seseo* (θ/s merger) is a common feature in many AndSp accents, as well as in Gibraltarian Spanish. (D)TH-fronting would be highly unusual in Spain as neither /ð/ nor /v/ have phonemic status. While dental fricative [ð] exists as an allophone of /d/ in intervocalic and word-final positions, the use of labiodental [v] is very restricted. Although a small number of speakers may employ [v] for [b] or [β], either as hypercorrection or as an idiolect, a ð/v merger would be an anomaly.

Whereas previous research in Gibraltar makes no mention of TH-fronting within the local adult community, this study found that, in controlled tests, 24 of the 72 informants (33.33%) showed clearly noticeable incidences of (T)TH-fronting, these figures rising to 37 (51.39%) in casual conversation. However, as in Britain, use was variable and standard and non-standard realisations coexisted in many speakers' inventories. In TW tests, [f] accounted for 10.75% of all voiceless ⟨th⟩ realisations (*n* tokens = 716).<sup>13</sup>

The overall figures for (D)TH-fronting were considerably lower than those for (T)TH-fronting. In controlled tests, 10 out of the 72 informants (13.89%) occasionally replaced [ð] with [v], rising to 14 (19.44%) in casual conversation. However, in both cases the level of consistency was negligible. Just 3.35% of

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13. Figures are based on the analysis of 10 voiceless ⟨TH⟩ produced by each of the 72 informants. Four tokens were invalidated, thus *n* tokens = 716.

TW voiced ⟨th⟩ lexical items and only 1.23% of all CC tokens were produced labiodentally.<sup>14</sup>

### 6.1.5 Aspiration of fortis plosives /p, t, k/

Whereas the presence of aspiration after pre-vocalic plosives is characteristic of BrE, StCast stops are not generally aspirated or are weakly aspirated. However, it should be noted that in other environments aspiration is a notable feature of the local AndSp dialect, particularly as a variant of /s/, (e.g., *Si* [hi], *peseta* [pe'heta]).

Although according to Errico (1997: 172), in Gibraltar “voiceless plosives /p, t, k/ are unaspirated in all positions”, subsequent studies have refuted this. Kellermann (2001) observed that initial fortis plosives were aspirated by her informants in 90% of the cases, although she notes “a strange covariation of aspiration and non-aspiration word-initially and medially, in the onset of stressed and unstressed syllables” (2001: 377). Cal Varela’s comprehensive study into the degree of aspiration of fortis plosives /p, t, k/ in Gibraltar (Cal Varela 2001: 270–324) found VOT (Voice Onset Time) values similar to those found in Britain. Given that aspiration is not a feature of StCast occlusives, he concludes that the high degree of aspiration found amongst the Gibraltarian population is indicative of extended exposure to native English from a young age (ibid.: 323).

The present research findings confirm the conclusions reached by Cal Varela, with VOT readings generally falling in line with BrE norms. All informants regularly demonstrated VOT values of more than 25ms, with the highest readings found in close vowels environments of the type [i] and [u].<sup>15</sup>

### 6.1.6 Initial /s/ + consonant

The fact that English post-pausal /s/ + consonant clusters are unknown in StCast often leads to epenthesis. Hispanophones may stereotypically insert a front vowel of the type /e/ before initial /s/ when followed by oral, nasal and lateral consonants (e.g., ‘start’ [e'stat], ‘small’ [e'smal]).<sup>16</sup> Although this may lead to the non-distinction of specific words such as ‘specially’ and ‘especially’, intelligibility is rarely affected.

14. Controlled test findings are based on the analysis of 8 voiced ⟨TH⟩ lexical items elicited from each of the 72 informants. Of the possible 576 tokens, nine were invalidated, thus *n tokens* = 576. Casual conversation findings are based on a total sample of 2915 tokens.

15. Findings are based on average VOT readings taken from ten lexical items (*n tokens* = 720).

16. Foreign borrowings tend to be adapted to Spanish orthographic and phonetic norms e.g., *esmókin*, ‘smoking jacket’; *esnób*, ‘snob’.

In Gibraltar, epenthesis is undoubtedly present in older speakers and is reflected in the orthographic representation of local Yanito words such as *escarte* ('skirting board') or *esprin* ('bed spring'). However, amongst the younger generations, this stereotypical pronunciation is much less common. In controlled tests no incidences were recorded, and although in casual conversation six of the seventy two informants did show signs of vowel epenthesis, use was sporadic and confined principally to non-homorganic environments, particularly in lexical items beginning with ⟨sp⟩ (e.g., 'Spanish', 'speak'). This Spanish transfer phenomenon was almost exclusively confined to the GibM. No incidences were recorded amongst either the Jewish or Indian informants.

### 6.1.7 Clusters and final consonants

Whereas almost all English consonant phonemes may occur word-finally, the distribution of Spanish ones is considerably more restricted. The pronunciation of BrE CVC and CVCC patterns can consequently cause difficulties for Hispanophones who may omit certain English consonants in word-final positions or when occurring in clusters. This is particularly common in Andalusia and appears to have also taken place in Gibraltar. Evidence for this can be seen in numerous Yanito words derived from English: e.g., *dóquia*, 'dockyard'; *tipá*, 'teapot'; *steimen*, 'statement'; *cimén*, 'cement'; *apoinmén*, 'appointment'; *sepli*, 'say please'; *conkli*, 'concrete'; *draf*, 'draft copy' (source: Cavilla 1990).

Although this might have been true in previous generations, particularly in established local words, little evidence was found for this tendency amongst pre-adolescents or adolescents in either controlled tests or casual conversation. When elision did occur, it usually fell within acceptable BrE norms (e.g., 'an(d)', 'thousan(d)s', 'las(t)').

Hispanophones, influenced by the allophonic distribution within their mother tongue, may produce English lenis plosives /b, d, g/ as fricatives [β, ð, ɣ] in intervocalic and word-final positions. In Gibraltar, however, although [β] featured occasionally (see section 6.1.1), no cases of Spanish transfer were recorded in controlled tests or casual conversation for /d/ or /g/.

The substitution of lenis plosives with fortis ones in final positions was noted in some speakers. Besides the use of [p] for /b/ as discussed in section 6.1.1, alveolar lenis plosive /d/ was produced as [t] by four informants (e.g., 'wide'; 'sad') and the alveolar lenis fricative /z/, which has no phonemic status in Spanish, was realised as [s] by seven informants in final positions (e.g., 'keys'; 'lies'). The fact that these voiced English consonant realisations do not occur word-finally in Spanish would appear to be the indirect cause of devoicing. Perhaps in an attempt to avoid typical Spanish final allophonic realisations, some speakers may overcompensate

and produce more familiar voiceless realisations in final positions. It was notable that this tendency was confined to the GibM and Moroccan communities.

In controlled TW tests, using fortis/lenis minimal pairs which tend to be problematic for Spanish speakers, 'write'/'ride'; 'juice'/'Jews'; 'peace'/'peas'; 'leaf'/'leave' were clearly distinguished by approximately 90% of the informants through voicing or the clipping of the vowel preceding the final fortis consonants. These minimal pairs did not appear consecutively but were spaced throughout the test and elicited from informants using Spanish prompts (e.g., *zumo de naranja*; *patatas con guisantes* for 'orange juice' and 'potatoes and peas'). Both words were produced identically by 4 informants in the case of 'write'/'ride', 7 for 'juice'/'Jews', 8 for 'peace'/'peas' and 6 for 'leaf'/'leave'.

Final /t/ was frequently affricated in controlled tests as well as in casual conversation, particularly amongst more fluent speakers.<sup>17</sup> In TW tests, 27.78% of informants frequently released final /t/ with frication [tʰ].<sup>18</sup> Although this variant was noted in the speech community as a whole, it was most evident in the Jewish community, where fricated release /t/ was employed by 50% of informants in TW tests and by 83.33% in Casual Conversation (CC).<sup>19</sup> In fast speech however, T-glottalling often substituted this variant.

#### 6.1.7.1 T-glottalling

##### *T-glottalling in the British Isles*

T-glottalling is the substitution of /t/ by the glottal stop [ʔ] (e.g., 'Gatwick' [ˈgæʔwɪk], 'great' [greɪʔ], 'get up' [ˈgeʔʌp], 'British' [ˈbrɪʔɪʃ]). It has traditionally been associated with less prestigious lower class accents from London and Glasgow but, as was the case with TH-fronting, its use has spread rapidly both socially and demographically. Accent and dialect studies have noted its presence in various parts of the English-speaking world, including Southern England (Fabricius 2000), Edinburgh (Romaine 1975; Macaulay 1977), Norwich (Trudgill 1974a),

17. Affricate or fricative /t/ release is present in certain English variants, particularly in London (Wells 1982: 323; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 46; Tollfree 1999: 171) and Liverpool (Wells 1982: 371; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 66; Newbrook 1999: 97).

18. Findings are based on the analysis of 5 lexical items containing word-final /t/ produced by each of the 72 informants. Of the possible 360 tokens, 1 was invalidated, thus *n tokens* = 359. Three or more affricated tokens was considered frequent usage.

19. Fricated /t/ release is a characteristic of a British Jewish accent, although this is more typical of Ashkenazi Jews than Sephardic Jews. The characteristic Jewish laminal (as opposed to apical) realisation of /t, d/ (Wells 1982: 303) was not a prevalent feature in Gibraltar.

Derby (Docherty & Foulkes 1999), Newcastle (Watt & Milroy 1999), Sheffield (Stoddart et al. 1999), Cardiff (Mees 1987; Mees & Collins 1999), West Wirral (Newbrook 1986), West Midlands (Mathison 1999) and Coleraine (Kingsmore 1995: 171 & 184).

