Dialectologia 5 (2010), 27-44.

THE SPANISH DIALECT SPOKEN IN NOANAMITO - COLOMBIA

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Abstract

This paper presents a description of the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito - Colombia. The people who live in this community are mostly of African descent and their speech is characterized by lexical and phonological patterns that differ from the rest of the country. The following phonological features are illustrated: *a*) /s/ deletion and aspiration; *b*) the cluster /ao/ (pronunciation variant that occurs at the end of words ending in /ado/); *c*) final /d/ deletion; *d*) phonological reduction of inflected *estar* 'to be'; and *e*) fricatives /s/ & /f/ shifted to [h] word initially. Some lexical features that are characteristic of this town are also described, such as: the use of the word *potrillo* (to refer to a canoe) or the word *papiao* (to refer to someone who has just eaten). The paper is structured in four parts: 1) Introduction; 2) Method; 3) Data analysis; 4) Conclusion.

Keywords
Spanish dialect, African descent, Lexical and Phonological features

1. Introduction

Studying dialects is quite challenging and rewarding in a country like Colombia with a variety of ethnic groups that have cultural as well as linguistic features that characterize them. Colombia a multiracial country, with people coming from three different origins, indigenous population, blacks from Africa and white Spanish, who later on mixed to give birth to a country full of colors and cultures has preserved eighty indigenous languages within different indigenous communities (Gordon, 2005). Spanish, as the official language of the country, has influenced and also been influenced by these languages and cultures.

This paper presents a lexical and phonological description of the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito - Colombia. Noanamito is a town located in the municipality of

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Lopez de Micay, this municipality of 3,101 square kilometers, is located in the Northwest area of Cauca department on the Pacific coast of Colombia.

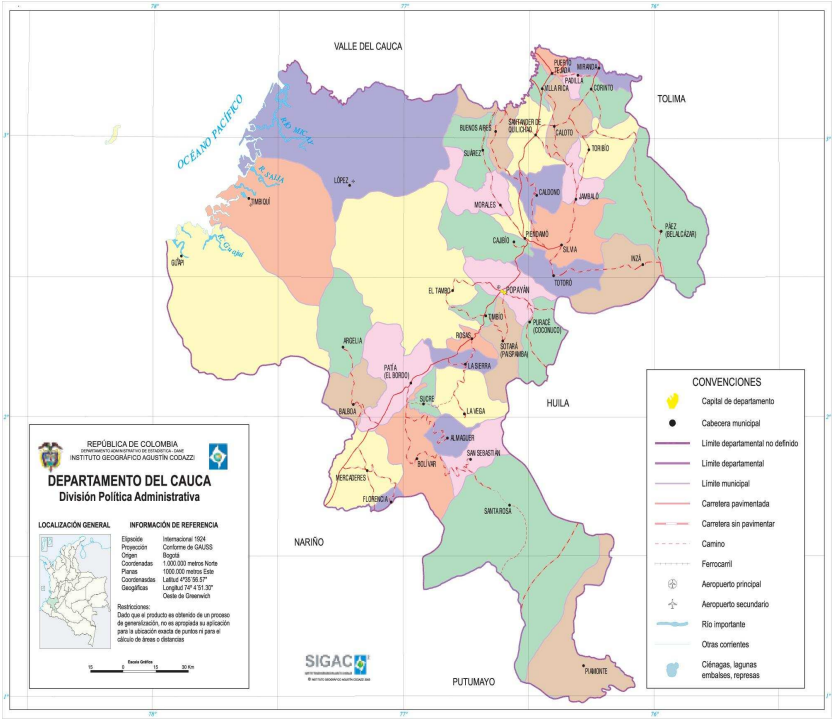


Figure 1. Map of Cauca Department

The municipality of Lopez de Micay has a population of 25,000 people and Noanamito has 2,000. The people in the different towns of the municipality are on the border of the Micay River. The most important economical activities are agriculture, fishing, and wood cutting.

This is a very isolated area in the country that has been forgotten by the central government in many respects. Since there are no roads to this area and the only way to access the community is by the sea, its people are in little contact with the rest of the country and not many people from other places visit this zone. Many factors such as education, race, and socioeconomic status make the inhabitants and their dialect stigmatized in other parts of Colombia.

Regarding stigma, Agheyisi and Fishman (1970) argued that people's reactions to language varieties can reveal their perceptions of the speakers (as cited in Gomez, 1992: 8). The individuals who speak this dialect are perceived as rural and less civilized, this is why it is difficult for this dialect to have prestige. When someone speaks a non-standard dialect of a language, they are often subjected to discrimination

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and the perception of stigmatized forms in language can lead to prejudice on the part of the hearers (Fought 2006: 187). In effect, speaking a non-standard dialect is often used as a motivation for discrimination, particularly if the speakers of the dialect do not have political or economic power.

