

Dialectal preferences of Polish students of Spanish philology. A sociophonetic analysis of fricative phonemes.

The Spanish language presents a diversity of variations, among them a regional one that highly affects the pronunciation. The main contrast manifests in the realisation of fricative phonemes which, according to *Nueva gramática de la lengua española* (2011: 167) allows to distinguish two main systems. The phonetic phenomenon of *seseo*, that occurs mainly in Latin American and southern Spanish varieties, consist of dephonologization of the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ that is replaced by the alveolar fricative /s/ with lamino-alveolar realisation. In the rest of Iberian Peninsula, the phonemic distinction between two fricative sounds remains, while the consonant /s/ is apical. The above contrast can result in problems in both teaching and acquiring Spanish as a foreign language, while also providing a field to investigate how non-native speakers articulate these specific sounds.

The present study examines linguistic attitudes and dialectal preferences of Polish learners of Spanish as a foreign language in comparison to the realizations of analysed sounds. Its main objective is to verify to what extent the actual production of fricative phonemes corresponds to the one selected by student as a used variant. Furthermore, the analysis will determine which of Spanish variety is more frequently applied among students.

The corpus consists of recordings carried out with advanced learners of Spanish that include the production of fricative phonemes /s/ and /θ/. The collected audio-material will be later perceptually and acoustically analysed using the Praat software to correlate it with data from the surveys on dialectal awareness, preferences and exposure to the language.

The analysis will expose if the declaration of used Spanish dialect manifests in the actual production of examined phonemes as well as general tendencies in the variant selection. The results may indicate a general preference of the Peninsular variety due to a greater exposure. However, the actual production of examined sounds is expected to demonstrate Latin American patterns as a result of similarity to the Polish realization of fricative phoneme /s/. The study seeks to introduce a new perspective to research on Spanish pronunciation and foreign language acquisition by the combination of acoustic and sociolinguistic methods.

Keywords: sociophonetics, fricative phonemes, acquisition of Spanish, dialectal variation

References

Real Academia Española y Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española. (2011). *Nueva gramática de la lengua española. Fonética y fonología*. Espasa.

Word count: 347