

STUDENT # 2130651



IS MIXED VOICE QUALITY PERCEIVED AS BELTING IN HISPANIC CULTURES?

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MODULE 3 BMPF7008



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Is mixed voice quality perceived as belting in Hispanic cultures?

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IS MIXED VOICE QUALITY PERCEIVED AS BELTING IN HISPANIC CULTURES?

introduction **WHY?**

- I am a Latin American voice teacher; belting has become my style's protagonist
- In my experience, there is a minimal vocal health concern for Hispanic performers.
- Preference for heavier and strained belts: is that sustainable?

**LAURA
LARENAS**



COMMERCIAL CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

- CCM has historically received less scientific attention in research and pedagogical training practices, than classical genres (Lo Vetri, 2008).
- There has been even less research focused on CCM styles within the Spanish/Latin American communities.

BELTING

Belting was associated with vocal unhealthiness (McGlashan et Al., 2017). However, even though there is still no consensus on the definition of belting (DeLeo LeBorgne et Al., 2010), several authors now conclude that there are various ways of producing healthy/mixed singing (McGlashan et al., 2017).



master1305's image/FreePik

BELTING

*"The speechlike, yell-like, or shouting voice production heard in commercial vocal substyles".
(Sundberg et Al., 2012)*

- **High-range utilisation of the chest voice register, which shortens the vocal tract and provides a richer tone colour (Titze, 2007).**
- **The use of systematic vowel modification for achieving the musical demands of a specific song is very likely in CCM singing (Herbst et al., 2023).**



BELTING IN SPANISH

- It is important to note that the lack of resources focused on singing in Spanish is quite a challenge.
- Vowel modification is limited to Hispanic singers.
- Important cultural aspects to consider.

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Español

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Feet /fiːt/	
red /red/	Estado
About /əbaʊt/	
Her /hɜːr/	
Back /bæk/	Ayer
Map /mæp/	
Ask /ɑːsk/	
Far /fɑːr/	
Cup (kʌp/	
Under /ʌnder/	Ostión
Box /bɒks/	
bought /bɔːt/	
Too /tuː/	Unión
Shoe /ʃuː/	
Book /bʊk/	

Source: (Finch & Ortiz, 1982)

Comparison **HISPANIC/LATAM LITERATURE REVIEW:**

"Belting is what happens when the chest register extends to higher lengths of the vocal range, avoiding the natural transition to head voice in women or falsetto in men.

Belters use only chest registers way ahead of what is usual"

(Mel Gowland & Saporiti, 2017, p.137).

Hispanic CULTURE

must be adequately concerned about vocal health or proper health technique.

A healthy belt involves the coordination of both TA and CT muscles (Dipp, 2022).

A normal chest voice quality is not dangerous, but vocal health gets endangered when the chest voice is pushed beyond its limits in terms of maintaining a hyper-functional component.

