





Estrategias instruccionales efectivas para desarrollar habilidades de escucha en adolescentes con TDAH

Effective instructional strategies to develop listening skills in adolescents with ADHD

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Artículo de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica

Enviado: 12/07/2024

Revisado: 09/08/2024

Aceptado: 16/09/2024

Publicado: 05/10/2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33262/cienciadigital.v8i4.3205>

Cítese:

Balseca Ponce, I. E., Ibarra Martínez, D. E., Toscano Caisatilin, J. A., & Fabre Merchán, P. (2024). Estrategias instruccionales efectivas para desarrollar habilidades de escucha en adolescentes con TDAH. *Ciencia Digital*, 8(4), 38-53. <https://doi.org/10.33262/cienciadigital.v8i4.3205>



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La revista es editada por la Editorial Ciencia Digital (Editorial de prestigio registrada en la Cámara Ecuatoriana de Libro con No de Afiliación 663) www.celibro.org.ec



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Palabras claves:

ADHD, EFL,
Listening Skill,
Teaching
Strategies

Keywords:

TDAH, EFL,
Habilidad de
Escucha,
Estrategias de
Enseñanza

Resumen

Introduction: Natural interactions and understandable linguistic input are essential to build attractive conditions for acquiring the English language. Effective exposure to language, both oral and written, is essential to understanding and producing a language. However, developing listening comprehension skills can be challenging for students with ADHD due to difficulties in attention, behavior, and cognition, as well as the unique characteristics of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. **Objectives:** In this regard, this research aims to document effective instructional strategies to improve listening skills among high school students with ADHD. **Methodology:** To this end, an exploratory-deductive qualitative research design was applied through an extensive review of the literature. Data were collected from 60 academic sources and analyzed using a neurolinguistic and pedagogical approach using a constant comparative coding method. **Results:** The results suggest that, to guide students with ADHD in developing English listening competencies, language instructors must build a learning environment that includes simplified inputs and content, clear instructions, multisensory conditions, and student-centered instruction based on individual needs. **Conclusions:** Simple, linguistically rich, engaging, and multisensory environments facilitate learning for students with ADHD and can have an impact on their overall academic performance and language development. **Study Area general:** Education. **Specific area of study:** English as a Foreign Language. **Type of study:** Literature review.

Abstract

Introducción: las interacciones naturales y la entrada lingüística comprensible son esenciales para construir condiciones atractivas para adquirir el idioma inglés. La exposición efectiva a la lengua, tanto oral como escrita, es fundamental para entender y producir un idioma. Sin embargo, desarrollar habilidades de comprensión auditiva puede ser un desafío para los estudiantes con TDAH debido a dificultades en la atención, el comportamiento y la cognición, así como a las características únicas del contexto de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). **Objetivos:** en este sentido, esta investigación tiene como

objetivo documentar estrategias de instrucción efectivas para mejorar las habilidades de escucha entre los estudiantes de secundaria con TDAH. **Metodología:** para ello, se aplicó un diseño de investigación cualitativa exploratoria-deductiva a través de una revisión extensa de la literatura. Se recopilaron datos de 60 fuentes académicas y se analizaron mediante un enfoque neurolingüístico y pedagógico utilizando un método de codificación comparativa constante. **Resultados:** los resultados sugieren que, para guiar a los estudiantes con TDAH en el desarrollo de competencias de escucha en inglés, los instructores de lenguaje deben construir un entorno de aprendizaje que incluya entradas y contenidos simplificados, instrucciones claras, condiciones multisensoriales y una instrucción centrada en la estudiante basada en las necesidades individuales. **Conclusiones:** los entornos simples, ricos lingüísticamente, atractivos y multisensoriales facilitan el aprendizaje para los estudiantes con TDAH y pueden tener un impacto en su rendimiento académico general y en el desarrollo del idioma. **Área de estudio general:** Educación. **Área de estudio específica:** Inglés como Lengua Extranjera. **Tipo de estudio:** Revisión bibliográfica.

Introduction

In a technological world where everything is rapidly merging boundaries, English language acquisition has become pivotal for worldwide communication, education, research, and business. Whether engaging with top executives, traveling internationally, or participating in various interactions, proficiency in English is crucial as it is the most widely spoken language globally. It permeates daily life in personal, educational, and professional environments, providing substantial administrative, academic, and social benefits. Effectively communicating in a global world has a significant impact on personal and professional growth.

