
The Use of Voiced Labiodental Fricative /v/ among American L2 Learners of Spanish

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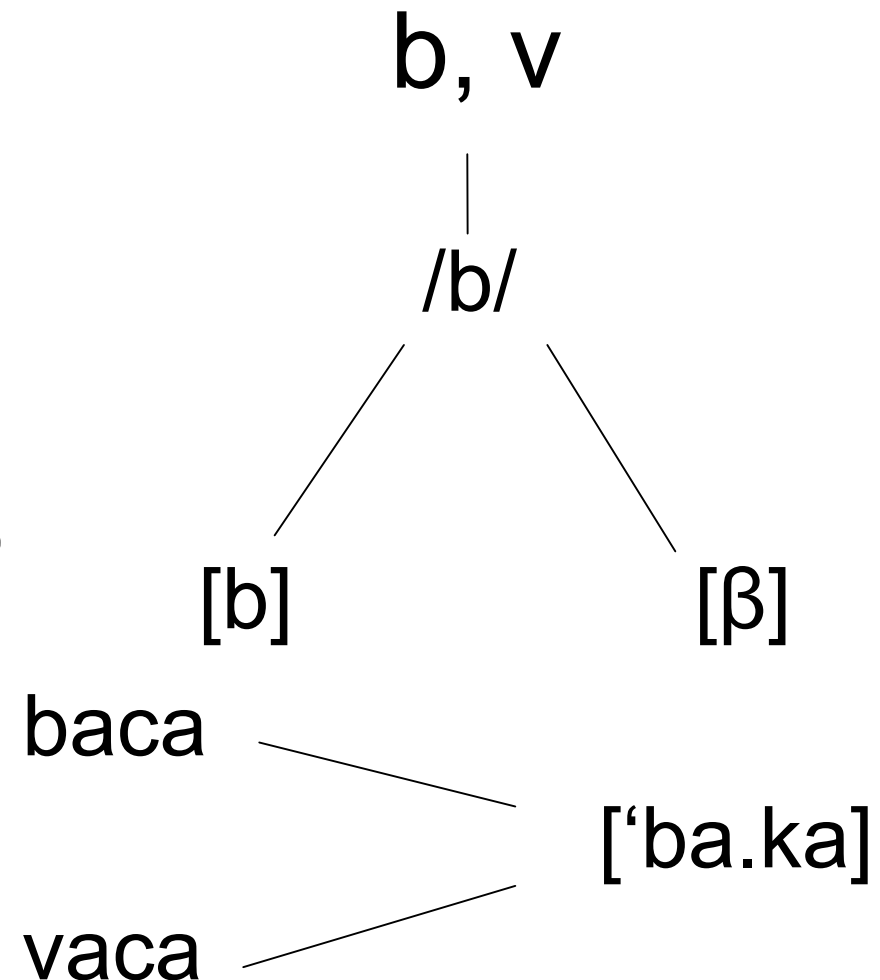
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1. Introduction

- The use of Communicative Approach in foreign language (FL) instruction
 - The weakness of Communicative Approach in the instruction of FL pronunciation
 - The use of English /v/ among American L2 learners of Spanish
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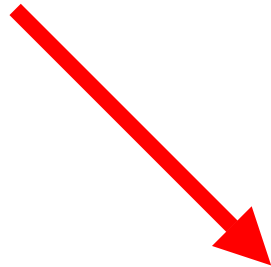
1. Introduction

- The two letters “b” and “v” are graphical representations of the same phonemes /b/ in Spanish, which has two allophones, [b] and [β]
- No phonetic distinction between the two letters since the 16th century (Zamora, 2004)



2. Purpose of the Study

Effects of Communicative Approach



Improvement on Spanish Pronunciation

3. Research Questions

- 1. Do students get accustomed to Spanish phonetic system over time with Communicative Approach?
 - 2. What potential changes could be made to improve the situation?
-

4. Literature Review

4.1 previous studies

- 1. D. Lincoln Canfield (1940) at University of Rochester
 - 266 first-year Spanish students (165 in the first semester course, 101 in the second semester course)
 - Explicit instruction
 - Reading task:

“Los perros están en el jardín del Señor Martínez. Cuando ladran se oye en todas partes. Cinco generales murieron del ruido atroz que hicieron. ¡**Vivan** los perros!”



