

# Study on "Teachers' Voice" in China during the Past 40 Years

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**Abstract.** Teachers are an ancient profession, imparting knowledge and preaching morality with words, sounds and actions. Voice is a basic tool for teachers to carry out their professional functions. As an academic object with both instrumentality and purpose, "teacher's voice" is different from ordinary voice application because of the professional characteristics of teacher's work and the individuality of voice expression. Therefore, the knowledge and research of "teacher's voice" can become a systematic academic object or research topic. This is the basis of the thesis. At present, there are few academic reviews on this topic, which is the origin of this topic.

**Keywords:** "Teacher's Voice"; Voice Expression; Voice Application; Professional Characteristics of Teacher's.

## 1. Introduction

In mainland China, the academic research on teachers' voices began at the dawn of reform and opening up. It has been 40 years since the publication of the periodical paper, which investigated the voice of 748 Primary school teachers in 1981 (Wang Pengwan et al., *Jiangsu Medicine*, 1981.04). This paper can be regarded as the first research finding of this subject. In the past 40 years, monographs, journal articles and academic dissertations related to "teacher voice" have been published as a total of 126. Combined with all these literatures, this paper reviews these researches and makes analysis of the existing problems.

## 2. Overview of Achievements

**Table 1.** Quantitative statistics of the research achievements and contents on "teachers' voice" in China during the past 40 years

Research Contents	Monographs (number)	Journal articles (number)	Academic dissertations (number)	Summation (number)
Achievements				
"Teachers' voice" research	6	15	1	22
Medical research	2	61	4	67
Realistic research	0	34	3	37
Summation (number)	8	110	8	126

**Table 2.** Quantitative statistics of the formats and publication times of the research works on "teachers' voice" in China during the past 40 years

Achievement formats	Monographs (number)	Journal articles (number)	Academic dissertations (number)	Summation (number)
Publication period				
1981-2000	1	19	0	20
2001-2010	0	37	4	41
2011-2021	7	54	4	65
Summation (number)	8	110	8	126

In general, academic cognition, "teacher's voice" is often attached to the subject category of "vocal art". This situation is also revealed in the academic achievement numbers of the two. The achievement

numbers of "teacher voice" is far less than that of "vocal art". Beyond the broad scope of "vocal music art", this paper only takes "teacher voice" as the theme and "Duxiu Academic Search" and "CNKI" as the sources of the literatures. According to the searching results, there are more than 120 kinds of research findings. The search results show about 120 kinds of research results (Deadline: 2021.12.1). The quantitative statistics of the basic achievements, research contents and publication periods are shown in the Table 1 and Table 2.

### 3. Problem Analysis

The above two statistical tables integrate the research achievements of monographs, journal articles and dissertations. From the output period of the achievements, it shows an increasing trend over time, which is consistent with the overall development trend of Chinese academic. Based on the two statistical tables, this paper briefly analyzes several important academic issues involved in "teachers' voice" through a comprehensive study of various existed achievements.

#### 3.1 Research on the Disciplinary Attribute of "Teachers' Voice"

In the past 20 years since the beginning of the new century, there has been a significant increase in the number of monographic researches. Among these research achievements, most academic papers had not specifically sorted out and accurately defined the disciplinary attribute of "teachers' voice". Among the eight monographs, only Peng Lijia's *Training and Health Care of teachers' voice* comprehensively considered and standardized the concepts, subject scopes and curriculum contents of "teachers' voice". This book defined "teacher's professional voice" as "a professional voice with good tone quality, volume and endurance of teachers obtained through strict professional training in order to carry out teaching tasks more effectively and adapt to the needs of teachers' profession actively". She proposed to set up a compulsory course that is "professional voice training course".<sup>1</sup> The other works followed peng Lijia's concept, definition and research systems about the topic of "teacher's voice". Some studies had included "teacher's voice" into the linguistic category. For example, *Teacher Voice Health and Training*, a book written by Jun Fu, believed that language training for teachers covers three basic connotations at different levels: firstly, vocal training from the physiological perspective – voice. Secondly, Putonghua training from the perspective of pronunciation - correct pronunciation. Thirdly, the skill training of language - oral expression.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, according to discipline and specialty in teachers' profession, there are subdivided researches which are the "teachers' voice" and training as well as health care. Such as the book *Exploration of physical education teachers' voice training and protection method* written by Yingying Xu (Heilongjiang People's Publishing House, 2019) and *Preschool teachers' voice health and health care* written by Ya-ping Tao (Sun Yat-sen University Press, 2021). These studies have been pushed this subject to specialization and refinement. Part of the academic papers involves the curriculum contents of "Teachers' voice". However, the main focus is on two aspects of vocal fundamentals and voice protection. Such as *Discussion on setting artistic voice course in normal university* written by Kun Xu (the Grand Stage, 2013.04), which suggested curriculum provision from the theory of vocalization, vocalization training, voice protection and so on while relatively ignored the discipline support of linguistics.