### *T-glottalling in Gibraltar*

The fact that T-glottalling was found to be present in both pre-adolescents and adolescents was particularly interesting. As it has not been mentioned in previous literature, nor does it appear to be evident in *Generation I* or *Generation 2* speakers, it would appear to be a new emerging phenomenon amongst youngsters.

In controlled tests T-glottalling was employed by 42 of the 72 informants (58.33%) to varying degrees, although consistency was notably low; only 6.69% of the 1152 ⟨t⟩ tokens were produced as [ʔ].<sup>20</sup> However, given the fact that words and short sentences were produced in isolation and not in connected speech, this was to be expected, especially as [ʔ] tends to occur as a fast speech phenomenon. Nevertheless, the very fact that T-glottalling formed part of the GibE phonetic repertoire at all was considered significant. It does not feature in neighbouring Spain and it is particularly difficult for Spanish speakers to produce.

41.67% of all tokens were substituted with [ʔ] in word-internal pre-consonantal environments (e.g., ‘Gatwick’, ‘seatbelt’) and across word boundaries (e.g., ‘light blue’). Glottal replacement was, however, always avoided intervocalically and was unusual word-finally before vowels or pauses.

As expected, glottal stops became more evident in casual conversation. 93% of informants used T-glottalling to varying degrees, and only 5 produced no glottalised tokens whatsoever.<sup>21</sup> It rarely occurred in intervocalic positions within the same word (e.g., ‘better’, ‘rotten’) and was largely confined to less conspicuous environments before consonants, and in word final positions before a pause or before consonants and also less frequently before vowels across word boundaries. Thus, rather than being seen as a move towards a low prestige vernacular, the use of the glottal stop in Gibraltar in these environments can arguably be interpreted

20. Each of the 72 informants produced 16 lexical items where glottalling could potentially take place in various environments (*n* tokens = 1152).

21. Percentages are based on an analysis of a total of 937 tokens where glottalling could occur. Inevitably, the number of tokens produced by each of the 72 informants in casual conversation varied. T-glottalling was considered “frequent” when more than 75% of the individual’s tokens were glottalled.



as a fast speech phenomenon which is indicative not only of a shift towards British models, but is also a reflection of increased English language fluency.

This contention would seem to be supported by an analysis of its social distribution. It was the higher classes, and the Jewish and Indian communities, who revealed the highest rates of T-glottalling (see Figure 6.1). These social groups, as previously seen, consistently showed the highest level of English language preference.

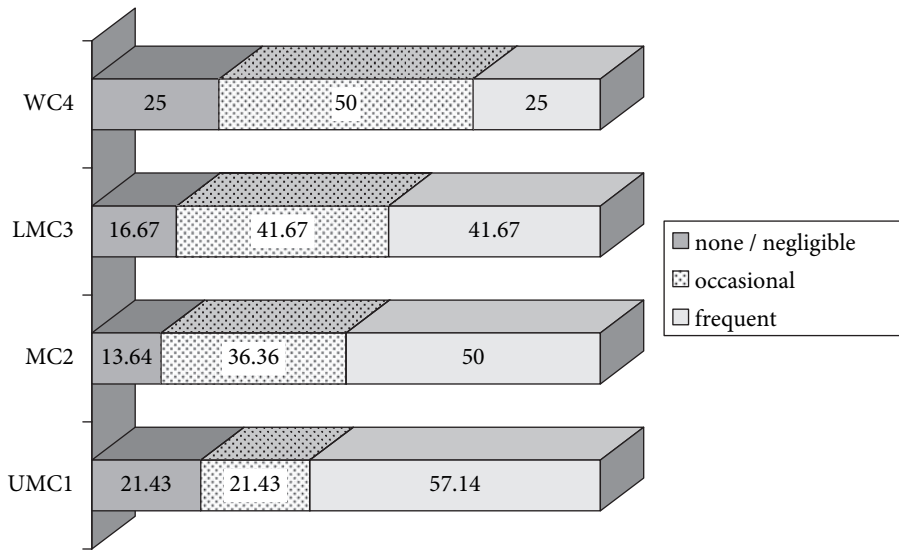


Figure 6.1 Degree of T-glottalling in casual conversation by class (n tokens = 937).

### 6.1.8 NG

The velar nasal /ŋ/ does not have phonemic status in StCast but it does occur allophonically before velar /k/ or /g/ (e.g., *ancla* ['aŋkla], 'anchor'; *rango* ['raŋgo], 'rank'). As it never appears in pre-pausal positions in StCast, except in borrowings such as *footing*, *marketing*, English word-final ⟨ing⟩ will tend to be realised as alveolar [n], thereby potentially leading to non-distinction of minimal pairs such as 'win'/'wing', 'sin/sing'.<sup>22</sup> The presence of this tendency in Gibraltar is suggested by the spellings of certain Yanito words derived from English e.g., *cilin*, 'ceiling'; *stikin plaste*, 'sticking plaster' (source: Cavilla 1990).

22. A final velar nasal may possibly occur in some Andalusian idiolects in certain lexical items such as *mejor* ('better') [me'hoŋ], although vowel nasalization in these cases is more normal [me'hō]. Neither of these variants was noted in the Spanish realisations of any of my interviewees, old or young.

While velar /ŋ/ is still common in BrE, it should be noted that speakers from the USA and the Caribbean tend to produce alveolar [n] rather than velar [ŋ] in final ⟨ing⟩ segments. This is also increasingly the case in several parts of Britain, such as, South East London (Tollfree 1999: 172), Cardiff (Mees & Collins 1999: 192), West Midlands (Mathisen 1999: 111), Derby (Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 51), Sheffield (Stoddart et al. 1999: 76), West Wirral (Newbrook 1999: 97–8) and Dublin (Hickey 1999: 271). Thus, the fact that 3 of the 72 informants regularly used alveolar [n] rather than velar [ŋ], and a further 7 did so occasionally, could either be interpreted as the result of Spanish transfer or alternatively as part of an ongoing trend in the English-speaking world.

In casual conversation, 31 of the informants (43.05%) occasionally produced final oral velar consonants after /ŋ/ in lexical items such as ‘sing’ [sɪŋg], ‘young’ [jʌŋg], ‘nothing’ [ˈnʌθɪŋg], and less commonly in gerunds (e.g., ‘cleaning’, ‘rowing’). This is not unusual in Britain (see Mathisen 1999; Docherty & Foulkes 1999; Stoddart et al. 1999; Newbrook 1999), and therefore its presence in Gibraltar suggests transfer from British models, particularly as final velar plosives do not occur in Spanish. In three cases the words ‘nothing’ and ‘something’ were realised with a final fortis velar plosive [ˈnʌθɪŋk]. This is common in London and has also been noted by the aforementioned authors in West Midlands, Derby and Sheffield.

### 6.1.9 J and W

BrE semi-vowel glide /j/ may be realised as an affricate or fricative of the type [dʒ], [j] or [ʒ] by Spanish speakers of English, and may result in the failure to distinguish minimal pairs such as ‘year’/‘jeer’ or ‘you’/‘Jew’. This, however, was not the case in Gibraltar where transfer was not noted in either controlled tests or casual conversation.<sup>23</sup>

The realisation of the back semi-vowel /w/ did not prove problematic either. For Spanish speakers, where the only words beginning with ⟨w⟩ are foreign borrowings or derivations, the semi-vowel /w/ may be difficult to pronounce, particularly when followed by a back vowel of the type [u] or [o]. Rather than a semi-vowel glide, Hispanophones may produce English words such as ‘wool’, ‘would’ with bilabial /β/ or with velar contact, thus making minimal pairs such as ‘good’/‘wood’

23. In Cavilla's (1990) *Diccionario Yanito*, several English borrowings and derivatives containing semi-vowel /j/ are spelt with ⟨i⟩: e.g., *iunion*, ‘union’; *tenkiu*, ‘thank you’; *fius*, ‘fuse’; *dóquia*, ‘dockyard’; *brauniú*, ‘brand new’.

particularly difficult to distinguish. This, however, was not the case amongst the participants in this study.<sup>24</sup>

It was noted that a few of informants elided /w/ altogether (e.g., ‘woman’ [‘umæn]), however numbers were not significant. Occasional Yod dropping was also present in certain contexts.<sup>25</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, in post-pausal positions, three informants deleted initial /j/ in isolated words (‘year’ [ɪɹ], ‘Yanito’ [a’nito], and ‘yes’ [es]). Clearly, in no way could this be described as a tendency, and this unusual realisation may be over compensation on the part of the speakers concerned in their attempts to avoid Spanish type fricative or affricate realisations.

In casual conversation, unstressed Yod coalescence (/tj/ > /tʃ/), which is common in Standard BrE, was present in many of the speakers word-medially and across word boundaries (e.g., ‘what you want’ [wɒtʃu ‘wɒnt]). However, what was somewhat surprising was the extended use of Yod coalescence in word-initial positions (e.g., ‘Tuesday’). This is arguably still considered non-standard in Britain, although it is rapidly spreading, particularly in the *Estuary* area. Of the 72 informants who made up this study, 29 (40.28%) showed signs of word-initial Yod coalescence. No particular stratification patterns were noted.

#### 6.1.10 H and H-dropping

The letter ⟨h⟩ tends to be silent in StCast except in foreign borrowings (e.g. *hall*, *Heavy Metal*). However, when speaking English, complete omission of ⟨h⟩ is unusual. Largely due to the influence of the Spanish *jota* ⟨j⟩, Castilian speakers often produce English initial and medial /h/ as a velar fricative [x] (e.g., ‘happy’ [‘xapi]).

