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DISERTACIÓN PREVIA A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL TÍTULO DE LICENCIATURA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA CON MENCIÓN EN TRADUCCIÓN

ANALYSIS AND TRANSLATION OF THE LITERARY DIALECT FOUND IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN PLAY THE PIANO LESSON

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Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

Martin Luther King, Jr.

To the people that inspire me daily, who I continuously learn from and who have made me the person I am today. I will never be able to fully thank you, but I hope that my achievements will be a testament to your teachings.

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INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The world of fiction poses many questions to those who delve into it. As much as we try to fictionalize a story, we always find a resemblance with some part of our reality, of our humanity. In fact, it is through literature that we are able to find truth and essence. Overcoming the barrier of language has led to the dissemination of great literary works, allowing them to become timeless and universal. This is particularly true in theatre. From William Shakespeare's comedies to Arthur Miller's drama, a great number of plays have found international audiences and have overcome the restrictions of time. This, of course, has implied carrying out a series of changes to the original versions of the plays to ensure adaptability to modern audiences. There is undoubtedly great appeal in sharing stories that transcend borders. This can be seen in the efforts of afro-descendant peoples around the world who share their experiences as different cultures with similar histories.

Among the works of African American writers, and specifically in the field of theatre, August Wilson, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is a highly acclaimed playwright who dramatizes aspects of the African American experience in his writings. *The Piano Lesson*, one of his main plays that received the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, is well-known among theatre academics and enthusiasts, who become immersed in the various themes concerning the historical struggles undergone by African Americans. One of the most interesting aspects in *The Piano Lesson* consists of the way Wilson portrays an African American dialect by including particular morphosyntactic elements. To identify and classify these elements will allow for an analysis of the grammatical nature of this dialect. Translators have been reluctant to translate literary dialects, especially those that pertain to a specific community and region, due to the challenges and limited options at hand. Although the most common solution is to standardize the translation (use a standard variety for the source text), there are other solutions that may be applied and that translators should consider when translating literary dialects, particularly because standardization implies losing an important feature of the original text and the author's message. In principle, the translator should understand the thought and purpose behind writing in dialect in order to make decisions accordingly. Finding different translation solutions will allow translators to use or develop new guides regarding how to approach the process of translating other works of fiction that use African American English (AAE).

August Wilson's works have been adapted to audiences outside the United States. For example, a local theatre in Lima, Peru, held a performance of *Fences* titled *Al otro lado de la cerca* in 2014, with an exclusive cast of black actors. Moreover, a community theatre in

Colombia performed an adapted version of the *The Piano Lesson* which was more reflective of the Afro-Colombian reality. The Colombian version not only included a rich local language, but even replaced the main symbol of the play, the piano, for the traditional musical instrument, the *marimba*. Wilson's plays undoubtedly speak to broader audiences, particularly to other black communities across the continent. This exportation of his plays implies a transposition of his language, cultural references, symbols, and others. In Ecuador, important efforts have been made to bring awareness of the hardships faced by black communities, even to this day. This has led to the emergence of cultural movements aimed at creating visibility of the black presence in the country. Many notorious scholars of African-descent keep cultural messages in their work. Some have delved into literature, such as Nelson Estupiñán Bass, Adalberto Ortiz or Antonio Preciado; others have done so in academics or politics, such as Juan García or Edgar Allan García. In this sense, an underlying question of this study concerns the type of impact that creating a national version of an acclaimed international play may have on Ecuadorian audiences. The lack of inquiry in this field may be of great interest to future scholars and may contribute to the important goal of providing visibility of this important social group and their significance to the construction of our national identity. A study of great relevance for our national literature is Dr. Cecilia Mafla Bustamante's *Arí-Sí-Yes*. Mafla analyzes and assesses the translations of the well-known indigenous-themed novel *Huasipungo*. This novel uses a literary dialect based on the native language *Kichwa*, to identify the Native-American characters, and is an important contribution to understanding the correlation between language and literature. However, less is known about the language practices of the African-Ecuadorian groups both from a linguistic and literary viewpoint.

Important differences arise in the creation of literary dialects in the source and target texts. This is the reason why the sections on linguistic descriptions have different approaches. On the one hand, African American English (AAE) is studied on a morphosyntactic basis, given the predominantly grammatical nature of the dialect in the source text. On the other hand, African-Ecuadorian speech is discussed from a phonological perspective due to the findings regarding the linguistic strategies employed by the literary sources which were analyzed for the creation of a target dialect. On this basis, the present study intends to understand the linguistic strategies, as employed by the source author, and analyze the conventions in the target culture by means of three sources: *Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos, Juyungo* and *Cuentos y décimas*. These will provide the linguistic evidence needed to create an adapted version of *The Piano Lesson*.

OBJECTIVES

Overall Objective

- To create a literary dialect for an adapted Spanish version of *The Piano Lesson* by using a nonstandard variety associated with the speech of a group of African-Ecuadorians, as portrayed and documented by writers and scholars respectively.

Specific Objectives

- To identify the specific strategies in *The Piano Lesson* and study the linguistic features in relation to the morphosyntactic norms in African American English.

- To compare the works of the Afro-Ecuadorian writers and scholars selected in the object of study, to identify the recurrent features and analyze them in relation to the phonological norms in African-Ecuadorian varieties.

- To analyze the strategies employed in literature and drama to create literary dialects, particularly concerning the source and target cultures.

- To explore the dynamics between standard and non-standard varieties from a social and linguistic perspective, and its relevance in works of fiction.

CHAPTER I- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1.　　SOCIOLINGUISTICS

To understand the significance of using AAE in a work of literature, and specifically how the literary dialect fits into a real social context in the United States, we must include an analysis from a Sociolinguistic focus. Nonetheless, establishing the scope of Sociolinguistics has not been an easy task for scholars who have provided a variety of definitions over the years, in order to demonstrate its autonomy from related fields. An analysis from a sociolinguistic viewpoint is essential to answering many questions of this study that linguistic concepts cannot solely answer, particularly the use of literary dialects correlated to the African American community. Before discussing the scope of sociolinguistics, let us briefly address certain linguistic concepts.

Linguistics is the academic field devoted to the scientific study of language. The scope of linguistics covers everything from the formal features of language structure to contextual uses of language, language formation, variation and change, and topics regarding language universals. It even serves as an underlying theory in correlated fields such as psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics. In fact, sociolinguistics is an example of such a field and many scholars sustain that it is inherently connected to linguistic theory and is therefore a branch of linguistics. Nonetheless, as an independent field, linguistics consists of major subfields that are based on different levels of study: sounds, constructions, meaning and forms of words (Matthews, 2000, p. 2). Thus, *phonology* and *phonetics* deal with sounds and speech sounds, *morphology* with word forms, *syntax* with constructions, and *semantics* with meaning.

i.　The Scope of Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the most accepted and used term among scholars when discussing language and society correlations. As explained in *Las ciencias del lenguaje y la variación lingüística sociocultural*, the linguistic structure remains the main object of study in sociolinguistics since it draws on sociological theory to arrive to conclusions about language (Vega, 2001, p. 26). This field is concerned with the use of language in its materialized form, in its real social environment, and as used by its speakers. While linguistics focuses solely on the abstract nature of language, that is, the set of rules that govern the sounds, words or sentences that we can discern and produce, sociolinguistics goes further into asking questions about concrete usage, i.e. the way people use language in real life settings, and the reasoning behind linguistic choices. Therefore, sociolinguistics acknowledges the heterogeneous nature of

speech and speech communities in general. Deborah Cameron states that sociolinguistics should "deal with such matters as the production and reproduction of linguistic norms by institutions and socializing practices; how these norms are apprehended, accepted, resisted and subverted by individual actors and what their relation is to the construction of identity" (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 11). Even though this might seem like a predominantly empirical approach, Ronald Wardhaugh, an important sociolinguistics scholar, points out that useful research must be both data and theory-oriented: "our research must be motivated by questions that can be answered in an approved scientific way. Data collected for the sake of collecting data are of little interest, since without some kind of focus […] they can tell us little or nothing" (2002, p. 16).

Although linguistic theory allows us to understand everything from phonetic to syntactic variation, sociolinguistics provides a space to analyze the distribution of these features within a specific speech community and along geographic and social lines. In fact, some of the most prominent research areas deal with the knowledge of linguistic variation in different speech communities. A language variety is determined by a specific set of characteristics that speakers recognize as being part of that variety. These characteristics can consist of peculiarities in pronunciation, grammar or the choice of words. Thus, people may associate the way someone talks to a specific region or social group. A language variety can then be categorized as a social variety, a regional variety, or as belonging to a specific style or register. A regional variety is a language or dialect that pertains to a specific geographical location. But regional varieties can also be representative of a certain social group (ethnicity) or class, in which case they become social varieties. Thus, African American English or the African-Ecuadorian dialects that are the object of this study are social varieties because they are mainly identified with the communities that speak them. But to be able to answer deeper questions such as why African American English is usually referred to as a dialect or vernacular rather than a language we must delve further into understanding the criteria under which every language variety may be categorized.

ii.   A Typology of Language Varieties

From a sociolinguistic perspective, language varieties can be classified based on whether they conform to parameters of standardization, autonomy, historicity, and vitality. The developer of this typology of language varieties was linguist William Alexander Stewart who first discussed the topic in a compilation of essays that focused mostly on studies of Second Language Teaching. In his chapter *An Outline of Linguistic Typology for Describing Multilingualism*, Stewart explains that a language type is defined by attitudinal factors which

provide certain levels of prestige to a variety. He states that "owing to attitudes which people have come to adopt toward certain socio-historical attributes of language, different languages may be accorded different degrees of relative social status" (Stewart, 1962, p. 17). Stewart's chart on language varieties, which has been reexamined and updated by many scholars over the years, provides important insight about the attributes that usually generate social attitudes towards language types (Rotaetxe, 1990, p. 25):

Attributes*				Language Type	Type Symbol
1	2	3	4		
+	+	+	+	Standard	S
+	+	+	-	Classical	C
+	+	-	-	Artificial	A
-	+	+	+	Vernacular	V
-	-	+	+	Dialect	D
-	-	-	+	Creole	K
-	-	-	-	Pidgin	P
* 1 = standardization; 2 = autonomy; 3 = historicity; 4 = vitality					

Table 1. Typology of Language Varieties by W. Stewart

- Standardization refers to whether a variety has a codified set of grammatical and lexical norms that dictate the correct usage, and which is formally accepted and learned by language users (Stewart, 1962, p. 17). It is usually propelled and disseminated by socially or politically influential groups through grammar handbooks, dictionaries or orthography guides. Stewart states that these normative instruments "tend to impart a generally accepted status of 'legitimacy' to languages which possess them" (1962, p. 17).

- Autonomy is attributed to varieties that may be genetically or typologically related but that are not sociolinguistically interdependent. Furthermore, they can be the symbol of a nation and used independently to fulfill every social function of that society (Rotaetxe, 1990, p. 28). In this sense, a dialect is not autonomous so far as it is judged against the standard variety or the norm.

- Historicity is attributed to long-standing languages that are a result of a "process of development through use" and associated to a national or ethnic tradition (Stewart, 1962, p. 17). Artificial languages, for example, are not considered to have historicity.
- Vitality refers to a whether a variety has native speakers and it is concerned with questions such as the number of speakers that use the variety and whether they are socially influential (Rotaetxe, 1990, p. 30).

