

HOW TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Cómo enseñar inglés como lengua extranjera a niños con Trastorno por Déficit de Atención e Hiperactividad

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Para citar este artículo: Toaquiza Vega, M. F., Vaca Enríquez, C. J. y Chiluisa Chiluisa, M. J. (2023). How to teach English as a foreign language to children with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. *Maestro y Sociedad*, (Monográfico Educación Médica), 95-102. <https://maestrosociedad.uo.edu.ec>

RESUMEN

Introduction: Attention- Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADH) is one of the most frequently diagnosed childhood diseases. However, in public educational units, especially in the Pujilí canton, there is no proper training on the part of the teacher to detect this deficiency and carry out an English class with the appropriate methodology and didactic material. To describe the object of this research on ADHD, some previous studies were analysed to understand how we, as future teachers, can identify and work with students with this type of learners. Materials and methods: The data set was analysed from fourth grade students from the Belisario Quevedo Educative Unit parallel B and F, who were evaluated according to their behaviour, level comprehension of English and how they would like to learn. Results: The data shows that two tenth grade students were detected with ADHD because they presented difficulties in completing the tasks assigned in class. Discussion: In addition, based on the results obtained in the teacher survey, it can be highlighted that it is of the utmost importance that teachers have good management, distribution and control of the classroom. Conclusions: Finally, it was determined that the students evaluated did not perform sufficiently to achieve the skills and sub-skills in the English language, so they were placed at level A1. Therefore, teachers use the CLT method and games as an effective strategy for teaching English as a foreign language.

Key words: Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; teaching materials; methodology; childhood illnesses; skills; sub-skills.

RESUMEN

Introducción: El Trastorno de Déficit de Atención con Hiperactividad (TDAH) es una de las enfermedades infantiles más frecuentemente diagnosticadas. Sin embargo, en las unidades educativas públicas, especialmente en el cantón Pujilí, no existe una capacitación adecuada por parte del docente para detectar esta deficiencia y llevar a cabo una clase de inglés con la metodología y material didáctico adecuado. Para describir el objeto de esta investigación sobre el TDAH, se analizaron algunos estudios previos para comprender cómo nosotros, como futuros docentes, podemos identificar y trabajar con estudiantes con este tipo de alumnos. Materiales y métodos: Se analizaron datos de estudiantes de cuarto grado de la Unidad Educativa Belisario Quevedo paralelos B y F, quienes fueron evaluados de acuerdo a su comportamiento, nivel de comprensión del inglés y cómo les gustaría aprender. Resultados: Los datos muestran que dos estudiantes de décimo grado fueron detectados con TDAH porque presentaron dificultades para realizar las tareas asignadas en clase. Discusión: Además, con base en los resultados obtenidos en la encuesta a docentes, se puede resaltar que es de suma importancia que los docentes tengan un buen manejo, distribución y control del aula. Conclusiones: Finalmente, se determinó que los alumnos evaluados no tuvieron un desempeño suficiente para alcanzar las habilidades y subhabilidades en el idioma inglés, por lo que fueron ubicados en el nivel A1. Por lo tanto, los docentes utilizan el

método CLT y los juegos como una estrategia efectiva para la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: Trastorno de Déficit de Atención con Hiperactividad; materiales didácticos; metodología; enfermedades infantiles; habilidades; subhabilidades.

Recibido: 11/6/2022 Aprobado: 25/10/2022

INTRODUCTION

The research carried out and presented in this article is not only based on studies of psychology and pedagogy dedicated to ADHD; it is also based on personal experience during pre-professional internships in “Belisario Quevedo” Educational Unit from Pujilí canton.

ADHD is one of the most often diagnosed childhood diseases, with incidence rates estimated to range from 5 to 10% worldwide and in Canadian school-age children (Climie & Mastoras, 2015, as cited in Faraone et al., 2003). It is undoubtedly that behavioural, social, and academic difficulties are common in children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Thus, it's crucial to recognize these kids' talents and qualities, especially in the context of the classroom (Climie & Mastoras, 2015). As a result, this study will investigate the different techniques that a teacher can use in the classroom with ADHD students to improve the teaching and learning in an environment that might concern many professionals.

