Evaluating the Origins of Black Spanish Dialects in the Caribbean and Northern Coastal South America

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Introduction

Dialects are varieties of a language used by groups smaller than the total community of speakers of the language according to Francis (1983). We all speak with our own individual idiolects; a manner of speech that is completely distinct to an individual, one which no other speaker of the same language has. However, these distinctions are minute, making it possible for speakers of the same language to understand one another. Nevertheless, dialects manifest themselves not only within the individual but also within specific areas of any given country. Everyone that lives in the northeast of the United States is able to distinguish, to varying degrees,
the difference between their own speech and the manner in which someone from the South speaks. Although these differences are accentuated to us, nothing more is said other than the fact that it is different. Society has seemingly agreed to accept this manner of speech whereas in other cases it has not. Speech produced by many urban Blacks or by whites from extremely rural regions has continuously, been perceived as substandard speech, indicating that that person somehow has substandard intelligence because they speak with a certain “accent”.

This phenomena is not only present in English, Spanish, like other languages around the world, has many dialects. It is the official language of twenty countries around the world. Approximately 320 million first language speakers reside throughout the Americas, Europe, and Africa. It is estimated that by the year 2000, first language Spanish speakers will number 420 million making 7% of the world population Spanish-speaking (internet source). The majority of Spanish-speakers reside in three areas: the Iberian peninsula (Spain), Africa (Equatorial New Guinea), and Latin America.

The national language of all of Latin America, Spain and Equatorial New Guinea excluding Brazil, Guyana and French Guyana is Spanish. In these areas, Spanish has developed with as many phonological variations as has English. Lipski (1994) states that the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America can be split into several dialect zones. Mexico and Central America, then the Caribbean including Panamá, Honduras, and Nicaragua and finally South America. South America is further divided into several zones with Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela in the first zone; Perú and Bolivia constituting the second; Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay constituting the final dialect zone (each country can be divided further into several dialect zones).

Spanish is spoken with a variety of distinct dialects and phonological variations, that vary within each country. In most countries near and around the Caribbean, because of the large African influence as well as influence from settlers from Andalucia and the Canary Islands, the greatest of these variations occurs between the coast and highland areas. As slaves, Africans were transported to the coastal areas of the Caribbean and northern shores of South America, bringing
with them African languages that may have influenced the way they learned Spanish. It is hypothesized that because of this, throughout Latin America, many dialects have taken on phonological features of many of the parent languages brought by the Africans. This is especially true in the Caribbean and northern coastal regions of South America because of the particular environment in which Africans found themselves once in the Americas.

Unlike other immigrants of the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, Africans were brought to the Americas in chains, destined to forced labor. Distinct to the American system of slavery, South American masters did not keep close contact with the slaves they owned. Usually, under the South American system, slaves worked in “gangs” under the watchful eye of another African or in some cases another white. They had their own quarters and, often, were allowed free association with one another. Their work areas were almost always isolated and far away from other white communities. In this manner many of their customs, languages, and religious practices remained unaltered, unlike in the United States (Manzano 1995). Their isolation from other Spanish-speaking people added further variables such as language learning and interference of parent languages to the acquisition of Spanish. In some cases, because there was no constant contact with native speakers of Spanish, the formulation of pidgins and eventually creoles began to appear throughout Latin America. In Panamá, Cuba, and Colombia this very situation occurred creating Lucumi in Cuba, Palenquero in Colombia, and Congo in Panamá. Despite the similarity in the parent languages, all three creoles remain very different from one another (Lipski 1986).

Many linguists however, have attributed Black speech, not to the African speech patterns brought by the slaves but to the influence of early Andalusian and Canary Islanders settlers who inhabited these areas. Andalusian and Canary Islander speech possess the same phonological processes that occur in the Black coastal speech of Ecuador and the Caribbean; the most prominent of these mechanisms being weakening, aspiration, and deletion effects. Although, the relevant time periods of the migration theories correspond, it is hard to convincingly argue that the African language influence had no lasting phonological or overall linguistic effects.
In the Republic of Ecuador, a small Andean country in the far northwest corner of South America, dialects differ greatly from region to region. Ecuador and the surrounding areas are linguistically categorized with only two zones; the highlands and the coast. However, like other South American countries, Black dialects were influenced by their native languages of Africa. In Esmeraldas, Ecuador where the population is majority Black, the influence of African culture and language systems is visible. Afro-Ecuadorians created a culture that integrates the mainstream culture as well as customs and cultural practices that were brought from their native African lands. The coastal dialectical difference of this area can be seen in literature created by Afro-Ecuadorians called "décimas" in which poems with ten lines invoke colloquial phrases, pronunciation, and sentence structure from the Black dialect (Whitten and Quiroga 1995). Furthermore, when speaking to a Black esmeraldeño, one immediately notes the difference in sentence structure and phonology from that of other parts of the country.

While many of the linguists who study Black Spanish dialects advocate migration theories, it is imperative that we begin to look and understand theories which contend that African languages had influence on the Caribbean and coastal dialects of Latin American Spanish. Migration theory states that Andalucians and Canary Island inhabitants going to the Spanish owned Americas settled throughout the Caribbean and northern coast of South America (Penny 1991). My argument will focus on these African influences in order to explain the historical significance of the phonological features that occur in predominantly Black regions of Spanish-speaking Latin America. While, I do subscribe to parts of the migration theories, I do not believe that Andalucians should be entirely credited with the dialects of those regions in the Americas. As will be explained in detail later, Niger-Congo languages as well, have similar phonological features that may historically explain the dialects of the Caribbean and northern coastal South America. I plan to first discuss the historical contexts of the regions. This hopefully will give insight and reason for why the migration theories and African language influence theories have predominated. Secondly, I will examine both the Andalusian dialect and several of the Niger-Congo languages that are accredited with
influencing the dialects of those regions today. Lastly, I will examine research that I completed in Ecuador that will further shed light on this ongoing debate.

Overview of Main Argument

It is the intention of this research project to bring diverse ideas to the forefront on the current debate on the origins of Black Spanish dialects. Throughout the Caribbean and South America, many academics and linguists have continually attributed these origins to the influences of southern Spaniards from the Andalucian areas who settled in the coastal areas of Latin American countries. However, many of these academics and linguists seem to depreciate the influence that Niger-Congo languages have had on coastal speech. It is indisputable that with the influx of so many African slaves from West Africa that their native languages affected the Spanish they learned. Ecuador is no different, the history of Blacks in this country remains intertwined with the history of Blacks throughout the Americas. Although the industry of the slave trade unravelled itself much differently in Ecuador, we must continue to question the complete dominance of the influence of the Andalucian dialect.

The phonological rules that govern the dialect of Esmeraldas remain different from the rules that govern “standard” dialects of Ecuador. I wish to prove that although the influence of Andalucian Spanish is apparent, these factors were not unique in the determination of how Blacks came to speak Spanish in Ecuador and the Caribbean. The four phonological rules that I will investigate, will prove that Andalucian Spanish was only one of several factors that determine
Black dialects; the weakening and aspiration of word-final and syllable-final /s/ phoneme; free variation between the phonemes /l/ and /r/; deletion of word final /d/; and velarization of the word final and syllable-final /n/ phoneme.