By looking at the typological chart, it is possible to arrive to important conclusions about the positive and negative attitudinal attributes for standard and nonstandard varieties. A standard variety of a language is expected to possess all the attributes. It is the variety with most social functions in a linguistic community since it is always used by social and political institutions, and it is the variety of choice in education and mass media. The remaining varieties can usually be defined (for example, there is no confusion in what differentiates a pidgin from a creole), but certain concepts are not always clear-cut. Furthermore, a dialect or a vernacular may become standardized with enough social prestige and through the "gradual codification and acceptance of its grammar and lexicon" (Stewart, 1962, p. 19). In the following section, we shall discuss some of the issues behind the term *dialect* in order to set a clear definition of its use in the present study.

iii.   Defining Dialect

As has been mentioned previously, the concepts behind what makes up a dialect and why it is different from a language are social constructs; therefore, they are better justified from a sociological rather than a linguistic perspective. Suzanne Romaine, a well-known scholar in historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, supports this by stating:

> […] *términos como lengua y dialecto son, desde el punto de vista lingüístico, nociones no técnicas, puesto que no hay ningún procedimiento objetivo para determinar cuándo los hablantes encontrarán que dos variedades son lo suficientemente parecidas como [para] adscribirlas a la misma lengua*. (El lenguaje en la sociedad: una introducción a la sociolingüística, 1996, p. 39)

If we were to set aside the social notions that contribute to the establishment of language hierarchy, we would find that "[…] all languages and all varieties of particular languages are equal in that they quite adequately serve the needs of those who use them" (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 335). Linguists are generally not invested in distinguishing between a dialect and a language "because (1) both languages and dialects are equally rule governed, and (2) there are different

views of dialects" (Green, 2002, p. 2). The views by which users may distinguish between languages and dialects resemble those attributed to the standard and nonstandard varieties because of the dependency that dialects and nonstandard varieties have on languages and standard varieties. Consequently, these same ideals are attributed to written and spoken varieties respectively. Therefore, on the one hand, language is thought to be the encompassing standardized variety that is propelled by the written word and used in most formal, social contexts, while a dialect is almost always nonstandard, since it deviates from the standard variety and is associated mostly with spontaneous, spoken language. However, these concepts are not definitive and the objects of study of the present thesis serve as examples to prove this. Karmele Rotaetxe, a specialist in Basque linguistics, points out that literature is an area where the written word clearly deviates from the norm (Sociolingüística, 1990). The so-called *literary dialects* are conscious uses of nonstandard varieties, which show that the written word is not exclusive to the standard variety. For now, we shall conclude that, even though sociolinguistic theory serves to understand the underlying concepts of language and culture, the use of *dialect* for the purpose of this study will be further discussed in accordance with the nomenclature in literature.

1.2.   AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH

African American English, categorized generally as a dialect of the English language, behaves much like an autonomous variety in the sense that, even though it is not formally a standard, it possesses a level of internal linguistic standardization, supported by its users and by numerous sociolinguistic researches. AAE is undeniably rule-governed and autonomous, to the extent that it has become a symbolic language of the African American people. Wardhaugh observed that "some speakers of African American Vernacular English maintain that their language is not a variety of English but is a separate language in its own right and refer to it as *Ebonics*" (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 38). AAE received much attention in matters such as education (e.g. the Oakland Ebonics resolution), and the debate on whether it is a dialect or a language is still present today. This section will give an account of the historicity of this variety, as well as an outline of its internal standardness.

i.   Terminology

For years scholars have differed in the terminology used to refer to the varieties of the English language as spoken uniformly by a great number of African Americans living in different cities of the Unites States. In *African American English: A Linguistic Introduction*, Lisa J. Green

explains that, historically, different labels have been given to the African American variety depending on the social context of the time (5). This is true if we consider that outdated terms such as *Negro English*, *Negro Dialect* or *Non-standard Negro English* were coined during a time when the word *negro* was used to refer to African Americans. Nowadays, some of the most common terms found in the main literature are: African American English (AAE), African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Ebonics, Black English (BE) or Black English Vernacular (BEV).

According to certain authors, not all these terms are synonymous. John R. Rickford once stated that the term *African American English* encompasses the "continuum of varieties [spoken by African Americans] ranging from the most mainstream or standard speech […] to the most vernacular or non-mainstream variety", while *African American Vernacular English* accounted only for the non-mainstream variety (African American Vernacular English: features, evolution, educational implications, 1999, p. xxi). This distinction was initially established by William Labov, who identified as *Black English Vernacular* the speech of a majority of African Americans from 8 to 19 years old living in the inner cities (Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular, 1972, p. xiii). The aim of using this term was to differentiate the speech of this specific age group from mainstream African American varieties, and to "avoid the impression that every African American would use the features associated with that [speech]" (Rickford, 1999, p. xxi).

In spite of the undeniable differences in terminology throughout the years, nowadays there is a clearer convention among linguists and the aforementioned labels are used interchangeably. Green argues that they conclusively refer to one same variety:

African Americans who use this variety, and not all do, use it consistently, but there are regional differences that will distinguish varieties of AAE spoken in the United States. […] Today, while some researchers choose to use African American English, others African American Vernacular English and still others African American Language, they are all referring to the same variety. (2002, pp. 1,7)

Following the current inclination of most scholars, this study will employ the term *African American English* (referred to as AAE from now on).

ii.   Origin and Categorization

The exact facts about the origin of AAE are still unknown and the debate about how this dialect came to exist is ongoing. Traditionally there have been two groups of scholars who favor different linguistic processes behind the origin of AAE: creolists and dialectologists. On the one hand, creolists sustain that AAE originated from a multilingual situation which caused speakers of different languages to develop a simplified means of communication, or pidgin, that would later be acquired by native speakers, thus becoming a creole (Green, 2002, p. 9). On the other hand, dialectologists believe that AAE has a clearer connection to nonstandard English varieties, and even that it shares the same characteristics of dialects spoken by Americans of any color in the south (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 341). Linguists who supported this view studied recordings of ex-slaves to prove that Earlier AAE was "more closely related to English than to creoles" and that it consequently originated as a dialect of English (Green, 2002, p. 10). Nonetheless, many authors point out that these opposing views are not mutually exclusive. Donald Winford (cited in Green), for example, argues that "AAE developed out of contact between Europeans and Africans in the South during the seventeenth century [and that it] continued to develop gradually in contact situations with creole varieties and varieties spoken by colonial settlers" (Green, 2002, p. 10). Overall, Winford states that the features that characterize AAE can be explained by the following statements:

I. Several features from earlier varieties of English were adopted into AAE.
II. Some seem to have resulted from imperfect second language learning.
III. Several can be explained as a result of retention of creole structure and meaning.

Even though inquiries on the origin of AAE are ongoing, much has been learned about its many idiosyncratic features, particularly those found among different AAE varieties. According to Dr. Alexander Kautzsch, an important scholar in English Linguistics and main contributor to the documentation of Earlier AAE for the electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English[1] (eWAVE), "neither Earlier AAE nor present-day AAE can be regarded as one single variety but rather as a bundle of varieties that vary along regional and social lines" (The Historical Evolution of Earlier African American English, 2002, p. 11). Accordingly, AAE can be categorized into three varieties that are distinguished by time and areal constraints: Earlier AAE, Rural AAE and Urban AAE. Earlier differs from Urban and Rural AAE regarding time: Kautzsch

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[1] "An interactive database on morphosyntactic variation in spontaneous spoken English mapping 235 features from a dozen domains of grammar in now 50 varieties of English" compiled at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies (FRIAS) and the English Department of the University of Freiburg, Germany. Last update: November 2013.

defines Earlier AAE as the varieties spoken during the 19th and early 20th centuries (2002, p. 11). Furthermore, Urban and Rural AAE are varieties pertaining to different geographical areas. Urban varieties of AAE are spoken by working-class African Americans throughout North America, particularly in "metropolitan areas such as New York, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Chicago, Detroit, Houston, and Los Angeles". Rural AAE varieties, on the other hand, are spoken by working-class African Americans that live in "small, more-geographically remote communities in southern states such as Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, Georgia, and Louisiana" (eWAVE, 2013). An important fact, as stated by Walt Wolfram in *The Grammar of Urban African American Vernacular English*, is that "although the roots of contemporary AAE were no doubt established in the rural South, its twentieth century development as a sociocultural variety is strongly associated with its use in non-Southern urban areas" (Wolfram, 2004, p. 111) Urban varieties emerged only after the Great Migration took place in the early 20th century, when African Americans migrated from Southern rural areas to metropolitan areas in the north, allowing for new language contact (Wolfram, 2004, p. 111). It is increasingly difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between rural and urban varieties due to factors like "back-migration", which has favored the use of Urban AAE in southern states. However, linguistic differences between the three varieties have been documented by many scholars throughout the years. Many of these differences are morphosyntactic in nature, and some may be observed in the table below (eWAVE, 2013):

AAE Feature	Earlier AAE	Rural AAE	Urban AAE
Multiple negation / negative concord	+	+	+
Them instead of demonstrative *those* (also *demonstrative them*)	+	+	+
Was for conditional *were*	+/-	+	+
New quasi-modals: aspectual meanings	-	+	+
Benefactive "personal dative" construction	+	+/-	+/-
Invariant present tense forms due to zero marking for the third person singular	+/-	+/-	+
Deletion of copula *be*: before NPs, AdjPs and locatives	+/-	+/-	+
Deletion of auxiliary *be*: before progressive	+/-	+/-	+
Invariant *be* as habitual marker	-	+/-	+
Was generalization	+/-	+/-	+/-
Deletion of auxiliary *have*	∅	+/-	+/-
No inversion/no auxiliaries in wh-questions and in main clause yes/no questions	-	+/-	+/-

Although there are many other features that could be incorporated in the list, we shall limit it to only those that are present in the object of this study. The following section provides a more detailed description of the features presented in the table.

iii.   Morphological and Syntactic Description

It should be noted that the information contained in this section is based on the linguistic findings with regard to the object of study. Therefore, not all the morphosyntactic elements of AAE are included, only those observed with high frequency in *The Piano Lesson*. They are listed below with a brief linguistic description:

- *Deletion of copula and auxiliary BE*

In the article *African American Vernacular English is not Standard English with Mistakes*, linguist Geoffrey K. Pullum states that "the AAVE copula can be omitted, but there are strict rules –surprisingly detailed and specific ones– about how and where" (1999, p. 45). Contractible or unstressed forms of *is* and *are* may be generally omitted.

He coming over tomorrow.	He lucky he didn't get caught.
What you doing here?	Where your phone at?

However, forms that are stressed or that initiate or end a clause are obligatorily overt. The latter includes confirmatory tag questions. Green also notes that the third person singular neuter pronoun (it) is always overtly followed by *is* (2002, p. 38): <u>*It's liable to be that long before he come by*</u>.

- *Generalization of was*

Regarding the past forms of BE, Green states that copula and auxiliary are obligatorily although without a singular/plural distinction (2002, p. 38). *Was* extends its use to the first-person plural, the second-person singular and plural, and the third-person plural: *You <u>was</u> hungry but he was thirsty*.

Was is also used in unreal or imaginative conditional sentences in lieu of SE *were[2]: If I <u>was</u> you I'd get rid of it*.

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[2] In Standard English, the use of conditional *were* with the first and third person singular, where *was* is the expected form, is a remaining feature of the Old English subjunctive mood. (Celce- Murcia, 1983, p. 344)

- *Habitual BE*

This highly discussed feature of AAE consists of "the use of the verbal marker *be* to signal the habitual occurrence of an event" (Green, 2002, p. 35). Thus, the feature not only deviates from Standard English (SE) but also takes on a culture-specific meaning of habituality or recurring events. In addition to the habitual aspect, it is also referred to as invariant because it lacks inflection for person and number (*I be*, *you be*, *she be* as opposed to *I am*, *you are*, *she is*):

Everybody be talking around here	She be first in line
Everybody usually talks around here	*She is usually first in line*

Wolfram notes that, in urban AAE especially, a "more recent aspectual change is the semantic expansion of invariant *be* beyond its reference to habituality" (2004, p. 119). Wolfram also points out that habitual BE must be distinguished from other contexts of bare infinitive BE, such as those that originate from "phonological processes that affect contracted forms of *will* and *would*", which lead to omission of the modal verbs (2004, p. 118), as in the examples below: *She be ready in a minute*, *If you do what she say everything be alright*.

- *Use of ain't*

Although not unique to AAE—it is in fact frequently employed in other Southern European American Vernaculars—this contraction is used with a unique set of functions by African Americans. One of these functions is *ain't* as a generic preverbal negator. Under this category, what distinguishes AAE from other English dialects, and Urban AAE from the rest of the AAE varieties, is the use of *ain't* for the past tense—that is, in lieu of *didn't*: *She ain't just made all that up*. Note that *ain't* does not carry tense in the examples, thus it does not have distinct past and non-past forms. The element that is generally marked for past tense is the main verb. However, Green observes that there are some cases in which past contexts take the main verb in non-past form. Therefore, sentences such as *We ain't stole it* or *We ain't steal it* are both equivalent to the SE sentence *We didn't steal it*.

In regard to the remaining functions, a*in't* is used instead of the copula, as in *I ain't scared of work*; or as a preverbal negated form for present tense BE, as in *He ain't asking you no questions*. It is also used for present perfect *have/has*: *I ain't never known her to say those things*. Not every main verb takes the past participle form for the present perfect, though.

