Reviewer's report

Title: Voice disorders in teachers: results from a French survey

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Reviewer: Felix I.C.R.S. I.C.R.S de Jong

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Page 5 In 2005, 20 099 mutualists, aged 18 years or over, were selected proportionally at the national level (France metropolitan and Dom Tom) and received a questionnaire by post. How was the selection precisely performed?

Page 5,6 Include the questionnaire in an appendix.

Page 6 The statistical methods should be explained more in detail.

Page 7 The breakdown of the group into teachers and non-teachers is not clear.

Page 7 When teachers (n=3,646) and non-teachers (n=1,933) were compared there was a significantly lower prevalence of voice disorders among non-teachers (p<0.001). What is meant here with “voice disorders”?

Page 7 “sore throat, followed by frog in the throat for men and hoarseness” are called problems here. Elsewhere these items are called disorders. I would prefer the term “symptoms”.

Page 7 No significant differences were observed between the prevalence of different voice disorders for each age group, except for sore throat where a peak was observed for both male and female teachers aged 26#35 years (p<0.0001). How was this calculated? Give statistic explanation.

Page 8 However, it should be noted that there was a trend towards higher prevalence of voice disorders among teachers of nursery classes than among teachers of other classes (data not shown). Similarly, when prevalence was compared as a function of type of teaching (music, EPS/dance vs. other subjects), the prevalence of voice disorders was appreciably higher among music teachers (data not shown). Supply data.

Page 8 A number of active teachers underwent vocal training. Women reported that they had undertaken vocal training more often than men (18 % vs. 10 %), which corresponds to the fact that they present with these disorders more often than men. I do not understand this.

Page 8 When the data are compared as a function of length of time spent in the teaching profession, women at the start of their careers (<5 years in the profession) more often reported voice disorders than individuals who had spent longer in the teaching profession (from 6 to 29 years) (55.6% vs. 49%). They were also more likely to have undergone voice training than teachers who had been in the profession for a long time (24 % vs.15 %). Significance level?

Fig. 2 “psychiatrics disorders” This is a heavy interpretation of the scores of the

Page 11 We have demonstrated that women at the start of their career (<5 years as a teacher) suffer more voice disorders than teachers who have been in the job for longer (from 6 to 29 years) (55.6% vs. 49%, respectively). See also: Kooijman PGC., Thomas G, Graamans K., Jong FICRS de. “Psychosocial Impact of the Teacher's Voice Throughout the Career”. J Voice. 2006 Mar 15

Page 12 notably major depression Explain this heavy statement.

References are not up-to-date.
The legends are too brief and inadequate.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.