I will attempt to prove this by relying on data collected from Esmeraldas, Ecuador. During the second week of October, I completed my research by taping several groups of students roughly between the ages of 14-18 as well as taping an older gentleman approximately 40 years of age. I was able to have the older gentleman speak freely about the political situation in the country as well as read a short paragraph. I was unable to have the students read this paragraph due to some unforseen difficulties. I was then to travel to the Chota Valley region to complete the same type of study however was mandated to leave early because of the imminent threat of an eruption of a volcano inside the city of Quito. Although I was not able to do this comparison, I have collected data from several academic sources namely the Hispanic language linguist John M. Lipski, who authored several articles and a book specifically dealing with the area of Afro-Hispanic linguistics.
Map 1.

The map above displays the two areas of Ecuador in which this research project is concentrated. Esmeraldas and the surrounding areas shaded in and the Chota Valley area also shaded.
This map indicates the Spanish-speaking Caribbean that exhibits the phonological features discussed throughout this research project. The darkened areas are the regions in which much of the debate is centered.
Chapter 1: Historical Context

The history of Ecuadorian Blacks has been shrouded with mystery and controversy for years. No one seems to know exactly how the Black population came to exist in Ecuador. One hypothesis states that in 1553 the first Africans were brought as slaves to what is now known as the province of Esmeraldas in the north of Ecuador (Speiser 1989:5). The ship carrying them crashed allowing the destined slaves to escape into the jungles of Esmeraldas. Out of the seventeen men and six women that shipwrecked, a permanent Black population of (twenty-five percent nationally) supposedly grew, that remains in the northern coastal areas of Ecuador today:

"The documented history of Ecuador establishes the beginning of Afro-Hispanic culture in what is now Esmeraldas, Ecuador, where a Spanish slaving ship ran aground in 1553. There a group of twenty-three Africans from the coast of Guinea, led by a black warrior named Antón, attacked the slavers and liberated themselves. Not long after, this group, together with other blacks entering this region, led by a ladino (Hispanicized black person) named Alonso de Illescas, came to dominate the region from northern Manabí north to what is now Barbacoas, Colombia (Whitten and Quiroga 1995:291)."

Many Afro-Ecuadorians attest to this theory, not wanting to admit that slavery was a part of their past history. This theory however has yet to be proven with any substantial evidence. Moreover, it seems very unlikely that the entire Black population of the coast resulted from the offspring of twenty-two people. Shortly after the shipwreck palenques or fortified villages of self-liberated Blacks began emerging throughout this region (Whitten 1974:41). By 1599 Africans created and sustained what was called "La Republica de Zambos". A zambo is someone of mixed indigenous and African blood. In the same year, a group of representatives of the Zambo Republic traveled to Quito, declaring their loyalty to Spain. According to Whitten (1974), slavery did not proliferate into the zambo republic until well into the nineteenth century. Since slavery did not expand into the
area of Esmeraldas until very late how did their dialect have such a large impact in this region? One question remains then. When did the southern Spainard Spanish come to influence the northern coast? After slavery in the Esmeraldas region originated southern Spaniards began settling in the area, subsequently creating the city of Esmeraldas. However, shortly after the initiation of slavery in the province Esmeraldas, slavery was abolished nationally in 1852 (Congreso de Cultura) which doesn't leave much time for the type of linguistic interaction between slave and master to occur as many hispanic language linguists would suggest. Africans learning Spanish according to this timeline, could not have spent the amount of time that it would take for the southern Spanish dialect to have had such a lasting effect:

"With respect to the individual development of the different Creoles and other Afro-American languages, the subsequent maintenance of contact with speaker of the European languages (English, French, Portuguese, etc.) after the initial period, the time of formation, would obviously have been an important factor. But research is now suggesting that a second factor was even more important, the degree of intensity of interaction with Europeans at the actual time of formation: the African-European demographic mix on the farms and plantations, at that time (Sutcliffe 1992: 13 )."

Some of the Afro-Ecuadorians on the coast seem to be reluctant to discuss topics of race and especially slavery. It seems to hit a bad chord with them, something they wish to forget. Presumably, this has to do with the fact that the social and racial atmosphere of the country is extremely close-minded. Socially, the country does not wish to acknowledge the African presence. Many Ecuadorians profess that their society compared to that of the United States is a fair and just one because everything is based on class. Many Ecuadorians firmly believe that just the mere chance of upward mobility makes their system of hierarchy superior.

The people describing the history of Blacks in Esmeraldas recount stories almost unwillingly. Black people in Ecuador have become a people forgotten, something that doesn't exist. Even many of the Blacks regard the theories of mestizaje that proliferate throughout the country, with understanding. Its almost as if they believe their situation will remain the same no matter what it is they do to improve it. Mestizaje is a word that cannot be defined simply. It is a phenomenon that took root in most of Latin America centuries ago. Fundamentally
though, it can be described as a social and political system that attempts to equalize the races through racial mixing and intermarriage (Whitten and Quiroga 1995:289-90). Nevertheless, a dimension of complexity is exposed when class structure is superimposed on this model. Poverty in Esmeraldas and the Chota Valley is abnormally high. The fact that the government refuses to comply with promises of building better roadways, improving sewage lines, and providing other basic needs for cities in both provinces further proves their inherent racist tendencies. Socially it is not acceptable to strongly identify with being Black or acknowledging one's roots in Africa. The upperclass white population of the country wishes to extinguish any sentiments such as these by using mestizaje. Unfortunately, many of the Afro-Ecuadorians have fallen into the trap of believing that mestizaje will improve their individual situations. Many Ecuadorians will tell, “Oh, you're looking for a Black population. Well “ya no hay el negro puro”. Or, in Ecuador, Black people don't exist. It seems that everyone wants to believe that somehow, through so much racial mixture and mestizaje, that Blacks have disappeared. And not just Blacks but, also their customs, culture, and language. This is completely false. In Esmeraldas province particularly, the Black population constitutes ninety percent of the population (Lipski 1984:157). Simply by observing the people and the city you can distinguish remnants of a culture brought by Africans not to mention obvious phenotypical features of the people themselves.

Linguistically, Esmeraldas has had many diverse language and dialect influences throughout the colonial and postcolonial era. It becomes hard at times, sifting through the diverse heritage, to discern what if any influence the African languages have on the manner in which esmeraldeños speak. Nevertheless, after slavery was abolished in 1852, Ecuador, also part of Gran Colombia (which included Venezuela, and Colombia) began fighting its war of independence against Spain. Black soldiers from Colombia were sent to aid in their fight for independence and after the wars ended, many of them remained. In the late 1800's further immigrations of Blacks added linguistically to this area, “Yet another group of Black citizens arrived in the late nineteenth
century, when between four and five thousand Jamaican laborers were brought in to work on plantations and construction projects—the last significant migration of Afro-Americans to Ecuador.¹ This last migration of English-speaking Blacks could have affected the dialects of Esmeraldas in countless ways nonetheless, this linguistic migrational effect has not been studied to any length.

