

Supplementary Table 6. Classification of subgroups based on DLE definition

Study	Non-DLE group			DLE group		Position
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4		
A Meng 2010, Wang 2012, Sun 2015, Wang 2015, Jin 2016, Li 2017, Cheng 2020, Wang 2021, Wei 2018	Completely exposure vocal folds area and anterior commissure under suspension laryngoscopy	Partial view of vocal cords with the anterior commissure seen only with external pressure	Nonvisualization of the anterior commissure even with external compression	The vocal folds and epiglottis are not exposed and only the soft palate is visible	Non mentioned	
Paul 2016	Full view of vocal cords	Partial view of vocal cords with the anterior commissure seen only with external pressure	Nonvisualization of the anterior commissure even with external compression	Visualization of only posterior 1/3 of the vocal cords	Classic Boyce Jackson sniffing position	
B Ma 2016	The anterior commissure exposed in the sniffing position, with large laryngoscopes and no external laryngeal pressure	The anterior commissure exposed in the sniffing position, with large laryngoscopes and external laryngeal pressure	The anterior commissure exposed in the sniffing position, with small laryngoscopes and external laryngeal pressure	Exposure of laryngeal view limited to the posterior third or less of the vocal cord in the sniffing position, with small laryngoscopes and external laryngeal pressure	Sniffing position	
Pinar 2009, Hsiung 2004, Kharat 2022	The others were defined as non-DLE groups		Exposure of laryngeal view limited to the posterior third or less of the vocal cord in the sniffing position, with small laryngoscopes and external laryngeal pressure		Flexion-extension/ classic sniffing or/ Boyce-Jackson position	
C Liu 2021, Chen 2019	Full view of vocal cords	Partial view of vocal cords or posterior commissure	Visualization of only epiglottis	Nonvisualization of epiglottis and vocal cords	Neutral position	
D Liu 2022	Patients with full view of the vocal cords or simply without exposure of anterior commissure after external manual compression		The others were defined as non-DLE groups		Sniffing position	
Huang 2016	Full view of vocal cords with or without external compression	Simply non visualization of anterior commissure with external compression	Visualization of only posterior 2/3 of the vocal cords with external compression	Visualization of only posterior 1/3 of the vocal cords with external compression	Boyce-Jackson position	

Age, body mass index, and modified Mallampati index were incorporated into the overall analysis rather than the subgroup analysis due to the insufficiency of data for transfer and aggregation. DLE, difficult laryngeal exposure.