The (Un)Teachability of Pronunciation

A critical approach to present-day English pronunciation teaching methodologies in the EFL classroom

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- Introduction

- Critical Review of the Textbooks

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Introduction

- Is pronunciation important?

    Communicative competence and sub-competences
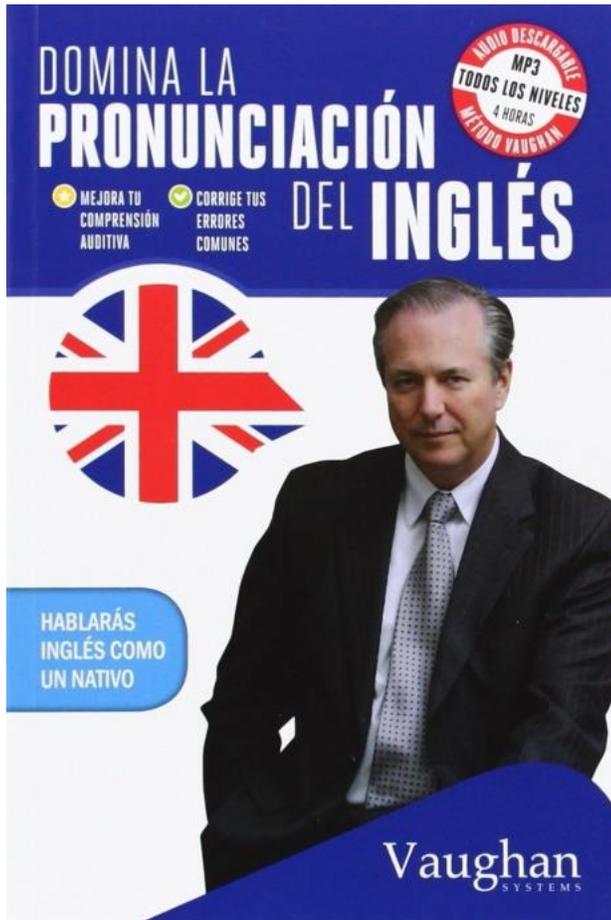
- Is pronunciation teachable?

    Vagueness and scarcity in the Aragonese Curriculum for ESO, e.g.

- Self-reflection: How much time is devoted to pronunciation in the classroom?

Introduction

Quasi-experimental study:

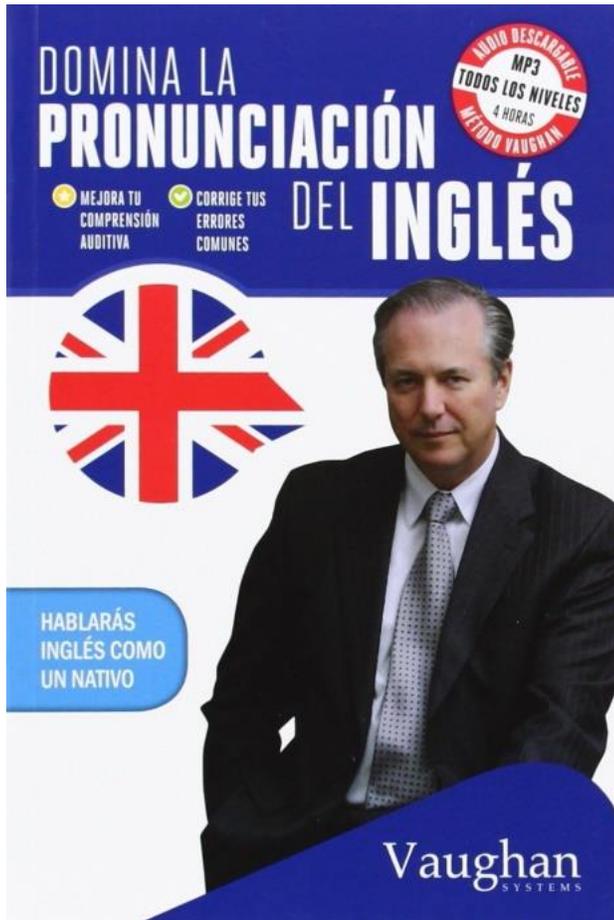comparison of two textbooks

Critical Review of the Textbooks

- Richard Brown *et al.*, 2014, Vaughan Systems

- Mismatches and contradictions
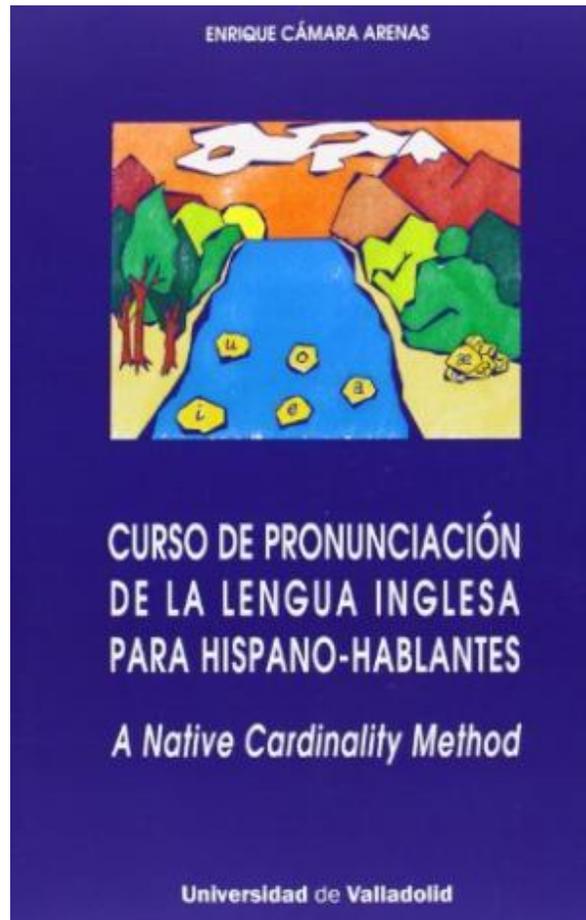- Unorthodox representation

/aúdoza/ "out of the"
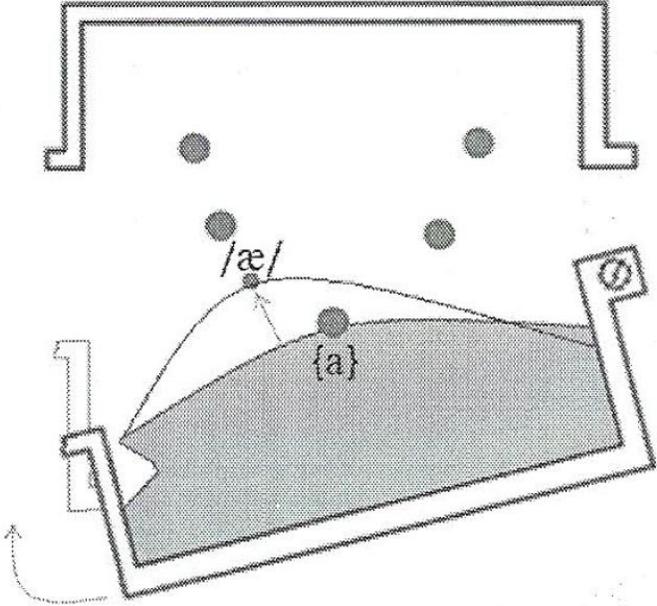
/dzeméyabin/ "there may have been"

Critical Review of the Textbooks

- Richard Brown *et al.*, 2014, Vaughan Systems

- Mismatches and contradictions
- Unorthodox representation

- Repetition as main activity

- Motivational and functional
- Does not follow current research
  (e.g. aspiration?)

Critical Review of the Textbooks

- Enrique Cámara Arenas, 2012, U. de Valladolid

- Native Cardinality
- Cognitivist approach
- Systematicity
- Mixed minimal pairs

- Research-based and well-informed

ENRIQUE CÁMARA ARENAS

CURSO DE PRONUNCIACIÓN
DE LA LENGUA INGLESA
PARA HISPANO-HABLANTES

A Native Cardinality Method

Universidad de Valladolid

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Methods: Context and participants

- Two groups of four students

- 3rd Year ESO

- AMCO and Multiple Intelligencies

Methods: Materials

PRONUNCIACIÓN: **SONIDOS**

/s/ "s"

¿Cuál es el error?

La "s" pronunciada como /sss/, cuando debería ser /s/.

¿Cómo solucionarlo?