In most parts of Western Andalusia, however, where aspiration is commonly present in the local accent (see Quilis 1993: 281), the English glottal fricative tends not to be unduly problematic. Thus, in neighbouring Gibraltar, perhaps unsurprisingly, velarized release was unusual. Nevertheless, H-dropping, or perhaps more accurately H-omission, was present in the speech of several informants, albeit in limited numbers and in restricted environments.

24. English words and derivatives containing semi-vowel /w/ are spelt with ⟨u⟩ in Cavilla (1990) e.g., (en) *famili uei*, ‘to be pregnant’ from ‘in the family way’; *uaij*, ‘wife’; *uornín*, ‘warning’.

25. As perhaps was to be expected, all 72 informants pronounced the word ‘suit’ as [su:t] rather than the more antiquated [sju:t]. According to a 1988 poll carried out for the *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (Wells 2000: 748), 28% of BrE speakers favour this second realisation with use being largely confined to older speakers. Today, 20 years after the survey was carried out, one would suppose that this realisation is nearing extinction.

*H-dropping in Britain*

H-dropping, the deletion of aspirate /h/, is, in the words of John Wells, “the single most powerful pronunciation shibboleth in England” (1982: 254). It is a phenomenon which has been in existence since at least the eighteenth century and during the Victorian period the aspirate H (or lack of it) became a clear social marker. Although H-dropping today is still popularly associated with London Cockney, it is a common feature throughout the British Isles, and research would seem to suggest that it is rapidly spreading both geographically and socially. Besides London (Hudson & Holloway 1977; Wells 1982; Tollfree 1996, 1999), H-dropping has been recorded in various parts of the UK including the West Midlands (Hughes & Trudgill 1987; Mathisen 1999), Milton Keynes, Reading and Hull (Williams & Kerswill 1999), Norwich (Trudgill 1974a; Wells 1982), Bristol (Hughes & Trudgill 1987), South Wales (Hughes & Trudgill 1987), and Merseyside (Hughes & Trudgill 1987; Newbrook 1999).

Studies tend to show that this phenomenon is considerably more common amongst boys (Kerswill & Williams 1999; Stoddart et al. 1999), where covert prestige and a desire for “street credibility” may be factors. Girls, on the other hand, tend to avoid non-standard forms which may invite negative judgements. However, as H-dropping becomes more widespread and less stigmatised, gender stratification patterns may be reinterpreted.

*H-dropping in Gibraltar*

In controlled tests in Gibraltar, /h/ was almost always produced in the initial position in words such as ‘happy’, ‘handbag’, ‘horses’. However, intervocalically in specific words such as ‘behind’ or ‘behaviour’, the glottal fricative was omitted by 12.50% of informants (boys: 19.44%; girls: 5.56%), and in /hj/ combinations (e.g., ‘huge’ [ju:dʒ]; ‘human’ [‘jumən]) by 18.05% of informants (boys: 25.0%; girls: 11.11%).<sup>26</sup>

H-dropping has been shown in previous studies to be subject to style stratification (see, for example, Trudgill 1974a: 131). This was also the case in Gibraltar. In casual conversation it was occasionally present in half of the speech community sample, although it was largely restricted to close-set items such as unstressed auxiliaries (e.g., ‘have’, ‘haven’t’, ‘has’, ‘had’) and unstressed pronouns (e.g., ‘he’, ‘his’,

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26. It is interesting to note that H-omission in [hj] combinations is a typical feature of certain Welsh varieties (see Mees and Collins 1999: 192), and this may partially explain why, according to some Gibraltarians, the local accent is sometimes mistaken for Welsh. Possible further explanations for this confusion might be found in the shared presence of a clearly released [l] as well as a distinctive rising intonation and stress pattern. This having been said, I personally hear little similarity between the two accents.

'him', 'her') as well as common lexical items (e.g., 'here', 'home', 'house', 'holidays', 'behind', 'who').

Of the 36 informants who occasionally dropped their *aitches*, 22 (61.11%) were male and 14 (38.89%) were female. This, at first sight, would be in keeping with previous studies which have shown girls to be considerably less likely to adopt stigmatised H-dropping than boys. However, although gender stratification was present and statistically significant ( $p = 0.059$ ), it is uncertain whether the same prestige/stigma parameters can be applied in the case of Gibraltar. H-dropping is by and large confined to non-conspicuous environments and would appear to be a reflection of language fluency rather than group identity.

Further weight was given to this contention when H-dropping \* school was analysed ( $p = 0.038$ ). Whereas the less well-considered school (Sacred Heart) had the lowest percentages of H-dropping, the more academically prestigious Hebrew School revealed the highest figures (see Figure 6.2).

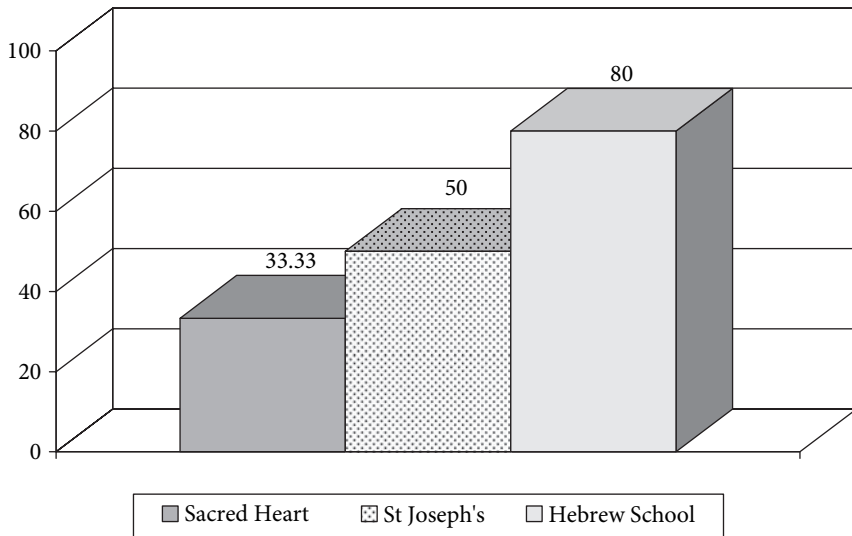


Figure 6.2 Distribution of H-dropping by middle school.

Analysis of class and ethnicity variables revealed that H-dropping was most prevalent in those sectors of the community which were, in general, phonetically closest to BrE. Whereas 66.67% of the Jewish and Indian communities dropped *aitches*, only 45.83% of GibM informants and 2 of the 6 Moroccan informants did likewise. Although differences were not great ( $p > 0.1$ ), the fact that H-dropping was slightly higher amongst the upper classes (57.14%) than amongst the working classes (50%) would seem to add further weight to the argument that it is fundamentally a rapid speech phenomenon, reflecting language fluency rather than social identity.

However, as it was noted that aspirate H was sometimes absent in the English of *Generation 1* and *Generation 2* speakers, alternative or parallel explanations are contemplated, leading us to consider the possibility of two distinct sources for H-dropping. Although the result may be the same, i.e., the non-pronunciation of the glottal fricative, reasons for this phenomenon may vary. In several cases, rather than H-dropping, which suggests active deletion, what was occurring was H-omission due to foreign language transfer. There was a distinctive Italian flavour to some realisations which leads one to suspect that the root source or cause of this phenomenon may, in some cases, be found, not so much in exogenous varieties of English, but rather in the history of language contact in Gibraltar.

The fact that the mother tongue of Genoese and Italian settlers was non-aspirate, and that these idiolects were still being spoken in Gibraltar at the beginning of the 20th century (Chiappe 2005: 55), may help to explain the embedding problem.<sup>27</sup> Although further study is needed, it is possible that the absence of aspirate /h/ in many cases, rather than being a new English-based phenomenon, may be a vestige of the Italian coloured pronunciation which formed part of traditional GibE, and has been passed down through the generations.

### 6.1.11 R

StCast /r/ has two distinct phonemic realisations in complementary distribution: flap [ɾ] (e.g., *pero* ['pero]) and multiple trill [r] (e.g., *perro* ['pero]). Although Spanish transfer rarely affects intelligibility, the tendency to employ Spanish taps or trills when speaking English is often a strong indicator of non-native speech.

#### *R in the the British Isles and beyond*

In most parts of England non-rhotic pronunciation is the norm.<sup>28</sup> With regards articulation, although flap [ɾ] occurs intervocalically, BrE generally tends to use a post-alveolar approximant [ɹ]. This realisation may be difficult not only for

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27. *Embedding* is one of the five problems which, according to Weinreich, Labov and Herzog (1968: 185) in their seminal paper 'Empirical foundations for a theory of language change', need to be addressed in order to explain language change in the field of secular linguistics. *Embedding* is fundamentally concerned with the problem of locating and analysing the linguistic and social settings where change takes place.

