

The project aims to verify the status of ongoing phonetic change regarding the weakening of the phoneme /s/ in coda position in the Spanish variety spoken in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The research will be based on a newly created, self-made corpus, composed of fragments of programs from the radio stations broadcast in the city.

Ecuador is one of the smallest, but at the same time one of the most diverse countries of Latin America. The diversity is reflected also in the language. Despite of being a small region on the map of the Spanish-speaking world, apart from numerous local languages, it can pride itself of many dialectal varieties of Spanish. However, the linguistic diversity is not reflected by the state of the art. Ecuadorian linguistics is limited to a few publications and the most extensive and complete one of them is still *El español del Ecuador* by Humberto Toscano Mateus, dating back to 1953. Moreover, there are no publicly available corpora of speech for this geographic area.

There is even less scientific interest in the variety of Spanish spoken on the coast of the country. On the one hand, it is not surprising that authors of such a scarce literature focused on the variety spoken in the capital city, Quito. On the other hand, after analyzing social, geographic and historical context, the absence of research on the language used in the metropolis of Guayaquil turns out to be a severe gap in the literature. Guayaquil, located on the coast, is Ecuador's biggest city and one of the most important harbors of the western coast of South America. The city is the economic center of the country. The capital – Quito, located in the mountain – is administrative, cultural and academic center. The two regions have never undergone a full merger, to a large extent because of the natural border of Andes. As indicated by Humberto Toscano Mateus, no navigable river connects them and in the 18th century, a journey from the harbor of Guayaquil to the capital city of Quito took 26 days and sometimes was impossible for half a year, because of winter rains. Due to historical, social, and even geographic and climatic reasons, the rivalry between the two urban centers is still persistent. As a consequence of the colonization process, among other reasons, the regions represent two separate linguistic zones.

/s/-phoneme is one of the most frequent in Spanish and, as such, it undergoes a number of phonetic processes. One of them is the weakening, consisting in the change of place of articulation. It is estimated that the phenomenon occurs in 50% of Spanish dialects. Linguists often relate its intensity with the social status of speaker and the speech style.

The aim of basic research is the development of knowledge and widening horizons of science. This is exactly the aim of the project proposed – it is aimed to help understand the relations between extralinguistic and linguistic factors in a variety of Spanish practically not investigated so far. Tackling the proposed subject is motivated by the lack of satisfying instrumental analyses of /s/-weakening and almost non-existent linguistic literature concerning the region investigated. Moreover, the development of a complete linguistic tool and creation of the first corpus of the Guayaquilean speech is an important input into Hispanic linguistics.