

# Theoretical aspects of vocabulary variability in American Spanish

## Diachrony and synchrony

Anna Mištinová

### Abstract

As a multinational and multicultural language, the Spanish language offers, despite its unity, a large number of differences on all linguistic planes. This dissertation's subject consists of an examination of fundamental theoretical questions concerning the variation of American Spanish's vocabulary on a diachronous and synchronous level. A diatopic approach in particular is employed with a focus on geographic-linguistic aspects. Based on theories of variation and other general theoretical aspects, an analysis is conducted on the differences and divergences of the lexicon in Hispano-American variations, on the main sources and causes of changes in comparison with European Spanish, on the origin and nature of the language in the early phases of the New World's conquering and the innovative influence of autochthonous substrates and adstrates. Linguistic contacts made in both the past and present occupy a significant place in this examination, and an emphasis is placed on the Spanish – indigenous languages – English triangle. Another area of focus consists of loanwords in Hispanic America, the process of their adaptation and assimilation. Also among the wide range of theoretical questions that this dissertation examines are the concepts and definitions of the term "lexical Americanism", including a specification of determining criteria as well as areal features related to the demarcation of dialectal areas. An outline of the main developmental trends in researching the vocabulary of Hispano-American variations is given in the conclusion.

**Key words:** Hispano-American variations of Spanish, linguistic variation, diatopic and diastratic differentiation, languages in contact, lexical Americanism, dialectal areas