28. Rhotic accents are those where post-vocalic /r/ is pronounced (e.g., 'car' /kɑ:r/). This is common in Scotland, Ireland, Canada and the USA with the notable exceptions of Boston and New York. Trudgill & Hannah (2002: 47) note, however, that in these two areas, the pronunciation of younger speakers, particularly those from the higher social class groups, is becoming increasingly rhotic.

non-native speakers, but for some native speakers as well. Due to its approximant quality, it is one of the last phonemes acquired by children, many of whom may initially substitute labial-velar approximant [w], labiodental [ʋ] or bilabial approximant [β]. This strategy, which is often viewed as a minor 'speech defect', may persist into adulthood. Although still stigmatised in certain circles, labiodental [ʋ] is now widely accepted as regional variant and is spreading rapidly, particularly in the Estuary area.<sup>29</sup>

Although [ɹ] is considered standard in Southern England, several regional variants are present in the English-speaking world. In the north of England, Scotland and Wales the alveolar flap [r] is particularly common. It is found on Tyne-side (Watt & Milroy 1999: 30–1; Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 51), on Merseyside (Wells 1982: 272; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 67; Newbrook 1999: 99), in West Yorkshire (Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 63), in South Yorkshire (Stoddart et al. 1999: 76), in the West Midlands (Mathisen 1999: 111), in Cardiff (Mees & Collins 1999: 193) and in Glasgow and Edinburgh where alveolar trill [r] and retroflex approximant [ɹ] may coexist (see Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 77; Stuart-Smith 1999: 211; Chirrey 1999: 228).

Besides Scotland, retroflex approximant [ɹ] is found in Ireland (Wells 1982: 432; Hickey 1999: 272), the south-west of England (Wells 1982: 342; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 52) and parts of the USA. However, according to Trudgill & Hannah (2002: 40), the acoustic quality of the North American /r/ is, for many speakers, achieved not so much by retroflexion (the curling of the tongue back) but rather by "the humping up of the body of the tongue".

Interestingly, in her proposal for a new phonological core for International English, Jenkins (2000) favours the General American retroflex approximant [ɹ] rather than the RP non-rhotic post-alveolar approximant [ɹ], for reasons of phonetic/orthographic concordance: "the GA variant is simpler for both production as there is only one version to acquire, and for reception as it is always realized regardless of which sound follows" (Jenkins 2000: 139–40).

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29. Rosewarne's (1984: 29) original description of Estuary /r/ is far from clear, leading Wells (1994c) and Maidment (1994) to question both the possible place of articulation and its validity. Whether it is predominantly realised as a labiodental approximant [ʋ] or a velar approximant [u] is debatable. However, an approximant variant, notably different from RP [ɹ], undoubtedly exists, and is particularly widespread in the South of England. For Estuary English see: Altendorf 1999a, 1999b; Coggle 1994; Jenkins 2003a: 113–6; Haenni 1999; Levey 2001; Levey & Harris 2002; Maidment 1994; Parsons 1998; Rosewarne 1984, 1994; Wells 1992, 1994a, 1994b, 1997a, 1998). A regularly updated Estuary English website containing various academic papers, newspaper articles and references can be found at: [www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/estuary/home.htm](http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/estuary/home.htm).

Uvular [ɣ] is still found in the North East of England, particularly in rural areas of Durham and Northumberland, where it is known locally as the Northumbrian burr. Although once fairly common, it is quite rare today and largely confined to older speakers (Wells 1982: 368-70; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 72; Watt & Milroy 1999: 30-1).

Retroflex flap [ɻ] is a feature of Indian English, although many younger IndE speakers are adopting alveolar approximant [ɹ] or alveolar tap/flap [ɾ] (see Wells 1982: 629; Trudgill & Hannah 2002: 130).

### *R in Gibraltar*

GibE is non-rhotic. Word-final post-vocalic /r/ did not feature in this study, except in the case of two Moroccan informants. Across word boundaries, linking /r/ was employed by only 29 of the 72 informants in common lexical items (e.g., 'far away'). The slow delivery of many informants and the characteristic absence of weak forms partially explain the fact that this standard BrE feature was avoided by the majority of local speakers. There was no evidence of intrusive /r/.

When Kellermann carried out her study in the early 1990s, she found [r] to be widespread, particularly amongst those informants born in the 1940s (Kellermann 2001: 398). However, this study found that the post-alveolar approximant [ɹ] is the norm today amongst pre-adolescents and adolescents, accounting for more than 80% of all realisations (see Table 6.4), whereas flap [ɾ] was generally absent, appearing only occasionally in word and syllable-initial lexical items (e.g., 'rubber', 'arrive') and after consonants (e.g., 'crazy', 'dress'). No incidences of Spanish /r/ were recorded amongst 9-12 year olds, with use being confined to a small group of older male GibM teenagers, only two of whom used it with any degree of consistency. Whereas Kellermann (2001: 398) found multiple vibrant [r] to be present in her older informants, this present study found it to be completely absent in 9-19 year olds.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 6.4** Distribution of R by phonetic environment (n tokens = 771)

WORD INITIAL			INTERVOCALIC			POST CONSONANT		
[r]	[ɹ]	[v]/[β]	[r]	[ɹ]	[v]/[β]	[r]	[ɹ] [ɻ]	[v]/[β]
1.4%	83.09%	14.04%	0.00%	83.17%	16.83%	2.16%	83.09%	14.75%

30. The figures presented here are based on the analysis of eleven lexical items where ⟨r⟩ appeared in initial, intervocalic and post-consonantal positions (*n tokens* = 771).



Interestingly, of the 771 tokens analysed, 115 (14.92%) were labiodental [v] or bilabial [β] approximants. As these variants are not mentioned in previous literature, and my own observations and analysis found no evidence of them among the adult population, at first sight at least, they may be considered new phonetic features. However, although variants such as [v] appear to be spreading amongst young speakers throughout Britain,<sup>31</sup> in the case of Gibraltar, it is too early to say whether this can be viewed as the start of a permanent trend.

As few informants had spent more than a total of eight weeks of their lives in Britain, it is difficult to see how and where these realisations originated, particularly given that the Spanish /r/ is very different, requiring firm single or multiple alveolar contact. Although linguistic exchanges with British tourists and visitors might conceivably influence the speech of certain sectors of the community (e.g., shopkeepers and shop assistants), this is unlikely to affect the pronunciation of schoolchildren directly to any great degree. While a very small number of informants occasionally helped out in family businesses at weekends, contact was not intense enough to throw light on the matter. Besides the fact that these exchanges are generally short, Gibraltarians are potentially exposed to a variety of accents through tourism, and it seems unlikely that pre-adolescents would have acquired this predominantly localised non-standard feature through sporadic contact of this type.

It is feasible that they were copied from English language television, but as cable and satellite programmes offer an array of accents where, if anything, American English is dominant, such a hypothesis appears unconvincing. Surveys into local TV viewing preferences of local youth (see chapter 4) revealed nothing to explain why some informants might consciously adopt or unconsciously acquire a minority variant such as labiodental [v] rather than more ubiquitous realisations such as retroflex approximant [ɹ].

Sociophonetic analysis revealed different stratification patterns to those one might expect for a non-standard variant, and unlike in Britain, [v]/[β] realisations did not appear to carry stigma or covert prestige associations. In contrast to most of the findings of this study which have shown males to be consistently more likely to innovate than females, in the case of [v]/[β], these features were considerably more prevalent in girls (36.1%) than boys (11.1%) ( $p = 0.021$ ). Social class and education

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31. Besides being present amongst many younger speakers in London and the surrounding area (see Tollfree 1999: 174), this variant has been recently noted, albeit in small numbers, in Newcastle (Watt & Milroy 1999: 30; Docherty & Foulkes 1999: 51), Merseyside (Newbrook 1999: 98), the West Midlands (Mathisen 1999: 111), Norwich (Trudgill 1999: 133), Reading, Milton Keynes and Hull, (Williams & Kerswill 1999: 147).

did not prove to be significant factors, nor were these variants dominant in any one ethnic group.

Rather than new phonetic innovations, these labiodental and bilabial approximant variants in the young Gibraltarian speech community appear to be developmental forms. As previously discussed, in Britain, the complexity of [ɹ] often leads to a more front approximant realisation amongst young children which may or may not be corrected at a later stage. Analysis of the age variable ( $p = 0.045$ ) suggests that this is the case in Gibraltar as well. Although [ʋ] and [β] were present in the speech of 13.16% of teenagers, figures were considerably higher amongst pre-adolescents (35.29%). This would therefore appear to suggest that they are temporary transitional forms which may be corrected at a later stage in the speaker's phonetic development. The fact that none of the informants over the age of 17 showed evidence of these variants would seem to strengthen this argument.

Only future study can ascertain whether the labiodental [ʋ] or bilabial [β] approximants present in the speech of some pre-adolescents will eventually give way to standard BrE [ɹ] when phonetic systems stabilise, or whether they will continue into adolescence and adulthood. If they do persist, the question is whether they will then be seen as uncorrected or non-correctable 'speech defects', or, as is increasingly the case in Britain, they will be considered valid local variants.

Whichever the case, the presence of these features is significant, providing further evidence of a continuing shift towards British English. Given that Spanish flaps and trills involve clear articulatory contact, it would be arguably inconceivable for Hispanophone children to produce an approximant realisation by defect. Thus, the presence of [ʋ] and [β] variants suggests that Gibraltarians are increasingly exposed to approximant realisations rather than Spanish-type taps or trills from a young age.

#### 6.1.12 L

Whereas BrE has two principal lateral allophones in complementary distribution (clear [l] before vowels and semi-vowels e.g., 'lost' [lɒst] 'allure' [ə'ljʊː] and dark [ɫ] before consonants or a pause e.g., 'fall' [fɔːɫ], 'sold' [sɔʊɫd]), StCast /l/ is clear in all positions.

#### *L variants in the English-speaking world*

Although complementary distribution of clear [l] and dark [ɫ] is characteristic of Southern English accents, this is not always the case in Northern English varieties where clear/dark divisions are often blurred (Wells 1982: 370–1; Docherty & Foulkes: 1991: 51).