According to all kinds of researches, no matter which subject the teachers' voice belongs to, as the nature of the curriculum, the "teacher's voice" should be a comprehensive subject including vocal skills, vocal medicine and teacher's language. This will standardize the future development of this discipline.

#### 3.2 Medical Research on the Issues of "Teachers' Voice"

As a physiological phenomenon, teachers' voice is associated with medical treatments and health care. Among all the academic achievements on teachers' voice, most of them are involved the medical health care issues. For example, special chapters and treatises are set up in monographs and papers

respectively to introduce the preventive strategies and treatment methods of voice diseases. Among them, Yulan Zhang's book "*Teachers' Voice Health Care*" (Heilongjiang Science and Technology Press, 1996) introduced the medical knowledge of teachers' voice at length. More than two thirds of the book is about the occurrence, treatment and prevention of teachers' voice diseases. Due to its long length, this monograph can comprehensively and systematically describe the medical issues related to teachers' voice, such as the professional examination and the treatment of voice diseases, as well as the selection of professional and practical equipment, etc., all of which have very scientific and practical introduction. However, most academic papers discussed about teachers' voice do not have this condition to start the narration. Most of them are empirical. Although there are 65 medical research papers on "teacher's voice health care", they had little substantial impact.

There are only 4 dissertations, "*Discussion on the correlation between the characteristics of teachers' voice disease and TCM syndrome based on cross-sectional investigations*" (Song Weijun, Guangzhou University of Chinese Medicine, Ph.D., 2019), "*Research on the effect of voice training after benign hyperplastic lesions of vocal cords for teachers*" (Guo Wenjun, Shanxi Medical University, Master, 2018), "*Research on the risk factors of the university teachers' voice diseases*" (Hao-ran Geng, Shanxi Medical University, Master, 2009), "*Study on the voice training effects to the throat disease treatments and sound quality improvements*" (Yan Li, Xinghai Conservatory of Music, Master, 2014), conducted systematic medical studies of the teachers' voice from the different medical perspectives, respectively. They are important references in this subject research.

Medical researches are the essential contents of the subject of "Teachers' voice". The question is, how many teachers can understand and master specialized medical knowledge and skills? How can academic research be effectively applied to reality and realize its value?

### 3.3 Investigation and Research on the Realistic Issues of "Teachers' Voice"

Concentrating on the realistic issues of "Teachers' voice", 37 investigated papers mainly focused on teacher subject in ordinary schools, that is, most of the researches on the teachers' voice are based on kindergartens, primary and secondary schools. There are relatively few researches on the voice of teachers in colleges or universities. The survey fields mostly adopted a city, district or county as the center, including Tianjin, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Changsha, Nanjing, Xi'an, Urumqi, Handan, Qingdao, Qinhuangdao, Dengfeng, Kaifeng, Wenling, Ji'an, Yiwu, Liling County, Pixian county and other cities or regions, which have been investigated and studied. Among them, the investigations and researches on the teachers' voice of primary and secondary school in Qingdao and Qinhuangdao are conducted as master's dissertations and explored deeply. These investigations, with a large sample ranges and many surveyed people, reflected the general status of the teachers' voice in local schools and evaluated the realistic conditions which affected the teachers' voice health. For example, Fu Dehui et al. have written "*Investigation on voice health status of 47,796 middle school, primary school and kindergarten teachers in Tianjin*" (Journal of Audiology and Speech Diseases, 2016. 10). Han Yanyan et al. have published "*Investigation and analysis on throat diseases of 11689 middle school teachers in Urumqi*" (Journal of Clinical Otolaryngology head and Neck Surgery, 2012. 04). Chang Jieyan et al. have written "*A survey of 3252 teachers' voices*" (Journal of Audiology and Speech Disorders, 1998. 01). Otherwise, there are a small number of the investigations about the teachers' voice in university. For example, Hu Axu et al. have researched "*the Voice feature detection and protection of the teachers in university*" (Information Systems Engineering, 2009. 07). Bing Li et al. have published "*Occupational voice diseases of college teachers and its prevention research*" (Journal of Shaoguan College, 2009. 10), etc. The above sampling methods and mentioned issues are similar to other researches on the teachers' voice of primary and secondary school basically.