4.1 previous studies

- Results of the study
- Significant improvement in pronunciation
- Reading task only: potential problems (grapheme-phoneme hypothesis: Zampini, 1994)

Initial position (<u>V</u> ivan)			
	Number of valid recording	Bilabial stop	English “v”
1st semester	143	78 (55%)	65 (45%)
2nd semester	85	58 (68%)	27 (32%)
Intervocalic position (Vi <u>v</u> an)			
	Number of valid recording	Bilabial fricative	English “v”
1st semester	140	51 (36%)	89 (67%)
2nd semester	79	39 (50%)	40 (50%)

4.1 previous studies

- 2. Raymond A. Elliott (1997)
 - 66 undergraduate intermediate Spanish students at Indiana University at Bloomington
 - Pronunciation pretest and posttest with four sections
 - 1. word repetition
 - 2. sentence repetition
 - 3. word reading
 - 4. free elicitation (description of a picture)
 - Results
 - Input alone: no improvement of student pronunciation
 - Explicit instruction: significant improvement in student pronunciation
 - “All learners who evinced a native-like accent had received extensive explicit training in the phonetics of the L2”
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4.1 previous studies

- 3. Deborah L. Arteaga (2000)
 - Comparison of ten textbooks used in college introductory Spanish courses
 - Books in the list vary from conservative to more Communicative Approach oriented
 - Treatment of phonetics (pronunciation) instruction in each book
-

4.1 previous studies

- Summary of the results of the study

Textbook	Phonetics in text	Phonetics in laboratory manual
<i>Arriba</i>	6 out of 14 chapters	6 out of 14 chapters
<i>¿Cómo se dice?</i>	8 out of 18 chapters	18 out of 18 chapters
<i>Poco a poco</i>	No	9 out of 18 chapters
<i>Puntos de partida</i>	7 out of 18 chapters	18 out of 18 chapters
<i>¡Claro que sí!</i>	Only in the prologue	17 out of 18 chapters
<i>¿Sabías qué?</i>	No	No
<i>Dicho y hecho</i>	5 out of 14 chapters	No
<i>Tú dirás</i>	Only in the prologue	10 out of 14 chapters
<i>Mosaicos</i>	No	7 out of 15 chapters
<i>Visión y voz</i>	No	11 out of 15 chapters

4.1 previous studies

- Kenyon College: *Puntos de partida*
 - Generally considered conservative
 - Laboratory manual is not used
 - The phonetics sections are often skipped or are optional



The textbook has limited influence on instruction

4. Literature Review

4.2 influencing factors

- Internal factors
 - Experience with the language
 - Critical period hypothesis

 - External factors
 - Instruction methods
 - Communicative Approach
-

5. Methodology

- 80 L1 English and L2 Spanish Kenyon College students from 4 different levels
 - Reading task: 11 out of 156 words included the letter “v”
 - Picture naming task: 21 out of 50 objects included the letter “v”
 - Analysis of student performances were complemented by the phonetic program Praat
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5. Methodology

- Reading task

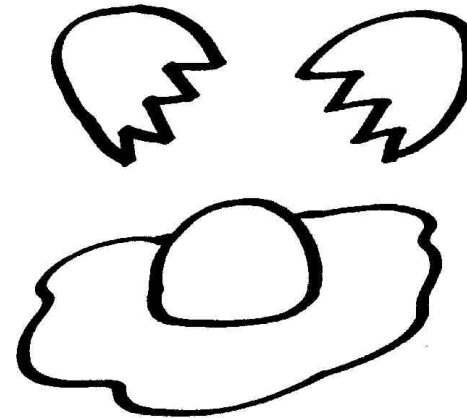
“La proliferación de parques temáticos y de museos interactivos revela que la concepción de ocio y de vacaciones está cambiando ...”