In many accents, both inside and outside Britain, /l/ is clear in all environments. In England, this is true of Newcastle (Watt & Milroy 1999: 31) and

Sheffield (Stoddart et al. 1999:76), although dark [ɫ] does occur occasionally in final positions. In South Wales, the lateral /l/ tends to be clear (Wells 1982: 390; Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 57; Cruttenden 1994: 184) with the exception of Cardiff and the Anglicised south-east (Wells 1982: 390; Mees & Collins 1999: 193) which has the same allophonic patterning as standard Southern English.

In other areas of Britain, dark or darkened variants may be present in all environments. This is true, for example, of North Wales (Wells 1882: 390) and Hull where Williams and Kerswill note that “/l/ is lightly velarized in both syllable-initial and syllable-final positions” (1999: 148). In North America, /l/ is considerably darker than in Britain (Wells 1982: 125) and this is also true in New Zealand and Australian English where initial /l/ is notably dark (e.g., ‘loyal’ [lɔɫ]) (Trudgill and Hannah 2002: 18).

The use of clear or dark /l/ may also vary depending on social class, age and gender. In Glasgow, Stuart-Smith (1999: 211) found that ubiquitous dark [ɫ] is particularly common amongst the working class. In Sandwell in the West Midlands, while /l/ is frequently dark in the speech of males (e.g., ‘leave’ [fi:v], ‘plate’ [plætɪ]), females may favour clear realisations in pre-vocalic environments (Mathisen 1999: 111).

Trudgill (1999: 132) found that whereas in rural East Anglia /l/ has traditionally always been clear, dark [ɫ] is now present in the urban centre of Norwich. This led him to predict that this new feature would eventually spread to the surrounding area (ibid.: 140). It could be argued that dark forms are more phonetically innovative and often the result of faster speech patterns. Accent or dialects tend to level from clear to dark and not the other way round.

Particularly among younger speakers, there is an increasing common tendency to reduce or omit velar contact, leading to vocalic realisations in the close back region ranging from [ö] and [ɤ] to [ʊ] or [u].<sup>32</sup> This phenomenon, known as L-vocalisation, is traditionally associated with Cockney speech and more recently with Estuary English (Rosewarne 1984, 1986, 1996; Wells 1992, 1994c, 1997a, 1998; Maidment 1994; Altendorf 1999a, 1999b; Lillo Buades 1999; Levey 2001).

Although tolerance is increasing, L-vocalisation remains stigmatised. Negative attitudes towards what seems to be a natural phonetic progression, would appear to owe much to its associations with low prestige Cockney and the class and education prejudices it instils. Many would argue that it is only a matter of time, however, before L-vocalisation becomes standard practice, and indeed

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32. As Wells (1982: 259) points out, L-vocalisation has important implications for the English vowel system, offering possible status to new diphthongs such as [ɪʊ] or [ɪö] in ‘milk’ or ‘pill’ and [eʊ] or [eö] in ‘melt’.

Jenkins argues that it already has: “The majority of RP speakers already pronounce pre-consonantal dark [ɫ] as /ʊ/ in non-careful speech, although many would probably deny that they do so” (Jenkins 2000: 139). In her *Lingua Franca Core* (LFC), Jenkins proposes the vocalised /l/ as an acceptable alternative to the difficult dark [ɫ]: “The production of dark [ɫ] is problematic for most learners of English, and many never acquire it. On the other hand, its regular substitution with either /l/ or /ʊ/ is unproblematic for EIL intelligibility”. She goes on to argue that as dark [ɫ] does not exist in Welsh English, “it thus seems unreasonable to have ‘higher’ expectations of L2 speakers” (2000: 139).

Johnson & Britain (2002) argue that L-vocalisation is a naturally occurring phenomenon, and from a phonetic point of view it seems fair to say that L-vocalisation is a progression from velarization, where the contact of dark /l/ becomes gradually lighter until it disappears completely. It could be argued that a non pre-vocalic clear /l/ may evolve into a dark l which in turn may eventually become vocalised.<sup>33</sup>

L-vocalisation has been reported outside London in several parts of Britain such as Reading and Milton Keynes (Williams and Kerswill 1999: 148). In the West Midlands, Mathisen (1999: 111) notes that this phenomenon is particularly common amongst young speakers. Docherty & Foulkes (1999: 52) note that it is taking root amongst young working-class males in Derby, and this is also the case in Glasgow (Macafee 1983: 34; Stuart-Smith 1999: 210). Outside Britain, L-vocalisation has been observed in the USA, particularly in New York (Wells 1982: 517), in New Zealand (Bauer 1986: 231), and in Australia (Borowski & Horvath 1997).

### *L in Gibraltar*

Gibraltarian /l/, as in StCast, is traditionally clear in all positions (Kramer 1986: 87; Errico 1997: 173). This is particularly evident in the speech of older Gibraltarians and is most probably due to Spanish transfer. According to Kramer “l is always pronounced with tension [...] in the final position, l is pronounced as in any position” (1986: 87). Although Kellermann (2001: 395) notes incidences of dark [ɫ], these were only present in small numbers, leading her to conclude that clear [l] is “a salient feature” of Gibraltarian English.

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33. Just as the difference between clear and dark /l/ can not be viewed in simple binary terms, some would argue that there are degrees of vocalisation (Hardcastle & Barry 1985; Wright 1989: 358; Kerswill 1995: 197). However, as Shockey (2003) rightly points out, from a strictly acoustic point of view, the difference between vocalised and velarized should, in fact, not be open to debate. If articulatory contact takes place, it should signify a consonant. On the contrary, if no contact takes place, a vocalic realisation is implied. For Shockey, the problem “lies in deciding how much tongue-palate contact can be allowed for a vowel, and what it means for a consonant to be “partially vocalised” (2003: 35).

My own analysis of adult speakers, using face-to face interviews as well as archive recording analysis, confirms this view. Of the six Generation 1 and Generation 2 adults interviewed, five consistently used clear /l/ in all environments. Only one interviewee employed velarized forms to any degree of consistency. The fact that the informant in question was evacuated to London during the Second World War and lived and worked in the South of England for 15 years, may explain the presence of dark /l/ in his phonetic repertoire.

This present study aimed to test whether the clear /l/ is still the norm amongst younger speakers, or whether darker realisations are finding their way into the local speech. To this end, a total of 1001 lexical items were analysed in casual speech. These contained /l/ in the following positions: pre-pausal (e.g., 'shell'), pre-consonantal (e.g., 'belt') and syllabic (e.g., 'bottle').<sup>34</sup>

Initial findings showed that lateral /l/ remains predominantly clear in Gibraltar, and fully dark [ɫ] realisations, when employed, were usually inconsistent and subject to phonetic context, speed of delivery and word familiarity. However, if we consider English /l/ realisations in terms of a continuum from clear /l/ at one end to vocalised /l/ at the other, there is evidence to suggest that a shift towards darker realisations is taking place in Gibraltar.<sup>35</sup> In order to gauge this process, each lexical item was graded from 1 to 5 and an average score calculated.

- 1 = Clear
- 2 = Quite clear
- 3 = Darkened
- 4 = Dark
- 5 = Vocalised.

Perhaps not surprisingly, L-vocalisation did not prove to be a significant feature amongst Gibraltarian youth. Although some isolated incidences were noted, it is premature to talk of a possible future trend in its infancy, and further study is necessary in order to gauge the development and permanence of possible change.

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34. Initial analyses of /l/ in casual conversation revealed that style stratification did not prove overtly significant. Therefore for reasons of homogeneity and statistical accuracy the findings of the controlled tests are presented based on 14 TW lexical items produced by each of the 72 informants. Of the possible 1008, 7 were invalidated, thus *n tokens* = 1001.

35. As no incidences were recorded, neither retroflex [ɭ] (common in IndE) nor alveolar lateral fricative [ɬ] (typical in Wales) are contemplated here.

Given the fact that previous studies have shown clear /l/ to be practically categorical in Gibraltar, the findings of this study appear to indicate the possible start of a phonetic shift in its early stages. Whereas, 55.44% of all lexical items were produced as a clear /l/, varying shades of velarization were evident (see Table 6.5).

**Table 6.5** Distribution of L in pre-pausal and pre-consonantal environments (n tokens = 1001)

Clear	Quite Clear	Darkened	Dark	Vocalised
55.44%	18.78%	13.99%	10.09%	1.70%

Homorganic syllabic environments (e.g., 'bottle', 'beetle') proved the most conducive to velarization, while clear /l/ realisations were most evident in pre-pausal positions when preceded by a strong vowel or diphthong (e.g., 'shell, bull, goal'). In this setting, 81% of lexical items were clear or quite clear.

**Table 6.6** Distribution of L by phonetic environment (n tokens = 1001)

	Clear	Quite Clear	Darkened	Dark	Vocalised
Pre-pausal /l/	70.39%	10.61%	8.40%	6.42%	4.19%
Pre-consonantal /l/	47.8%	23.11%	18.13%	10.96%	0%
Syllabic /l/	44.68%	24.11%	13.47%	16.31%	1.42%

Preceding vowel quality proved relatively significant, with dark forms being appreciably more likely after front vowels (/i/ /e/) (23.95%) than back vowels (/ʊ/ /u/ /ɔ/) (17.28%). This at first sight appears surprising. Given the fact that velar and palato-alveolar consonant environments tend to favour velarization, one might expect back vowel environments, due to their velar proximity, to be most conducive to dark /l/. However, Hardcastle & Barry's research into the phonetic environments and factors which influence L-vocalisation using EPG (electropalotography) reveal similar findings (see Hardcastle & Barry 1985: 43).