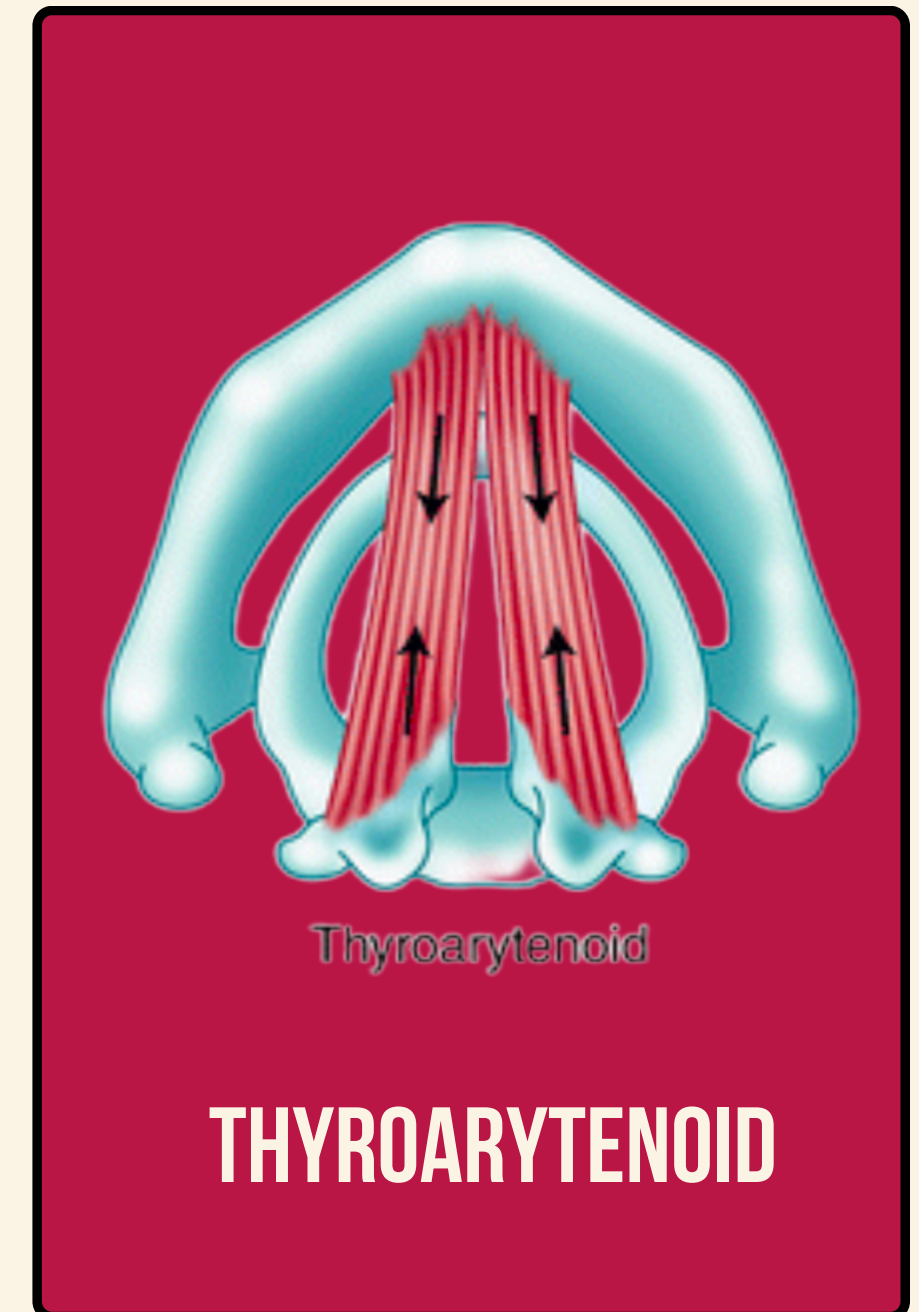
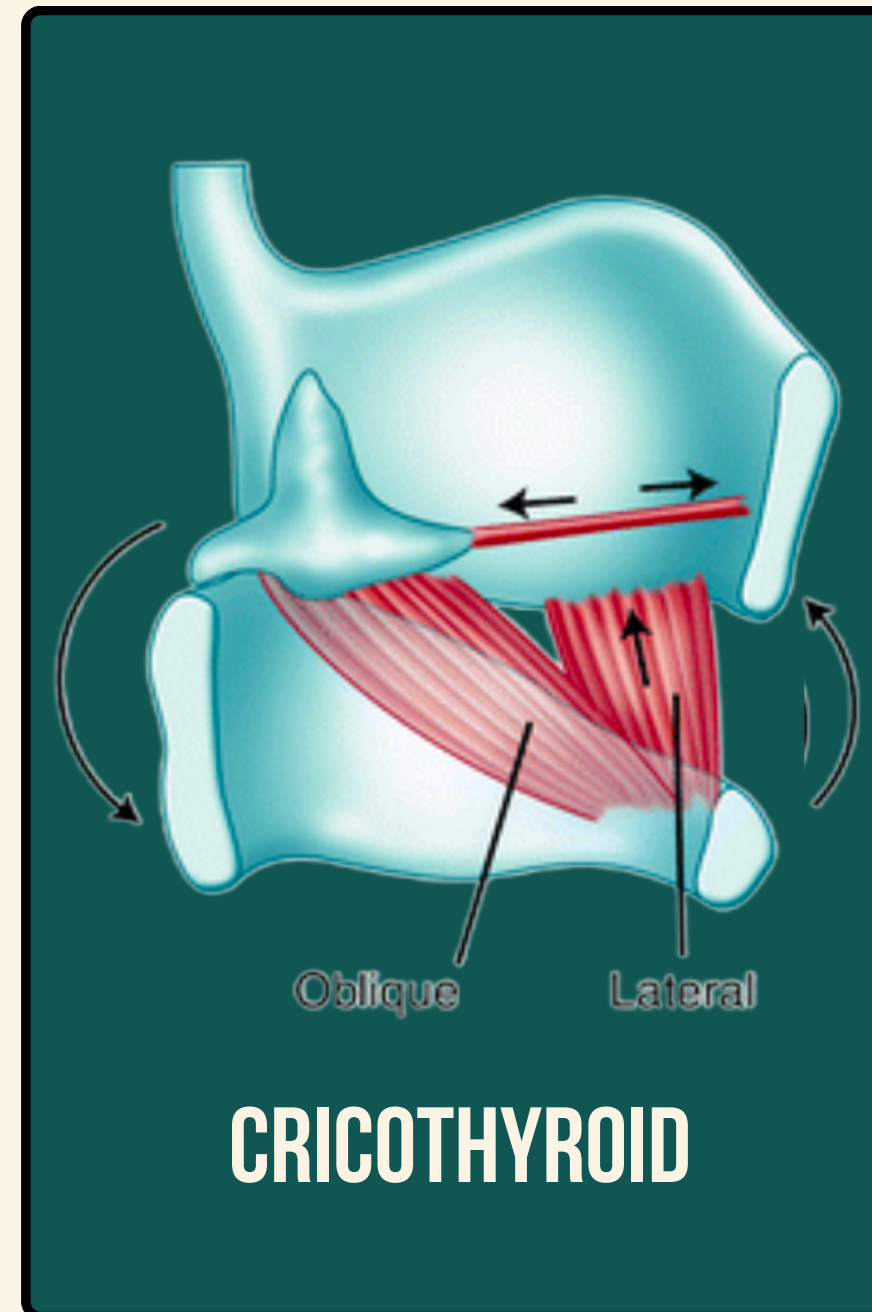
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Vocal Fold MASS