2. Method

In order to describe the most salient lexical and phonological features of the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito, people from this community were interviewed and recorded. A semi-structured questionnaire was also administered to elicit lexical features. These data made it possible to find lexical as well as phonological variations in the speech of individuals of different genders, age groups and educational levels. A sampling of 24 speakers who have always lived in the community were chosen and the three most salient variables of the population were managed — sex, age and education.

The criterion for narrowing education down to high school is because there are no universities in this community, so the people who have gone to college have had to live somewhere else for extended periods of time, and have received influence from other dialects. The participants were classified in three age groups. *a*) Eight participants 20-35 years old are the youngest population interviewed; *b*) Eight participants 36-50 years old are the middle age group; and *c*) Eight participants 51-70 years old are the older speakers group. Socio-economic class was not considered because the people who have studied up to high school and stayed in the community have the same socio-economic status. They are usually farmers or fishermen who work everyday in the fields or go out to the sea to be able to economically support their families.

After all the data was recorded, the interviews were transcribed and the data was coded according to the participant's characteristics. Example: MEA1 is a male participant who studied up to elementary school and is in age group A= 20-35 years old.

The analysis of the data allowed me to focus on the following phonological features:

a) /s/ deletion and aspiration. Since these phenomena exist in other areas of Colombia as well, the variations that exist in Noanamito are analyzed in order to

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describe the pattern of /s/ deletion - /Ø/, /s/ aspiration - /h/, and remaining - /s/. Resyllabification in /s/ word final before vowel initial word is also analyzed. There is a distinction between word internal versus word final /s/ in order to find out which is more likely to be deleted, aspirated or retained. The scales of /s/ deletion and aspiration in nouns, verbs, articles/pronouns and adjectives are presented to determine in which word forms /s/ is more frequently deleted or aspirated.

b) The cluster /ao/- a pronunciation variant that occurs at the end of words ending in /ado/.

c) Final /d/ deletion is typical of this community and is represented in their everyday speech.

d) Phonological reduction of inflected *estar*- 'to be' occurs very frequently and is a dialect marker in Noanamito.

e) Fricatives /s/ & /f/ shifted to [h] word initially. All these phonological variables represent the most salient patterns in the speech of Noanamito.

There is evidence of how some dialects of Spanish evidence reduction of syllable- & word-final /s/ to [h], en route to complete deletion of /s/ (Lipski, 1995). These works and others that focus on the phonology of dialects of Spanish provide evidence that supports the variation that exists across dialects in different regions where Spanish is spoken.

The lexical variants are words that vary in the community due to *a*) its geographical position (on the border of Micay river and close to the Pacific Ocean), and *b*) its employment specific vocabulary, such as farming or fishing terms. Some of these words are: *potrillo* (to refer to a canoe) or *papiao* (to refer to someone who has just eaten).

3. Data analysis

Through the data collection process I expected to find some lexical and phonological variables in the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito and I found many more variables than I anticipated.

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3.1. Phonological variables

There are a series of tables and figures that present the different variables, the number of tokens, and the percentages analyzed. The analysis compares occurrences of these variables taking into account gender, educational level and age in order to find differences among groups of participants according to their demographics and educational levels.

3.1.1. /s/ Syllable final

Participant	Total # of tokens	s-s	%	s-h	%	s-Ø	%
MEA1	43	14	33%	21	49%	8	19%
MEA2	20	2	10%	15	75%	3	15%
MEB1	37	12	32%	17	46%	8	22%
MEB2	55	18	32%	22	39%	15	26%
MEC1	60	12	20%	30	50%	18	30%
MEC2	41	9	22%	19	46%	13	32%
FEA1	48	5	10%	28	58%	15	31%
FEA2	28	3	11%	19	68%	6	21%
FEB1	8	2	25%	4	50%	2	25%
FEB2	39	9	23%	24	62%	6	15%
FEC1	30	4	13%	12	40%	14	47%
FEC2	38	3	8%	21	55%	14	37%
MHA1	41	11	27%	25	61%	5	12%
MHA2	42	10	24%	26	62%	6	14%
MHB1	39	13	33%	24	62%	2	5%
MHB2	46	9	20%	28	61%	9	20%
MHC1	50	9	18%	34	68%	7	14%
MHC2	21	1	5%	14	67%	6	29%
FHA1	41	12	29%	25	61%	4	10%
FHA2	40	6	15%	33	83%	1	3%
FHB1	31	11	35%	14	45%	6	19%
FHB2	32	5	16%	20	63%	7	22%
FHC1	20	7	35%	10	50%	3	15%
FHC2	29	4	14%	21	72%	4	14%
Total	879	191	22%	506	57%	182	21%

Table 1. /s/ - syllable final

Note: the codings used in the far left column reflect the following variables:
M =Male, F= Female,

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E= Elementary school, H= High school,
A= 20-35 years old, B= 36-50 years old, C= 51-70 years old.