Quantitative analysis, based on average individual realisations, revealed that the use of dark and darkened /l/ was slightly more extended amongst the younger age group (52.94%) than the older age group (47.36%), although divergence was not great enough to be strictly statistically significant. Gender correlation, on the other hand, was considerably less ambiguous ( $p = 0.053$ ), with darker realisations more evident amongst boys than girls (see Figure 6.3).

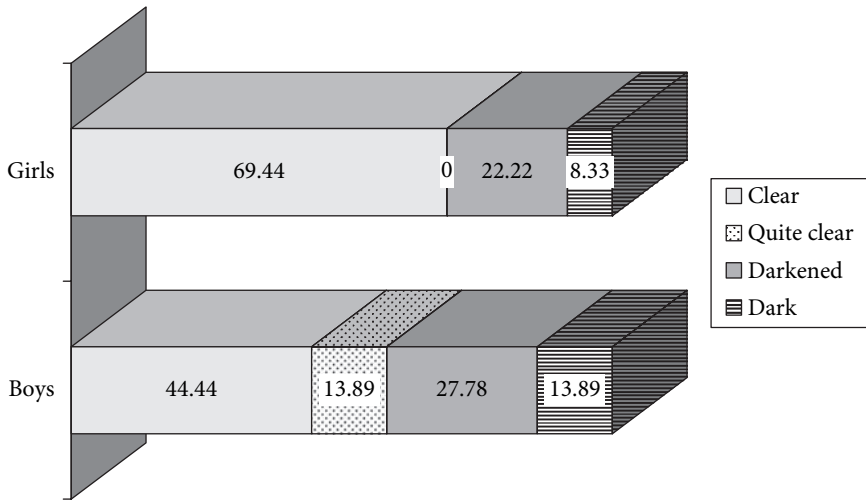


Figure 6.3 Distribution of L in pre-pausal and pre-consonantal environments by sex.

Statistical analysis confirmed the class stratification pattern which has been repeated throughout this study ( $p = 0.017$ ). Whereas all working-class (WC4) informants employed traditional GibE clear [l], 71.43% of UMC1 informants preferred dark or darkened realisations (see Figure 6.4).

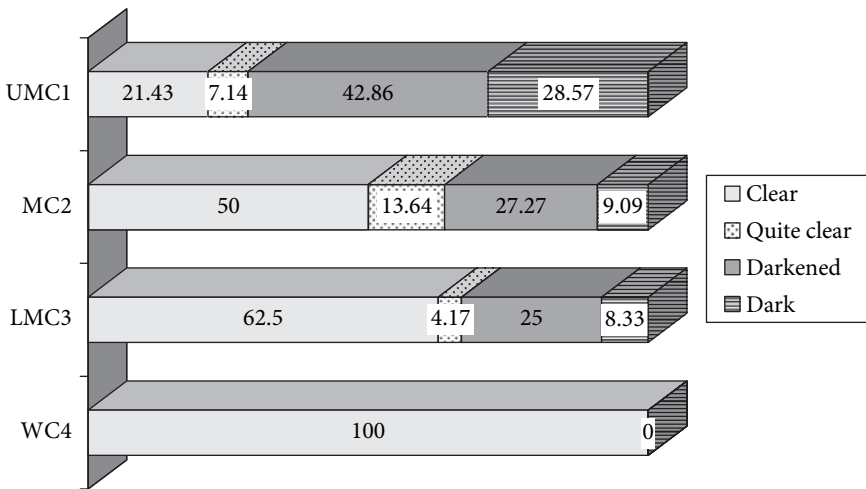


Figure 6.4 Distribution of L in pre-pausal and pre-consonantal environments by class.

Analysis of ethnicity, although in this case not strongly significant ( $P > 0.1$ ), reiterated the same distribution patterns which have been shown elsewhere in this study. Whereas language maintenance (through Spanish transfer) was strongest

amongst the autochthonous majority, the Jewish community was most likely to adopt BrE dark [ɫ] forms (see Figure 6.5). The fact that a high degree of clear /l/ realisation was noted amongst the predominantly English-speaking Indian community may possibly be explained in terms of IndE transfer, since the corresponding lateral tends to be clear in all environments (Wells 1982: 629).<sup>36</sup>

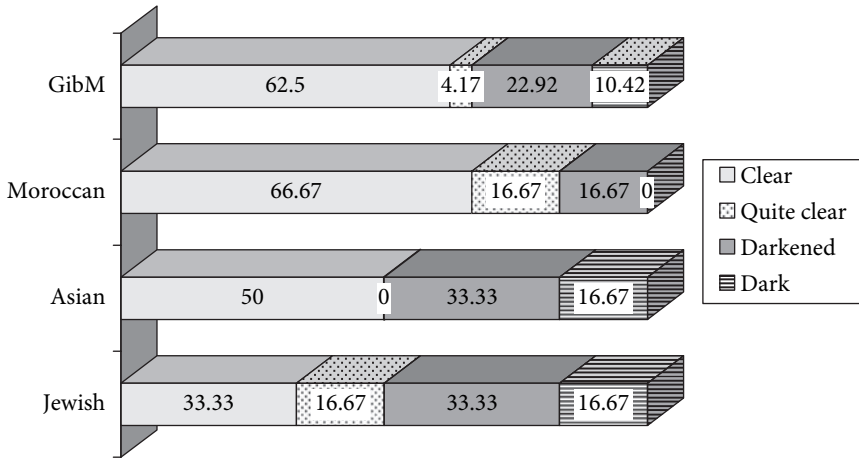


Figure 6.5 Distribution of L in pre-pausal and pre-consonantal environments by ethnic groups.

In conclusion, although the use of clear /l/ in all environments remains the norm in Gibraltar as a whole, the findings of this study suggest that a process of velarization, although still in its infancy, may be underway. Accepting that the presence of clear /l/ in Gibraltar is a consequence of Spanish transfer, it would appear that the use of darker /l/ realisations is intrinsically linked to increased English language competence and fluency amongst younger speakers.

Innovation and language change, once again, proved to be considerably more noticeable amongst boys who, as was shown in chapter 4, tend to speak more English than girls outside the home domain. Similarly, the fact that darker /l/ realisations were significantly more evident amongst the higher classes than the lower classes, would appear to be a reflection of levels of education and a more Anglophone orientation on the part of the upper strata. This is also suggested through ethnic stratification patterns, where Jewish informants showed the strongest tendency towards dark /l/, while clear /l/ maintenance was more evident amongst the GibM.

36. Although IndE /l/ tends to be realised as a clear alveolar lateral, amongst older speakers retroflex lateral approximant [ɭ] (e.g., 'although' [v:ɫɫʰo:]) may be used (Trudgill and Hannah 2002: 130). No examples of this realisation, however, were recorded in this study.



There are, as yet, few incidences in Gibraltar of the increasingly common British trend towards L-vocalisation. This is not surprising considering that the process of velarization in Gibraltar is still in progress. Starting from the premise that lateral realisations within an English language framework form a clear to dark continuum, vocalised /l/ can arguably be seen as the culmination of the process. Thus, it would seem unusual to jump from clear /l/ to vocalised /l/ without first passing through an interim period of velarization. Three informants were found to consistently, but not exclusively, produce vocalised /l/. However, it is clearly unsafe to draw any reliable conclusions about possible future trends in Gibraltar on the basis of such a small and variable sample.<sup>37</sup>

## 6.2 Summary and conclusions

Previous academic and popular literature suggests that certain GibE consonant realisations are subject to Spanish transfer. Although this appears to be still true in older speakers, amongst the 9–19 year olds who made up this study, divergence from BrE norms was limited. Unlike the Gibraltar vowel system which revealed a high measure of inter-speaker variability, the GibE consonant system, in general, appears to have attained a considerable level of stability. This has been partially facilitated by the fact that a greater degree of direct overlap exists between Spanish and English consonant systems than vowel ones.

Those consonant realisations which are potentially subject to variability can be classified in four categories according to the stage of transition in which they find themselves.

1. Consonants which have completed their transition and where no, or practically no, trace of Spanish transfer is evident.
2. Consonants where transition is almost complete, although vestiges of Spanish transfer are still evident in a small minority of informants.
3. Consonants which are in their early stages of transition towards BrE norms.
4. Non-standard consonant variants within a BrE framework.

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37. All of the three informants in question were GibM teenagers with a high level of English language fluency. Two were male and one was female, two were lower-middle class (LMC3) whereas one belonged to the upper class (UMC1). A further 7 informants revealed occasional or isolated examples of L-vocalisation.

*Category 1*

The considerable majority of GibE consonant realisations coincide with BrE ones. Typical Spanish “errors” such as the mergers of /tʃ, ʒ/dʒ and j/dʒ, the non-aspiration of fortis plosives, pre /s/ + consonant epenthesis, cluster and final consonant omission, the velarization of /h/ and the frication of final /g/ were generally absent from the speech of young Gibraltarians.

*Category 2*

Whereas the consonants mentioned above appear to have completed the transition, other consonant realisations such as labiodental ⟨v⟩, voiced ⟨th⟩ and ⟨r⟩ still show signs of Spanish transfer, although in all cases BrE realisations are the overwhelming norm.