To begin with, worldwide, Vu & Nguyen (2020) carried out a study about the strategies for teaching English to ADHD students in Vietnam, which showed that classroom arrangement is essential to work with ADHD students. They should be placed near the teacher as they are more attentive to the lesson as well as increase collaborative activities in order to establish a secure, welcoming, and helpful learning environment. By contrast, Ivask (2015) claims the idea that English teachers must promote activities that ADHD kids enjoy, because it would help them to calm down and redirect their energy to another activity so they do not become difficult to control, giving as a result irritations or aggravations. Moreover, the study of Johnson & Mason (2012) focusses on the improvement of reading comprehension with ADHD students, employing a multicomponent reading comprehension technique (TWA: A: Think Before Reading, Think While Reading, Think After Reading) following the Self-Regulated Strategy (SRSD), pointing out that teaching ADHD high school students through TWA reading comprehension approach can enhance their reading comprehension. Additionally, Vojtková & Kašpárková (2019) found that a multisensory approach aids in a child's growth while they learn a foreign language, as well as modern technological tools, such as interactive whiteboards, tablets, and computers, because they support a child's learning process and are able to capture the interest of students with ADHD. Finally, Pramesti (2021) carried out a study in Denpasar, using Total Physical Response (TPR) in the English learning process for ADHD kids, which revealed that TPR method helped students retain new English vocabulary more easily while performing a variety of activities they enjoyed, relieving their tension during class.

In Latin America, the strategies that have been used are different. Based on Numpaque (2020), who mentioned that the strategies guarantee learning through the implementation of different learning styles and multisensory activities. This is due to the fact that this type of students can acquire their knowledge more easily by using activities through the senses in which motivation and games are recommended to strengthen learning. Additionally, Miranda (2018), said that it is evident the need to implement initiatives in this area that are reflected in new teaching techniques that facilitate learning and for which they should be trained to transmit significant learning to students with ADHD. Furthermore, Angulo (2021), in the study on the teaching-learning process of two students with ADHD, said that the interaction, communication and motivation are fundamental to teaching to those students. Likewise, De la Cruz et al., (2022), show through the results that the didactic strategies and methodologies applied to give good results for the academic needs of ADHD are substantial since in the learning process the student pays more attention to the classes because they are entertaining and interactive. Finally, Orellana (2016), with this research implied and resulted in the improvement of the practice between students and teachers to give better teaching. In conclusion, it is necessary that students' learning processes are carried out through different assessment strategies for each of them.

There are different methodologies that have been developed in Ecuador. To begin with, based on Girón (2016), students with learning difficulties can learn at the same pace as their peers by using music, strategies and songs as a method of teaching English in pedagogical activities. Additionally, Pérez (2022), assures that the ludic methodology is advantageous, as the students behaved more calmly, paying attention and always willing to participate. According to the author, following a lesson plan and setting the time for each activity

is key to enable students with this disorder to comply with the activities. According to the lesson plan, the Ecuadorian curriculum is based on a language-driven CLIL approach, where content from other disciplines is used for meaningful and purposeful language use (Met, 1999). Additionally, the proposed EFL curriculum also works with the learner-centred approach. In which the teacher does not focus on his or her performance as a teacher or on specific facts to convey, but rather on what and how students learn (Ministerio de Educación, 2016).

On the other hand, ADHD is common and early application of a diagnostic test is necessary because it helps the teacher to make the necessary adaptations and also to be aware of having knowledge or training on how to teach and develop listening skills with this problem (Cando et al., 2017). Another view based on Maldonado & Montoya (2016), consider that the implementation of methodological strategies such as: games, group work using thinking and action to solve problems, listening dialogue, watch a card, more or less projective card, draw dictation, and truly free is indispensable to know how students with ADHD feel inside the classroom. Finally, Córdova & Ponce (2022), mention that the application of methodological strategies such as: learning with films and TV programmes, Taboo, Lying Game, Whispering Challenge and Letter Training can be identified as positive in general for students working individually and in groups so that students' oral fluency skills can be improved.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research as this study allowed us to look at, analyse and describe a problem regarding the level of ADHD learners' English skill. To describe the object of this research about ADHD, some previous studies were analysed to understand how teachers can identify and work with students with this type of learners. Two fourth-grade students from parallel B and two students from parallel F of “Belisario Quevedo” Educative Unit were evaluated with the aim to know their conduct, level of English comprehension and how they would like to be taught. Additionally, four teachers took a survey which allows us to realise the methodologies and how they develop the class. Finally, it was analysed which strategies are appropriate for teaching English as a foreign language to students with ADHD.