Wolfram notes that *ain't* "may be used with *but* to indicate 'only' or 'no more than'" (2004, p. 124), as in: *Now, there ain't but so many places you can go*.

Finally, *ain't* also participates in a type of negative inversion process, thus it can be fronted when the subject is indefinite: *Ain't nobody talking to you*, *Ain't nothing wrong with him*.

- *Zero marking for the third person singular*

This accounts for the absence of the third person singular marker *-s* for the present tense. It is also known as invariant present tense, because of the identical verb forms for each grammatical person: <u>*He say*</u> *he going back, but I'm gonna stay*.

Zero marking also includes the replacement of *doesn't* and *has* with *don't* and *have*, because, as pointed out by Rickford, *does* and *has* both use the *-s* marker (1999, p. 7).

- *Auxiliary HAVE*

The auxiliary HAVE functions in compound tenses such as present perfect and present perfect continuous in SE, but it can be omitted in AAE. Therefore, as Green states, the simple past and present perfect are sometimes identical in form, but they "can be distinguished only in emphatic affirmation environments, cases in which the auxiliary HAVE is stressed and occurs on the surface in the present perfect" (2002, p. 39). However, she also states that "some verbs do take *-en* in the present perfect" (2002, p. 39):

She already eaten her lunch   She already ate her lunch

- *No inversion/no auxiliaries in questions*

Wh-questions and yes/no questions in AAE show deviance from SE question formation, particularly regarding auxiliary usage. Auxiliaries in AAE do not occur obligatorily in questions. Although it would not usually prevent understanding in written form, auxiliary omission in oral speech requires a special intonation to signal that a question is being asked (Green, 2002). The auxiliaries that may be omitted are:

AUX DO
What you doing?   What he want?
You get the point?   You liked him?

AUX BE

He still doing that?   How your people doing down there?

Except in the past tense: *Who <u>was</u> you talking to?*

AUX HAVE

She been studying?   How long you been planning to move?

- *Multiple negation / negative concord*

Negative concord, or multiple negation, is the construction of a single negative sentence with more than one type of negator and without cancelling each other or changing the whole negative meaning. However, AAE allows for the use of many particles, from sentential negatives[3] to negative indefinites. Thus, according to Wolfram, negative sentences can "be marked both within the verb phrase and on postverbal indefinites" (Wolfram, 2004, p. 123), as in: *He <u>wasn't</u> doing <u>no</u> work or <u>nothing,</u> You <u>don't</u> do <u>nothing</u> but bring trouble*.

It can consist of a preverbal indefinite and verbal negative: *Otherwise you all can go back out there and be where <u>nobody don't</u> have to ask you nothing*. In relation to this last case, there can also be a type of inversion of the negative auxiliary and the indefinite pronoun, as in: *Some people say it was rigged but <u>don't nobody</u> know for sure*, *<u>Ain't nobody</u> said nothing about that.*

Many cases of multiple negation take place because of the lack of suppletive *any*, which is obligatory in SE to generate grammatical sentences such as *You don't do anything*. This sentence would be reproduced in AAE as *You don't do nothing*.

Finally, Green points to the fact that out of all the negative particles only one is a marker for negation (usually the particle in the verb phrase), and the others are either in agreement with the negative meaning or add emphatic meaning (2002, p. 78).

- *Completive DONE*

The use of *done* as a "quasi-modal" is a recurrent trait in AAE, highly discussed among sociolinguists. Wolfram states that preverbal *done* "functions in AAVE like a perfect, referring to an action completed in the recent past, but it can also be used to highlight the change of state or to intensify an activity" (2004, p. 119). Furthermore, Rickford notes that *done* is used to "emphasize the completed nature of an action" (1999, p. 6). As for its grammatical environment,

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[3] Sentential negatives are negators that affect an entire sentence rather than a phrase or a word.

done is used as an auxiliary, before the main verb: *He done eat his dinner*, *They done used all of it.*

However, there are also instances in which *done* takes the past participle form of the verb: *We <u>done seen</u> them together*.

- *Benefactive "personal dative"*

This is a trait that AAE shares with Southern dialects. It consists of the "use of object pronouns (me, him, and so on) after a verb as personal datives" (Rickford, 1999, p. 8). Thus, while in SE one would say *I bought myself a car* (i.e. for myself), in AAE it becomes *I bought me a car*.

- *Use of quasi-modals*

Fixing to is sometimes used to indicate an action that will occur in the immediate future or an event that has been planned (Wolfram, 2004, p. 121). This is one of many "quasi-modals" that are used in the same sense, such as *finna*, *fitna*, *fixta*, and *fidda*. Many authors agree that these modal markers belong to one of the innovative features of AAE. The modal "precedes non-finite verbs, which are not marked for tense and agreement" (Green, 2002, p. 70), as shown below:

We <u>fixing to come</u> see you.   He <u>fixing to go</u> to work.
We are planning to come see you.   *He is about to go to work*.

- *Demonstrative THEM*

This consists of the extension of the objective form *them* for attributive demonstratives. AAE uses the 3rd person plural object pronoun *them* where SE would generally use the plural demonstrative *those*, therefore it is always followed by a noun or a noun phrase: *Somebody down there talking to <u>them people</u> about their problems*. (Wolfram, 2004, p. 125)

- *Linguistic Camouflaging*

An interesting phenomenon found in urban AAE is *linguistic camouflaging*. According to Wolfram this is a sociolinguistic process "in which a vernacular form resembles a standard or different vernacular form [but which] carries a distinctive semantic-pragmatic meaning or is constructed in a subtly different way" (Wolfram, 2004, p. 114). This can be seen in the use of

come as a semi-auxiliary, also known as *indignant come*. In SE, *come* can precede movement verbs (e.g. they came running); however, in AAE, *come* also accompanies other types of verbs in order to express indignation. In this regard, the use of come in urban AAE "fills a unique semantic-pragmatic role indicating speaker indignation" (Wolfram, 2004, p. 115).

He come telling me how mad he was

meaning   *He had the nerve to tell me how mad he was*

1.3. AFRO-ECUADORIAN SPEECH

Up to 2001, the African Ecuadorian population constituted 5% of the total population of Ecuador according to the national census (Guerrero, 2005, p. 5). Historically, there were two major groups of African descendants that first entered the Ecuadorian territory. One group was brought from West Africa to work on sugarcane and cotton plantations belonging to the Jesuit congregation in the northern highlands. According to research by American linguist John M. Lipsky, the sugar mini-empire that lasted from 1680 to 1760 was the "prime motivation for the arrival of black slaves" and "[b]y 1779 more than 1300 African slaves worked on these former Jesuit *haciendas*" (Afro-Choteño speech: towards the (re)creation of a "Black Spanish", 2008, p. 101). Nowadays, these afro-descendant groups occupy the provinces of Imbabura and Carchi, specifically the Chota/Mira river valley and the neighboring Salinas valley (Lipski, 2008, p. 100). According to popular usage, the terms *Chota* and *Choteño* are used to refer to the entire range of black communities located in these areas. Another group that came to Ecuador in 1553 consisted of slaves that were being taken to Lima, but who managed to escape after a shipwreck. As a group of free men and women, they settled in what is known today as the province of Esmeraldas, in the northern coast of Ecuador. This group is known for having successfully resisted colonists and native groups trying to gain their territory. Nowadays, the Esmeraldas Province holds the largest black population in the country, referred to as *Afro-Esmeraldeños*.

The oral traditions of African-Ecuadorians are preserved through the "guardians of memory", who keep stories, songs and poems in their own memories and pass them on to new generations, so that they learn and continue to preserve them. Moreover, many efforts have been made towards collecting and keeping this inherited knowledge in written form to ensure the longevity of the stories, characters, themes, and others. Juan García, for instance, is one of the main collectors of oral traditions and has published numerous poetry compilations, namely the *Décimas Esmeraldeñas*, as well as songs and stories belonging to Choteños and Esmeraldeños respectively. It is also worth mentioning the important contributions of Afro-Ecuadorians to the national literature. Adalberto Ortiz, Nelson Estupiñán Bass and Antonio Preciado are some of the most internationally acclaimed writers and poets that have strived to bring national awareness on the social reality faced by Afro-descendants in Ecuador through their work.

At a certain time, it was mistakenly believed that the speech of African descendants across the country shared the same linguistic features, which disseminated the idea that all

Afro-Ecuadorians spoke the same dialect—an idea that persists in popular thought. However, it has clearly been proven that this is not the case and that African-Ecuadorian communities are linguistically idiosyncratic in the sense that their speech aligns with the particularities of each region (Sierra vs. Coast) and most importantly that they possess their own distinctive elements. Accordingly, and without disregarding the existence of other African-descent groups in Ecuador, we may identify two major Afro-Ecuadorian linguistic varieties: Afro-Choteño Spanish and Afro-Esmeraldeño Speech. The following sections will provide a brief linguistic account of both varieties.

i. Afro-Choteño Variety

The variety spoken by African-Ecuadorians in the northern highlands has been academically referred to as *Chota Valley Spanish* or *CVS.* Up to this day there is no consensus on the origin of CVS, but numerous studies have provided important insight into this variety. Sandro Sessarego writes that Afro-Choteño speech "appears to be the result of intermediate and advanced second language acquisition processes, which do not necessarily imply a previous creole stage" (Some Remarks on the Origin of Chota Valley, 2013, p. 88). Although in terms of structure CVS does not radically differ from neighboring dialects, certain elements are of great interest to linguists because they are not found in other dialects. Lipski's views are that CVS represents "a unique dialect cluster that differs subtly but consistently from the speech of neighboring groups of Euro-mestizo origin" (2008, p. 104). Within the research carried out by Lipski and Sessarego, the following has been documented:

a) Although subject-verb agreement in contemporary Afro-Choteño is complete, occasional lapses have been recorded, particularly in the speech of older speakers:

> Comienza[n] a colorearse las vistas.

Noun adjective gender concord is also complete, with a few exceptions. A clear lapse is observed in the use of the adjective *mismo* in postnominal position since it does not inflect for gender, but remains in the unmarked (masculine form) (Lipski, 2008, p. 108):

> Sobre la materia <u>mismo</u> [misma] de cada pueblo.
> Fue la voluntad de ellas <u>mismo</u> [mismas].

b) Although /s/ is almost never aspirated in CVS (a trait that distinguishes it from the Afro-Esmeraldeño speech), it is generally omitted in word-final position with a frequency considerably higher than in the neighboring highland Ecuadorian Spanish (Lipski, 2008,

p. 107). This phonological trait has an impact on the morphological level as well, particularly in the construction of plural forms. In plural noun phrases for example, the plural marker /s/ is found only in the first element of the noun phrase, which is usually a determiner (e.g. los doctor[es]). Furthermore, bare singular nouns in object position have also been recorded (Lorenzo come naranja[s]).

c) The final /r/ of infinitives is lost in traditional speech (*comé* for *comer*, *bailá* for *bailar*), although this feature is apparently fading; according to Lipski, it occurs only occasionally in the speech of younger residents (2008, p. 108). Nonetheless, the Afro-Choteños acknowledge it as characteristic of the region.

d) Non-standard use of prepositions

> Yo vivo lejos [de] las casita[s].
> Yo soy [de] abajo.

e) Irregular use of the verbs *ser* and *estar* ('to be')

> Mi hijo es a [está en] Quito.

f) Non-reflexive *llamar* instead of the usual Spanish *llamarse*

> Mi finado papá [se] llamaba Ángel.