In the case of ⟨v⟩, whereas Kellermann, in 1992, found that labiodental fricative /v/ accounted for about 62% of all realisations, the present study found that usage has increased to 83.5% amongst the new generation. Although [b] or [β] are still present, these Spanish realisations are rapidly disappearing, and as the shift towards BrE norms nears completion, use of the transitional labiodental approximant [ʋ] in this context is becoming increasingly less frequent.

Whereas Kellermann found that Standard BrE /ð/ accounted for only about 58% of all voiced ⟨th⟩ realisations, the present study found that it is now used by 91.9% of young Gibraltarians. Spanish type [d̪] realisations are rapidly disappearing as are the transitional realisations [ɾ], [ð̞] or [dð̞].

Previous studies suggest that Spanish phonemes [r̄] and [r] were once the predominant ⟨r⟩ realisations in Gibraltar. Amongst young Gibraltarians, however, BrE approximant realisations are fast becoming the norm. No cases of multi-vibrant [r] were recorded in this study and alveolar tap [r̄] accounted for less than 2% of all ⟨r⟩ tokens.

*Category 3*

Other consonant realisations are slower to change. This is the case of ⟨l⟩. Previous studies (Kramer 1986; Errico 1997; Kellermann 2001) have shown that ubiquitous clear [l] is practically categorical in GibE. The findings of this study suggest that, although clear [l] still predominates, there is evidence of a shift in its early stages towards darker realisations in non pre-vocalic environments.

Although the original source of traditional GibE [l] almost certainly lies in neighbouring Spain, since clear [l] is also widespread throughout the English-speaking world, the local realisation may not necessarily be perceived as substrate-induced, and thus change may be optional. In Gibraltar, the shift towards darker realisations arguably has more to do with fast speech phenomena due to

increased fluency than an active desire to follow Standard BrE allophonic distribution norms.

#### *Category 4*

As consonant realisations begin to stabilise the first signs of non-standard variation within a British English framework begin to appear. In Gibraltar, although percentages are low, the first signs of L-vocalisation, labiodental approximant [ʋ] in ⟨r⟩ realisations, TH-fronting and T-glottalling are beginning to emerge. Although it is arguable whether the presence of these variants can be considered a trend, the fact that these features are unknown in Spanish, appears to add further evidence of an increasing shift towards an English phonetic inventory.

Although occasional H-dropping (or omission) was noted, it was largely confined to inconspicuous environments and did not appear to be subject to prestige/stigma judgements. Rather than being seen as a non-standard English language variant, its presence, in some cases, was interpreted as a possible vestige of ancestral Italian influenced pronunciation.

As divergence from BrE norms was not great overall, not surprisingly, age, sex, class and ethnic stratification were not as statistically significant as they were for vowels. Nevertheless, when divergence was present, similar patterns emerged to those exhibited in chapters 4 and 5.

Speaker ethnicity and social class proved to be the strongest conditioning factors. Once again, language maintenance through Spanish transfer was most evident in the GibM, while the pronunciation of the Jewish and Indian communities was closest to BrE norms. Spanish transfer was most evident amongst the lower classes.

Whereas pre-adolescents and adolescents frequently revealed clear differences in vowel realisations, consonant variability was considerably less marked. This suggests that whereas vowel realisations are undergoing apparent time change, a relatively stable consonant system based on a British model, has already, by and large, been established.

## Summary and conclusions

In a multilingual community such as Gibraltar where most speakers can communicate, to varying degrees, in two or more languages, language choice can not be viewed in simple binary terms. Speakers will tend to accommodate and adapt their speech forms and language choice to suit the situation and the linguistic strengths or preferences of their interlocutors.

While English has been the official language of Gibraltar since the early eighteenth century, largely due to geographical proximity, Spanish language variants have traditionally been spoken on the Rock in all but formal environments. This arguably remains the case today, but there is evidence to suggest that language shift is taking place.

The initial seeds for this development were sown after the Second World War when Gibraltarian evacuees, many of whom had been exposed to English for the first time, returned to the Rock with increased English language confidence. Although this induction, combined with the introduction of a British education system helped to set change in motion, it was arguably not until the escalation of cross-border tensions in the 1960s and 1970s that the local population was given the necessary motivation to embrace the English language.

Underpinning this study is the contention that the complete closure of the border between 1969 and 1982 had a direct effect on the linguistic development of the local population. Largely as a consequence of this singular action, various political, social and socio-psychological factors combined to provide an environment ripe for language change. Empirical research started out from the initial hypothesis that an accelerated shift towards English language preference was taking place amongst the new generation of Gibraltarians. Although this process was initiated in the generation who experienced the blockade first hand, it was felt that consolidation, change and innovation would only begin to become truly manifest in the next generation. This hypothesis has been corroborated by self-report data as well as phonetic analysis in this study.

Findings showed that a significant and ever increasing number of young Gibraltarians feel more comfortable speaking English in home and school environments. As the local speech community begins to speak English from a younger age, levels of language proficiency appear to be rising; one in three informants

claimed to have a higher level of English than one or both parents. This is partly the consequence of conscientious efforts on the part of elders to encourage the use of English at home as well as in school. Significantly, whereas Spanish or Yanito remained the principal means of inter-parental communication, English was more commonly used between parent and child.

While previous studies have shown that for many older Gibraltarians English language acquisition began at school, there are now signs to suggest that the opposite phenomenon is beginning to take place. Although it should be stressed that cases are still few in number, some local children do not come into contact with Spanish until they start school. While further research is needed to monitor the situation, it is true to say that concerns have been voiced locally, particularly amongst those who support a bilingual approach to education, that levels of Spanish language competence are falling.

The fact that more pre-adolescents than adolescents claimed to speak English in home and school environments may be interpreted as proof of ongoing language shift. However, an alternative or parallel explanation is admissible. In some cases, the differences in language behaviour between the two age groups may be explained by the endeavours of parents and educators to give youngsters a firm grounding in English from an early age. These imposed norms may be relaxed when the child gets older.

Variationist research and theory argues that unlike children's speech, which is closer to parent established norms, adolescent speech tends to be more influenced by peer-based identities (Wolfram 1969; Macaulay 1977; Eckert 1988, 1997, 2000, Kerswill 1996a; Kerswill & Williams 2000). As Gibraltarian teenagers gain a degree of autonomy and move away from parent-oriented networks, it is possible that they may choose to revert to traditional language patterns. This reversed language shift may be motivated by acts of teenage rebellion, statements of local identity or as a means of accommodation, integration or acceptance into peer groups.

Moreover, although there was no reason to question the honesty of informant responses, the possibility that self-report tests might be subject to over-reporting was contemplated, particularly in the case of younger informants who are more parent or educator-focussed. Given the possibility that subjective assessment may lead to a discrepancy between stated and real language choice, in order to affirm our initial hypothesis, self-report data was contrasted against sociophonetic findings.

Informants revealed a clear shift towards BrE norms and generally demonstrated limited evidence of the Spanish substratum effects which have traditionally coloured English vowel realisations (e.g., KIT/FLEECE or TRAP/STRUT/BATH mergers) and consonant features (e.g., /ʃ/tʃ merger, dʒ/ʒ/j merger, non aspiration of fortis plosives). Whilst a more BrE phonetic orientation does not, in itself, necessarily prove that Gibraltarians are adopting English as their preferred form

of expression, sociophonetic findings would seem to add credibility to the self-report data and therefore give further weight to the contention that language shift is taking place.

With a degree of phonetic stability established, it was notable that non-standard BrE variants, which have hitherto been absent from the local vernacular, are beginning to appear in the speech of young Gibraltarians.

Although GibE /l/ still remains predominantly clear in all environments, data suggests that there is a shift in its early stages towards darker realisations in pre-pausal and pre-consonantal environments; at the extreme end of the continuum, the first isolated cases of non-standard L-vocalisation are also beginning to emerge. As regards R, the labiodental approximant and bilabial approximant variants [v] and [β] were noted in several speakers. Further real time study is needed, however, to determine whether they will take hold as dialectal features or, as is more likely, are simply developmental variants which may or may not be corrected at a later stage. Whichever proves to be the case, it is significant that like L-vocalisation, this approximant realisation is very much an English feature rather than a Spanish one. If parents have a low level of English and feel they are not in a position to correct their children's pronunciation or enforce standard norms, these features may go unchecked.

Two other non-standard variants were recorded in the speech of young Gibraltarians: T-glottalling and TH-fronting. As these variants are not evident in adult speakers, they can be classified as new emerging phenomena, following similar trends to those taking place in Britain. Once again, the fact that these features are unknown in Spain would seem to provide further evidence of an increasing shift towards an English phonetic inventory.

T-glottalling was present, to varying degrees, in more than 93% of young informants, although it was uncommon in intervocalic positions. The fact that it was most evident in casual conversation, particularly in commonly used lexical items would seem to suggest that it is fundamentally a fast speech phenomenon and a manifestation of increased English fluency and increased exposure to British pronunciation models.

TH-fronting was evident in 50% of young speakers, although levels of consistency varied. Its recent emergence in the speech of local pre-adolescents and adolescents, either as a permanent or temporary developmental variant, is considered significant. As θ/f and ð/v mergers are highly unusual in Spanish speaking children, it would imply that Gibraltarians are exposed to an English phonetic system from a young age and this feature may now be inbuilt.

I would argue, however, that non-standard variants such as T-glottalling and TH-fronting can not be treated and measured in the same sociolinguistic terms as they are in Britain. There is no clear evidence to suggest that stigma or covert

prestige associations are, at present at least, attached to these realisations. The fact that T-glottalling was more evident amongst the higher classes than amongst the lower classes, and most common amongst the more Anglophone Indian and Jewish communities, would seem possibly suggest that it is fundamentally a marker of colloquial English fluency.