Judging from the academic status of these investigations and studies, the current survey field is relatively small, involving around 25% of the total numbers of the provincial capital cities and even less local cities. These surveys are relatively concentrated in economically developed regions or cities. It is predictable what will happen in other poor-economic regions. This is an academic situation which

is worthy of reflection and also a hot topic that needs academic researchers to study and pay much attention.

## 4. Several Proposals

### 4.1 The Subject Attribute and Teaching Regulation of "Teachers' Voice" should be Clarified Again

As mentioned above, there is no clear explanation on the subject attribute of "Teachers' voice" in most existing research results on teachers' voice. Even in systematic research monographs, such as *"Teachers' voice training and health care"* written by Lijia Peng and *"Teachers' voice health and training"* written by Yun Fu. In these two monographs, the complete and standardized discipline framework of "teachers' voice" has not been clearly presented. In order to study the subject of "teachers' voice" in a more comprehensive and in-depth way and make it play its educational function in the aspects of discipline theory, curriculum system and practical applications, it is necessary to establish a relatively scientific, standardized and complete disciplinary framework. Based on the experience of all the researches mentioned above, it is concluded that the training and cultivation of teachers' voice skills, as the disciplines construction and the curriculum setting, can integrate the three disciplines of vocal music skills, voice medicine and teachers' language. This is a comprehensive and scientific system which is suitable for voice training courses of teachers and needs to be carried out and practiced in more colleges and universities.

### 4.2 Colleges and Universities Need Set up "Teachers' Voice Training" Courses

The disciplinization of "teachers' voice" needs the corresponding curriculum settings as the implementation measures and Institutional guarantee. At present, there is no specific investigation data about this kind of courses and their basic information offered by the colleges or universities in China. The setting information about this courses can only be found in some schools. Such as, *"Voice Training of Teachers"* of Central China Normal University, *"Oral Phonology of Teachers"* of South China Normal University, *"Teacher Phonation and Language Xpression"* of Shanghai Normal University, *"Basic Theory and Training of Voice Care"* of Guangxi Normal University, *"Artistic Voice Medicine Foundation"* of Central Academy of Music, *"Speech therapy"* of Capital Medical University, and so on. Colleges and universities offer "Teachers' voice training" courses, which will integrate the resources of vocal music skills, voice medicine and teachers' language, make full use of the professional advantages of each subject, explore the scientific nature and practicality of "teachers' voice training" courses, and gradually form a stable and standardized teaching paradigms. It is of great subject value and practical significance to the voice health of the teaching staffs and the shaping of new teaching talents.

### 4.3 The Academic Research of "Teachers' Voice" should Serve the Teaching Practice Finally

Among all the research papers about "teacher's voice", the most concerned is the investigation and research on the application of teacher's voice in teaching practice. This is a extremely normal academic phenomenon, which is consistent with the subject attribute of "teacher's voice". The problem lies in that most of the research results of "teachers' voice" have been shelved and no subsequent research reports have been seen. There is no promotion to solve various issues related to "teachers' voice" after the investigation and research process. And the theoretical researches haven't played the effect to practical application and promotion. According to the master dissertation *"Investigation and Analysis of the Teachers' Voice Status in Primary and Secondary Schools and Preschool in Qingdao"* (Weiwei Jiang, 2010), the total incidence of uncomfortable voice symptoms of teachers in Qingdao was about 54.88%. And the master dissertation *"Investigation Report on Voice Diseases of Primary and Secondary School Teachers in Qinhuangdao"* (Debin Jin, 2007) demonstrated that the prevalence of voice diseases of teachers in Qinhuangdao is 37.67%. Such research data objectively reflected the realistic problems of the local teachers' voice. However, it's a

pity that their study is past more than a decade. Have improvements been implemented locally? Are there any new changes in the incidence of teachers' voice? There haven't seen any follow-up researches or reports, which is the serious disconnection between academic researches and educational reality. It is expected that some improvements will be made in the future researches.

## 5. Conclusion

For nearly forty years, the domestic academic communities around the academic research of "teachers' voice" have tried explorative thinking and constructive attempts in the aspects of discipline construction, medical observation and social investigation, etc. most of the research institute shows, all is the result of the objective, scientific and rational, conducive to the development of the discipline of teachers "voice" and practical needs. Of course, it is obvious that there exist deficiencies and regrets of these studies. It is expected that the future researches could reflect the important role of theories in revealing, explaining, reflecting, feeding and guiding the reality to establish a new direction of academic research on teachers' voice.

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