As previously mentioned, CVS is consistent for the most part with the regional Spanish structure, and even shows some influence from the native language Kichwa. Even though the cultural and historical memory of the Afro-Choteños is reflected in their traditional music (such as the *bomba*), dance, poetry and literature, in recent years they have included language as an important element of self-identification. Lipski found that an increasing awareness of their cultural identity has led younger residents to "acknowledge local speech patterns and to resist linguistic assimilation to regional and national norms" (2008, p. 104) The linguistic description above represents only a small part of CVS features, which constitute a variety much different from the coastal speech, and there still remains much to be done to gain comprehensive insight into the Choteños' language practices.

ii. Afro-Esmeraldeño Variety

Unlike Afro-Choteño Spanish, the Spanish variety of Esmeraldas for the most part has been analyzed as part of the coastal dialect in general and from both phonological and lexical perspectives. According to the article *Sobre la pronunciación del español en el Ecuador*, one of

the early referential studies on Ecuadorian geographical phonetics, the Coastal region of Ecuador phonetically belongs to the vast sea area historically influenced by black and Andalusian communities, a fact that also pertains to the northern province of Esmeraldas (Boyd-Bowman, 1953, p. 222). The Coastal Colombian- Ecuadorian speech is known as *español ecuatorial* or Equatorial Spanish and it is spoken in the pacific coasts from the south of Colombia to the north of Peru, including the Ecuadorian coastline, the plains west to the Andes and the Galapagos Islands. The particular situation of an Afro-Esmeraldeño Spanish variety still raises questions among linguists, but according to Lipski "in Esmeraldas, the local Spanish dialect is by no means creolized, although it is decidedly popular, featuring the Costeño phonetic characteristics found throughout Latin America" (The Chota Valley: Afro-Hispanic Language in Highland Ecuador, 1987, p. 158). In accordance with various sources, the following features are some of the most recurrent in equatorial Spanish, and particularly in Esmeraldeño speech:

a) The coastal speech is characterized by the phonological phenomenon known as *yeismo*[4]. In Esmeraldeño speech, the phoneme for the digraph ‹ll› is lost when it is in contact with the ‹i›. Thus, one hears *maravía* instead of *maravilla, gaína* instead of *gallina*, or *poíto* instead of *pollito* (Boyd-Bowman, 1953, p. 226).

b) Aspiration is also an important feature of Esmeraldeño speech. The phoneme /s/ becomes aspirated[5] in syllable- and word-final position, and it is omitted in final position of a phonic group (Boyd-Bowman, 1953). In accordance to the latter, a phonological representation would look like the following:

> la^h co^{h}ta^ø do^h fó^{h}foro^ø

The phoneme /x/ (which is represented by the grapheme <j>) is also aspirated, marking a noticeable difference with the pronunciation in the Sierra (Reino, 1991, p. 95).

c) Another feature that is highlighted is the omission of final -*r* and -*l* in stressed word-final syllables as in *mujé* for *mujer, señó* for *señor, animá* for *animal*, or *papé* for *papel* (Boyd-Bowman, 1953, p. 227). Furthermore, the same sounds may be interchanged before consonants in unstressed syllables; ‹l› may be heard instead of ‹r› or vice versa (e.g. *polque* for *porque, arma* for *alma*).

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[4] The loss of the phoneme corresponding to the Spanish grapheme ‹ll› as in *pollo*, and its merging into the phoneme corresponding to the grapheme ‹y› as in *vaya*.
[5] Pronounced as an [h].

d) Word-final -*d* is omitted as in *verdá*, *uʰté*[6]. Additionally, intervocalic -*d*- is omitted in certain Afro-Esmeraldeño groups: *naa* for *nada*, *toavía* for *todavía*, *marío* for *marido*, etc.

Even though there is relevant insight into the linguistic features of Esmeraldeño speech, much more needs to be documented at the morphological and syntactical level. In fact, the lack of comprehensive information on the language practices of Afro-Ecuadorian communities has led to their misrepresentation in the national literature, with many scholars having to re-evaluate the assumptions and approaches taken towards these communities:

> "Only recently has language usage emerged as a key element in the reinforcement of Afro-diasporic identity in Latin America, openly confronting the plethora of literary and musical parodies that incorrectly ascribe to speakers of African descent grotesquely deformed and 'incorrect' Spanish" (Lipski, 2008, p. 99).

Today, many continue to work towards creating national visibility of African-Ecuadorian presence and rebutting long-standing stereotypes that have fossilized in the minds of the Ecuadorian people. The continuing section will shift to the literary field and explore the approaches taken from some of the most representative afro-Ecuadorian authors in the portrayal of their communities through their art.

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[6] The accent marks are added to represent compensatory vowel lengthening.

1.4. LITERARY DIALECT

In literature and drama, the use of language that deviates from the standard is commonly referred to as a *literary dialect*. It is an important tool in building characterization. Writers use different strategies to create a literary dialect, such as respelling, morphosyntactic strategies, idioms and regionalisms. A literary dialect may be a sociolect, associating a character with a specific region or social class, or an idiolect, consisting of the individualized speech of a character, not necessarily linked to a group. However, we must not confuse the practices in literature with the concepts discussed thus far in the realm of sociolinguistics. Raphael Berthele quotes Sumner Ives in stating that "nearly all examples of literary dialect are deliberately incomplete; the author is an artist, not a linguist or a sociologist, and his purpose is literary rather than scientific" (Translating African-American Vernacular English into German: The problem of 'Jim' in Mark Twain's Huckleberyy Finn, 2000, p. 589). Dialect writing can be a trademark style of certain authors, as in the case of notorious American writer Mark Twain. To this end, we must consider that a literary dialect is indivisible from its conceiver, the author, and bound to his/her own perceptions of the language. This has in many occasions shed a light on the prejudices that an author may have towards certain social groups. African Americans for example have historically been portrayed in American literature by using inaccurate representations of their speech or altering the spelling of the lines of African American characters to extremes. However, authors writing in dialect have become more aware of the impacts that their literary choices may have. Nowadays, the discussion among this type of scholars focuses on what constitutes an accurate, non-stereotypical literary dialect and who is better qualified to create one.

Dialects or nonstandard varieties do not have the same number of social functions as the standard variety. The standard is used in important social and political institutions, it is generally the language in which education is carried out, it is the variety of choice of the mass media. In this sense, the nonstandard does not have as many social spaces or outlets as the standard variety, and it has historically been associated with the non-formal, oral speech rather than with the written word (although this association is evolving in the context of social media). For this reason, it is important to acknowledge the conscious decisions that authors make when they write in dialect, particularly when these authors are representatives of minorities. Writers of the postcolonial movement, for example, are more and more interested in exploring new ways to decolonize and redefine themselves and their communities through the arts with the purpose of taking back their identities. As stated in *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, "by

defamiliarizing the language, post-colonial writers can bring readers face to face with the reality of difference and call into question the supremacy of the standard language" (Bassnett & Trivedi, Post-Colonial Translation Theory and Practice, 1999, p. 13). Therefore, using the language of their communities to write novels, poetry and plays is more than a signature style. It is a given in the process of self-identification and self-expression. Authors find a space in literature that they might not be able to find in other social outlets.

i. Source and Target Literary Dialects

When analyzing *The Piano Lesson* and the Afro-Ecuadorian literature taken as a starting point to create the target dialect, important differences arise. With respect to the source text, August Wilson's approach assertively reflects on the language usage of a specific African American community. He portrays an accurate linguistic representation with factual morphosyntactic and lexical features as documented by linguistic scholars that have collected data on the speech of many African Americans. It is worth mentioning that his writing style in general conforms with standard spelling (with few exceptions) and punctuation (no additional marks). However, Wilson's language is built on morphological and syntactic choices, on lexicon and on the rhythm (timing and pauses, length of sentences). An additional characteristic, as pointed out by Mary Ellen Snodgrass in *August Wilson: A Literary Companion*, consists of the contrast in the speech of characters who represent different geographical areas. She states that, in *The Piano Lesson*, "language also delineates the changes in black culture when people make the Great Migration from South to North" (2004, p. 74). Characters who represent urban North like Berniece and Maretha avoid using "the slang and agrarian expressions" that the characters from the rural South —Boy Willie and Lymon Jackson— use (Snodgrass, 2004, p. 75). The distinction in the characters' speech should be kept in mind when making translation decisions that reflect a similar contrast in the target text.

Even though many of the features presented thus far pertain to the structure of the language and are conventionally used by authors writing in AAE, other strategies at the orthographic level are implemented depending on the style of the author and on the intended effect. As an example, let us look at the style of playwright Suzan-Lori Parks, the first African American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize for drama in 2002 for her play Topdog/Underdog. It is within this play that she provides linguistic hints by resorting to not only word choice and morphosyntactic variation, but also to respelling of words (Topdog/Underdog, 2002, p. 12):

BOOTH.

Wrong! Sucker! Fool! Asshole! Bastard! I bet yr daddy heard how stupid you
was and drank himself to death just cause he didn't wanna have nothing to do
witchu! I bet yr mama seen you when you was born and she wished she was
dead, sucker! Ha Ha Ha! And 3-Card, once again, wins all thuh money!!

In *The Routledge Handbook of the English Writing System*, Michael D. Picone clarifies the difference between eye dialect and pronunciation respelling by stating that "the former, though resorting to non-standard respelling, […] corresponds to no real change in standard pronunciation [while] the latter employs respelling to represent actual differential pronunciation" (2016, p. 331). Thus, the contraction *witchu* is an example of pronunciation respelling given that it shifts from the standard pronunciation of *with you* by using the [tʃ] sound to link both words, while *thuh* is an example of eye dialect because it does not differ from the standard pronunciation of *the* (the latter is almost always pronounced with a schwa sound [ə]). Even though respelling strategies are widely used in a variety of literary contexts, this type of non-standard speech rendition has been continuously criticized by scholars who state that it is almost always pejorative and condescending. In *Pragmatics of Fiction*, Gaëlle Planchenault explains that this is due on the one hand to the illusive nature of the linguistic representation and on the other to the social stigma of illiteracy (2017, p. 271). In support of the former statement, Planchenault asserts that representing non-standard speech with non-standard spelling "is a highly symbolic act", which is proven by the fact that certain elements do not correspond to real dialect use. As an example, Leech and Short point to the respelling of *and* as *an'* or '*n* to portray lower-class characters in novels, which in reality reflects an elision that "occurs naturally in English speech, without respect to dialect". They conclude that "it is its non-standardness that strikes us, not the supposed phonetic reality behind it" (Planchenault, 2017, p. 271). But the most critical aspect to consider is that non-standard respellings are generally perceived as misspellings, which leads the audience to associate the social stigma attached to illiteracy with the character represented by this type of speech. For this reason, numerous handbooks for writing fiction in the English language advise against using respelling strategies. John Dufresne, for example, advises that "dialect should be achieved by the rhythm of the prose, by the syntax, the diction, idioms and figures of speech, by the vocabulary indigenous to the locale. Eye dialect is almost always pejorative, and it's patronizing" (The Lie That Tells a Truth: A Guide to Writing Fiction, 2003, p. 200).

Although respelling strategies have proven to be controversial for audiences of the English language, much more needs to be learned about the practices in other languages, and to whether there is a "right way" of using this type of strategy. The question is relevant since respelling can be a recurring aspect in the literary traditions of a given culture. This is true for many of the works analyzed in this study with the purpose of creating a parallel story in the target language. From Juan García's Afro-Esmeraldeño stories and poetry compilations (from now on referred to as *Cuentos y Décimas*), to the writings of African Ecuadorian author Adalberto Ortiz, these works all show a combination of lexicon, syntax and different degrees of respelling. In fact, regarding this last strategy, Lipski notes that there is an ongoing convention among certain writers across the region:

> "[…] some Afro-Hispanic writers have deliberately adopted an 'eye dialect' style in order to give voice to dispossessed citizens of African origin. In all instances, the speech traits in question—nearly all phonetic in nature—are common in the vernacular speech of the region, irrespective of race" (2008, p. 99).

The employment of respelling strategies is undeniably relevant to the self-identification of different afro-descendant groups. The works analyzed for this study are proof of such statement. Adalberto Ortiz's and Juan García's writings are examples from the literary perspective, while Edgar Allan García's dictionary, from the lexicographical perspective. Most of the respelling strategies are based on the Coastal phonological features described in the overview of Afro-Esmeraldeño speech. Aspiration, for example, is represented by the omission of the ‹s›. A more in-depth discussion on these strategies will be presented in the analysis.

ii.   A Note on Respelling Strategies and Works of Drama

At this point, it is also important to question the feasibility of the pronunciation respelling strategy in a play text for theatre performance. The concern for both written and oral aspects is an essential quality of theatre texts. When resorting to dialect, playwrights generally rely on strategies that will contribute to a spoken version of that dialect. As mentioned in *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, "[In drama,] dialogue must be not only intelligible, but also 'speakable,'" (Landers, 2001). Susan Bassnett also acknowledges the uniqueness of the drama text because of the performance dimension: "[a play is] much more than a literary text, it is a combination of language and gesture brought together in a harmonious frame of timing" (Snell-Hornby, 2007, p. 107). The accuracy in both verbal and non-verbal translation is key in what scholars call a "performable" play. While the problem of defining what constitutes a "performable" playtext is beyond the scope of this paper, the distinction between the written and

performative dimensions is significant to understanding why a playwright might incorporate respelling strategies. In her article *Translating for the Theatre: The Case Against Performability*, Bassnett distinguishes the dramatic text from its concretization in performance, asserting that the latter does not always represent the fulfillment of the playwright's work: "[…] the text is written to be read in much the same way as a piece of prose narrative is read. In fact, there is in existence what might be described as a whole sub-category of dramatic texts, set out in dialogue but never meant for performance" (1991, p. 104).