In the present study the age, sex, social class and ethnicity of the speaker proved to be important variables conditioning language behaviour in Gibraltar; the sociophonetic distribution patterns by and large complemented those revealed by quantitative analysis of the self-report findings.

Overall findings showed that in, most contexts, pre-adolescents were approximately 50% more likely to use English than their adolescent counterparts. Although, as argued, it is possible that this is the consequence of short term language pressure on younger children, phonetic analysis supports the contention that apparent time language change is taking place, since the younger age group also showed the greatest approximation to English pronunciation norms. While this does not preclude the possibility that Spanish language forms are adopted at a later stage, it does not detract from the fact that overall levels of English appear to be improving, varying from generation to generation and even from sibling to sibling. As pronunciation becomes more codified and more focussed, it is perhaps natural that innovation also proved most prevalent in the younger age group.

Gender studies tend to show that, while boys are more likely to adopt non-standard language forms, females veer towards more prestige language forms (see, for example, Trudgill 1972, 1974a, 1983; Lakoff 1973; Chambers & Trudgill 1980; Labov 1990; Gordon 1997: 48). Given that English is generally considered to be the most prestigious language in Gibraltar, the fact that English language preference was stronger in boys than in girls would appear, at first sight, to go against the grain. This apparent anomaly can partly be explained by the high degree of language tolerance that characterises this multilingual community. While the local Spanish variants are not considered to be highly prestigious, they are not overtly stigmatised either. Of the two variables, age was more influential than sex. Whereas percentages for language maintenance were highest in adolescent females, language change and innovation was strongest amongst pre-adolescent males.

Although the samples studied were small, ethnolinguistic variation appears to be evident in Gibraltar. The Jewish and Indian communities were the most Anglophone of the four communities. These two groups tended to have family and ethnic community ties outside Gibraltar as well as trade and business contacts away from the Rock, therefore making them less tightly tied to the wider speech community. Language maintenance, on the other hand, proved strongest within the autochthonous majority (GibM). This having been said, generational language shift was most notable in the GibM, with younger generations speaking considerably

more English than their parents do. Phonetic analysis complemented the self-report findings, with standard and non-standard British English features being most evident amongst Jewish and Indian informants. The Moroccan community, the least integrated and most marginalised of the four speech groups, proved difficult to assess; in some homes neither Spanish nor English were spoken.

In terms of social stratification, Spanish language maintenance and Spanish transfer were most evident amongst the lower classes, whereas the higher classes were generally closer to BrE norms. In many cases, however, due to the sampling problems discussed in chapter 3, class and ethnicity variables overlapped; Jewish and Indian informants tended to belong to the higher MC3 or UC4 social strata while Moroccan informants predominantly fell into the lower class brackets. It was notable that within the autochthonous majority similar class based patterns were maintained, although stratification was less marked than in the speech community as a whole. However, to see Gibraltar as a strict class-structured society would be erroneous. The fact that the higher classes tended to be more Anglophone in orientation may largely be explained in terms of education and travel opportunities abroad.

Variationist research suggests that language change is more likely within mobile social networks where loose tie members, through exogenous linguistic contact, may import non localised features into the speech community which may then lead to permanent language change (Trudgill 1986, 1992, 1996; Milroy and Milroy 1992; Cheshire et al. 1999; Williams & Kerswill 1999).

The present findings suggest that it is the middle-classes who reveal the highest percentages of non-localised features. This would appear to be in keeping with Milroy & Milroy's (1992) contention that the more privileged middle classes with external ties of a non-kin nature are the most likely to innovate, whereas the less geographically and socially mobile working-classes, who tend to maintain closer ties with the family and their immediate environment, are less susceptible to language change. However, while it seems reasonable to assume that mobile and loose-tie elements bring change into the speech community as a whole, it is not clear whether a purely class-based approach to weak/strong ties is applicable to Gibraltar.<sup>1</sup>

Although findings confirmed that it was the more mobile higher classes who had most contact with Britain, the hypothesis that posited a direct relationship

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1. Kerswill & William's research into language change in Hull, Reading and Milton found that mobility and social class can function independently (see Williams & Kerswill 1999: 56; Kerswill & Williams 2002).



between language maintenance and contact with neighbouring Spain could not be demonstrated. The somewhat surprising picture that emerged was that, given the proximity of Spain, cross-border relationships were fairly limited; few informants had Spanish friends and contact with Spain was largely confined to shopping and family day trips involving limited linguistic interchange. The legacy of the thirteen-year blockade is undoubtedly an important factor. Although the border has been open for almost a quarter of a century, and conscientious efforts at official levels are being made on both sides of the frontier to improve cross-border relationships, the process of re-establishing lost contact is a slow one.

While the home domain is fundamental in initiating the patterns of language behaviour, as the child becomes less parent-focussed, peer influence may condition subsequent language selection and use. The school environment appears to be an important channel through which language norms and innovation are propagated. Given the fact that non-standard features such as T-glottalling and TH-fronting are not apparent in the adult community, it seems likely that they are transmitted through school networks.

While these features, once mainly associated with London working class accents, have rapidly spread both socially and demographically to other parts of Britain, it is striking that they were found in Gibraltar. Due to its unique multi-lingual colonial status, British based variationist sociolinguistic theories are difficult to apply to Gibraltar. Although, as the official language of Gibraltar for three centuries, it could be argued that GibE has every right to be treated as a legitimate English language variant or dialect, language change in Gibraltar cannot really be classified as a dialect levelling process in its early stages, or at least not in the same way as it is perceived in a monolingual British context.

Dialect levelling implies the replacement of local features with standard or non-standard features which are more widespread (Trudgill 1986: 26; Cheshire et al. 1999: 1; Watt & Milroy 1999: 26; Williams & Kerswill 1999: 149; Britain 2002: 35; Milroy & Gordon 2003: 130).

Levelling occurs in conditions of high dialect contact when speakers of different varieties interact, and, in their attempts to accommodate to their interlocutors, avoid features that are unusual or regionally marked in favour of forms with wide social and geographic usage. Such interactions, replicated across populations, can lead to permanent language change. (Cheshire et al. 1999: 1)

Although on the one hand this seems to be what is happening in Gibraltar, an arguable prerequisite for true dialect levelling to take place is a degree of initial stability. In the case of Gibraltar, the process of change from Spanish to English dominance is still in its infancy. Although young speakers are increasingly adopting standard and non-standard English features in line with British norms, it is still

premature to talk about levelling in a speech community where AndSp and Yanito arguably still predominate, and English, in many cases, is infused by L1 transfer.

However, it seems more than possible that as English gains further ground, GibE will continue to converge towards BrE. The fact that most informants looked favourably on British English is an important factor. Research into speaker socio-psychological orientation has stressed the importance of a positive attitude towards a given model as a requisite for language change (Labov 1963, 1972a; Milroy & Milroy 1997; Dyer 2002) and a negative disposition as impeding or delaying the process. This shift, at present at least, is facilitated by the fact that young Gibraltarians do not generally view the (stereo) typical local vernacular as a legitimate dialect or accent as such, but rather as English impregnated with Spanish phonetic features which often reflect the “linguistic limitations” of the speaker.

One of the main problems of applying weak tie theory to the case of Gibraltar is that there is no neighbouring English-speaking community to exert a direct influence on the isolated British colony. Although it is likely that new language variants such as T-glottalling or the labiodental approximant [v] are imported from Britain, it is still unclear exactly how such relatively localised features have reached Gibraltar, particularly as they are not evident in the speech of the adult population.

Exogenous contact in itself would not appear to be sufficient to fully explain such rapid change in the speech community. As an imposed prerequisite for selection, none of the informants had lived outside Gibraltar, thus any contact with the UK was limited to short visits and family holidays. Two other possible sources of “embedding” can be put forward, although once again, neither in isolation is completely satisfactory or all-encompassing: language change may be brought about through face-to-face contact with English-speaking visitors or residents, and/or standard and non-standard linguistic features may be acquired via English language satellite media. The specific source of change remains to a certain extent an enigma, but what is clear is that language change is occurring in Gibraltar because a sufficiently firm linguistic foundation has been established in which to innovate.

In order to explain what Weinrich, Labov & Herzog (1968) termed the “actuation problem” of why language change is set in motion, socio-psychological factors need to be taken into account. In a diffuse speech community where linguistic norms are not strictly codified, language expression may be an act of identity. As Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985: 181) argue, the speaker adapts his/her linguistic behaviour towards the group he/she wishes to identify with. Given the often tense relationship that exists between Gibraltar and neighbouring Spain as the result of the sovereignty problem, the decision to be seen and heard to be British is a strong motivating factor for language change. In a society such as Gibraltar,

which vehemently defends its British status and strongly opposes any political attempts at devolution, language may be a clear expression of national identity and allegiance.

However, in the words of Britain's former Prime Minister Harold Wilson (1916–95) “a week is a long time in politics”. Situations alter, relationships evolve, and of course languages change. Although the 13 years of isolation may linger in the memory of older Gibraltarians, it is history for the new generations of Gibraltarians.

The future linguistic direction that Gibraltar will take, in the short term as well as the long term, is far from certain. Although the present study suggests that there is a clear shift towards English, it is still unsure whether this will be sustained. Furthermore, if it does continue, the question is whether this language change will take place at the expense of Spanish. One hopes not. There are various possibilities and options in this multilingual society. Much will depend on how the trilateral relationships between Gibraltar, Spain and Britain will develop.

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