First, a checklist taken from Bula’s research (2011) mentioned in Cando et al. research (2017) helped to collect information about ADHD learners’ condition (Table 1). This checklist has thirteen criteria related to behaviour features with two alternatives: yes or no. The pre-service-teachers observed the participants' behaviour. The checklist was applied during the English class.

Table 1 Psycho-pedagogic diagnosis

Behaviour	Yes	No
1.-Interrupts or introduces the teacher and other students.		
2.-Has difficulty waiting for his turn.		
3.- Constantly stands up for no apparent reason.		
4.- Does not finish on time the assigned tasks.		
5.- Is very forgetful.		
6.- Cannot sit still for short periods of time.		
7.- Does not pay attention to details.		
8.-Shows difficulty sustaining attention.		
9.- Has a messy desk.		
10.- Has short-term memory.		
11.- Loses personal belongings.		
12.- Is very talkative.		
13.- Shows difficulty sustaining attention.		

Second, a diagnostic test elaborated by the researchers was applied in order to know the level of English that the students with ADHD had. This diagnostic test was piloted with students from both parallels to see if they understood the questions, which they did. In addition, an interview considered by Angulo research (2021) was adapted by the researchers into a survey that was applied in order to assess students’ preferences to be taught English (Table 2). Finally, the researchers developed a teacher survey which was applied to find

out about the methodologies they have used with these students (Table 3). The data collection instruments were useful to analyse the characteristics of ADHD, level of English, to assess students' preferences for English language instruction and to evaluate the strategies and methodologies used by teachers.

Diagnostic test

Grammar Section

- Choose the answer which you think best fits the gaps.

1. My name Pablo. I.... 8 years old. 2. Where are you from? 3. Anita..... soccer with her sister
- a) is, am a) I from Quito. a) play
b) are, am b) I am from Quito. b) played
c) is, have c) You are from Quito. c) plays
4. What is her favorite food? 5. I havein Latacunga.....2019.
- a) Her favorite food is pizza. a) lives, for
b) His favorite food is pizza. b) lived, since
c) She favorite food is pizza. c) life, since

Vocabulary Section

- Choose the correct answer and write your choice.

6. What are the days of the week? 7. Martha is looking ____ the window into the garden.
- a) Monday, Friday, Saturday. a) thrugh
b) Sunday, Winter, February. b) throogh
c) January, November, December. c) through
8. The ____ in Pujilí in the winter can be very cold. 9. I leave the house to go to ____ at eight o'clock.
- a) wether a) shcool
b) weather b) school
c) whether c) schoo
10. The swimming club meets every ____ at six o'clock in the evening.
- a) Wednesday
b) Wenesday
c) Wensday

Listening section

- Listen to the audio “the way to the park” Is the following sentence true or false?

Click to listen to the audio: <https://youtu.be/e2GndN3OLp4>

11. You must find a safe place to cross the street.
- a) True
b) False

Reading Section

- Select the correct answer .

12. Read the reading about “Harold” and select the correct answer.

Hi.

My name is Harold.

I am from Ecuador.

I am Ecuadorian and I speak Spanish.

Harold is _____.

- a) Turkish
- b) Spanish
- c) Ecuadorian.

Speaking Section

13. Topic: Giving personal information.

Speaking prompts: What is your name?; How do you spell it?; How old are you?; Where do you live?

Writing Section

14. Write a personal profile about yourself. Use the questions below to develop this activity.

What is your name?; What is your age?; Where do you live?; What is your favorite color?