Each participant provided at least 20 tokens, with the exception of FEB1 whose speech is full of pauses and did not provide much information. There is a total of 879 tokens that are divided into three categories: *a*) /s/-deletion syllable finally as in word final *gracias* - *gracia* 'thanks'; *b*) aspiration as in *cuantos* - *cuantoh* 'how many'; and *c*) remaining as in *país* - *país* 'country'.

[s] aspiration-[h] was the most frequent realization among all participants occurring 57% of the time. The second realization was /s/-retention that occurred 22% of the time followed by /s/-deletion- [Ø] occurring 21% of the time. Most cases where there is /s/-retention is because the participant was being emphatic or because he was very careful in his speech.

/s/-syllable finally is analyzed and the number of occurrences is added up. However, there are some differences between /s/ in syllable final position (when it is word internally) and /s/ in word final position. The data show that /s/ occurs word finally more frequently than word internally in syllable final position. Table 2 shows this difference.

	# of tokens	**s-s**	**%**	**s-h**	**%**	**s -/Ø/**	**%**
/s/ word finally		143	16%	372	42%	182	21%
/s/ word internally		48	6%	134	15%	0	0%
Total	879	191	22%	506	57%	182	21%

Table 2. /s/- word finally vs. /s/- word internally in syllable final position

Although all participants used words with /s/ in position word internally and /s/- word finally, the percentages of cases where /s/ occurs in position word internally are fewer. Even more remarkable is the fact that participants deleted the /s/ 21% of the time when it was word finally but nobody did it when it was syllable-final word internally. Not deleting the /s/ when it is in the middle of a word seems to be the unmarked choice in this dialect. On the other hand, /s/ retention and /s/ aspiration occurred in different places in the words.

Another relevant term to discuss is resyllabification. To analyze when resyllabification took place, the total number of tokens where the /s/ in word final

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position is followed by a word starting with a vowel were taken into account: as in the phrase: *tres años* 'three years'. Here the /s/ is retained and is resyllabified as the onset to the first syllable of the following word. However, in most cases the /s/ is aspirated or deleted and there is no resyllabification. Table 3 shows that there were 157 potential cases out of 879 cases where there could have been resyllabification because there was an /s/ in word final position followed by a word starting with a vowel. However, only 37 of these words were resyllabified while 120 presented weakening or deletion. These results correspond to the greater frequency of /s/ deletion and aspiration that is shown on table 3.

Participant	**total # of tokens of /s/ syllable final**	**Potential cases of resyllabification**	**%**	**Cases of resyllabification**	**%**	**/s/ deletion/ weakening**	**%**
MEA1	43	8	19%	5	12%	3	7%
MEA2	20	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%
MEB1	37	10	27%	4	11%	6	16%
MEB2	55	7	13%	0	0%	7	13%
MEC1	60	10	17%	1	2%	9	15%
MEC2	41	8	19%	1	2%	7	17%
FEA1	48	11	23%	2	4%	9	19%
FEA2	28	2	7%	0	0%	2	7%
FEB1	8	2	25%	0	0%	2	25%
FEB2	39	3	8%	0	0%	3	8%
FEC1	30	8	27%	2	7%	6	20%
FEC2	38	6	16%	1	3%	5	13%
MHA1	41	10	24%	3	7%	7	17%
MHA2	42	10	24%	1	3%	9	21%
MHB1	39	9	23%	5	13%	4	10%
MHB2	46	3	6%	0	0%	3	6%
MHC1	50	5	10%	0	0%	5	10%
MHC2	21	3	14%	0	0%	3	14%
FHA1	41	11	27%	2	5%	9	22%
FHA2	40	6	15%	2	5%	4	10%
FHB1	31	5	16%	2	6%	3	10%
FHB2	32	7	22%	1	3%	6	19%
FHC1	20	7	35%	3	15%	4	20%
FHC2	29	4	14%	1	4%	3	10%
Total	879	157	18%	37	4%	120	14%

Table 3. /s/ - resyllabification

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Cedergren (1978) on her work on /s/-variation in Panamanian Spanish affirms that in 70% of all occurrences of /s/ as a nominal plural marker in a noun, /s/ is deleted. What is expected is that /s/ be deleted first in nouns, then in adjectives, then in articles and finally in verbs. Actually, these results show that all participants deleted the final /s/ mostly in nouns, in 79% of all occurrences. However, adjectives were deleted only 2% of the time; articles were deleted 7% of the time and verbs were deleted 12% of the time. Table 4 shows that scale of deletion.

