

**6.** (10 points) Einstein's special theory of relativity states that an object's length contracts as its velocity increases according to the formula

$$L(v) = L_0 \sqrt{1 - \left(\frac{v}{c}\right)^2}$$

where  $L_0$  is the length of the object at rest,  $v$  is the velocity of the object, and  $c$  is the speed of light. (Recall from physics that  $v < c$  necessarily)

**(a)** Approximate  $L(v)$  by its second degree Taylor polynomial near  $v = 0$ .

**(b)** What is the approximate error in your approximation from part (a) in terms of  $v$  when  $v$  is small compared to  $c$ ?

**(c)** By what percentage will the length of the object contract when it is travelling at a velocity of 99% of the speed of light?