Ir aprendiendo las palabras que se pronuncian con /s/, es decir una "s" vibrada y practicar este sonido. Piensa en el sonido que hace una abeja, y escucha el audio para ayudarte. Fíjate en que si dices /féis/, estarás diciendo "phase", 'fase'; pero si dices /féisss/, estarás diciendo "face", 'cara'.

Otro ejemplo es la diferencia entre /clóus/ y /clóusss/. Las dos se escriben "close", pero /clóus/ viene del verbo 'cerrar' y /clóusss/ es 'cercano'.

El truco del espejo

Tras ducharte con agua caliente, aprovecha el vaho que se produce en el espejo de tu cuarto de baño y apunta en él las palabras de esta página. Dilas en voz alta al menos 25 veces todos los días durante una semana centrándote en el sonido de la "s" suave. Será una buena señal si sientes un leve cosquilleo en la punta de la lengua al pronunciar la /s/. Una vez que se desempañe el espejo, si estás rodeado de moscas que han acudido a tu llamada, sabrás que lo estás haciendo bien.

Curiosidad:

"A phrase" es una 'frase hecha', 'una expresión'.

PRAISE
RAISE
PHRASE
PHASE
RISE
ADVISE
WISE
CLOSED
POSE
NOSE
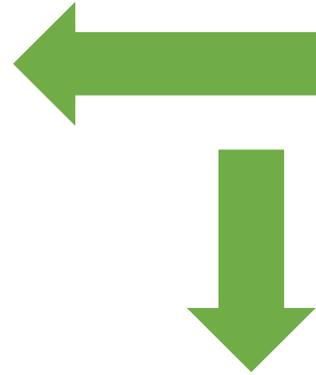
Vaughan's DPI

NCM

6x09. **Posición Final.** También en posición final, seguida de silencio o de consonante sorda, /z/ puede perder su voz parcial o totalmente. El resultado puede ser una [s] muy suave —lenis. Recuerda que la vocal precedente siempre será más larga que si fuera realmente cerrada por /s/.

Más corta + /s/	Más larga + /z/
bus [bʌs]	buzz [bʌˑz]
price [pʰɹaɪs]	prize [pʰɹaˑɪz]
fuss [fʌs]	fuzz [fʌˑz]
Jas [dʒæs]	jazz [dʒæˑz]
lice [laɪs]	lies [laˑɪz]
boss [bɑˑs]	Boz [bɑːz]
dice [daɪs]	dies [daˑɪz]