Total # of /s/ deleted	**Nouns**	**Verbs**	**Articles/pronouns**	**Adjectives**
182	144 – 79%	21 -12%	13-7%	4 - 2%
some examples of /s/ deletion	*potrillos* 'canoes'	*es* 'it is'	*las* 'the'	*pequeños* 'small'
	letras 'letters'	*comemos* 'we eat'	*nosotros* 'we'	*rápidas* 'fast'
	envases 'containers'	*somos* – 'we are'	*ellos* 'they'	*grandes* 'big'

Table 4. Scale of /s/- deletion

These variations show that even though word final /s/ in nouns is deleted most of the time, /s/ in other words such as verbs is also often deleted. It is important to note that the frequency of use of adjectives is limited if we compare it to verbs and pronouns which may be a cause for the results obtained here.

/s/-aspiration-/h/, which is the most frequent realization among all participants, is also analyzed in order to find out which word forms are more often aspirated. Table 5 presents the scale of /s/ aspiration – /h/.

Total # of /s/ aspirated	**Nouns**	**Verbs**	**Articles/pronouns**	**Adjectives**
506	214 – 42%	162-32%	98 – 20%	32 – 6%
some examples of /s/ aspiration	*gracias* 'thanks'	*somos* 'we are'	*vos* 'you'	*respetuosa* 'respectful'
	López 'name of municipality'	*es* 'it is'	*los* 'them'	*hermosos* 'beautiful'
	niños 'children'	*vamos* 'we go'	*ellos* 'they'	*buenas* 'good'

Table 5. Scale of /s/- aspiration

/s/-aspiration presents the same patterns as /s/-deletion. Nouns are aspirated more frequently, 42% of the time, followed by verbs which are aspirated 32% of the time.

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Adjectives are aspirated only 6% of the time. The difference between the scale of /s/-deletion and /s/-aspiration is the high percentage of nouns that are deleted. The aspiration of nouns and verbs was very frequent as we note on table 5.

All the data collected was also analyzed according to the different independent variables present in this study which are: age, gender and education. Tables and graphs of each variable are presented in order to see how the speakers' characteristics influenced their speech.