5. Methodology

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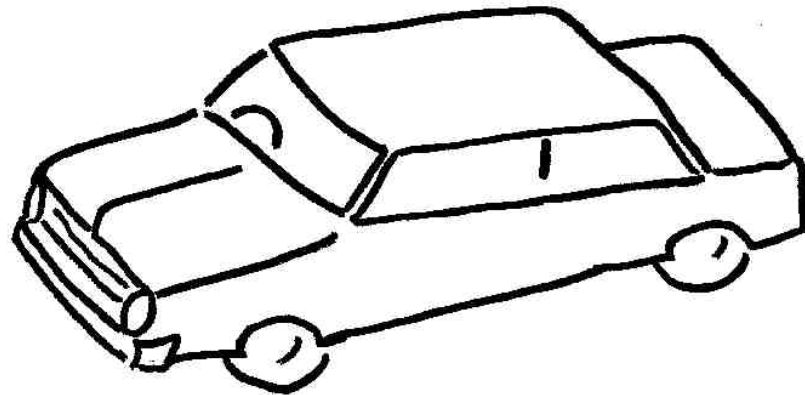
“Doscientos veintitrés”

“Avión”



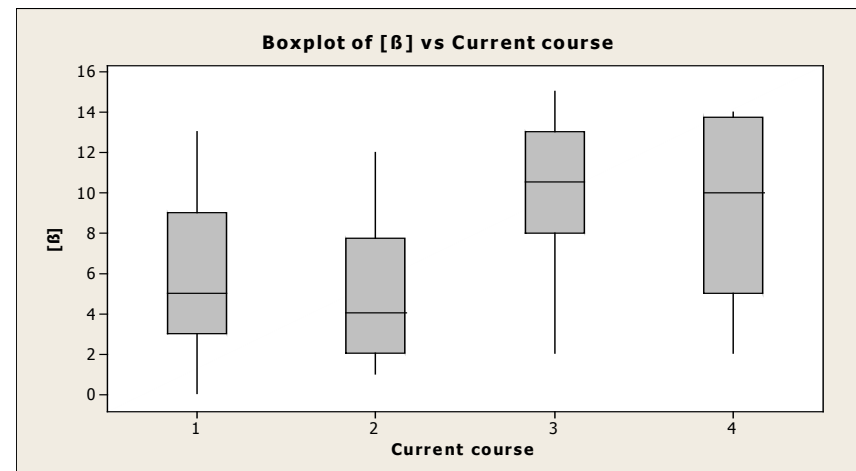
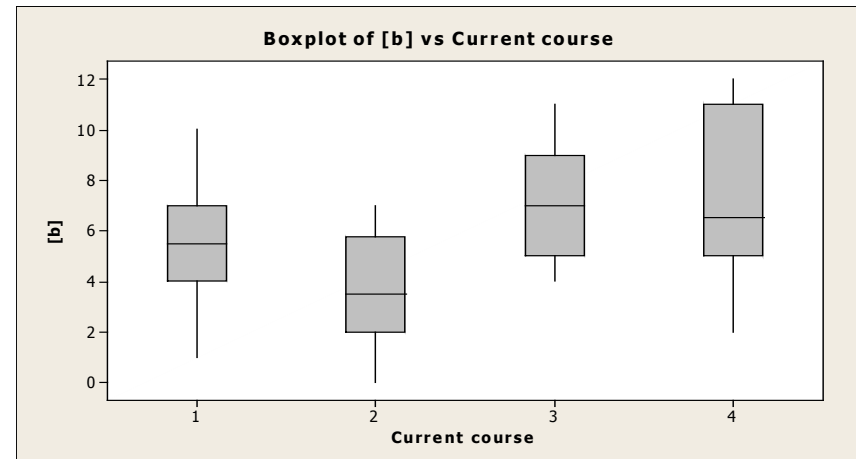
“Huevo”