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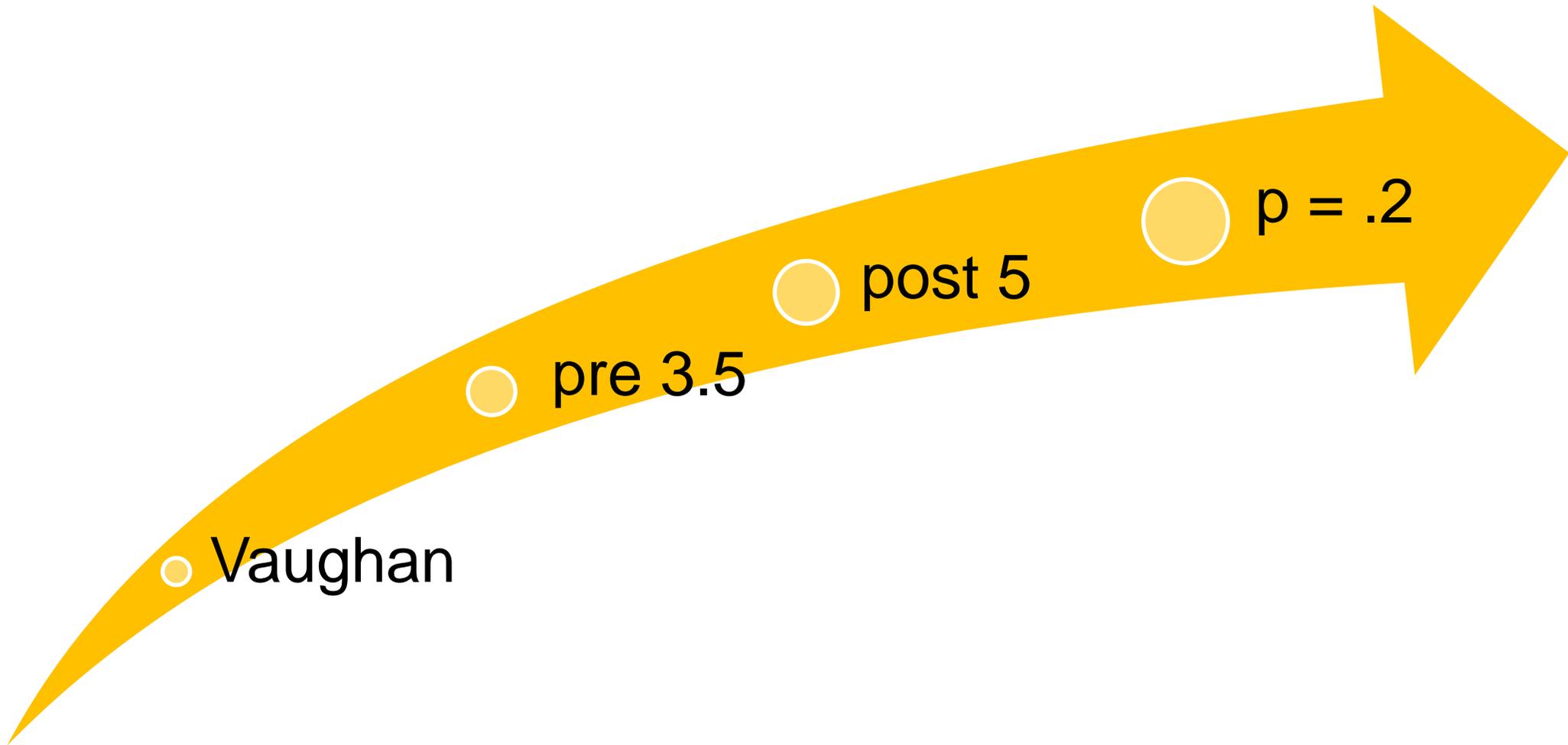**Academic genres and language ecologies**