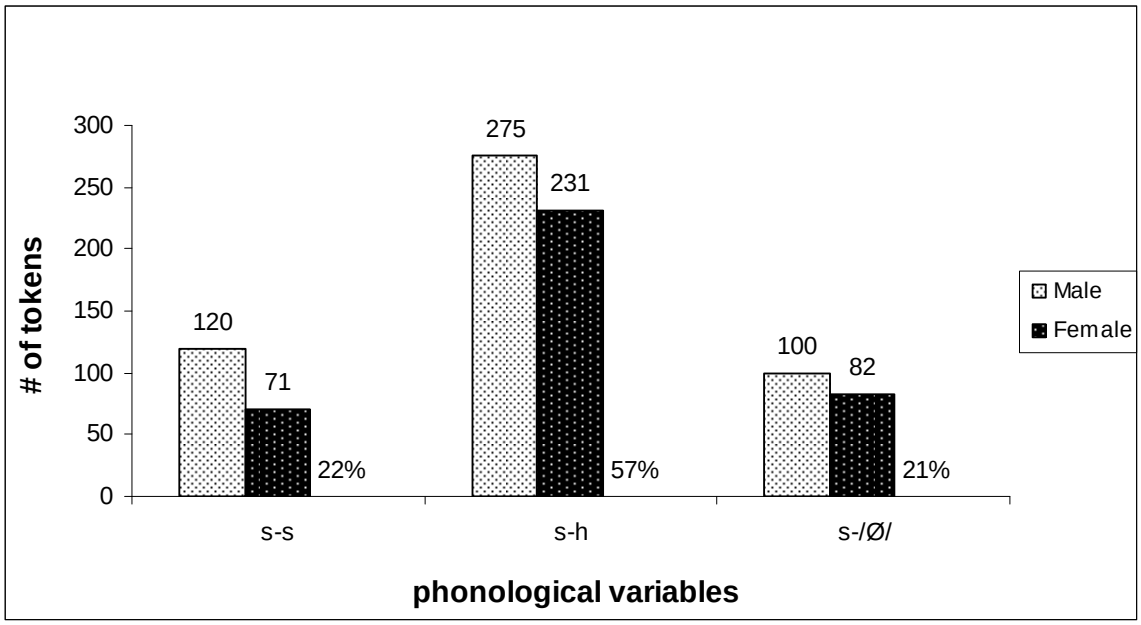


Chart 1. /s/-syllable final – gender

# of tokens	s-s	s-h	s-/Ø/	Total
Male 495	26%	54%	20%	100%
Female 384	18%	60%	22%	100%
Total 879	22%	57%	21%	100%

Table 6. Percentages of /s/ deletion – gender

Chart 1 shows that male participants produced a greater number of syllable final tokens of /s/ than female participants did. The three variables, /s/-[s], /s/-[h] and /s/-[Ø] are more frequent on male speakers because they produced a larger number of cases to be analyzed. Table 6 shows the percentages of /s/ deletion by gender. It appears that female participants used slightly more realizations of the variables than male

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participants did. Females appeared to delete and aspirate the /s/ slightly more often, while males had more remaining /s/.

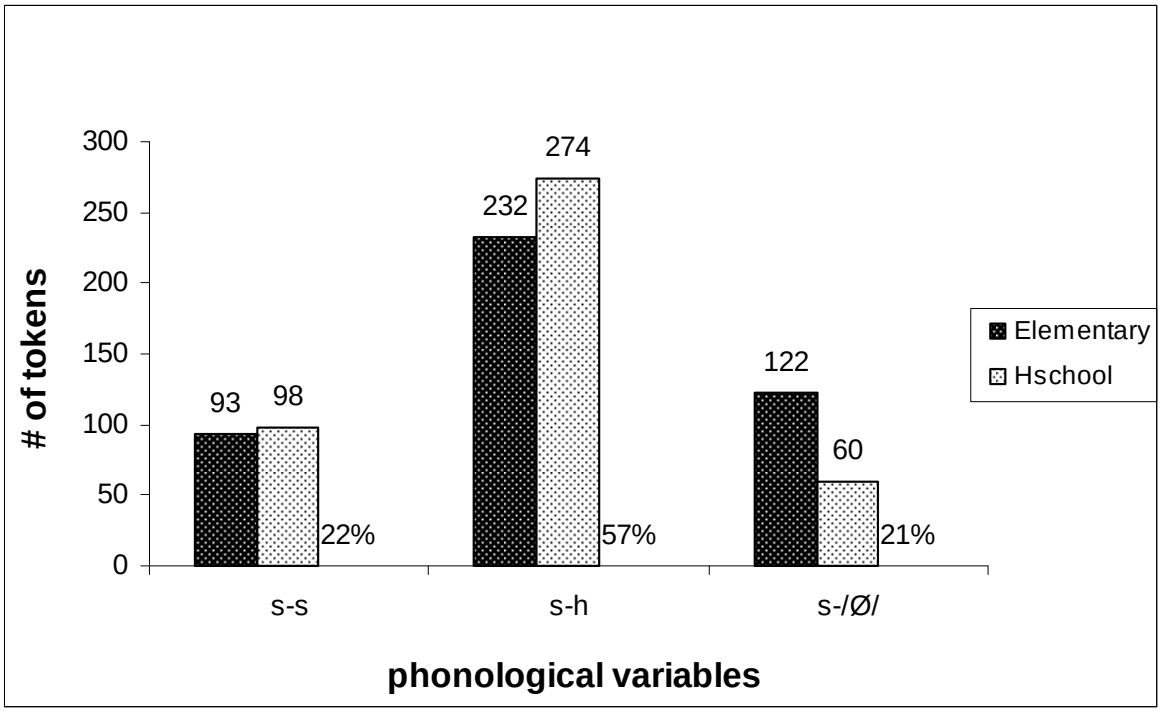


Chart 2. /s/-syllable final – education

Participant	s-s	s-h	s-/Ø/	Total
Elementary	20%	52%	28%	100%
Hschool	23%	63%	14%	100%
Total	22%	57%	21%	100%

Table 7. Percentages of /s/ deletion – education

Education plays a role in the preservation of a dialect as we can see on table 7 Participants who studied up to elementary school showed a slightly higher number of occurrences regarding /s/-deletion, while the ones who studied up to high school led their way on /s/- retention and aspiration. The results appear to indicate that /s/ aspiration is the unmarked choice for both groups, but the two extremes, /s/-retention, usually used by more educated people, and /s/ - deletion, mostly used by less educated people, seem to be a marker within each group.