“Coche”



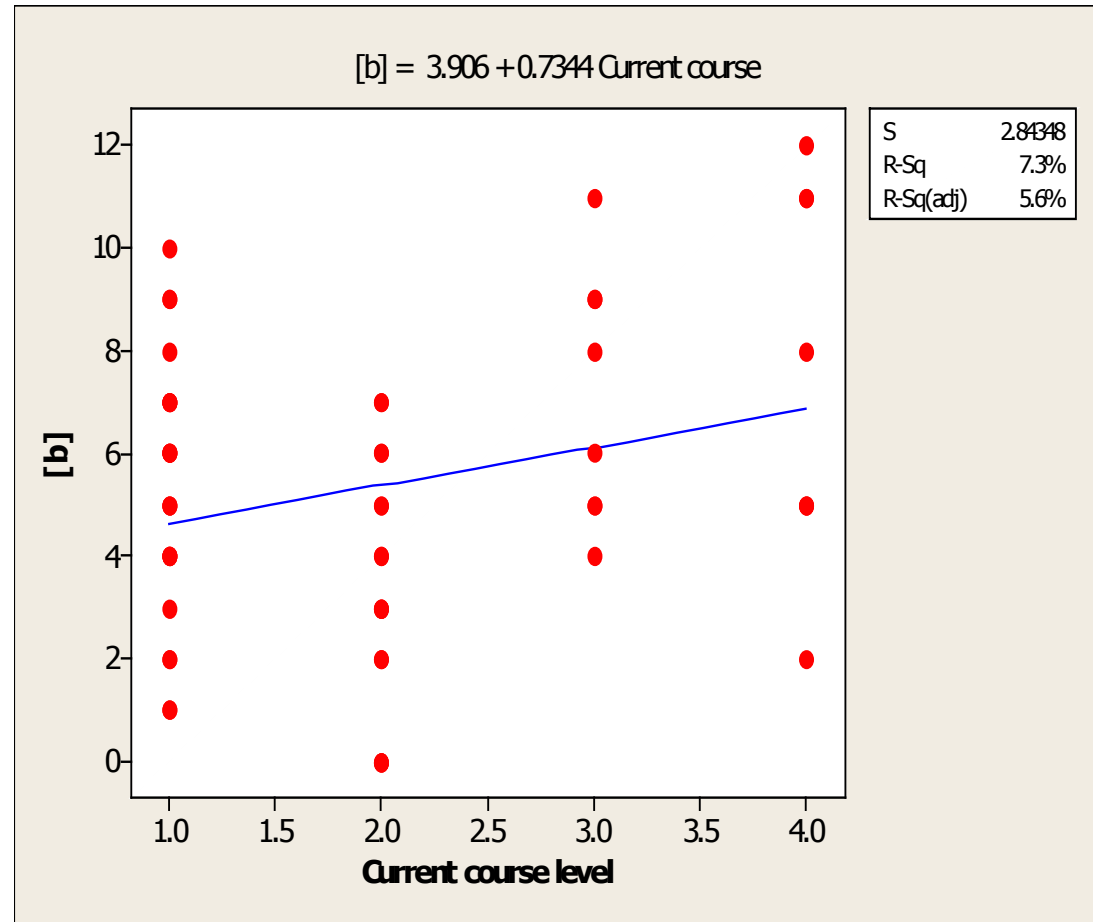
6. Results

- Students' performance vs. course levels
- Only those who have not gone abroad to Spanish-speaking countries were included (N=56)
- Significant difference among the levels