¹Lipski, J. The Chota Valley: Afro-Hispanic Language in Highland Ecuador; The University of Houston; 1984, 157
Historical Context Part II

Esmeraldas constitutes only one of the Black populations in Ecuador. The second which, perhaps is even more linguistically significant, lies in the highlands. The Chota Valley of Ecuador, approximately two and a half hours outside of the capital Quito, also contains a considerably large Black population that has existed since the Jesuits began transporting slaves to that area for labor in the early eighteenth century (Whitten 1974).

This area has become a place of much anthropological and sociological study due to its unique development. Today, it stands as the last and only known Black highland population that endured in all of Latin America and the Caribbean. The Black communities there, have remained in relative seclusion for the past several hundred years because of both their geographic location and poor educational preparation. The area is surrounded by mountains and the roads leading to the region are inadequate making it difficult to enter or leave. Since many of its residents do not have educational backgrounds past high school, migration to other cities for job opportunities is low. However, despite this small fact, some of the younger generation is beginning to migrate to the bigger cities to find jobs and/or better financial opportunities. The linguistic heritage of this region has just recently become an area of much study because of the relative seclusion of Chota Valley residents as well.
Because of inaccessibility, the Chota Valley residents in the past had little contact with other languages and dialects. Seclusion of the Chota Valley facilitated the maintenance of various syntactic features. Some linguists observe that the choteño dialect is similar to early slave dialects. Much of the culture and "accent" which Chota Valley inhabitants retain, is considered to have remained the same as earlier periods in the history of this region. Lipski (1984) claims that this variant alone more closely mimics bozal speech than any other dialect in the Spanish-speaking world. A bozal was a newly arrived African thus bozal speech was the speech used by newly arrived African slaves learning Spanish as a second language most often learning it imperfectly (Lipski 1984:158). Although the Chota Valley dialect resembles other highland areas more than the coastal regions, the result of its development brings into question many of the theories about the origins of Black dialects in Ecuador as well as the Caribbean. In the Chota Valley area of Ecuador, Africans were brought as slaves by Jesuits needing workers for their plantations:

"The wider span of dates given, 1550-1700, subsumes a period of indigenous secular exploitation by white and mestizo overseers and hacendados, followed by a Jesuit solution to the indigenous-non-indigenous conflicts by the direct importation of African slaves. Other Catholic orders and secular organizations also imported slaves for plantations in the Chota-Mira Valley. The Jesuits ran slave-based, productive and profitable plantations in the area, and found the military means to put down slave rebellions, from their entry in 1586 until their expulsion in 1740. The strategy of the Jesuits was to focus on sugar-cane production based on black slave labour... (Whitten and Quiroga 1995:293)."

The Jesuits began importing African slaves about a decade after the ship in Esmeraldas ran aground. They used the slave labor primarily as plantation workers for agricultural purposes. However, after the religious sects expulsion in 1740 many of the Black slaves remained in the region transferring from Jesuit masters to Ecuadorian masters. Because of relative seclusion from other areas of Ecuador after the abolition of slavery in 1852, this dialect began developing independently. After learning Spanish from the Jesuits there was no constant and dominant dialect influence from other areas. The residents of the Chota valley relied on the Spanish they already knew. Thus, mannerisms, phonological and morphological processes that occur in their native Kwa language patterns, began to divulge themselves in the dialect developed in this area. Lipski
(1984) believes because many of the Blacks remaining came directly from West Africa or were separated by just one generation, they began infusing their native language patterns with the Spanish they spoke.

Chapter II: Phonological Differences between Andalucian and "Standard" Spanish

The difference between the Andalucian dialect and the dialects of the Caribbean and the northern coast of South America are almost nonexistent. Both dialects have five phonological rules that can distinguish them from "standard" dialects of Spanish. These rules are: the weakening/deletion of word-final /s/, the deletion of word-final "d", the velarization of word-final "n", the free variation of the phonemes /l/ and /l/, and the substitution of /z/ for /s/. None of the same rules apply to more 'standard' dialects of Spanish. No deletion or free variation occurs, all words are produced as they are represented orthographically. Vicente (1978) suggests that:
"Differences, within the vast territory of the Americas, are slight within the total structure of the language. There are far fewer differences between any two regions of enormous America, however far apart they may be, than between two neighboring valleys in Asturias, for example. (Vicente 1979:378)."

All of the phonological traits that are exhibited in Latin America for example can be found in the Spanish of Spain with few exceptions. These exceptions usually include the influence of outside languages that have affected the dialect. One of the major differences of dialects in Latin America is the use of the [s] phoneme instead of [θ] that is used throughout most areas of Spain.
Part II: Contrasting Andalucian Phonology with "Standard" Spanish

Phonologically the differences between the Andalusian dialect and other dialects of Spain are not as great as many would think. Obviously the dialect contains several features that do not occur with the frequency with which they occur in the other dialects of Spain however, these features are not unique to Andalucia and the Canary Island regions. The two most salient features of this dialect are what many Spanish language linguistics describe as yeísmo and seseo. Yeísmo is the "merger of the palatal /ʎ/ and the midpalatal fricative /ʃ/, usually with non-lateral results (Penny 1991:93)." That is, where orthographically represented as 'll', both phonemes in Andalusian Spanish are realized as /ʃ/ in speech. Seseo is the weakening of the phonemes /s/ and /ʃ/ (Vicente 1960:227).

Andalucian Lexicon:
pollo- chicken [po.3o]
mallo- mallet [mo.3o]
llamo- (I) call [3a.mo] (Penny 1991:93)

Orthographically these words can be represented as 'poyo', 'mayo', and 'yamo' respectively. As demonstrated above the /ʎ/ is realized in every situation as /ʃ/. The phenomenon of yeísmo is a phonological process that is not documented as occurring with much frequency throughout the Caribbean and northern coastal Ecuador with the exception of Puerto Rico. Whereas, in standard dialects of Spanish orthographical representations of 'll' are pronounced in that same manner. For example;

Standard Lexicon:
pollo- chicken [po.jo]
mallo- mallet [mo.jo]
llamo- (I) call [jo.mo]

Throughout most of Latin America with the exception of the areas of focus of this project, this particular sound is produced in this manner.
The second most prominent feature of the southern Peninsular dialects is the seseo. This phonological process, like yeísmo, is not exclusive to the southern regions. It also exists in Valencia, parts of Galicia, Catalán, and Vasconia.

Andalucian Lexicon:
estamos- (we) are [e\text{\textipa{h}}.to.m\text{\textipa{h}}] or [e\text{\textipa{t}}.o.m\text{\textipa{o}}]
andaluz- Andalucia [\text{\textipa{d}n.\text{\textipa{d}a}.lu\text{\textipa{h}}}] or [\text{\textipa{d}n.\text{\textipa{d}a}.lu\text{\textipa{i}}]
historia- history [i\text{\textipa{h}.to.ji.a}] or [i\text{\textipa{j}.o.ji.a]
cosas- things [ko.so\text{\textipa{h}}] or [ko.so]

Here the realization of both the /s/ and the /θ/ are completely deleted. In the case of the phoneme /s/, it can be realized as a deletion or an aspiration, “Also lowland and Andalusian is /s/. The deletion or aspiration of the /s/ occurs in word or syllable final position within a coda. When it occurs syllable-final either before a pause or another consonant, it reduces to an aspiration or is simply deleted (Cotton 1988:204).” Within each word any combination of deletion or aspiration may occur. That is to say, if there is an aspiration in the beginning syllables the aspiration does not necessarily have to carry throughout the entire word. For example, in the word ‘estamos’ a combination such as this may appear [e\text{\textipa{t}}.o.m\text{\textipa{o}}] or [e\text{\textipa{h}}.to.m\text{\textipa{o}}], both do occur without creating a word that sounds awkward to a native speaker of this dialect.