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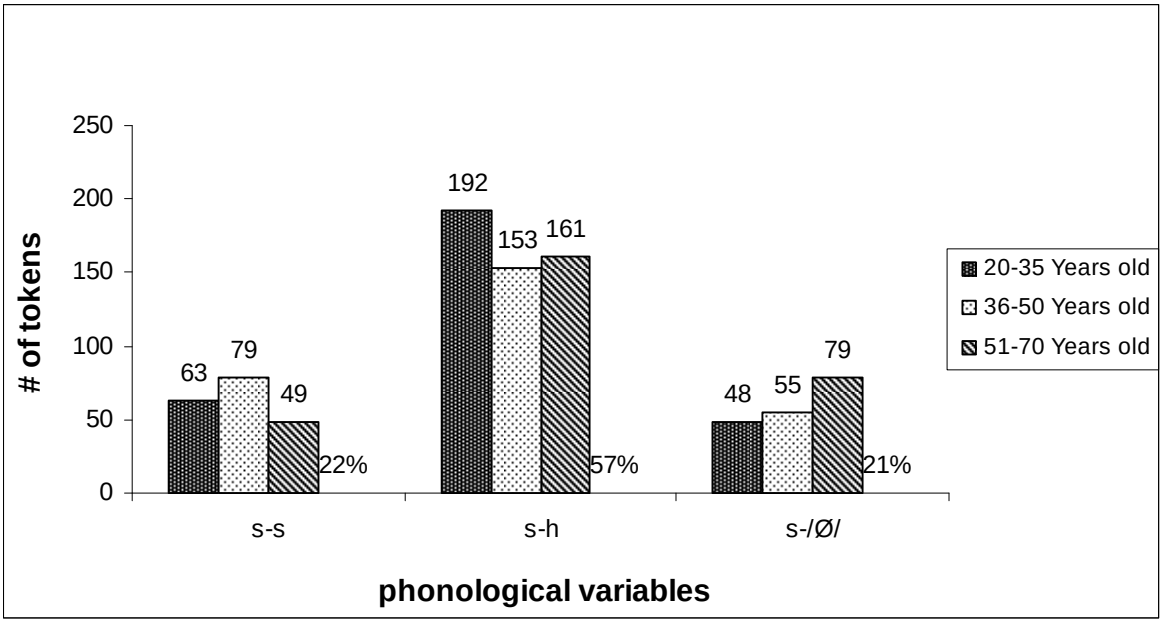


Chart 3. /s/-syllable final – age

Participant	s-s	s-h	s-/Ø/	Total
20-35 years old	21%	63%	16%	100%
36-50 years old	28%	53%	19%	100%
51-70 years old	17%	56%	27%	100%
Total 879	22%	57%	21%	100%

Table 8. Percentages of /s/ deletion - age

Older speakers use slightly more lexical and phonological variants than younger speakers do. Chart 3 shows that age group 36 to 50 has more remaining /s/, while age group 51 to 70 presents more /s/-deletion. What is significant is that older speakers seem to be moving between /s/-deletion and aspiration most of the time not pronouncing the /s/, which is expected.

3.1.2. Final /d/-deletion

Words ending in /d/ often delete the final /d/. Here is an analysis of the /d/s that are deleted and the number of cases where this happened. The words that the participants used the most were: *usted* 'you'; *edad* 'age', *comodidad* 'comfort', *amistad* 'friendship', and *velocidad* 'speed'. Most speakers who used these words deleted the

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final /d/. There are a few cases of participants who did not delete the final /d/ all the time which can be seen on table 9 below.

Participant	**# of tokens**	**Deletion**	%	**words where they occur**
MEA1	1	1	7,14	Edad
MEB1	1	1	7,14	Usted
MEC1	1	1	7,14	Usted
MEC2	1	1	7,14	Usted
FEA1	1	1	7,14	Comodidad
FEB2	2	2	14,28	Usted
FEC1	1	1	7,14	Usted
MHB1	1	0	0	Usted
MHB2	2	1	7,14	Amistad
FHA2	1	1	7,14	Usted
FHB2	1	1	7,14	Usted
FHC2	1	0	0	Velocidad
Total	14	11	78,54%	

Table 9. Final /d/ - deletion

3.1.3. Phonological reduction of inflected estar ‘to be’

The verb ‘to be’ in Spanish has two meanings which are: *ser* and *estar*. This variable occurred with the inflections of the form *estar*, which are the following six: *Estoy, estas, está, estamos, estáis, están.* Some participants deleted the two first phonemes from all the inflections resulting in [toy], [tas], [ta], [támos], [táis], [tan].