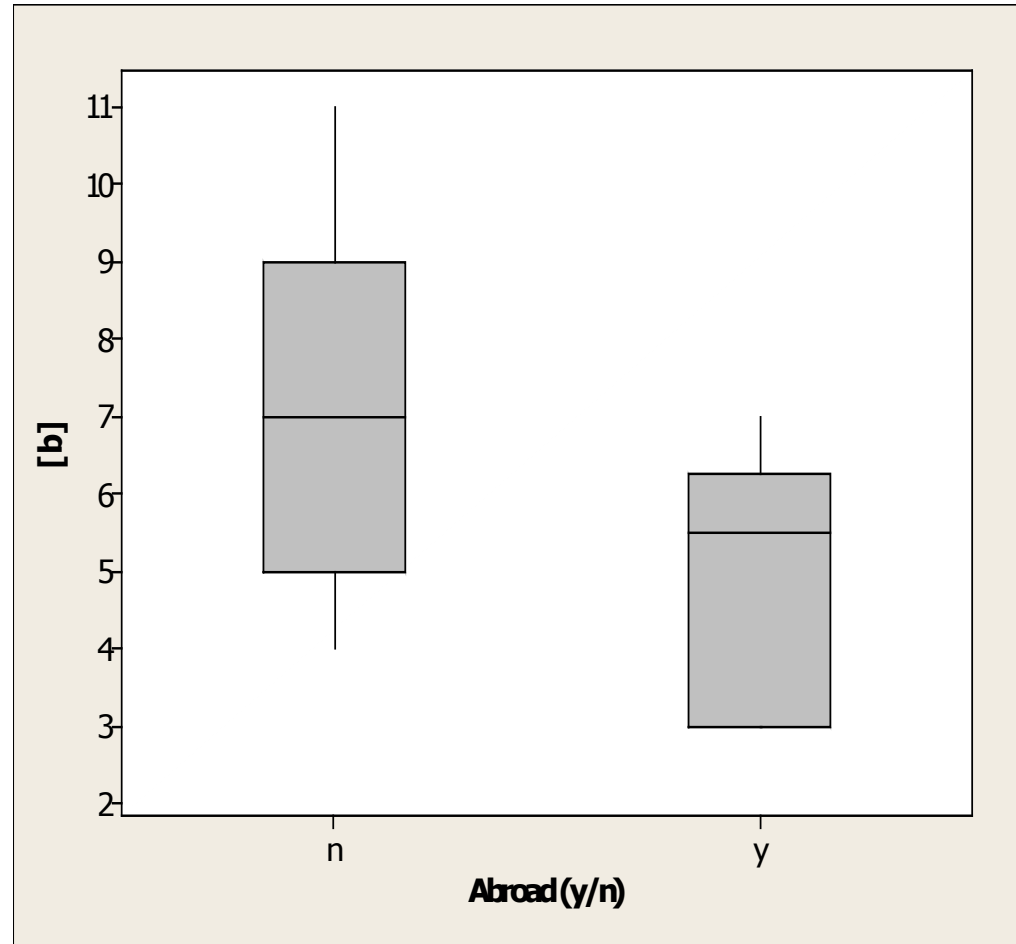
6. Results

- Low correlation between the two variables



6. Results

- No significant difference in performance between the two groups



3. Research Questions

- 1. Do students get accustomed to Spanish phonetic system over time with Communicative Approach?
 - Yes, but the effect of the instruction appears to be very minimal

 - 2. What potential changes could be made to improve the situation?
 - Explicit instruction for pronunciation (from previous studies)
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7. Conclusions

- Course level and improvement in pronunciation have very low correlation with Communicative Approach
 - Studying abroad has no significant effect on students' performance on pronunciation
 - Pronunciation needs to be taught explicitly for more effective acquisition
 - The importance of the present study: pronunciation as a necessary tool for advanced & professional communication
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8. Future Research

- Larger sample size
 - Especially for upper levels (N1=24, N2=19, N3=14, N4=23)
 - Comparative research with a similar school with different instruction method
 - Effects of popular Hispanic culture and “Spanglish”
 - Analysis of other sounds
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