Typically discussed as the amount of vocal fold that makes contact during each cycle of vibration.

- When the VF mass is thicker, the VF vibrates all the way, from bottom to top
- When they are thinner, only the top of the folds vibrates together, generating less intensity and volume.



FOR THIS PROJECT: TYPES OF BELT

LIGHTER MIX



Will be used when singers use the thinner (both CT and TA configuration) vocal folds configuration; less VF mass.

HEAVY BELT



Will be used when singers use the thicker vocal fold configuration; greater VF mass.



METHODOLOGY

QUALITATIVE METHODS

- Survey
- Perceptive Journal (Personal)
- Strategy
- Implementation & Interview

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Qualitative research is characterised by its researcher's involvement, holistic perspective, and execution of data analysis during the data collection (Denscombe, 2014).

FINDINGS

VOCAL COACHES		STUDENTS
INTRODUCTION		
Thank you for your participation. This questionnaire is going to take 10 to 20 minutes of your time. Your answers will be part of a research study conducted by The Voice Study Centre and The University of Wales Trinity St. David MA student body. Answer in English or Spanish, as you prefer. ----- Gracias por participar. Este cuestionario tomará 10-20 minutos de tu tiempo. Tus respuestas serán parte de un estudio realizado por alumnado de The Voice Study Centre y la Universidad de Gales Trinity St. David. Puedes contestar en inglés o en español.		
INICIAL QUESTIONS		
Age/Edad:		
Briefly describe, in your opinion, the characteristics of a great belt (you can exemplify with some artists that achieve your desired characteristics):	Briefly describe your trajectory as vocal instructor (certifications, studies, etc)	
QUESTIONS (This section applies to each audio)		
Do you perceive this as a belt? / Consideras que el/la cantante está belteando?		
Why? / ¿Por qué?		
Please describe the weight of the voice from light to heavy / Por favor describe tu percepción del peso de la voz, desde ligero hasta pesado		
What do you perceive about the sound's balance of brightness and darkness? / ¿Qué percibes en cuánto al brillo o la oscuridad de la voz?		
What do you perceive might be happening with the breath? / ¿Qué crees que está pasando con su respiración?		
Do you hear anything that makes you worry about their vocal health? / ¿Escuchas algo que te haga preocuparte acerca de la salud vocal del/la cantante?		
Is this execution sustainable and healthy? / ¿Es esta una ejecución sustentable y saludable?		
Why do you consider it healthy/not healthy? / ¿Por qué lo consideras saludable/no-saludable?		

