

VOICE MEASUREMENT CHANGES FOLLOWING A VOICE CARE PROGRAMME AMONG TEACHERS: A PILOT STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Voice problems are common among teachers due to heavy vocal demands during teaching. Voice care programmes have been shown to improve teacher's voice. However, in Malaysia, benefits of such programmes have not yet been researched. This study examines the changes in acoustic measurements and self-reported vocal handicap using the Voice Handicap Index (VHI) following a 6-week voice care programme for teachers reporting voice problem symptoms. A combination of direct and indirect therapy techniques were used together with voice amplification. 16 teachers were assigned to either a treatment (n= 9) or a control group (n=7). Pre- and post-treatment comparisons showed that only the treatment group experienced significant improvements in VHI scores and jitter % following the programme ($p < 0.05$). However, comparisons between the groups revealed non-significant difference for all measurements ($p > 0.05$). Although between-group differences did not achieve statistical significance, benefits from the programme were seen in the reduction of teachers' self-perceived vocal handicap where 8/9 teachers in the treatment group showed decrease in VHI scores compared to only 2/7 in the control group. Teachers also reported increased awareness and knowledge of voice care and perceived the programme as a positive experience. Clinical significance of this study was shown in terms of improvements in teacher's perceptions. This study suggests that a voice care programme may be beneficial for teachers and calls for the need for further research to be done.

Ng, J.W.K 2010. *Voice Measurement Changes Following a Voice Care Programme Among Teachers: A Pilot Study*. Bachelor of Speech Science Thesis. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.