Standard Lexicon:
estamos- (we) are [es.to.mos]
andaluz- Andalucia [\text{\textipa{d}n.\text{\textipa{d}a}.lu\text{\textipa{s}}]
historia- history [is.to.ji.a]
cosas- things [ko.sos]

Here, we see the retention of the [s] phoneme in all cases.

There are three other features that characterize the Andalusian dialect. Probably the second most salient feature of this dialect though is interchange between the /l/ and /rl/ sounds.

Andalucian Lexicon:
acuerdate- (reflexive command) remember [a.kw\text{\textipa{d}t.ei}]
Puerto- port [p\text{\textipa{w}e.l.to}]
mandar- to send, or command [m\text{\textipa{n}.d\text{\textipa{l}}]
tradicional- traditional [tra.di.si.o.nar]
This process, like the seseo, also only occurs in the coda. So that the /l/ in words such as ‘historia’ would not be able to change to /r/ because it is in the onset. This feature also does not adhere to specific rules in that, there are no reasons why in one instance speakers of this dialect may use an /l/ > /l/ as opposed to the opposite. Vincent (1960) attempts to describe the process by instituting preference depending on the area of Andalucia. That is to say, in “Cadiz, Malaga, and Huelga /l/ > /l/ whereas in Grenada, Cúllar-Baza, and Sevilla the tendency for /l/ > /l/ is more common (Vincent 1960:249).” However, this study is incomplete and cannot account for all cases of this process.

Standard Lexicon:
acuerdáte- (reflexive command) remember [akweɾ.ɾe.tet]
Puerto- port [pwɾer.to]
mandar- to send, or command [mʌndar]

In comparison to the Andalucian dialect again, the phonemes are produced as they are seen.

The next process, the deletion of word-final d is also indicative of the Andalusian dialect.

The consonant d has two different allophones. The phonemes /ð/ and /d/ in this dialect represent the two in Andalucian dialect whereas in all of northern Spain the d has three allophones.

The consonant can be realized by /ð/, /d/, and /θ/.

Andalucian Lexicon:
verdad- truth or right(affirmation) [βerðæ]
especialidad- specialization [es.pɛɾˈsi.æli.ðæ]
azada- hazard [ozəo]
cumplido- accomplished, completed [kʌmplio]
dedo- finger [deɾo]

Between two vowels the consonantal sound /d/ disappears. Any vowel sound works even mixed vowels such as in the word /dedo/. Nevertheless, as seen below, in the standard dialects the [d] phoneme is retained everywhere.

Standard Lexicon:
verdad- truth or right(affirmation) [βerðæd]

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The final rule that generally identifies the Andalusian dialect is velarization of word-final
/ŋ/. Thus the /ŋ/ consonant has two allophones: [ŋ] and [ŋ].

Andalucian Lexicon:
- pan- bread [pān]
- sazon- seasoning [sə.zən]
- común- common [ko.mun]
- flamboyan- type of tree [flám.βə.ʒən]

According to Cotton (1988), the phoneme /ŋ/ becomes velar before a pause when word-final or
when syllable-final before another consonant becomes [ŋ]. The process occurs much more
frequently though when the word is independent such as ‘en’ or ‘con’ meaning in and with
respectively.

Standard Lexicon:
- pan- bread [pən]
- sazon- seasoning [sə.zən]
- común- common [kə.mun]
- flamboyan- type of tree [flám.βə.ʒən]

Here the /ŋ/ phoneme is not realized as [ŋ] in any case further demonstrating the standard
phonology.

There is one other characteristic that commonly occurs however, many linguists do not
identify this as one that is unique to the Andalusian dialect because it is present in many other
regions of Spain. This attribute deals with the phonetic realization of the two consonant sounds b
and v. In the southern region dialect both sounds are realized as /β/.

Andalucian Lexicon:
- vivir- to live [βiβir]
- beber- to drink [βeβer]
- bailar- to dance [βailar]
- vacilar- to hesitate; sway [βasilar]
As shown below, there is no difference between the standard Spanish development of this sound and the Andalucian dialect. This characteristic is shared by both dialects.

Standard Lexicon:
vivir- to live  [βiβir]
beber- to drink  [beβer]
bailar- to dance  [baɪlər]
vacilar- to hesitate; sway  [βasiˈlar]

Chapter III: Two Theories of the Origins of Black Dialects

Part I: Andalucian Migration Theory

There are several theories that float around the linguistic community concerning the adoption of the four phonological rules that occur throughout the Caribbean and coastal Ecuador. The most prominent theory that is supported by many different Hispanic language linguists attests to the settlement theories for dialect influence in these regions. According to Tomás (1948) Andalucians and Canary Islanders coming from lowland and coastal areas of Spain settled in the
coastal areas and Caribbean of Spanish-speaking Latin America. Furthermore, he advocates that Andalucian and Canary Island dialects having the same phonological processes as the Caribbean and coastal regions of Latin America are completely responsible for the dialects that developed in the same areas of Latin America today. Andalucian and Canary Islander speech is most characterized by the deletion of [s] and free variation between [r] and [l] phonemes. Until recently this theory had not been challenged seriously because of lack of information concerning this subject however, in light of recent archival discoveries, the arguments of this theory are beginning to be refuted.

Whitten and Quiroga (1995) argue that in Ecuador alone, the southern Spaniards did not come to settle in the northern coastal areas until very late; around 1860. At this point in the history of the northern coast, it is thought that many of the Blacks there already learned at least some form of Spanish from the indigenous populations involved in trading transactions. Since the Zambo republic thrived until the early 1800's, Africans there remained free, living in many of the palenque communities that spanned through that region, thus neutralizing the effect that southern Spanish dialects would have.

Although it is obvious that Andalucians and Canary Islanders exhibit the same dialect which much of the Caribbean and coastal areas of South America exhibit today, many other factors have yet to be studied in order to come to such a conclusion as has Tomás. The influence or lack thereof of West African language systems was not even mentioned by studies authored by Tomás. In order to generate a complete conclusion, it seems imperative that languages of the slaves be studied as well. Perhaps acknowledging that Africans could have contributed to society in such a way proved too much for Tomás. Regardless of his personal beliefs, these influences must be studied in order to gain a complete and accurate understanding of the origins of Caribbean and northern coastal dialects.