SURVEY

5 Hispanic Vocal Coaches (Ages 25–35)

5 Hispanic Students (Ages 17 –22)

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Audio selections that include a variety of vocal fold mass conditions that may or may not be perceived by the listeners as belt quality.

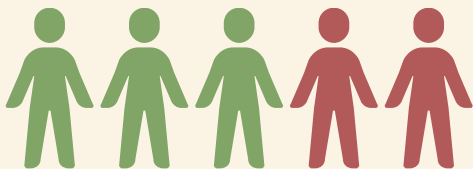
RESULTS

YES

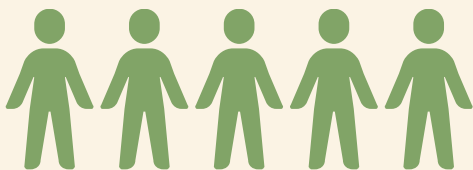
NO

STUDENTS

Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



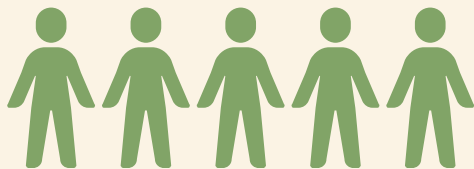
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?

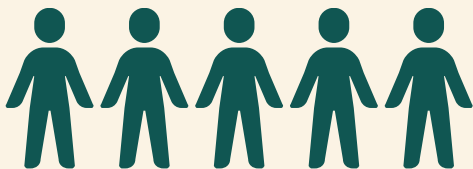


Is this sustainable/healthy?



TEACHERS

Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



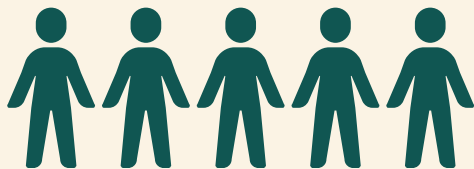
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



AUDIO 1

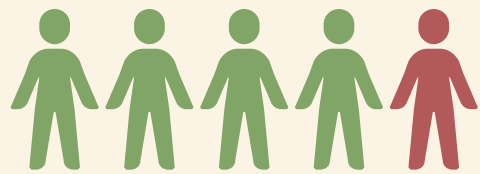
AUDIO 2

AUDIO 3

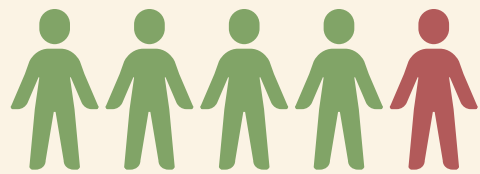


STUDENTS

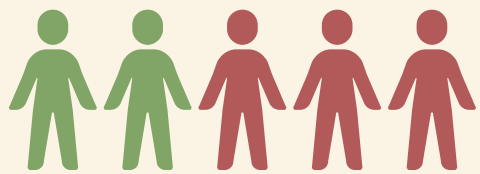
Is this belt?



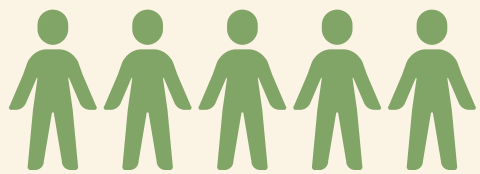
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



TEACHERS

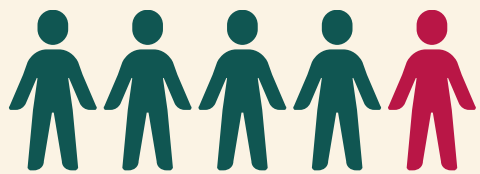
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Is this sustainable/healthy?