Table 2 Students survey

Questions	Options			
1. ¿Cuáles son las actividades que le parecen más difíciles en la clase de inglés?	Escribir en Inglés	Las tareas de gramática	Actividades de speaking	Trabajos de listening
2. ¿Cuáles son sus fortalezas en la clase de inglés?	Ninguna	Entender el vocabulario	Entender lo que el profesor dice.	Usar el inglés en clase
3. ¿Cuáles son las actividades que más disfruta en la clase de inglés?	Jugar mientras aprendemos	Actividades con música	Trabajar en grupos y en parejas	Estar sentados y atender al profesor
4. ¿Cuáles son sus debilidades en la clase de inglés?	Entender Inglés pero no poder hablarlo	La pronunciación	Escuchar sin saber lo que el profesor dice	Memorizar vocabulario, reglas gramaticales y frases
5. ¿Qué actividades te gustaría que la profesora de inglés realice en las clases para que usted pueda aprender?	Exámenes de práctica	Audio e imágenes	Juegos	Trabajos grupales
6. Desde casa ¿Qué tipo de actividades has desarrollado para fortalecer el proceso de aprendizaje de inglés?	Escuchar mi música favorita en inglés	Ver programas de televisión o una película en inglés	Escribir un diario en inglés	Leer el periódico o un libro en inglés.
7. ¿Qué consideras que se puede mejorar en las clases de inglés?	Usar el inglés en la clase	Hacer ejercicios que me permitan practicar	Escuchar audios en inglés	Realizar actividades en el patio

Source: Adapted from Ángulo (2021, p. 100)

Table 3 Teacher's survey

Questions	Options		
1. What methodologies have you used to encourage children to do classroom activities?	Communicative Language Teaching	Ludic Method	Audiolingual method
2. What strategies have been well accepted by the learner when learning English?	Games	Flashcards	Cooperative Learning
3. Have you followed a lesson plan?	Yes	No	Maybe
4. Which framework have you used in the lesson plan?	CLIL	Learner- Centred	No one
5. Have you monitored students' times when carrying out activities in class?	I have not controlled it.	Yes, I have controlled it.	Sometimes I have controlled it and sometimes I have not.
6. Which adaptations have you used to enable students to work in class?	Extra time on activities	Positive reinforcement and feedback	Classroom management strategies
7. What are the activities in which your student has developed with ease?	Speaking and Writing activities	Listening activities	Reading activities

Source: Adapted from Ángulo (2021, p. 104)

RESULTS

Results of Pedagogic diagnostic (Table1)

Students from "Belisario Quevedo" Educative Unit were not diagnosed with ADHD by a specialist, but psycho-pedagogical observation was applied using a checklist. Most of the items on this checklist were positive and four eight-year-old students in the fourth grade were found to have ADHD. These pupils were very talkative and therefore did not pay attention in class. In addition, they did not complete homework and activities on time. They were very absent-minded and forgot things in different places, they could not stay in their seats for short periods of time. Additionally, their tables were messy. Therefore, their characteristics coincide with those of the disorder mentioned above.

Results of the Diagnostic Test

Based on the diagnostic test, it was evidenced that four students from "Belisario Quevedo" Educative Unit showed a low level in the grammatical part. While in the vocabulary and listening part, some terms could be recognised by the learners. As for reading and writing language production was not evidenced. In the speaking area it was noted that the children did not understand the questions and therefore had a bad result. Through the results obtained, it was determined this group of pupils were in pre-A starters level.

Results of the Student's survey (Table 2)

The most difficult activities for children were writing according to the 50 %. Meanwhile listening activities were the least difficult with 0%. On the other hand, 25 % for grammar and writing with 25 %. About the greatest strengths, 50 % of participants are able to understand the vocabulary. Additionally, the other 25 % use English in class, but the 25 % do not have any strengths. The 25 % of the population enjoy the activities with music, but 50 % of them say they enjoy playing more while they learn, 0 % prefer sitting and attending to the teacher and 25 % prefer working in pairs. Based on this question 60 % have difficulties with understanding what the teacher says while 20 % understand but cannot speak it. On the other hand 10 % have difficulties with pronunciation and the other 10 % have difficulties in memorising vocabulary, grammar and its phases.