Cotton (1988) suggests that perhaps the migration theory lacks a thorough examination. She believes that although Andalucian dialects can account for some of the traits exhibited by
dialects in the Americas, they cannot account for everything:

"More interestingly, some of the characteristics which are supposedly Andalusian are also supposedly African, such disappearance of syllable-final /s/, which occurs not only in southern Spain but also in the slave speech of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in the Palenquero of Colombia (Cotton 1988:206-07)."

She sites several examples of words in Palenquero\textsuperscript{2} that demonstrate the deletion of the /s/ phoneme.

Lexicon:
ponemos [ponemo] 
se espanta [se panta] 
juez [hwe] 
mosca [mok:a]

Now although this deletion also occurs in the Andalusian dialect, Tomás cannot conceive that this feature also has roots in West African languages. Perhaps because of his limited knowledge of African languages or a somewhat skewed view that Africans were incapable of contributing to their society he relentlessly denies their influence. The phonological aspect that interchanges the [l] and [r] phonemes is of special interest because it occurs also in several West African languages such as Hausa, Tiv, and Efik as will be shown later. The Andalucian migration theory can explain all of the processes that occur but as stated earlier African languages can as well. It is commonly agreed that this theory demonstrates the greatest possible explanation however, conformists of this theory, like Tomás have not accounted for African elements. Historically, this theory of migration cannot be explained in Ecuador. Historically, the Andalucians had no great linguistic influence over the Blacks residing in Esmeraldas.

Both Cotton and Lipski however, also contend that Portuguese slaving stations may have influenced the way in which slaves learned Spanish or other languages of the Caribbean.

\textsuperscript{2}The creole composed of several West African languages and Spanish. Spoken in San Basilio de Palenque, Colombia.
Part II: Portuguese Theories

The Portuguese language theory suggests that many slaves of the Caribbean and the northern coast of South America were influenced by a creolized pidgin of Portuguese that was learned in the slaving stations. The theory that has been postulated by both Cotton and Lipski states that before slaves were sent to the Americas, all of them learned some type of creolized pidgin of Portuguese. The creolized pidgin provided a substratum which affected perhaps the phonology of the slaves' second language:

"Brought to Curacao and Aruba in the southern Antilles, these Blacks were held for resale and, while there, developed a pidgin which may have served as a substratum for further development in whatever linguistic local they were later to find themselves-where their second language was to be Portuguese, Spanish, English, or French, or a creole such as Papiamentu of Palenquero (Cotton 1988:206)."

Although this does not completely explain the processes that occur throughout the Black port cities of Latin America, it does account for some of the data. It also provide for some interesting speculation into the possible effects this creole could have had on Black dialects.

"The considerable structural similarity among known Afro-Iberian dialects has often led researchers to postulate that during colonial times, most African slaves brought to Latin America spoke some variety of creolized Portuguese, learned in the Portuguese slaving stations in Africa or on board ship during the middle passage. Some researchers believe that this creole language (which may also have been responsible for creole formation in other regions of the world) continued to be spoken at least by some second-generation Africans in Latin America thus shaping their usage of Spanish (Lipski, 1986)."

The theory advocated by both Lipski and Cotton though lacks sufficient study. Since the Portuguese creole theory is not an opinion held by the majority of Spanish language linguists, not much is known about how it has affected Black dialects. This is simply a shortcoming of the field that should be improved in order to investigate the truth.

Since not much is known or written about this theory I will only speculate into the
influences it may have had.

Part III: The Chota Valley Case

As mentioned in earlier sections of this research project, Ecuador has two concentrations of Blacks. Unlike other Latin American countries where there are no Black highland populations, the dialect of this region is distinct from almost every other dialect of the entire country.

The impacts that slavery had on the Chota Valley were varied. Not only did social and economic issues develop but, also linguistic issues. The influence of African languages in the Chota Valley has not been disputed. However, the phonology of this dialect is not the linguistic aspect that has been questioned here. The Chota Valley displays a dialect that is similar to more standard dialects in some respects nevertheless, concerning the morphological features of this dialect, the argument of linguists who maintain that West African languages influenced many Black dialects is strengthened. We must keep in mind that phonetics and phonology are only one aspect of a dialect and govern the pronunciation and sound of the dialect. Not only did these languages affect the phonology and phonetics of Black Spanish dialects but, also the morphology and in some cases the syntax of their dialects as well.

If we examine the Chota Valley which, has had no coastal dialect influence, we may be able to determine the origins of Black speech in Ecuador. Comparing the most constant and common characteristic of Black coastal speech /s/ deletion between the coast and the highland area we can
immediately ascertain some very important results. Although the /s/ phoneme is not deleted in word-final position as much as it is in the coastal areas it is deleted 11% of the time (Lipski 1984:160). Considering the other highland areas, where the /s/ phoneme is not deleted at all, this dialect presents some difficulties for theorists who feel that Andalusian dialects are the one and only cause of those Latin American dialects today.

Even though this deletion involves other factors, the phonology of West African languages obviously affected the Chota Valley dialect as well. Some of the deletion occurs within the realm of morphology. The deletion of [s] in these cases occurs in instances where [s] carries no meaning:

"That is to say, loss of /s/ when this consonant signals the plural of nouns, the second person singular of verbs, or other significant differences, is relatively infrequent in the Chota region, as in the rest of highland Ecuadorian Spanish, while in the case of lexical or grammatically redundant /s/, reduction is considerably more common. For example, in the first-person-plural verbal endings -mos, the /s/ is purely lexical, as it is in Jesús, además, seis, and other similar words (Lipski 1984:161)."

Rules of redundancy also apply to some of the cases of /s/ deletion in this region. Redundancy according to Francis (1983), is in simple terms a normal utterance in natural language, unlike a code such as telephone numbers or artificial languages like symbolic logic, contains more information than is necessary to convey the message.

(1) Tú vas a la tienda
(2) Vas a la tienda.

In sentence (1) the demarkation of the second person singular is indicated twice by the phoneme tú as well as the ending of the verb 'ir' meaning to go. There is no difference between the meaning of the two sentences however, the addition of tú in sentence (1) can add in some cases emphasis to the fact that it is you and not anyone else going to the store.

Lipski further, believes that the weakening of this phoneme has to do with the Africanized Spanish and creolized Portuguese that was used as a substratum for Blacks to learn Spanish. He maintains that although this dialect appears to be like other Ecuadorian highland dialects it is fundamentally different. Lipski asserts that, "the Chota dialect is at odds with other Ecuadorian
dialects of Spanish...(Lipski 1984:162).”

The Chota Valley dialect, which has had no influence from the Andalusian dialect, remains at least somewhat similar to the dialects of Esmeraldas and other Caribbean nations. How is it then that this dialect remained similar without any influence from Andalucia, if no Andalucians ever settle in this region? This question holds the key to resolving some of the misconceptions of this debate.
Chapter IV: African Language Origin Theories

It is more than apparent that a variety of West African languages influenced Black dialects of the Caribbean and coastal Ecuador. Although the traits that are African are also Andalusian, we cannot simply accept the easiest explanation for the origins of these dialects. Throughout the Caribbean and coastal Ecuador we can see the effects that Africans had on those cultures. Food, music, and festivals of the Caribbean would all be completely different if we continually depreciate the African did language influence there. It is almost impossible to separate language and culture. Consequently, if we admit that African culture affected these regions then we must also admit that African languages affected the Spanish spoken there as well.