The chart below illustrates the number of tokens and the specific cases where this variable occurred.

Participant	**# of tokens**	**deletion**	**%**	**words where they occur**
MEA1	4	1	1,45	Está
MEA2	3	0	0	
MEB1	1	0	0	
MEB2	7	4	5,8	estan, estoy
MEC1	2	0	0	
FEA1	5	0	0	
FEA2	5	1	1,45	Estoy
FEB1	2	2	2,9	Estoy
FEB2	3	0	0	
FEC1	4	4	5,8	estoy, estamos, esta

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FEC2	2	1	1,45	Estoy
MHA1	4	0	0	
MHA2	4	1	1,45	Está
MHB1	3	0	0	
MHB2	2	0	0	
MHC1	2	0	0	
MHC2	2	0	0	
FHA1	2	0	0	
FHA2	2	0	0	
FHB1	4	0	0	
FHB2	2	0	0	
FHC1	2	0	0	
FHC2	2	0	0	
Total	69	14	20,3%	

Table 10. Phonological reduction of inflected *estar* 'to be'

The most remarkable difference to analyze in the realization of this variable is the difference between elementary school and high school participants. This variable was present in thirteen out of thirty-eight tokens of elementary school participants. While in high school participants it only occurred in one out of thirty-one tokens.

3.1.4. Fricatives /s/ & /f/ shifted to [h] – word initially

The realization of the fricatives /s/ and /f/ shifted to [h] at the beginning of a word is a phenomenon that occurs in the speech of some speakers of the Noanamito dialect. The words where this variant occurred were: *familia* 'family', *fulano* 'someone', *sino* 'instead', *fuera* (inflection of the verb 'to go'), *saliendo* (inflection of the verb 'to go out'), *se* (reflexive particle), *somos* 'we are', *fuerte* 'strong', and *salido* (inflection of the verb 'to go out').

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Some phonetic examples of this change include:

Word	Standard Colombian Spanish	Noanamito Spanish Dialect
Familia	[famílya]	[hamílya]
Sino	[sino]	[jino]

Participant	# of tokens	s/f→[h]/# of cases	%	words where they occur
MEA1	7	3	12	familia, fulano, sino
MEC2	6	3	12	fuera, saliendo, se
FEC1	5	3	12	somos, familia, fuerte
MHC1	4	2	8	salido, si
MHC2	3	1	4	fuerte
Total	25	12	48%	

Table 11. Fricatives /s/ & /f/ → [h] - word initially

Only five out of twenty-four participants used the [h] realization of the variable. It seems that this realization is not in the speech of everybody in the community; however it is common to find it in people of different age groups, genders and educational levels.

Male speakers used this pronunciation variant more than female speakers did, which suggests that making generalizations about whether men or women's speech is more innovative will depend on the variable and also on the number of tokens produced by a specific group. On the other hand, elementary school and older participants still show a higher number of local variants compared to the other groups.

3.1.5. Cluster /ado/ reduced to /ao/

This variant is present in different dialects of Spanish; however, there is a slight difference in intonation and use in the dialect spoken in Noanamito.

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Participant	# of tokens	Occurrences	%	words where they occur
MEA1	2	0	0	acostumbrado 'accostumed', regocijado 'exhilarated'
MEB1	2	0	0	dedicado 'dedicated', despertado 'waked up'
MEC1	3	3	15,8	pesado ''heavy', buscado 'searched', tocado 'touched'
MEC2	1	0	0	sacado 'taken out'
FEA2	1	1	5,26	*fermentado* 'fermented'
FEB1E	1	0	0	*entenado* 'stepson'
FEB2E	1	0	0	*embuchado* 'stuffed'
FEC1	1	1	5,26	*añejado* 'aged'
MHA2	1	0	0	*copado* 'taken'
MHB1	1	0	0	*añejado* 'aged'
MHC1	2	1	5,26	*dedicado* 'dedicated'
FHB2E	2	2	10,52	*lado* 'side'
FHC2	1	1	5,26	*fermentado* 'fermented'
Total	19	9	47,36%	

Table 12. Cluster /ado/ reduced to /ao/

Reducing the cluster /ado/ to /ao/ seems to be the unmarked choice in informal everyday speech; not doing so identifies the speaker as an outsider. This variable is used by all the groups compared in this study. Older speakers (51-70 years old) had more realizations of this variable using it 32,58% of the time followed by middle age speakers who used it 10,52% of the time.