Methods: Procedure

- Introduction

- Execution of exercises

  - Presentation
  - Pre-test
  - Teaching

- Post-test

13 Reasons Why
Netflix
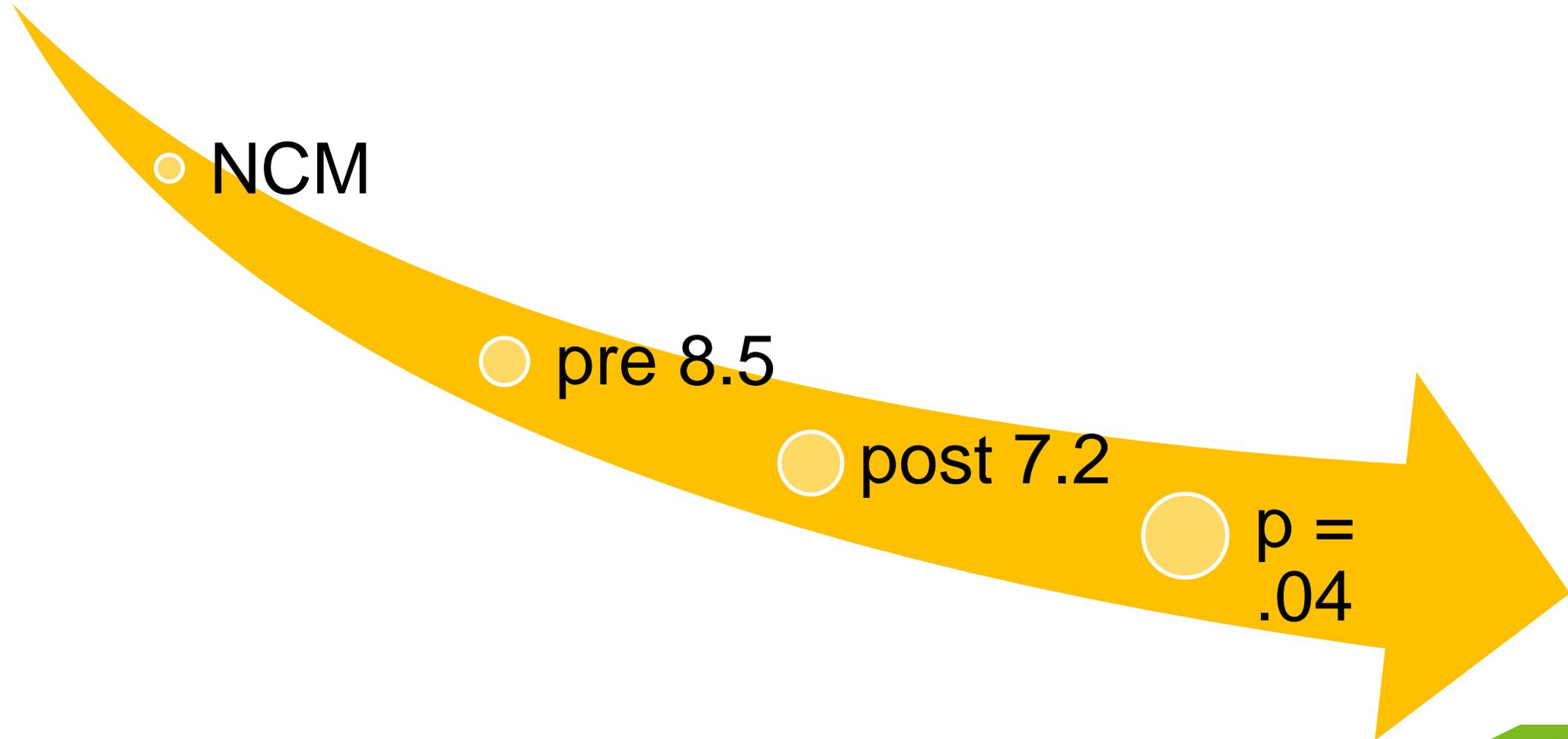
+ Student T   α = .05

Results

Vaughan

pre 3.5

post 5

p = .2

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Results

Results

Vaughan
1.5

NCM
-1.3

p = .08
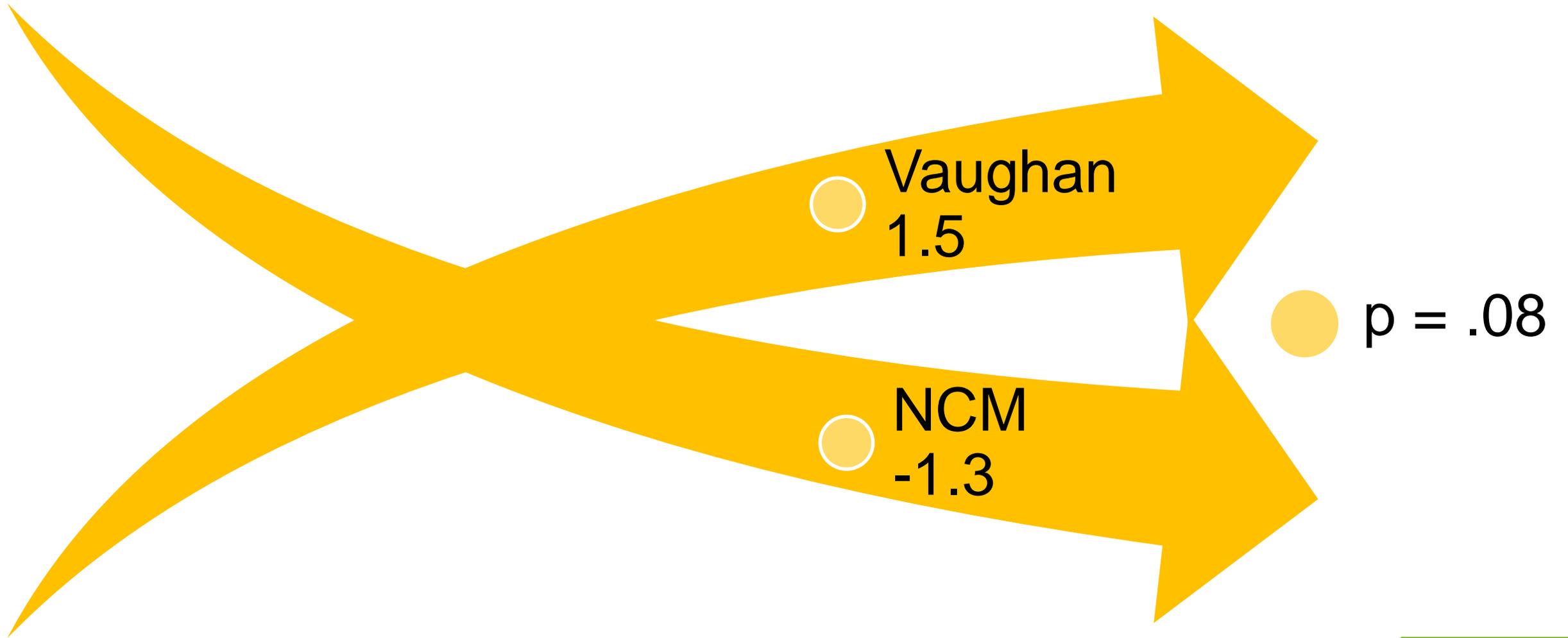
Discussion

- Is pronunciation teachable then?

Different approaches have different effects
on the learning of the micro-skill analysed

These approaches fall short for the context they have been applied to.

-> Not advisable to use them *sic* in an ESO context.

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Discussion

- Where do they fall short?

- No real context
- No communicative purpose
- Cf. Celce-Murica *et al.,* 2010

- Silver lining: some components and ideas can be used but need redesigning