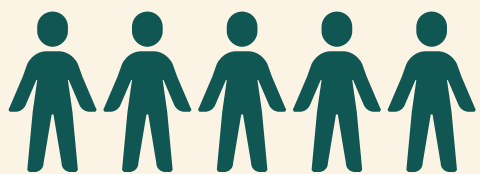
Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



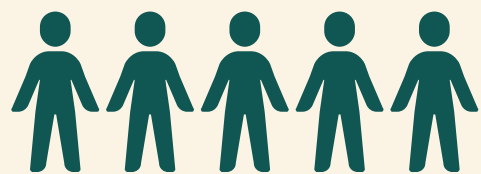
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



AUDIO 4

AUDIO 5

AUDIO 6

AUDIO 7



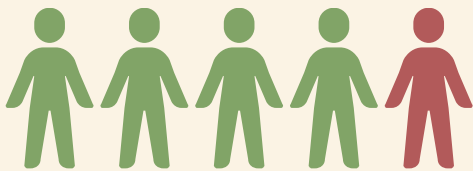
RESULTS

YES

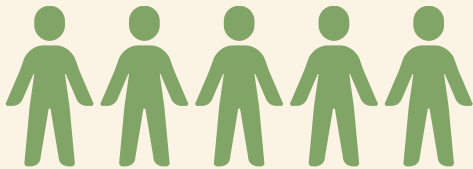
NO

STUDENTS

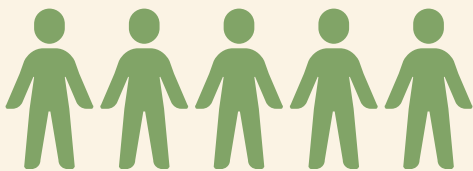
Is this belt?



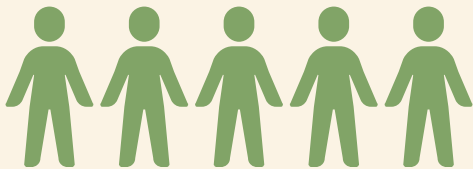
Is this sustainable/healthy?



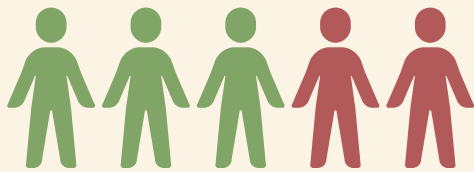
Is this belt?



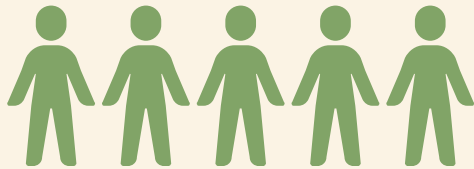
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?

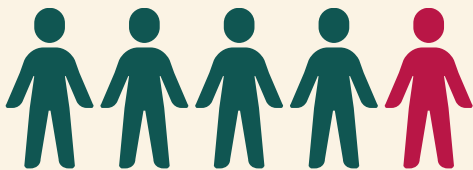


TEACHERS

Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



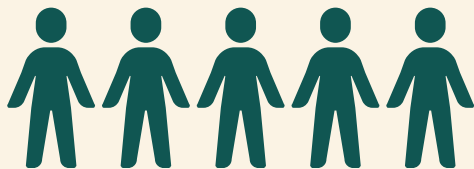
Is this sustainable/healthy?



Is this belt?



Is this sustainable/healthy?