Results show that 40 % of students prefer games and 40 % practice exams as activities that teachers can implement in class. On the contrary the 10 % prefer audios e images and the other 10 % prefer group work. About 75 % of the students listen to songs in English as activities at home while 25 % read a book or newspaper in English. 0 % of students watch films in English or write a diary. The students mentioned that among the improvements, 50 % said that activities should be carried out in the playground, but 25 % preferred to do more exercise and the other 25 % preferred to listen to music.

Results of the teachers (Table 3)

A teacher survey was conducted in the "Belisario Quevedo" Educative Unit. The results showed that 43 % of the teachers use Communicative Language Teaching as a methodology to encourage children to do classroom activities, 28 % use the Ludic method and the other 29 % use the Audiolingual method. The results showed 37 % of the teachers believe that games have been well accepted by the learner when learning English as well the 38 % that correspond to the flashcards, and the other 25 % that it is cooperative learning is less accepted. The 50 % of teachers followed a lesson plan to teach but the other 50 % maybe worked with a lesson plan. The 50 % of teachers employed CLIL approach in the lesson plans as the basis of their classes, and the other 50 % employed no one. It was analysed that 25 % of teachers sometimes control students' times when carrying out activities in class, 50 % do not control it, and 25 % of them do. The results showed that 43 % of the teachers use extra time on activities as adaptations to enable students to work in class, 28 % use positive reinforcement and feedback, and 29% use classroom management strategies. The 0% teachers state that their students do not have proficiency neither in speaking activities nor writing. While 33% of the teachers believe that they can develop their skills in listening activities. Finally, 67% of the teachers claim the idea that students are good for reading activities.

DISCUSSION

ADHD is one of the most commonly diagnosed childhood diseases, with estimated incidence rates ranging between 5-10% worldwide and in Canadian school-aged children (Climie & Mastoras, 2015, cited in Faraone et al., 2003). This same pathological problem was found in the "Belisario Quevedo" Educative Unit. First,

the methodology applied was qualitative and quantitative. This means that the students of this institution were subjected to interviews and surveys. Thus, students with ADHD were identified; this step is essentially important because according to (Cando et al., 2017) it helps the teacher to know the student's needs and physical or curricular adaptations can be made. As a result, planning on the basis of students' difficulties must be controlled in time (Pérez, 2022).

Referring to Vu & Nguyen (2020), who carried out a study on strategies for teaching English to students with ADHD, in which it was shown that the layout of the classroom is essential to work and have good classroom management with students who have this type of disability. Based on the results obtained in the teacher survey elaborated by ourselves, it can be highlighted that it is of the utmost importance teachers have good management, distribution and control of the classroom. Students with ADHD should be placed close to the teacher, since they are more attentive to the lesson and increase collaborative activities to establish a safe, helpful, and effective learning environment.

Finally, De la Cruz *et al.*, (2022), show through the results that the didactic strategies and methodologies applied to give good results to the academic needs of ADHD are substantial since in the learning process the student pays more attention to classes because they are entertaining and interactive. In accordance with what was announced by the author and based on the results obtained in the teacher survey prepared by us, it can be concluded that the methodology and the applied strategy influence the learning of students with ADHD, in this case the teachers use the CLT method and the strategy that has been most effective are the games.

CONCLUSIONS

This research concludes that ADHD is a frequent learning problem in Basic General Education students. Therefore, it is very likely that we will find students with this disability in most classrooms. Making a diagnosis is of the utmost importance as it would help teachers find appropriate activities for students with the mentioned disability. Teachers can apply a psycho-pedagogical diagnosis at the beginning of the school year, so that, according to the results obtained, they design a lesson plan with curricular adaptations, which contributes significantly to the teaching-learning process.

On the other hand, the interviewed students with ADHD do not have a good command of the English language. Above all, they do not develop productive skills such as speaking. However, they manage to understand the lessons through dynamic and entertaining activities guided by more dynamic didactic material such as: images, games, drawings and songs. For this reason, it is necessary to make use of the ECRIF method and the CLT framework because students learn more effectively, achieving a better understanding of the English language. Finally, that is why teachers must be trained and renew their teaching methods and strategies, in order to carry out their academic objective and ensure that students with ADHD do not feel excluded from the class group.

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Conflicto de intereses

Los autores declaran no tener ningún conflicto de intereses.