

Prospective Study of Treatment of Voice Problems in Teachers: Preliminary Results

Purpose: To assess the value of a novel web-based voice hygiene education (VH) versus voice hygiene + voice production training (VH+VP) for the treatment of voice problems in teachers.

Methods: $N=$ 108 student and professional teachers in the US and Hong Kong, who self-identified as having a voice problem were enrolled in a prospective therapy program, and received either a personalized VH intervention; VH+VP interventions (similar to Lessac-Madsen Resonant Voice Therapy), or no intervention. The VH and VH+VP groups received one intervention face-to-face, during a single day, followed by a four-week internet monitoring period with personalized feedback. One year later, participants received a web-based booster of their assigned intervention, followed by an internet monitoring period. Follow-up measures were collected 1, 3, 12, and 24 months after their first intervention date. The VHI served as the primary outcome measure.

Results: Considering the greatest change from baseline in VHI scores across all follow-up time-points, all groups showed some evidence of improvement over time. For the greatest change parameter, the VH+VP group showed the most improvement ($M = -11$, $SE = 3$), followed by the VH ($M = -8$, $SE = 5$) and the control group ($M = -2$, $SE = 2$), $p < .05$ for all comparisons. All three groups showed improvement in VHI at all follow-up time-points (1 mo, 3 mo, 12 mo, 24 mo). The VH+VP group saw the biggest improvement (largest VHI decreases) starting at 12 mo, and this trend continued through the 24 mo mark.

Conclusions: Preliminary results indicate that a significant decrease in self-perceived voice handicap occurs following a personalized voice hygiene program combined with voice production training in teachers with voice problems. Results were consistent across institutions. Results indicate that a unique voice training program combining live and web-based interventions may be beneficial for teachers with voice problems.

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