AUDIO 8

AUDIO 9

AUDIO 10



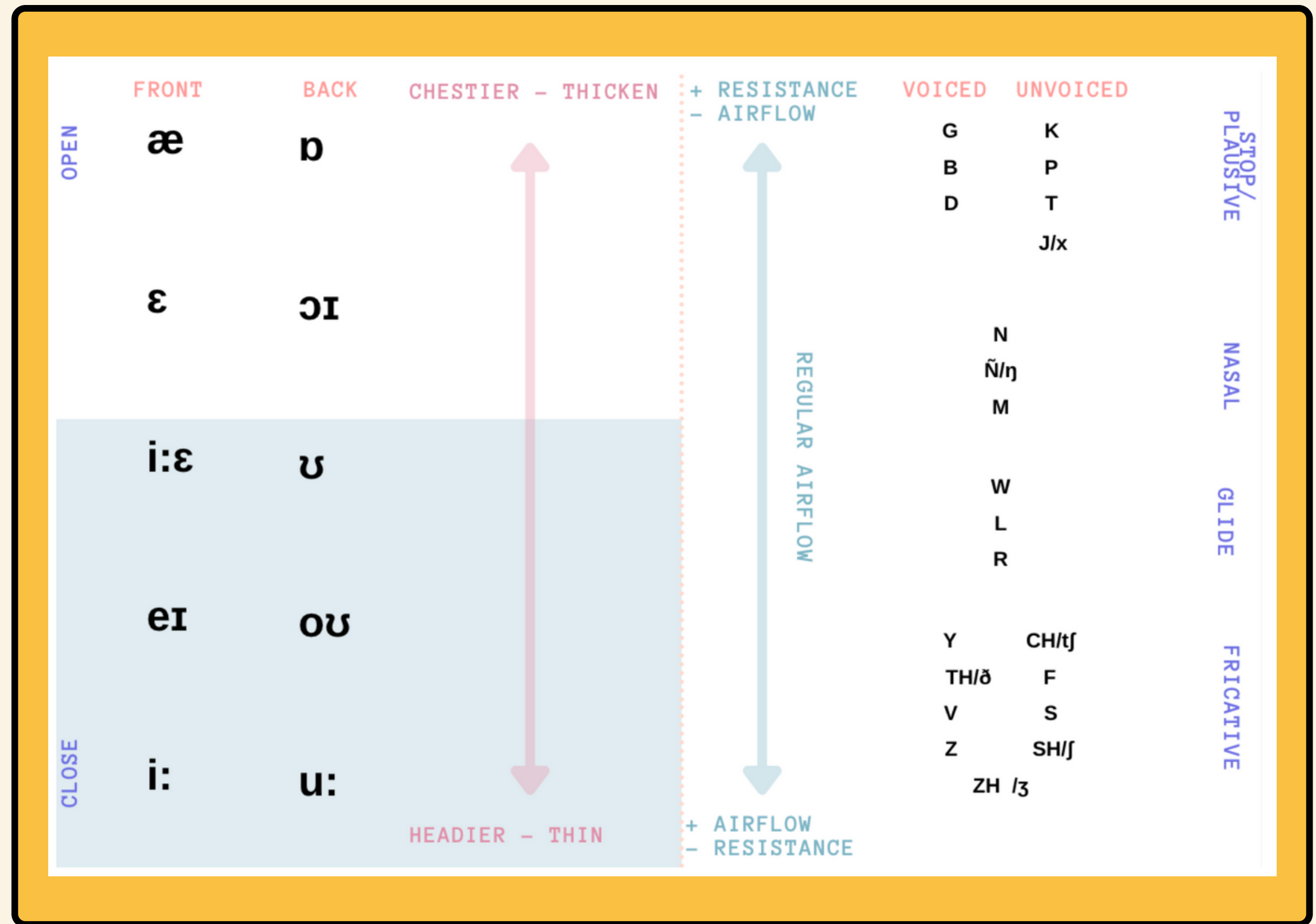
HIGHLIGHTS

MORE WEIGHT	STUDENTS VS VOCAL COACHES	HEALTH PERCEPTION
Some participants need to hear high notes with “chesty” configuration, weightiness, and more vocal fold mass, to consider notes as belts.	Vocal coaches are paying more attention to health issues than students are. Students may appear more aware of the notes' weightiness and highness level.	Head-voice dominant fragments tend not to light so many worries about vocal health.

Teaching STRATEGY

Premise: vowel and consonant selection can significantly support the thickening or the thinning of vocal fold mass.