In this context, respelling strategies in general serve the written dimension rather than the performance since they appear on paper and are intended for the apperception of readers and not spectators. Some of these strategies may arguably serve as linguistic cues to help the actor shape his or her performance, as long as the elements are pronounceable and do not interfere with the memorization of the dialogue. Nonetheless, to classify these elements as performable would require meeting with the production team and the actors to set out an actual performance and evaluate the efficiency of the elements. Since this would require the development of a separate project, this study will focus only on the written dimension of the translation.

1.5.   TRANSLATION

Translation emerges from a context of solving real-life linguistic issues by transferring the ideas, beliefs, or specific concepts from not only a source language to a target language, but from a source culture to a target culture. In this sense, a translator's job is to facilitate communication and create common ground for intercultural exchange. Some types of texts will usually be more challenging than others when trying to translate them in a way that they have the same applicability or use in the receiving audience. The possibility of an accurate equivalence will depend on factors such as how typologically similar the languages at issue are, the degree to which the source and target audiences may share knowledge and experiences, or the available strategies to solve non-existing equivalents in the target language. To exemplify this, let us turn to the world of medical translation: although translating medical terminology is not an easy task, it is certainly a field that provides common ground between certain cultures or societies; as human beings, we share many physiological features, internal and external organs, illnesses which are usually subject to the same types of medical procedures or treatments. Even though we use different instruments to talk about these medical issues, the need to talk about them usually means that each linguistic community will in fact have at least one way of referring to a certain organ, or medical treatment, or illness, etc. The problem arises when a concept in language A has no immediate equivalent in language B, forcing a translator to look for the most appropriate solution (i.e. the concept with the closest meaning in language B).

A field of study where translators must constantly face these types of challenging translation tasks is *literary translation*. In the field of literature, the production of a text, either prose or poetry, depends not only on what an author says, but how he/she says it, and the latter is granted the same importance as the former —and sometimes even more (Landers, 2001, p. 7). Due to the fact that, as translators, we are expected to achieve comprehension and translation accuracy, it is important to understand what distinguishes literary translation from other types of translation. First, it is more subjective given that, when translating a novel or a poem, we must rely almost completely on the author's intended audience, tone, intentions, etc. Second, and as an addition to the first point, an author's stylistic choices, literary devices or even the language he/she uses to write may be part of a cultural message inside the literary work. For instance, in *The Piano Lesson*, the author further develops the connection between his characters and the African American community by using a literary dialect that represents African American English. It is possible to conclude that the stronger the linguistic connection to culture, the more challenging it may be to find equivalents in the target language.

i. Literary Translation Theories

The craft of translating, as defined in, consists of the interpretation of verbal signs by means of different signs from a different language (Torre, 2001, p. 69). Nonetheless, in the world of literary translation this means not only trying to transmit the author's message in an accurate way, but also keeping the same tone and register of the original text while remaining faithful to the author's style. What many scholars take for granted is the actual challenge of trying to remain faithful to the original sense and style while at the same trying to create a piece of literature that will be accepted by the receiving audience. Well-known scholar Theodore Savory suggests that a successful translation should encompass these fundamental aspects (Torre, 2001, p. 42):

-Translations should act as complete transcripts of the ideas from the original work.

-Style and modes of expression should be of the same type, as found in the original.

-Translation should have analogous naturalness and fluency to the original text.

However, in many instances we are faced with situations that force us into making difficult decisions: in our quest for remaining faithful to meaning we might fail to represent stylistic features found in the original due to linguistic differences of the languages at issue; additionally, we may have to sacrifice other relevant qualities of the original text in order to guarantee comprehension and acceptability at the receiving end of the translation. Two schools of thought derive from this debate, in which the matter of *author vs target audience* is carefully examined. Eugene A. Nida establishes two ways of approaching translation: through formal equivalence, which is oriented toward the source text and aims to remain as close to the original sense as possible, and through dynamic equivalence, which is oriented toward the target language and favors *thought-by-thought* translation in order to achieve naturalness and create the same effect that the source audience might have had when reading the original text (Torre, 2001, p. 124). The present study will favor dynamic equivalence, or what Peter Newmark (cited in Landers), has identified as *targeteers* (Landers, 2001, p. 51)*,* because the purpose is to render the play *The Piano Lesson* into a parallel version in Spanish by using a dialect connected to an African-Ecuadorian community in a similar way AAE is connected to an African-American community. To achieve this rendition, the study will look at the translation procedure known as *adaptation*.

ii. Adaptation

The concept is highly known as a translation technique in which a feature of the original text must be changed so that it becomes recognizable to the target audience. In talking about serious imaginative literature, Peter Newmark states that the adaptation technique "is used mainly for plays and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten" (Newmark, Approaches to Translation, 1995, p. 46). Translating *The Piano Lesson* consequently calls for an adaptation because the fact that AAE is one of August Wilson's main literary devices inevitably leads to the lack of an immediate equivalent. To further support this argument, Landers states only three circumstances in which opting for adaptation is justifiable, the most obvious being the translation of drama: "[In drama] dialogue must be not only intelligible, but also 'speakable,'" meaning that *how* the message is spoken on stage must be given greater priority (Landers, 2001, p. 56). In spite of the skepticism surrounding the adaptation technique, Landers discusses its true nature in relation to translation:

> "Adaptations are not inferior to translation. They merely apply a different set of methods to the selfsame problem of recreating as closely as possible for the TL reader the effect experienced by the SL reader" (Landers, 2001, p. 58).

iii.   Literary Dialect & Translation

Many scholars concerned with theorizing literary translation agree on the fact that translating dialects is one of the most complex challenges a translator can face. However, there is also an agreement on how the task is virtually achievable: some of the immediate solutions consist of finding an equivalent dialect in the target language, rendering the dialect with a colloquial variety in the target language, or simply using the widely-spread standard variety of the target language (Berthele, 2000, p. 608). It is essential to determine which of these will prove most appropriate taking into consideration qualities such as faithfulness to the source text and to the author's objectives, or respect for the target audience and what they will consider appropriate, among others.

An important study about literary dialect and translation is the one carried out by scholar Raphael Berthele, titled *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. In his analysis of the different translations offered throughout time, and of how translators took different steps to translate the lines pertaining to the character *Jim*, Berthele found the following: a first solution consisted in standardizing the translation, which meant losing the distinctive and non-standard voice of the character. For the study at present, this would mean translating *The Piano Lesson* into standard

Spanish and losing an essential characteristic to the development of the original text. Moreover, the most appealing solution consisted in rendering African American English with a sociolect derived from German. However, this too presented certain limitations: each dialect carries different historical, regional or social connotations and to choose a different dialect would add these layers that are not equivalent to the setting of the author's novel (Berthele, 2000, p. 608). In Berthele's words,

"It is possible to render AAVE [African American Vernacular English] with a sociolect or dialect that represents analogous social strata or even analogous regional linguistic identity. But the analogy is, of course, never complete; there is no perfect equivalent of Black:White race relations" (Berthele, 2000, p. 608).

In spite of the difficulties that are expected to arise in the translation of *The Piano Lesson*, it is a plausible solution, on the one hand, due to the expressed willingness on the part of African-descendant groups outside the United States to adapt Wilson's stories to their national contexts and, on the other, given the possibility of doing so under the linguistic conventions of these communities. As an important piece of drama that may overcome the barriers of language and time, this play speaks to international audiences, making it relevant to render the original into a language that will have a similar cultural value in the target audience. Not attempting to find and opting for a standardized translation of the play will be of great cost, since the target audience will be deprived of an essential part of the original meaning.

CHAPTER II- ANALYSIS

2.1. SOURCE LITERARY DIALECT

i. The author and his works

August Wilson, whose birth name is Frederick August Kittel Jr, is an acclaimed African-American playwright born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. According to a website that honors the playwright, Wilson left his household while still very young to pursue his passion, writing (The Life and Work of August Wilson Slide Show, 2010). His love for theater motivated him to co-found the Black Horizon Theater with Rob Penny. This Black Nationalist Theater would become a home to Wilson's first works as a playwright. His first professional play, Sizwe Banzi is Dead, was performed at the Pittsburgh Public Theater in 1976. Nonetheless, his most recognized work originated in 1982, when Wilson wrote his first play from the *The Pittsburgh Cycle. The Pittsburgh Cycle* is a set of ten plays based on different stories that explore themes and realities concerning the African American community in the United States. The plays are subsequently set in each decade of the 20th century, as illustrated in the following chart (The Life and Work of August Wilson, 2017):

Play and year it was written	Decade represented in the play
Gem of the Ocean, 2003	1900s
Joe Turner's Come and Gone, 1988	1910s
Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, 1984	1920s
The Piano Lesson, 1984	1930s
Seven Guitars,1995	1940s
Fences, 1987	1950s
Two Trains Running, 1991	1960s
Jitney, 1982	1970s
King Hedley II, 1999	1980s
Radio Golf, 2005	1990s

Almost all the plays (except *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*) take place in Pittsburgh's Hill District, a group of neighborhoods of African-American heritage. His works have earned him many awards including the 1987 and 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Drama thanks to his plays *Fences* and *The Piano Lesson* respectively, and many Tony Awards nominations for Best Play. Additionally, most of his plays from The Pittsburgh Cycle have been performed on Broadway, New York, at different times and stages. Wilson is said to have developed his artistry from the four B's: the blues, the art of painter Romare Bearden, and the writings of poet Amiri Baraka and writer/poet Jorge Luis Borges. In early 2005, Wilson was diagnosed with liver cancer, which led to his death on October 2nd of that same year. His works are an important portrayal of the African American experience due to representative themes, characters, storylines and imagery that are intrinsically linked to this culture (The Life and Work of August Wilson, 2017).

ii.   The Piano Lesson

The Piano Lesson (TPL) was written in 1984 but is set in 1963 Pittsburgh. The story revolves around the Charles family, focusing mainly on the lives of Doaker, the uncle, Boy Willie, the nephew, and Berniece, the niece, all of whom are confronted with the issue of family heritage in the context of slavery and oppression. This issue develops on the basis of a beautifully carved piano they possess, which contains the images of their ancestors, and which represents both the family history and the means to better the family's future. For Berniece, the piano is a testament to the family's struggles and is a valuable family heirloom that should be kept in their household in order for the family to remain together and never forget their history. However, Boy Willie is convinced that, by selling the piano, he will be able to provide a wealthy life for his family and buy his own piece of land, therefore turning around his family history of slavery, poverty and injustice. In the end, and after the appearance of ghosts and numerous fights between the siblings, the piano remains as an important artifact of the household, but Boy Willie insists on the fact that Berniece must continue to play the piano, otherwise, he will return and sell it.

One of August Wilson's most notable influences was the painter Romare Bearden. Wilson was impressed by how Bearden himself portrayed the African-American experience through his paintings and was inspired enough to create *The Piano Lesson* based on one of Bearden's paintings by the same name. In an interview, Wilson said:

> "What I saw was black life presented on its own terms, on a grand and epic scale, with
> all its richness and fullness, in a language that was vibrant and which made attendant to

everyday life, ennobled it, affirmed its value, and exalted its presence" (From Chaos to Collage: The Influence of Romare Bearden's Art on August Wilson).

The Piano Lesson has received many awards and nominations throughout the years, making it one of Wilson's most popular plays. To name a few: it won the 1990 New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play; the 1990 Pulitzer Prize for Drama; and the 1995 Peabody Award. It was also nominated to a 1990 Tony Award for Best Play (The Life and Work of August Wilson, 2017). An earlier performance of the play had among its cast the renowned actor Samuel L. Jackson. Additionally, a TV film based on *The Piano Lesson* was broadcast on CBS in 1995 and also received numerous awards. The film was directed by Lloyd Richards and included actors and actresses such as Charles S. Dutton, Alfre Woodard and Carl Gordon.

iii.   Wilson's literary dialect

August Wilson's approach to creating literary dialects for his plays is empirical rather than theoretical. In talking about his creative process, Wilson recounts:

> "I don't do any research other than listen to the blues. […] What do I know about 1911? Not much. […] They used words like 'fella' and 'reckon,' which they wouldn't say in 1948. I'm not even sure they said that in 1911. To my ear that's the way it would be, but it doesn't matter whether or not I'm getting the period exactly. My plays are ultimately about love, honor, duty, betrayal. They're not about 1911 or 1948" (August Wilson and the Power of Blues, 1996).