By simply considering the number of slaves that were brought to this area we cannot deny that their languages had at least some effect. From the millions of slaves brought to the Americas, the majority of them remained in the coastal regions of the Caribbean and South America. This possibly gives some explanation to why hispanic language linguists argue that African influence theories must be given credit.

African language theorists argue that the languages brought by the slaves, having many of the same phonological processes as their dialect does now, shaped the way in which Blacks came to learn and speak Spanish. Cotton (1988) states, "The other group notes that some of these shared
traits are attributable to the vast number of African slaves brought to these regions from the middle of the sixteenth century well into the nineteenth.

Interesting enough, many theorists like Tomás who contend that West African languages had nothing to do with Black dialects fail to account for overwhelming evidence that points to the contrary. The phonological processes that occur in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean are also present in Brazil, Haiti, Jamaica, and Curaçao:

"By and large, where these Caribbean dialects correspond to each other they re semble Andalusian as well. However, phonologically, they share a number of traits from West African languages which are also found in Brazilian Portuguese, Black English, and French creoles (Cotton 1988)."

It is almost surprising that the same phonological features of these Spanish dialects would result in non-Spanish-speaking Caribbean and coastal nations. We must then raise the question; If these phonological processes occur in other languages where Andalusian dialects had no effect, where do the phonological processes then originate? Obviously the effects that these languages had on Spanish were greater than traditional theorists such as Tomás would like to believe. By canceling out the Andalusian factor, we can see that African languages were at least partly responsible for the formation of Black dialects.

Kwa languages, languages within the Niger-Congo family primarily spoken throughout West Africa, where the majority of the slaves were captured and brought to the Americas, greatly influenced the development of Black dialects throughout Latin America. In all of the West African languages with the exception of Wolof and Efik the liquids [r] and [l] disappear in syllable or word-final positions. Furthermore, word-final consonants provide many difficulties for Niger-Congo languages speaker when learning a second language:

"Syllable final consonants (of English) present difficulties for speakers of many Nigerian languages. Such languages either do not have final consonants, or have only restricted number of such consonants. Some speakers tend, therefore, to add another vowel after the final consonant, whatever it may be (Sutcliffe 1992:22)."

Sutcliffe (1992) further notes that such languages can account for nasalizations, "The same CVCV
and CVN patterns (open syllables, or syllables closed by a nasal) occur throughout West Africa, Efik and Wolof are obvious exceptions." It seems that many of the traits that characterize West African languages were retained and implemented in the usage of Spanish by Blacks.
Part II Sketch of Niger-Congo Languages

The darkened area represents the Niger-Congo region. This area displays the region where the majority of the slaves entering the Americas originated.

Africa is a continent that contains more than two hundred languages, many of them much different from one another. In West Africa, from where the majority of slaves were captured to bring to the Americas, many of the languages fit into the Niger-Congo family. Within the Niger-Congo language family there are three branches as well as several subbranches. The Niger-Congo languages include the Bantu languages and other major language groups. Many of these languages contain similar traits but, some still remain mutually unintelligible. All of the languages
in the Niger-Congo family are tonal with a few exceptions. With the exception of two, all the languages in the family are SVO, however I will concentrate only on the phonological aspects of these languages that coincide with the Andalusian dialect phonology (Lyovin, 1997:194).

It is important to use several of the Niger-Congo languages here. Most slaves coming from these areas were brought from different language groups. It is my belief that because they were all shipped together living together working together all of the phonological processes of their languages transferred to the Spanish in which they began to learn.

**Tiv**

Tiv is one of the larger language groups within the Niger-Congo family. There are over one million speakers. It is primarily spoken in the Benue Province in the Benue-Plateau state of Nigeria. Only some of the phonological aspects of Tiv are similar to those in the Andalusian dialect of Spanish. The most salient of these features not so surprising, is that, [r] and [l] are in free variation (Dunstan, 1969:143).

In the Tiv language there are twenty-two simple consonant sounds [p, b, t, d, k, g, f, v, s, j, y, h, g, s, z, n, r, j, w], eight complex consonant sounds [kp, gb, mb, nd, ng, mb, ts, dz, ndz, ndg] and six vowel sounds [i, e, u, o, a] (Dunstan, 1969:143). The only phonological aspect of Tiv that coincides with that of the Andalusian dialect is the free variation between the phonemes [r] and [l]. This process also occurs in Urhobo, a language spoken in the Delta province of Nigeria with an estimated 225,000 speakers.

**Efik**

Efik is a language spoken in Calabar city and Creek town and throughout Calabar province. This language has sixteen consonant sounds, one complex consonant sound and seven vowel sounds. The Spanish [r] is realized in most cases as [r] for words with a single [r] sound and in Efik is often replaced by the phoneme /l/. The second feature in Efik that correspond with
Andalusian phonology is the shifting of the phoneme [n] to [ŋ] in especially word-final position. Thus such as [ksn] meaning 'deny' shifts to [kŋ] and [sana] meaning 'walk' changes to [sâŋa] (Dunstan, 1969:39).

Hausa

Hausa is spoken in most of the states in the North of Nigeria and much of West Africa. It is spoken by an estimated twelve-million people. There are twenty-two simple consonant sounds and eight complex consonants. There are also five vowel sounds and two diphthongs. Similar to Efik the phoneme /n/ in word-final position changes to /ŋ/. The next phonological aspect that compares to the Andalusian dialect is the difference or lack thereof between the two phonemic sounds /b/ and /v/. Hausa has no /v/ sound therefore all words are pronounced with the /b/ phoneme. However, in many of these dialects this phoneme changes further to the /β/ (Dunstan, 1969:73-81). This feature is shared with the southern regional dialects of Andalucia Spanish.

These are just a few of the phonological processes that occur in these languages. In a study as short and limited as this it is impossible to account for all of the phonological aspects of Andalusian dialect without studying many of the Niger-Congo languages in depth. Dialect difference even within these languages is great. With more time and more knowledge and study of these languages, I believe that all of the phonological features including [s] and [d] deletion would be represented more adequately. These languages only account for the Nigerian area and without looking at all of the languages that were brought with the slaves it is impossible to accurately exhibit all of the phonological affects of the languages brought by them. It is reasonable to conclude that these languages had not only a lasting effect but also a substantial one.
Chapter V: Analysis of Coastal Dialect: Retrieved Data

The four principal phonological rules that I investigated while in Ecuador were: (1) loss of word-final /d/; (2) interchange and loss of /l/ and /r/ in all positions; (3) velarization of word-final /n/; (4) and loss of word-final /s/.