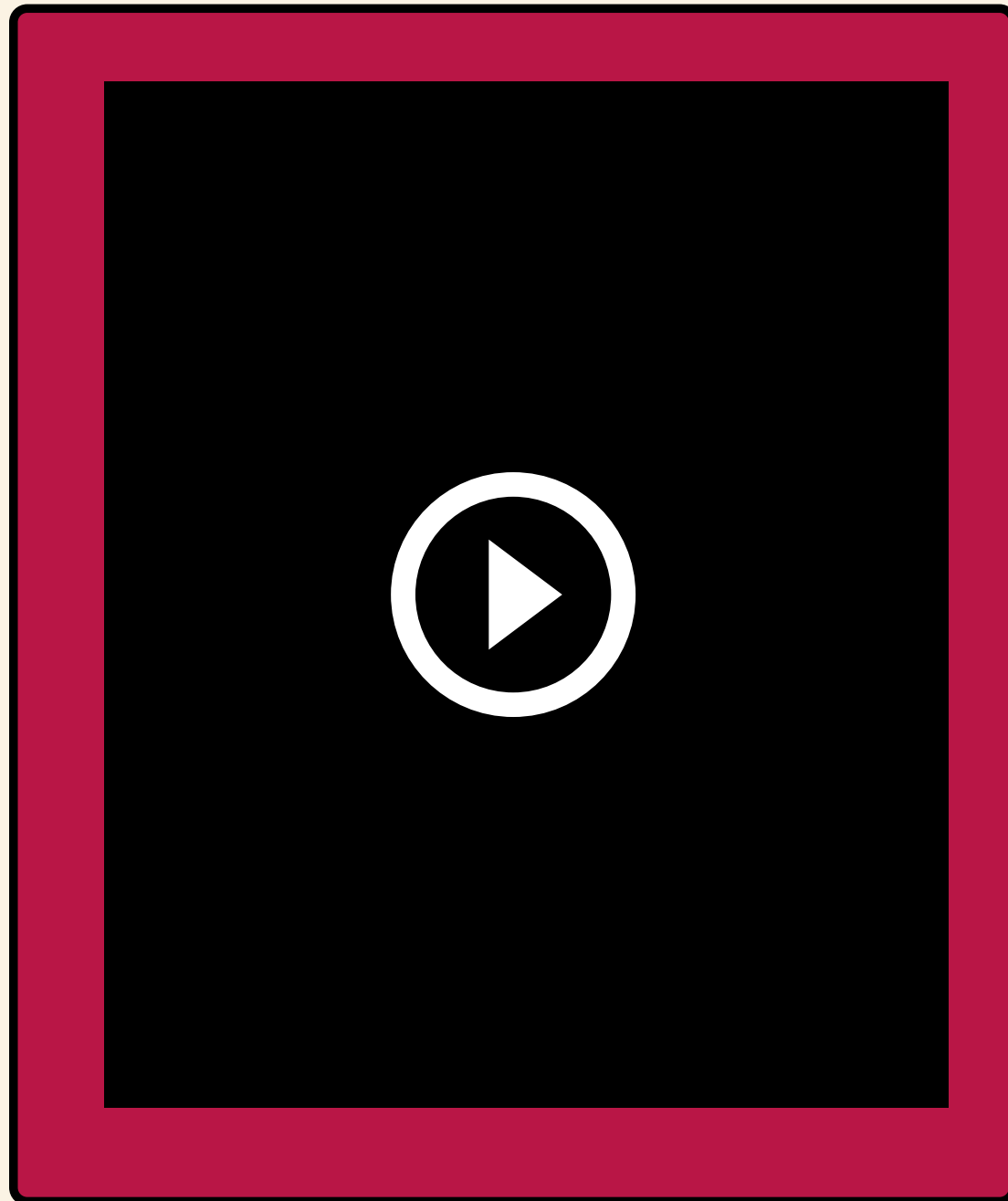
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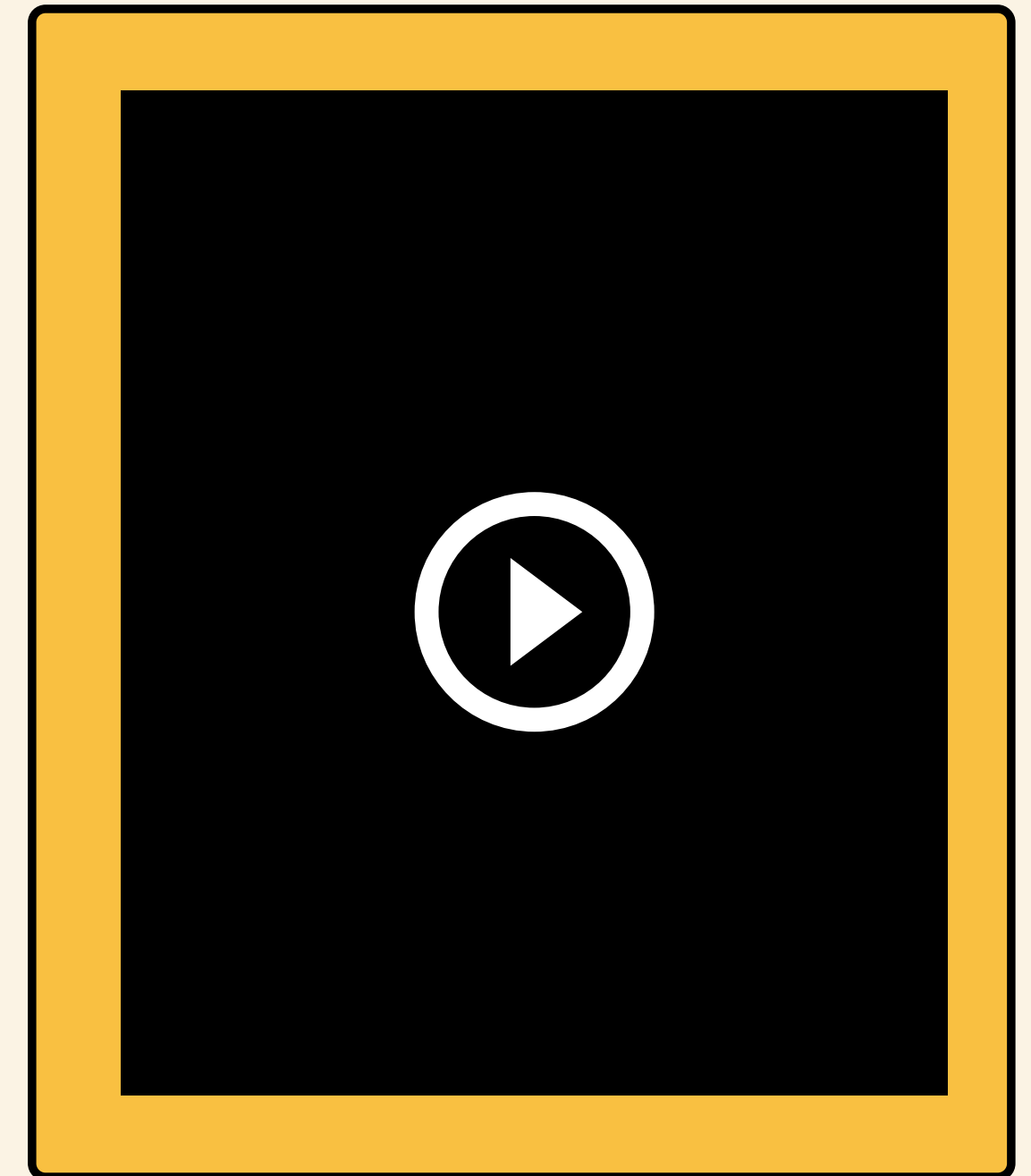
FINDINGS

Participants: 2 students that answered the initial survey:

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- Vocal exercises with descendant scales. "Bei" "mi" "wi", "nu", "me"
- They were also asked to change temporarily some consonants and vowels of the song.
- Without them noticing, they were asked to sing the belted part one semitone higher than the original tone, to encourage the usage of a lighter mixed voice.



HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTH > WEIGHT



Students achieved a lighter sound and felt comfortable with it. Even though they usually prefer a heavier belt, experiencing a healthier option that still has a rich rounded sound worked well and was acceptable for them.

The CONCLUSIONS

- There is a preference for a heavy-belt quality.
- When students notice that a mixed voice approach increases options when belting, they may be more likely to explore that possibility.
- Relying on the possibilities of vowel and consonant modification could help vocal coaches and students to achieve an acceptable belt quality without compromising vocal health.

Hispanic singing education needs to gain more terrain. As singers are aware of their vocal health, they get more open to new paradigms and accept healthier alternatives. In a culture where we admire strained high notes, a mixed belt quality is a clear possibility.

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Thank You!
Q&A