3.2. Lexical variables

Noanamito is a town that has many lexical variables that make it different from other places in Colombia. Many words are coined by adolescents who want to sound original and also by speakers of all other age groups who use special words related to their work, their traditions or typical foods. Note that some of these words may be used in surrounding areas that have influenced or have been influenced by the Noanamito Spanish dialect.

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	Noanamito Spanish Dialect	**Standard Colombian Spanish**	**English translation**
1	allu	alla (lejos)	there (far away)
2	avis	has	have
3	ayupi (despedida cariñosa)	adios	good bye (intimate)
4	brincha	pedazo de carne	piece of meat
5	canalete	remo	oar
6	cauchi cauchi	delgado	thin
7	chalupa	herida pequeña	small wound
8	Chavacano	inexperto	beginner
9	chinguirito	aguardiente regional mezclado con gaseosa y limon	regional alcoholic drink mixed with soda and lemon
10	cho/ chos	mentira	lie
11	cochoso	parrandero y bebedor	(someone who likes drinking and dancing)
12	comita	comadrita	(your child's godmother)
13	corosito / curtido	enano	dwarf
14	enano	banano	banana
15	equé	si	yes
16	estar bembo/ tanquiao/ pespé/ papiao	estar lleno	to be full
17	éta	esta	this
18	ete bo	hola, usted	hey you
19	ijilo /iji/ chapalo	míralo	look at it
20	jecho	aguardiente oficial	official alcoholic drink
21	maito	hermanito	little brother
22	ñanguita	por gusto	don't waste your time
23	pa' donde pegó María?	para donde se fue María?	where did Mary go?
24	paino	padrino	godfather
25	percanta	mujer joven	young woman
26	percha	mujer bonita	pretty woman
27	pon	trago grande de viche (bebida alcohólica)	big sip of *viche* (alcoholic drink)
28	potro/potrillo	canoa	canoe
29	tatacoa	mujer mala	bad woman
30	truje	traje	I brought
31	tuco	trozo de madera o envuelto de maíz	piece of wood or food made of corn
32	una mangania	una gran cantidad	a lot
33	velai	correcto	true

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34	viche/ charuco/ tapetusa	aguardiente (regional)	alcoholic drink (from the region)
35	yo lo vide	yo lo vi	I saw it
36	tapao	* comida típica	* typical food
37	quebrao	* comida típica	* typical food
38	atollao	* comida típica	* typical food

Table 13. Lexical description

Nouns such as *chinguirito* (9), *comita* (12), *corosito* (13), *maito* (21) and *ñanguita* (22) show a pattern that is very common in the community, which is using a lot of diminutives. It is common to find diminutives not only in nouns but also in adjectives such as *pequeño – pequeñito* 'small' and in pronouns such as *eso – esito* 'this'. Using diminutives gives more intimacy.

The word *allu* (1) is an example of an inflection used to be emphatic and to modify the adverb of place *allá*. It is also common to find these kinds of inflections on greetings such as *ayupi* (3) lengthened and enhanced by the tone of voice.

The words *potro* and *potrillo* (28) are used in the community to refer to a mean of transportation- a canoe; however, in other Spanish dialects it refers to a horse or baby horse. The relationship that *potro* or *potrillo* have with a horse is that they may be both considered means of transportation.

There are many terms for foods or drinks such as *brincha*, *viche*, *corosito*, *tapao*, *quebrao* and *atollao* which do not have an exact translation, but that have been coined in the community because of the process of food preparation. Moreover, the word *corosito* was translated here as dwarf, but it originally comes from a kind of coconut that is very small. For this reason, people who are short are called *corositos.*

There are some other words whose origin could not be traced; they have just appeared in the community and have been used for many years.

4. Conclusion

In this study, the most salient lexical and phonological features of the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito-Colombia were described an analyzed. This analysis will allow people from other places to have a better understanding of the linguistic diversity

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of this community and its people. I hypothesized that older speakers, female participants and people who have studied up to high school used a bigger number of local lexical and phonological variants; while younger speakers, male participants and people who have studied up to high school used a smaller number of local lexical and phonological variants. After the data analysis, there were many differences found among the different groups.

In this regard, the Spanish dialect spoken in Noanamito, Colombia has specific features that are used by people of different age groups. There are linguistic differences among groups according to gender, education and age. This study provides linguistic information about the community and gives a better understanding of the differences that are due to their geographic and historical situation. Nonetheless, a further study should include people who have had access to higher education. Comparing the speech of more subjects can lead to the discovery of other variants of this dialect. Further study can also compare other dialects of Spanish spoken in other towns of the municipality of Lopez de Micay to contrast the linguistic differences of the towns that are closer to the sea with those that are closer to the mountains.

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