I conducted my research according to the advice from several professors in the Swarthmore Linguistics department. When interviewing the different participants in Esmeraldas, I first asked them general questions about the political situation in the country to let them speak without any constraints. I then had some of them read a paragraph that elicited the four phonological processes that I believed would occur in their speech. Upon my arrival in Esmeraldas I was aided by the family that took me to a high school where I was able to interview several groups of students. The ages of the students ranged from 14 to 18. I then went to the central plaza and interviewed another gentleman of about 40 years of age as well. After reviewing the interviews, I found that all four phonological processes which I predicted occurred in both the restricted speech and the unrestrained speech. I was not able to complete my original idea of comparing the origins of the Black coastal dialects and the dialects of another Black settlement, the Chota Valley, because I had to leave the country early because of the threat of an eruption of a volcano that lay just outside of Quito. It seems to have worked out better this way however, because I feel that the project that I wanted to take on may have been a bit ambitious in terms of the time and amount of linguistic training that I have had thus far. The data that I have brought back are consistent with many of my hypotheses about African influence within the dialect. According to Sutcliffe who claims that Niger-Congo language speakers have difficulty when learning languages with consonant final sounds, much of the data I analyzed proves that hypothesis. All of the
phonological processes that occur deal with final consonant sounds that for Niger-Congo language speakers provide difficulties. With this data I would like to emphasize the four phonological processes that occur and link them with the West African languages that I have sketched.

**Phonological Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Lab-Dental</th>
<th>Inter-Dental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fric.</td>
<td>ð ð ð s s z s z s x y</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lat. Approx</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>l</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eject. Stop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows all the consonant sounds that occur in Spanish
Table 2 represents the vowel sounds in Spanish:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-high</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-low</td>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data represents work I completed in Esmeraldas, Ecuador unless otherwise specified. All of the examples that will be shown have been extrapolated from interviews that I conducted with native Esmeraldeños. The sentences that I chose as examples all elicit at least one of the four phonological processes that I mention throughout this paper (deletion of the /s/ and /d/, the velarization /n/, and the free variation between /l/ and /l/). I have arranged the data in such a way that a comparison between the IPA transcriptions of both standard and coastal speech of Esmeraldas is illustrated.

A: /s/ Deletion Examples
Example (1)  Nos apoyamos en todo, si algo nos pasa nos explicamos.

Gloss: (we) support in everything, if something (to) us happens us we explain (it).

We support eachother in everything, if something happens to us we explain (it) to eachother.

Standard Spanish transcription:
[nos apojamos ëŋ todo si algo nou nos eksplikámous]

Esmeraldeño transcription:
[nø: apojamoŋ ëŋ to: si algo no: poso nouŋ eŋplikámøs]

Example (2)  Aquí quatro partidos políticos manejan.

Gloss: Here (in Ecuador) four political parties work.

Here (in Ecuador) four political parties are at work.

Standard Spanish transcription:
[œ.ki kwa.тро part.i.ðos politikos ma.ne1.xǎn]

Esmeraldeño transcription:
[œ.ki kwa.тро part.i.o politiko ma.ne1.xǎŋ]

Example (3)  Hemos perdido. Como esclavos de las religiones en los países árabes.

Gloss: We have lost. Like slaves of the religions in the arab nations.

Standard Spanish transcription:
[et.mus per.ðiŋo kõ.mo es.klo.ðos ðet la rel.ii.xi.ðn.eis]

Esmeraldeño transcription:
[et.mø per.ðio ko.mø eklo.ðø ða la rel.ii.xi.øn.ei]

In examples 1-3, the deletion of /s/ is illustrated. As shown, the deletion can occur only in syllable and word-final positions. After the deletion of the /s/ phoneme occurs however, one of two processes may occur. First the remaining vowel sound may be elongated or
secondly, in place of the deletion an aspirated sound may be added to the already existing vowel sound. The sound is constrained however. Deletion can only occur if it does not change the meaning of the word. For instance, in example (1) the word [nos] can change to either [noː] or [noh]. In all cases positioning of the word within other phonetic environments does not shift the sound to one process or the other. That is to say, there are no special instances or phonetic environments where a deletion must take place instead of an aspiration or vice versa. Surprisingly, though, deletion or aspiration does not take place in every case where it could occur. Such as in example (1) where in the final word 'explicamos' the final /s/ phoneme remains where it could be deleted or aspirated.

In the West African languages Hausa and Tiv final consonant sounds are absent. Furthermore, as earlier stated, Sutcliffe argues that when learning second languages, Niger-Congo language speakers normally delete final consonants.

B: Free variation of [r] and [l]

Example (1) Aqul es mejor.
Gloss: Here is better.
It is better here.
Standard Spanish transcription:
[a.ki es me1.xor]
Esmeraldeño transcription:
[a.ki es me1.xol]

Example (2) Pasamos mejor en la ciudad.
Gloss: (we) spend better in the city.
We have a better time in the city.
Standard Spanish transcription:
[pa.sα.mos me1.xor en lo si.ju.ðæð]
As expected the free variation feature of Andalucia and coastal speech did appear as much as it would have in other areas that have had Andalusian influence. The process is much more common in the Caribbean especially Puerto Rico. However, the interchange is illustrated in examples 1 and 2 in the same word ‘mejor’. The free variation of [l] and [r] cannot occur word-initially. Moreover, it can only occur in a coda. For example in the word [melxor], the final [r] changes to [l]. However, this change cannot occur for example in a word like, [la:me:ɾ]. Here the [l] phoneme cannot change to [r] because it occurs in the onset. Whereas, the final [r] sound could change to [l].

According to the West African languages already mentioned, this process occurs in their languages as well. It would not be extremely difficult to hypothesize that those processes carried over from their languages to the Spanish they learned. The West African languages that did influence the Spanish all are have phonology that primarily deals with the coda just as the phonological processes of the Spanish dialect.

C: /d/ deletion

Example (1) Por el progama que he tomado.

Gloss: For the program that (I) have taken.

Because of the program that I have taken.

Standard Spanish transcription:

[pocel pro.gra:ma kei el toma:so]

Esmeraldeño transcription:

[por el pro.gra:ma kei el tama:so]

Example (2) ?Aquí todo es más estricto verdad?

Gloss: Here everything is more strict, right?
Everything here is more strict, right?

Standard Spanish transcription:

[a. ki to.o es ma.s es.trik.to beta.3e8]

Esmeraldeño transcription:

[a. ki to.o esh ma es.trik.to beta.3e8]

Example (3) Como vamos sacar plata para los gustos, los gastos, a los empleados.

Gloss: How (we) going to get money for our pleasures, the costs, to the maids.

How are we going to get money for our pleasures, costs, for the maids.

Standard Spanish transcription:

[ko.mo ba.mo sa.kar pla.ta pa.ro los guh.to los ga.to a los
em.ple.a.d.os]

Esmeraldeño transcription:

[ko.mo ba.mo sa.kar pla.ta pa.ro lo: guh.to los ga.h.to a los
em.ple.a.d.os]

In the examples 1-3 the /d/ is deleted in word-final position as well as between to vowel sounds. Unlike the rules of /s/ deletion the surrounding phonetic environments do determine whether or not the /d/ phoneme is deleted. However, every environment where /d/ deletion can occur it doesn’t necessarily have to occur. It seems that this option is left to the speaker and his/her ease with the word than it has to do with any phonological rule that concerns frequency of the deletion. /d/ goes to deletion after a vowel. In example 2 the deletion of /d/ is illustrated in both word-final and between two vowel sounds in the words ‘verdad’ and ‘todo’ meaning ‘correct’ and ‘all’ respectively.