Thus, two main aspects can be learned from this passage. On the one hand, the author's exposure to the blues serves as the linguistic knowledge required to create the literary dialect. On the other hand, his purpose for writing in dialect is not based on the language accuracy of a certain time, but on bringing the audience/reader face-to-face with a representative variety of AAE. Even though the dialect in *The Piano Lesson* is not an exact portrayal of the speech of African Americans living in Pittsburgh during the 1930s, it is quite a faithful representation of modern AAE, particularly of Urban AAE. Overall, the playtext contains morphosyntactic elements documented in northern urban usage rather than southern rural usage, and many may not have existed in Earlier AAE. This is the case of features such as the use of invariant BE as habitual marker, indignant *come* or quasi-modals. Concrete features are:

-       Morphological: the dropping of the inflective morpheme for the third person singular ‹-s›, *was* generalization, demonstrative *them*, use of the bare root of a verb for the past tense.

- Syntactical: the use of completive done, copula deletion, habitual BE, negative concord, benefactive personal dative, use of *ain't*, no question inversion, auxiliary HAVE omission, linguistic camouflaging, quasi-modals.

Now, let us observe some examples from the playtext:

> DOAKER: Berniece don't like all that hollering now.
> BERNIECE: Don't you wake that child up!
> BOY WILLIE: You going up there . . . wake her up and tell her her uncle's here. I ain't seen her in three years. Wake her up and send her down here. She can go back to bed.
> BERNIECE: I ain't waking that child up... and don't you be making all that noise. You and Lymon need to sell them watermelons and go on
> …
> DOAKER: Yeah, I heard that. He come by here about a year ago. Had a whole sack of money. He stayed here about two weeks. Ain't offered nothing. Berniece asked him for three dollars to buy some food and he got mad and left.
> LYMON: Who's Wining Boy?
> BOY WILLIE: That's my uncle. That's Doaker's brother. You heard me talk about Wining Boy. He play piano. He done made some records and everything. He still doing that, Doaker?

Other strategies are lexical, as in the use of *holler*, of informal register and associated with the development of the blues; and rhythm, which may be observed in the use of shorter sentences to mark a faster pace.

The approach in translation should be as empirical as the original. For this reason, it is important to draw from the traditional literature of the target culture. However, it is worth noting that little to no linguistic studies have been carried out regarding the speech of African Ecuadorians, thus there is less factual linguistic data to demonstrate whether the target literary dialect is faithful to actual usage. But before proceeding with the discussion about the target culture and translation decisions, it is essential to provide a list of the most recurring dialectal features found in *The Piano Lesson* in order to substantiate the playwright's morphosyntactic choices.

iv. Source Text Features		
Feature	**Usage in TPL**	**Examples**
BE Deletion	Deletion of copula	This my Uncle Doaker. Doaker, where your bottle?
	Deletion of BE auxiliary	Me and Lymon selling watermelons. What you doing up here?
	First person singular *am* is never deleted but is almost always contracted, except in questions. Its negative form, *am not*, is replaced by *ain't.*	I ain't thinking about Sutter. And I ain't thinking about staying up here.
Generalization of *was*	*Was* extended to the first-person plural, the second-person singular and plural, and the third-person plural.	We was down there working. What was you and Lymon doing over in Stoner County? I remember when you was down there on the Willshaw place planting cotton. You wasn't thinking about no Reverend then.
	Used instead of conditional *were*.	If I was you I'd get rid of it.
Habitual BE	Habitual BE lacks inflection for person and number. Construction: BE + verb in *-ing* form, and negative forms are constructed with auxiliary DO	This the time everybody be getting up around here. Say they be fighting one another for you to stay with them.
Use of ain't	As a generic preverbal negator: *ain't* in replacement of the present tense auxiliary *don't* rarely occurs in *The Piano Lesson.* It is observed only where SE would use *don't have*, and *ain't* is always followed by *got.*	See if you can get the smoked ones. If they ain't got that get the fresh ones.
	But it is used for the past form *didn't* (a	

	feature particular to Urban AAE)	We ain't stole no truck, woman. I told you Lymon bought it.
		She say Sutter's ghost standing at the top of the steps. She ain't just made all that up.
	Instead of the copula	
		But I ain't scared of work. I'm going back and farm every acre of that land.
		That's all in her head. There ain't no ghost up there.
	As a preverbal negated form for present tense BE	
		I told you I ain't going back down there and take a chance on that truck breaking down again.
		He's my company. He ain't asking you no questions.
	Instead of present perfect *have/has*	
		I ain't never known her to touch it since Mama Ola died.
		She don't need no water. She ain't seen nothing.
		Ain't she got big?
	ain't + but	
		Now, there ain't but so many places you can go. Only so many road wide enough for you and that piano.
	Negative inversion	
		Ain't nothing wrong with being a preacher.
Zero marking for the third person singular	-*s* deletion	Boy Willie say he going back, but I'm gonna stay.
		When she see I got a chance to get Sutter's land she'll come around.
	Replacement of doesn't for *don't* In *The Piano Lesson*, no examples of *have* in replacement of *has* are present.	She don't want you making all that noise.
Auxiliary HAVE	Present perfect and present perfect continuous do not take auxiliary *have*	How long you been with the railroad now?
		Me and Lymon been riding two days in that truck.

	Except in the past tense	If Berniece had seen him like she think she seen him she'd still be running.
	Except after a modal	It could have been anybody. Now they might have stole them watermelons, but I don't believe they stole that truck.
No inversion/no auxiliaries in questions	AUX DO	What you like to eat? Where you all get that truck from, Lymon? You remember Lymon Jackson from down home? Your mama told you about that piano?
	AUX BE	He still doing that, Doaker? How your people doing down there, Lymon?
	Except in the past tense	Who was you talking to?
	AUX HAVE In *The Piano Lesson*, no example of the past form was found.	She been playing on it? How long you been with the railroad now?
Multiple negation / negative concord	Verbal negation, preverbal and post/verbal negatives.	Naw, I ain't worried about nothing like that. It ain't nothing but a little old elevator. Now, I wouldn't get in none of them airplanes. You couldn't pay me to do nothing like that. Doaker say you don't never leave no address with nobody.
Completive DONE	Used to emphasize a recently completed action	We done sold them all. Sold the truck too. I thought I might have been seeing things, but Maretha done seen

	Followed by the past participle	Sutter's ghost.
		He called me to him and said cause of how long our families done known each other.
Benefactive "personal dative"	Use of object pronouns as personal datives	Avery got him one of them good jobs.
		If you pick up some cornmeal I'll make me some cornbread.
		You never find you another piano like that.
Use of quasi-modals	Only *fixing to* is used in *The Piano Lesson*	BERNIECE: I'm surprised you ain't woke Maretha up.
		BOY WILLIE: I was fixing to get her now.
Demonstrative THEM	*Them* extended to attributive demonstratives	I'm leaving. Soon as we sell them watermelons.
		See all them pictures carved on it?
		Me and Lymon used to haul wood all around them parts.
Linguistic camouflaging	Indignant COME	Come talking about he looking for me. What he come all the way up here for? If he looking for me all he got to do is wait. He could have saved himself a trip if he looking for me. That ain't nothing but in Berniece's head.
Other verbal variation	Use of the bare root of a verb instead of the past form, causing the past and present forms to resemble one another.	He come by here about a year ago *instead of* He came by here about a year ago
	Preterite had: *Had* appears before simple past verbs.	I'll tell you this. If Berniece had seen him like she think she seen him she'd still be running.

2.2. TARGET LITERARY DIALECT

In addition to their affiliation with African-Ecuadorian communities, these authors share similar strategies to create the literary dialects in their works. These strategies are in principle phonological because they try to reproduce or capture the actual sounds used by Esmeraldeños in their day-to-day speech. However, it should be noted that many of the features are not exclusively representative of the Esmeraldas province, but conform the speech of the coastal region. Let us look more specifically at the strategies employed in the objects of study:

1)   *Adalberto Ortiz* is an internationally acclaimed Ecuadorian novelist and diplomat. His most studied novel to date is *Juyungo*, which is the nickname for the main character Ascensión Lastre. The novel deals with themes related to the hardships faced by African-Descendants in Esmeraldas and shows several characters with different backgrounds, including Afro-descendant and mestizo characters that are represented by dialects of their own. These characters' speech is not only portrayed through respelling patterns but also through morphosyntactic patterns such as *voseo*:

> –Ve vos, manganzón. ¿Qué haces ahí parao como bobo?
>
> Andá ya mismo a sacar unos bimbes pa la comida.
>
> –Bueno…
>
> –¿Bueno qué?
>
> –Bueno, señó – repuso Ascensión de mala gana. Tomó un machetico corto y bajó
>
> a la ceja del monte, a buscar las matas de ñame, entre rezongo y rezongo.
>
> –¡Qué negro más resabiao!
>
> –Es de que le ajustés la mano, vos como padre, Gume.

A variety of devices can be identified from this passage, including the use of regional lexicon, such as *manganzón* and *bimbes,* and morphosyntactic features, such as *voseo* and *ser + de que*). But the use of respelling strategies is what links the character directly with equatorial speech, given that the phonetic traits attached to this variety are represented in his writing. Some examples observed in the fragment are the omission of intervocalic -d- and of final -r (with an accent added to signal compensatory vowel lengthening).

2) Juan García's story compilations are an important source when it comes to finding linguistic evidence because they are told from the point of view of native Afro-Esmeraldeños. It is unclear to what extent García modifies the language documented in the stories, and whether decisions are made from a literary or a linguistic focus. Nonetheless, given that García has

worked closely with these Afro-descendant communities, his works provide an important basis for the development of a literary dialect that this community may see as its own. The following excerpts are taken from the story titled *Juan Bobo y el muerto*:

Los compañeros de Juan Bobo salían todas las noches a pescar corvina cerca de una parte 'onde asustaban, que el que iba solo pasaba trabajo porque salía un muerto... Así que los muchachos dijeron:

-Esta noche, invitemo' lo a Juan Bobo a pesca' y dejém'lo allá...

Así lo hicieron. Ya se jueron a la casa 'onde él vivía y le dijeron:

-Juan Bobo, vamo' a pesca', vamos a coge' corvina pues, esta noche, que hay harto pesca'o …
-Estas son pendejadas ... Ahora me hundo y me voy por el plan y surjo más abajo.
                                                    …

Cuando de allá el muerto le contesta:

-Yo llevo dos y con vos son tres ... ¿'Onde querés que peliemos:
en tierra o en agua, al golpe o a la cuchilla?

A lo que Juan Bobo oyó así, nomá' que contestó:

-A 'onde quieras y como quieras.

-Vamos pa' tierra, pues.

En seguida nomá' que, rra, ra, ra, ra, alzó el de él y, punn, a la canoa. Y ahora sí, salieron pa' tierra.

Some important differences arise when comparing García's and Ortiz's works. In *Cuentos y Décimas* we have a larger number of respelling features. Moreover, the text is consistently marked with apostrophes to signal that a letter has been omitted. Respelling features from this passage, besides the ones previously mentioned, are the omission of *-s* to mark aspiration, the replacement of ‹f› for ‹j›, the omission of word-initial *d-*, as well as the omission of intervocalic *-d-* and of final *-r*, the latter without an accent to mark compensatory vowel lengthening. The features that the two authors share thus far is the use of the apocope[7] *pa* or *pa'* for *para*, and voseo.