- Might be useful as self-study tools for students and teachers themselves
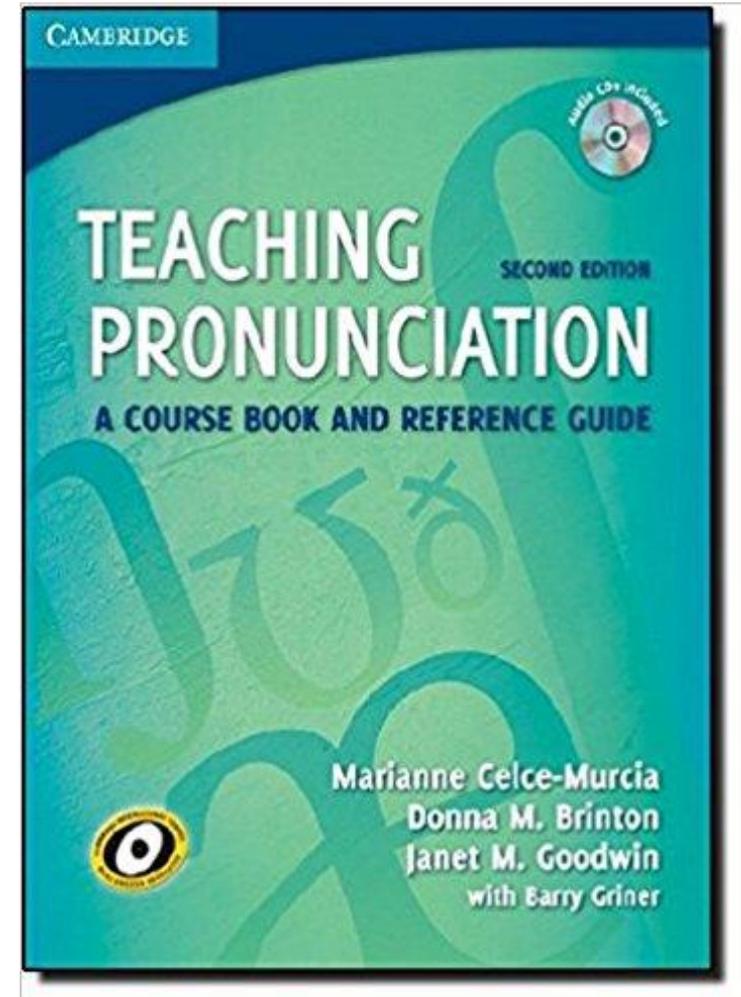
Discussion

Limitations of the scope of the study

• More data needed: participants and phonological elements

• Time factor

• Triangulation with a questionnaire e.g.

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Discussion

Designer methods in the post-method era

WHY?

Maybe customers still want the ultimate method because it is offered

In conclusion…

- Phonological subcompetence is essential for the communicative competence.

- Vaughan and NCM should not be used in the classroom but elements from them can be used.

- Further research can help us better understand the role of methods and the importance of pronunciation teaching.

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Acknowledgements

genresandlanguages.org   @genres_language