D: /n/ shift to /g/
Example (1) Desesperación en alimentación.

Gloss: Desperation in nourishment.

Standard Spanish transcription:
[des.pər.a.ci.ðən ə n a.ll.men.to.si.ðən]

Esmeraldeño transcription:
[des.pər.a.ci.ðəŋ ə n a.ll.men.to.si.ðŋ]

This example illustrates the velarization of the /n/ phoneme. This rule states that velarization of /n/ sounds can only occur syllable-finally. That is at the end of any syllable of the end of any word the velarization may take place. Like the other rules though, the shift does not necessarily take place. In the word [a.lım.to.si.ðŋ], we can see both syllable and word-final velarizations of the /n/ sound. As with Efik, the final /n/ phoneme becomes velar.

Part II: Speculation

The /s/ deletion is probably the most salient feature of Caribbean and coastal Ecuadorian speech. There are several phenomena that seem to have occurred with this phonological pattern. I have noted that in many earlier texts of Spanish from both Andalucia and the Caribbean, the deletion has always been represented orthographically as an aspiration:

“Don Chago: El ahma no se usa pa caminal. Tengo lah piernah durah.
Doña Gabriela: Y pa venil a dehperdimoh se trajo uhte Ia ropa.
Don Chago: Que ropa? Ah sí. Eh que no quería dejala allá sola. No me guhta que me traqueteen mih cosah. Y se cree que allá le van a aguantál toah suh manfah. La mujé e Tomá no lah va a aguantál (Cotton 1988:212).”

3This is taken from a Puerto Rican play called La carrereta.
Translation: Walking with asthma doesn’t work. I have tough legs. Did you bring the clothes, in order to say goodbye to us? What clothes? Ah yes. Its just that I didn’t want to leave her there alone. I don’t like it that you messed up my things. And you think over there they’re going to put up with your craziness.
However, today this same representation can be represented simply erasing any consonant sound where the deletion has occurred or by having the ‘h’ to represent an aspiration. It seems that the /s/ is in the process of going through a weakening phase and within the few centuries could be entirely deleted with leaving a mark of aspiration at all.

All of the phonological processes illustrated in A-D, can be explained through either Andalusian migration hypotheses or African language origin theories. All of the phonological aspects illustrated in section I are present in the West African languages as well as the Andalusian dialect. However so much emphasis and attention has been focused on Andalusian influence since the establishment of this field that many linguists completely discredit the influence of any African language on the phonology of the Caribbean and coastal Ecuador. It is important to investigate the data I have set forth completely. After comparing this data with the sketches of the few West African languages, it is possible that those language systems influenced Black speech in more ways than anyone would like to believe.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

Thomas and the woman aren’t going to put up with it.
Within the last twenty years the topic of dialect difference in the United States and abroad has become an issue of great concern. Scholars have realized that dialect difference is more than an exercise in phonology. It has had and continues to have implications on a social level. It has been construed to mark differences not only in speech, but in people. Many use dialect difference to make assumptions about people, about their educational, economic, racial and ethnic background. Thus, studies in this topic are no longer limited to the academic realm. They are now being given attention by the greater public and policies are being shaped by it.

The discrimination against people with dialect difference is great in the United States. It seems that anyone producing perceived "substandard" speech patterns is not allowed access to certain jobs and in some cases even denying these people the right to live in certain areas. Many United States residents hold the common attitude that anything but standard dialect usage is unacceptable. Many citizens believe that anyone producing these dialects is somehow less intelligent and/or a bad person waiting for the right opportunity to take advantage of some innocent standard dialect speaking person. This however, is simply not true. Dialect and intelligence have nothing in common. Dialect is simply a result of your living environment. If someone is raised in the South by southern born parents that person will most probably have a southern dialect. It is simply not fair to judge someone for the manner in which they speak. We cannot assume that because someone has a standard American English dialect that that person is automatically more intelligent than someone who does not speak in the same manner. It should be made mandatory that every United States resident study an introductory course in linguistics to understand the importance of dialect difference and most importantly why it occurs.

Just two years ago educators in the Oakland, California school district hypothesized that their Black children did not speak English in the same way that their white children spoke English. Furthermore, Black children were having trouble understanding their
teachers because of the way they spoke and understood the English language. This in turn inhibited their learning of the material presented to them adequately. The school district applied for federal funding arguing that their children in fact spoke a language (which we know to simply be a dialect) that differed so much from English that it prohibited some of its speakers from completely understanding more standard dialects. These speech patterns were said to be remnants of African language systems that influenced some of the syntactic and phonological processes that occurred in their dialect of the English language. Their attempt to receive federal funding ultimately failed because of logistical problems however, their attempts and others like it are beginning to show how language and dialect difference can pose varying degrees of challenges to its speakers.

Languages other than English have also dramatically been affected by dialect difference. China has over two-hundred dialects (Wang; Introduction). In many cases these dialects are mutually unintelligible having only the Chinese character writing system to link them. One person from Hunan province traveling to Canton province would have extreme difficulty in understanding what was being said had it not been for the Chinese government. The government instituted a national or standard language that is used in every school across the country. Dialect difference in the United States and many other western countries is not as extreme that residents from different states are not able to understand one another however, the Chinese government perceived a problem and instead of condemning speakers of other dialects they developed a reasonable solution.

The Black dialects of the Caribbean and coastal Ecuador incite many forms of social and racial stigma. On the coast this stigma is not as present, but once that coastal person enters the highland regions of Ecuador it is apparent that the dialect is not regarded with any form of respect or understanding. Many highlanders often call coastal residents ‘monos’ meaning ‘monkey’. They often justify this by saying, “Costeños are more fun and jovial similar to monkeys. That is why we call them ‘monos’.” This seems far from the truth.
though. It is apparent that the African influence is something that many residents of the country are ashamed and attempt to discredit. However, as mentioned throughout this research project, West African languages and culture has affected the cultures all over Latin America.

The phonology of West African languages manifest themselves all through the Spanish of Latin America. Not only does it present itself in Spanish dialects but throughout the dialect and languages where Blacks were brought as slaves. All four phonological rules of the Caribbean and northern coastal dialects of South America can be accounted for, using African language phonological rules and applying them to those dialects. Nevertheless, there is a school of thought which maintains that these phonological rules originate in the Spanish of Andalusian dialects.

In the West African languages, that I have sketched out, the rules of free variation, deletion, and velarization all present themselves. Although, Andalusian dialects present many of the same processes, the are not the sole contributors to the formation of Black dialects. Especially, given the historical contexts of the different regions, there is impressive proof that West African languages may have influenced Black dialects as well.

We cannot deny historical proof that West African slaves bringing their language and customs, influenced the societies of Latin America in a way that fundamentally changed those regions. We must stop believing that Africans were simple passive participants in the shaping of Latin American history and culture. Africans affected the society into which they were brought as much as they were affected by it. Linguistically and culturally Africans must be given ownership to many of the customs and dialects that are present in Latin American culture.
Bibliography


Interviews

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