3) Finally, an important source not only because of its phonetic description of Esmeraldeño speech, but because of the richness of its lexical content is the *Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos*. Although its approach is linguistic rather than literary, it constitutes one of the few sources that document real language use in the region. The dictionary includes the most

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[7] The elision of one or more sounds or letters at the end of a word.

common local words and phrases, and a system of respelling elements can be found in the examples that follow each definition. Let us observe the examples below:

Ahí no más En ese momento, en ese instante. Ej: *cuando lo vio vení, ahí no má ze levantó y ze jué.*

A ónde Para dónde. Ej: *me dijo que juera pero a ónde iba yo a ir, dígame ujté...*

Picarse de Dárselas de, pretender algo que no es. Ej: *yo creo que no é zino que ze las pica de brujo, pa andá lampareando nomá*

By altering the spelling in the examples, García intends to document the phonological features of the pronunciation of Esmeraldeños. He comments, for example, on his choice of employing the ‹z› wherever the /s/ sound appears. He states: "Cabe agregar que, sobre todo en el norte de Esmeraldas, muchos todavía hablan con la *zeta* en vez de la *s* o la *c*: *zí zeñor, tengo una zita con uté*" (García E. A., 2006, p. 16). This is one of the respelling features that is not present in any other source, including the literary works and the linguistic studies. However, the system does share main features such as aspiration, but it is represented by either the omission of the ‹s› or by replacing it with a ‹j›, as in *ujté* for *usted*. Other features are the omission of initial *d-* as in *onde*, omission of final -r, final -d and final -s (which carry accents for compensatory vowel lengthening), and the replacement of ‹f› for ‹j›.

Some conclusions may be drawn from this comparison of sources. Firstly, all the sources presented shall be useful in determining elements at the syntactical and lexical levels. Secondly, regarding respelling strategies, the works described may be placed at different ends in a continuum, where J. García and E.A. García rely on respelling strategies the most, while Ortiz, the only fiction writer, relies on them the least. Both approaches need to be taken into consideration given that, in creating a target dialect for a play, we must be aware of the conventions found in the works of fiction that focus on the written form, but also in the works that focus on the oral form or on real language use. The following table shows a comparison of some of the most recurrent features in the sources for the creation of the target text, of which the majority consist of respelling strategies.

i. Target Text Features		
Feature	**Example**	**Source**
The use of *j* instead of *f*	Ni zé ónde tá altualito, creo que ze <u>jué</u> pa <u>juera</u>.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (20)
	En seguida alzó el vuelo en el caballo y se <u>jue</u>.	Cuentos y Décimas (32)
	Ascención, por ejemplo… si no <u>juera</u> por esta maldita enfermedá.	Juyungo (114)
Omission of final *-d, -r -s* syllable and use of an accent mark for compensatory lengthening in stressed final syllable	Yo no voy a <u>dormí</u> en eze cucho, ¿ta oyendo?	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (53)
	El muchacho todos los días se iba a <u>jugá</u> 'onde el padrino y los papás tenían que <u>í</u> lo a <u>buscá</u> ya de noche.	Cuentos y Décimas (70)
	Vea, madrina, yo quiero <u>hablá</u> un asunto con <u>usté</u>.	Juyungo (162)
in monosyllabic words	'Toy precupada poque mi marío anda desaparecío dende hace má de <u>tré</u> día el degraciao.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (57)
	[…] seme va a <u>i´</u> a trae´ un calabazo de agua que hay allá dentro […]	Cuentos y Décimas (71)
	Hasta no sé cómo, de <u>vé</u> que no iba a sacá ni jota, se consigue […]	Juyungo (164)

Modification of conjugated *estar* 　　Taba for estaba 　　Ta for está 　　Tuvo for estuvo 　　Tuvimos for estuvimos This feature shows much variety. Sounds or whole syllables can be omitted, but they are not always omitted.	- ¿Y cómo 'ta mi abuelita? Ya 'ta buena, no ze preocupe. -No me zupo dar razón de 'ónde estaba mi ahijao. -El joven ´staba oyendo ahí… -Más abajitoo es que ´ta -Cuando lo jueron a vé, estaba espumiando... 'Ta bien, señora.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (35) (55) Cuentos y Décimas (46) (62) (19) Juyungo (130)
Omission of *s* before a *t* or use of *j* instead of the *s*[8]	-Aquí donde uté me ve. -Aquí 'toy zi no me han vijto. ¡Qué jueño que u´ted jueña, pue´ mamá!	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (23) (25) Cuentos y Décimas (45)
Omission of intervocalic *d* in word ending -ado	Limpiamo' al entundao para volverlo a la crijtiandá pero nada, no ze pudo. […] cuando iba subiendo el marido recién se venía parando de ´onde había esta´o calentándose... Lo que se me da es que está espantao.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (52) Cuentos y Décimas (68) Juyungo (158)

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[8] These features both represent the same phonological phenomenon of aspiration.

Omission of initial *d* in *donde*	Me dijo que juera pero a <u>ónde</u> iba yo a ir.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (52)
	Ya un día se acomodó y se jue pa' <u>'onde</u> el compadre	Cuentos y Décimas (80)
Apocope *Pa* or *pal*	No juimo <u>pal</u> pueblo <u>pa</u> hacé gente y buscá al entundao.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (75)
	- […] sos hombre <u>pa'</u> peliá... - […] se mandó <u>pal</u> monte...	Cuentos y Décimas (14) (97)
	[…] la condenada pa' el monte, pa' el monte.	Juyungo (157)
Prothesis *<u>En</u>antes* or *<u>en</u>ante*	**Enantes** Antes, hace poco.	Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (65)
	Vaya a traé me la hierbita que dije <u>enante</u> en el camino...	Cuentos y Décimas (119)
	Verá su mercé. Estando yo <u>enantes</u>, en uno de los barracones […]	Juyungo (102)

2.3. TRANSLATION

Name and Characters

The Piano Lesson: *La lección de piano*

English Text	Spanish Text
Doaker	Tío Doker
Boy Willie	(Niño) Willy
Berniece	Berenice
Lymon	Limón
Maretha	Mareta
Wining Boy	Requires Adaptation

Following the Colombian adaptation, the name is literally translated into *La Lección de piano*. The names of the characters are also kept from the original (only the main characters are presented in the textbox), but they have been orthographically adapted to the target language in order to facilitate pronunciation.

Some of the character's names can be linked to a particular musician. *Wining Boy* is said to have been inspired by jazz pianist Jelly Roll Morton, who, in effect, has a song called *Winin' Boy Blues*. A functional adaptation of this name would require looking into notable African-Ecuadorian musicians and finding possible coherence with the background of the character. *Lymon* may have also been used in reference to singer/songwriter Frankie Lymon, who is known for his rock and roll and rhythm and blues music. Other names such as *Doaker* are more difficult to place but may be adapted phonetically in the target text.

In addition, Wilson is known for using compound names (e.g. Boy Charles, Papa Willie Boy). Many of these are formed to trace a lineage of names: "Wilson turns Willie Boy, the demeaning slave era name of a plantation carpenter, into the source of subsequent names, Boy Charles and Boy Willie Charles. [...] [T]he elements of family names establish their own nobility into the 1930s" (Snodgrass, 2004, p. 55). A complete adaptation would have to include this concept of name heritage in the target text.

Excerpt 1

English Text	Spanish Text
DOAKER: Who is it? BOY WILLIE: Open the door, nigger! It's me . . . Boy Willie! DOAKER: Who? BOY WILLIE: Boy Willie! Open the door! DOAKER: What you doing up here? BOY WILLIE: I told you, Lymon. Lymon talking about you might be sleep. This is Lymon. You remember Lymon Jackson from down home? This my Uncle Doaker. DOAKER: What you doing up here? I couldn't figure out who that was. I thought you was still down in Mississippi. BOY WILLIE: Me and Lymon selling watermelons. We got a truck out there. Got a whole truckload of watermelons. We brought them up here to sell. Where's Berniece?	DOKER: ¿Quién es? NIÑO WILLY: ¡Abrí la puerta, negro! Soy yo… ¡Willy! DOKER: ¿Quién? NIÑO WILLY: ¡Willy! ¡Abrí la puerta! DOKER: ¿Qué hace' por aquí? NIÑO WILLY: Te lo dije, Limón. Limón pensó que 'taba' durmiendo. Tío, ¿recuerda' a Limón Jackson? Limón, te presento a mi tío Doker. DOKER: ¿Qué hacé' por aquí? No sabía que era' vo'. Pensé que 'tabas en la Cohta*. NIÑO WILLY: Yo y Limón 'tamo' vendiendo sandía. Tenemo' un camión cargao de sandía. La' trajimo' pa' vendé. ¿Onde 'tá Berenice?

- *Morphological and syntactic*: One of the main features of the translation is the use of the Spanish *voseo*. In this excerpt, it is marked by the imperative, the verb and the pronoun *vos*. The imperative undergoes morphological modification: *abre*: *abrí*. In the question *¿Qué hacé por aquí?*, the stress in the verb shifts to the last syllable, which is signaled by the accent mark. E.A. García's dictionary points out that Esmeraldeños sometimes pronounce *haces* as *hacís*. However, this feature is not recurrent in any of the other sources and could hinder comprehension.

Furthermore, the use of *sandía* is a subtle inclusion of the bare singular noun in object position identified by Lipski in Afro-Choteño Spanish.

- *Eye Dialect:* In order to mark aspiration, conjugated forms of the verb *estar* are, as in *taba'*, *tamo'*. Moreover, initial d- is dropped (*onde*), as well as the final -r in infinitives.

*Although the adaptation of cultural references is not resolved within this study, in order to keep the dualism of urban/rural, manifested also as here/there, up/down or north/south, a distinction is made in the translation between the afro-communities of the coast and the sierra (Esmeraldeños and Choteños).

Excerpt 2

English Text	Spanish Text
BERNIECE: Why you all got to come in hollering and carrying on? Waking the neighbors with all that noise.	BERENICE: ¿Por qué tienen que hacé tanto bochinche? Van a dehpertá a lo' vecino' con tanto alboroto.
BOY WILLIE: They can come over and join the party. We fixing to have a party. Doaker, where your bottle? Me and Lymon celebrating. The Ghosts of the Yellow Dog got Sutter.	WILLY: Que se unan a la fiehta, pué. Doker, ¿onde 'tá el trago? Yo y Limón vamo' a celebrá. Lo' Fantahma' del Perro Amarillo agarraron a Sutter*.
BERNIECE: Say what?	BERENICE: ¿Qué, qué?
BOY WILLIE: Ask Lymon, they found him the next morning. Say he drowned in his well.	WILLY: Preguntále a Limón, lo encontraron al otro día. Dizque se ahogó en su propio pozo.
DOAKER: When this happen, Boy Willie?	DOKER: ¿Y cuándo fue eso?

- *Eye Dialect*: Deletion is manifested in <u>*vamo' a celebrá'*</u>, and in *pué*. Omission of initial *d-* is also employed.

Additionally, the conjunction *pues* is left at the end of the sentence given that it is a common trait among the target dialect sources.

Cuentos y décimas: Vamos pa' tierra, <u>pues</u>.
Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos: habla <u>pué</u>.

- *Lexical*: *to holler* means *to shout* and is used in informal contexts. However, the word has a connection to African-American history. According to the *Oxford Dictionaries Online*, a holler is:

A melodic cry with abrupt or swooping changes of pitch, used originally by black slaves at work in the fields and later contributing to the development of the blues.

The selected translation is *bochinche*. According to the Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos, even though it is not exclusive to Esmeraldeño speech, it is used with higher frequency in comparison to the surrounding areas. Examples are found in *Juyungo*: Por gusto íbamos a formá <u>bochinche</u>.

For reasons of formality, the phrase *al otro día* is preferred over *a la mañana siguiente* for the translation of *the next morning*. The decision is also based on the recurring use of this phrase in García's *Décimas y Cuentos* (e.g. Así es que al otro día, partió pa' , onde el compadre; Al otro día, bien de mañanitica, ya estuvo ahí).

Excerpt 3

English Text	Spanish Text
LYMON: *(Noticing the piano.)* Is that the piano? BOY WILLIE; Yeah... look here, Lymon. See how it got all those carvings on it. See, that's what I was talking about. See how it's carved up real nice and polished and everything? You never find you another piano like that. LYMON: Yeah, that look real nice. BOY WILLIE: I told you. See how it's polished? My mama used to polish it every day. See all them pictures carved on it? That's what I was talking about. You can get a nice price for that piano.	LIMÓN: (al notar el piano). ¿Ese e' el piano? NIÑO WILLY: Sí… mirá, Limón. Mirá eso' tallao'. De eso te 'taba hablando. Mirá el tallao tan bonito. Y el refinao, ¿lo vé? No hay otro piano igual a este. LIMÓN: 'Tá bonito. NIÑO WILLY: Te lo dije. ¿Vé cómo 'tá pulío? Mi mama lo pulía to' lo' día'. ¿Ve' la' imágene' tallá? De esa' te 'taba hablando. Puede cohtá un platanal el piano.

    - Morphosyntactic: In trying to reproduce actual fluent speech, the standard question *¿Es ese el piano?* loses the subject-verb inversion and is kept as *¿Ese es el piano?*. The right intonation would signal the interrogative nature of the phrase in performance.

Voseo in the translation modifies the imperative. In this case, only an accent is required to make the differentiation (*mira*: *mirá*).

    - Eye Dialect: the excerpt shows modification of the verb to be ('taba, 'tá). This feature shows much variation across the target sources, showing full forms (estaba) to omission of syllables or graphemes ('taba, 'staba).

Moreover, omission of intervocalic -*d*- occurs in *pulío* and *tallao*. An important translation decision is the inclusion of additional punctuation marks —such as the apostrophe to signal the omission of a letter (pulí'o). This technique is consistent with the conventions of the target authors; however, it has deliberately been reduced to specific contexts (such as the omission of

the plural markers) in order to not overuse the punctuation marks on the pages, given that it may distract the attention of the reader or even confuse them.

    - Lexical: the standard accent in *mamá* is purposefully omitted so that it reads *mama*. This is a feature documented in Afro-Choteño Spanish. Lipski states: "the word for `mother´ in the traditional Afro-Chota dialect is *mama,* with accent on the first syllable, instead of the more common" (2008, p. 105).

Platanal is an informal word for "a lot of money" and is included in the Diccionario de Esmeraldeñismos (García E. A., 2006).

Excerpt 4

English Text	Spanish Text
LYMON: All you got to do is find out who he is and tell him somebody else <u>wanna </u>buy it from you. Tell him you can't make up your mind who to sell it to, and if he like Doaker say, he'll give you anything you want for it. BOY WILLIE: That's what I'm <u>gonna</u> do. I'm <u>gonna</u> find out who he is from Avery. DOAKER: It ain't <u>gonna</u> do you no good. Berniece ain't <u>gonna</u> sell that piano.	LIMÓN: Solo tenés que averiguá quién é y decirle que alguien má lo quiere comprá. Decíle que no sabés a quién vendérselo y te dará la plata que tú quiera'. NIÑO WILLY: Así mihmo voy a hacé. Le voy a preguntar al sacerdote quién é. DOKER: De ná te va a serví. Berenice no va a vendé ese piano.

    - Morphosyntactic: voseo marks the verb in *tenés, averiguá*, *decíle* and *sabés*.

    - Eye Dialect: This excerpt is a rare example of the use of respelling strategies in the source text. *Wanna* and *gonna* are examples of pronunciation respelling that, unlike *witchu*, are highly widespread, to the point that they have been officially incorporated in the English language as contractions. In the target text, respelling strategies are used in the dropping of final -r in the infinitives *averiguar*, *comprar, hacer* and *decirle*. In these cases, using an accent mark is necessary to facilitate comprehension and easy reading of the text.

At this point, it is also relevant to discuss the use of ‹*h*› to mark aspiration in the target text. This feature, which deviates from the conventions previously analyzed, is used to illustrate the two strategies that are employed by two of the target culture authors: the use of the ‹j› instead of the ‹s› and the omission of the ‹s›. To choose one over the other, further inquiries will have to be made to determine which is more comprehensible by the reader.

- Lexical: it is common across the target sources to find the use of *así* instead of *eso*; thus, the phrase *así mihmo voy a hacé* is chosen over *eso mihmo voy a hacé*.

Excerpt 5

English Text	Spanish Text
DOAKER: He supposed to come past here this morning. Bemiece going down to the bank with him to see if he can get a loan to start his church. That's why I know Bemiece ain't gonna sell that piano. He tried to get her to sell it to help him start his church. Sent the man around and everything.	DOKER: Dizque va a vení hoy de mañana. Berenice lo va a acompañá al banco pa' vé si le dan un préhtamo porque quiere empezá su iglesia. Por eso Berenice no va a vendé el piano. Él ya se lo pidió. Hahta envió al hombre pa' que lo compre.

- Morphosyntactic: *Dizque* is a contraction of *dice* + *que* that means *supposedly* or *apparently*. Although it has formally been inscribed as a word, even by the Real Academia de la Lengua Española, it is undeniably a recurring feature used in all the Esmeraldeño sources:

> Juyungo: Asimismo <u>dizque</u> era de chico, emberracao como mandinga.
> Cuentos y Décimas: cogió esa plata y se fue, dizque a buscar quien le hiciera esa casa.
> Diccionario: depué de que me roba, que dizque le zirva la comida.

The apocopated form *pa* is also used in the translation. It is the shortened version of *para* and is quite frequent in equatorial speech.

- Eye dialect: omission of final *-r* with accent for compensatory lengthening and *h*-marking for aspiration.

Excerpt 6

English Text	Spanish Text

BOY WILLIE: He bending over looking down his well, woman. . . how he know who pushed him? It could have been anybody. Where was you when he fell in his well? Where was Doaker? Me and Lymon was over in Stoner County. Tell her, Lymon. The Ghosts of the Yellow Dog got Sutter. That's what happened to him.	WILLY: Pero mujé, si ehtá agachao mirando el pozo, ¿cómo va a sabé quién lo ha empujao? Pudo ser cualquiera. ¿Vo' ónde 'taba' cuando se cayó al pozo? Y el tío ¿ónde 'taba? Nosotros 'tábamo' en […] Dile, Limón. Los fantahma' del Perro Amarillo* agarraron a Sutter. Así fue la cosa.

- *Eye dialect:* omission of final -*r*, intervocalic -*d*-, and initial -*d*. Omission of initial syllable in conjugated *estar*.

- *Lexical*: This excerpt is part of an argument between Berniece and Boy Willie, after she accuses him of pushing Sutter down the well. The character's indignation is expressed through defensive statements and rhetorical questions. The pronoun *vos*, which has a lot of vitality in the Esmeraldas province, generally performs different functions in Ecuadorian Spanish, one of which is to show annoyance or anger between both intimate and distant speakers.

To portray an everyday language, the word *cosa* is included in the sense of *asunto*, in the phrase *así fue la cosa* (García E. A., 2006).

*Although this cultural reference falls outside the scope of this study, an adaptation would require finding an equivalent reference for the name of this phantom in legends and myths from the target culture. This adaptation could be the shapeshifting creature known as la Tunda.[9]

Excerpt 7

English Text	Spanish Text

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[9] For more information, see
https://books.google.com/books?id=NZRFAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA123&lpg=PA123&dq=la+tunda+fantasma&source=bl&ots=WXcimjRYTU&sig=lf20lHfSex7TlOt7o_xXsiswvuk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwir9NqdzJDeAhVhu1kKHb18DpgQ6AEwE3oECAYQAQ#v=onepage&q=la%20tunda%20fantasma&f=false Date of access October 18, 2018.

BOY WILLIE: <u>Come talking about he looking for me</u>. What he come all the way up here for? If he looking for me all he got to do is wait. He could have saved himself a trip if he looking for me. That ain't nothing but in Berniece's head.	NIÑO WILLY: Venirme a decir que el fantahma de Sutter me busca. ¿Pa' que vendría a buhcarme hasta acá? Si me está buhcando solo tiene que ehperá. Se habría ahorrado el viaje. Eso e' puro cuento de Berenice.

     - Morphosyntactic: Indignant *come* is used in the source text. The following passage is part of a discussion between Boy Willie and Berniece in which Berniece is sure that the Ghost of Sutter is looking for Boy Willie, implying that he was somehow involved in Sutter's death. Boy Willie consequently replies with outrage, which shows synchronicity between the use of the semi-modal *come* and the ambience of the moment. The Spanish version uses a similar structure to the English one. Other features are the use of apocopated *pa'*, the *h*-marking for aspiration and omission of final *-r*.

CONCLUSIONS

- The work of August Wilson has taken a prominent place in the repertoire of American literature, due to its important message on the social realities linked to the African-American experience. *The Piano Lesson* is one of his most acclaimed plays, which delves into questions of family heritage in the context of social oppression. A device that adds to the social value of his plays is language. In order to create what is referred to as a *literary dialect*, Wilson relies on rhythmical patterns as well as morphological, syntactical and lexical features. After analyzing the features of African American English as documented by linguists, Wilson's dialect may be categorized as an accurate representation of the everyday speech of a group of African-Americans located in specific northern urban cities in the United States. This is also coherent with the fact that the story takes place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The alignment with urban AAE is proven in the use of features that are exclusive to this variety, such as habitual BE or linguistic camouflaging.

- The social discussion surrounding this play has attracted international attention, particularly of groups that identify with some of the themes and characters, to the extent that they have introduced the play, with different levels of modification, to their own societies. One of the main questions that emerges when adapting the play to a local context is how to proceed with the literary dialect. As has been proven in this study, the language in the original text is marked with relevant morphological and syntactical features that contribute to the sociolinguistic aspect of the story. In the process of creating an adaptation for an Ecuadorian audience, an insight into the linguistic and literary practices of African-Ecuadorian communities, particularly of the major groups of Afro-Esmeraldeños and Afro-Choteños, allows the translator to identify the strategies at hand, on the basis of the features documented by scholars and the literary choices made by national authors.

- When comparing the procedures behind the source and target dialects, important differences arise. We may conclude that, while Wilson's approach is essentially morphosyntactic, the devices available in the target culture for the creation of a literary dialect are based fundamentally on respelling strategies. A comparison between the sources that pertain to the target culture demonstrates that: a) phonological features serve as an important basis in depicting the speech of Afro-descendant groups in Ecuador, and they are represented in written form by employing respelling strategies; b)

most of these features appear to derive from Equatorial Spanish, which is used throughout the coastal region and is not exclusive to the speech of Afro-Esmeraldeños; and c) the sources with a linguistic inclination use a higher number of respelling features, possibly to document the most variation, while the strictly-literary source shows less respelling, which is employed only in the dialogue sections.

- Although the use of respelling strategies for the literary representation of characters has been increasingly criticized in recent times, it is undeniably a recurring feature in the literary traditions of African-Ecuadorians. An effective translation/adaptation of the play shall employ strategies depending on the style and intention of the playwright of the source text, but should also take into account the functional elements in the target culture. Moreover, it seems important to determine whether the play is meant to reach audiences in written form or be performed on a stage.

- African American English is a well-documented variety of the English language that has continuously been studied from sociological and linguistic focuses. The interest towards AAE first began in matters concerning education. From there on, many efforts have been made toward understanding the structure of AAE and finding ways to bridge education and language. Much has been learned about this variety by means of both diachronic and synchronic studies. Varieties of AAE can be categorized based on the geographic location of its speakers (rural vs urban AAE), or on the time the variety was spoken (earlier AAE). Furthermore, certain features are particular to a variety of AAE, as the use of habitual BE exclusively in Urban varieties.

- African-Ecuadorian language varieties have been less explored from these perspectives. Varieties as spoken by Esmeraldeños have been commented on in studies that broadly describe the general language practices in the region. Moreover, the so-called Afro-Choteño Spanish has received some international attention from scholars interested in collecting data on Afro-Hispanic languages and creolization. Nonetheless, there is an increasing interest on the part of the communities themselves to answer some of the questions regarding language, identity and culture, and much more needs to be learned about these varieties through thorough documentation of concrete language use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given that this study is an initial exploration of the linguistic strategies available for the adaptation of *The Piano Lesson* to an African-Ecuadorian context, an important follow-up study could explore the adaptation of other cultural elements in the play, such as geographic, historical or musical references. The Colombian adaptation, for example, choses to substitute the symbolic piano with their African-Colombian traditional instrument known as the *marimba*. To consider all the elements that may be adapted could create a more representative and less foreign version of the play.

- Literary dialects tend to be easily outdated. The passing of time may bring new writers with different perspectives on how to better portray the African-descendant communities in the national literature. An updated version of this study may serve to create a more faithful representation of the speech of Afro-Ecuadorians in accordance with the conventions of the specific times, avoiding a stereotypical portrayal of language use.

- Since Wilson's plays are set in different decades starting from the 1900s, an intertextual comparison could allow for the identification of differences in his literary dialects based on the decade represented.

- Moreover, an analysis of other African-Ecuadorian sources may also be useful to identify real-life language practices of the communities in the coast and in the highlands. For example, an analysis of Nelson Estupiñán's works may serve to add, confirm or even contradict some of the linguistic features presented in this study.

- A real challenge for this dissertation was finding comprehensive and accessible linguistic studies on the speech of African-Ecuadorian peoples across the country. Although to carry out such studies would require a great deal of resources and time, it is a gap in the literature that requires the attention of future generations of linguists.

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