Considering theories of language acquisition, according to Chomsky (2006), human beings have an innate capacity to acquire a language; however, it requires meaningful language exposure and interactions in linguistically rich environments. Meaningful

language exposure through oral and written means will provide English Language Learners (ELL) with the language syntax and phonology requires to effectively produce the language. Krashen (1985) highlights the importance of providing comprehensible input for learners to understand and produce a language effectively. Thus, honing listening and comprehension skills remains vital for effective communication. Oral understanding of a language is a fundamental linguistic skill and serves as the primary medium through which individuals acquire a massive portion of their education (Heredia, 2018). Effective listening comprehension can significantly enhance the learning experience and facilitate communication competence in this global language.

However, considering the contextual characteristics of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments, developing listening comprehension abilities can be significantly challenging for students. Finding ways to keep students focused and motivated in class presents a considerable challenge due to limited access to meaningful language, poor interactions, ineffective instructional practices, or poor access to technological resources. When those components are added to a young student with ADHD, the result is a markedly greater learning barrier. Students with ADHD face considerable challenges in developing listening skills compared to their peers without this condition.

ADHD learners commonly present challenges in diverse areas including attention, behavioral control, and learning difficulties. According to Katie Kawa (2020), sometimes ADHD can create challenges in friendships and other relationships. This is often because individuals with ADHD might struggle with listening and may interrupt others during conversations. Individuals with ADHD struggle to maintain focus while listening and encounter difficulties paying attention to details (American Psychiatric Association, 2022; Kurbonova & Umarova, 2024). In the words of Cando-Guanoluisa et al. (2017), students with ADHD regularly score low, with high difficulties in listening, as compared to their classmates' results. Those issues do not only limit the development of listening skills, but also lead to challenges developing core skills such as speaking, reading, and writing in their first language, which often affects their ability to learn a second language (Turketi, 2010). Mapou (2009) notes that individuals with ADHD have a weak capacity for auditory-verbal information which causes problems with listening comprehension.

Considering the characteristics of EFL contexts and the learning challenges face by ADHD students when acquiring English language, this article aims to document effective instructional strategies for enhancing listening skills among high school students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) through an extensive revision and summary of the current literature.

Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD is a behavioral condition that makes focusing on everyday requests and routines challenging (APA). People with ADHD typically have trouble getting organized, staying focused, making realistic plans, and thinking before acting. ADHD is commonly diagnosed in school-aged children because the symptoms linked to that disorder are most salient in the classroom (Danielson et al., 2018). Some researchers suggest ADHD vary across individuals and age groups, frequently presenting difficulties with sustained attention, executive function, and emotional regulation. Others, on the contrary may point out that there is a neuroscience aspect to understanding individuals with ADHD. ADHD is a heterogeneous disorder characterized by neurodevelopmental deficits in cognitive control. Auditory distractions are a frequently reported symptom in individuals with ADHD (Blomberg, 2022).

Dr. Thomas E. Brown (2018, 57:38) stated that ADHD is no longer seen as merely a problem with excessive hyperactivity or simply not listening when people speak; today, it is understood through a neuroscience approach and clinical experience. ADHD is now recognized as an issue with the development of the brain's management system and its executive functions. Key areas affected in the brain of a person with ADHD include the frontal lobe, basal ganglia, corpus callosum, and cerebellum. When the frontal lobe is affected, individuals may exhibit delayed responses, impulsiveness, frequent interruptions, impatience, poor time management, disorganization, and heightened emotional responses. Involvement of the basal ganglia and cerebellum can lead to tension, fidgeting, and impaired motor control. When the corpus callosum is impacted, individuals may experience reduced cognitive performance, slower response times, memory delays, and difficulty recognizing social cues (Hallahan et al., 2009).

Marashi & Dolatdoost (2016), argue that students with ADHD not only are at risk of facing behavioral difficulties, moreover, roughly one-fourth of children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), also exhibit learning disabilities due to challenges in acquiring academic skills. This correlation, highlighted by DuPaul & Stoner in 2004 and later in 2004, indicates a heightened risk of underperformance and lower academic success for these students which in turn unveils the necessity of tailored educational strategies that accommodate the unique learning requirements of students with ADHD in language acquisition. The prevalence of ADHD among students presents unique challenges within educational frameworks, particularly in the acquisition of foreign languages.

Teaching English to ADHD learners

Considering the unique limitations of ADHD learners, it become pivotal that language instructors reconfigure their curriculum, methods, strategies, and practices to become

more responsive and effective when teaching English to this specific population of students. Camacho (2024), highlights that students' daily challenges stem from a lack of motivation and ineffective methodologies that fail to engage their interest in the language. To address this, it is crucial for English teachers to update their knowledge and move away from traditional methods in favor of more dynamic approaches such as the Communicative Language Approach (CLT) and Total Physical Response (TPR). The effective integration of CLT and TPR within classroom practices increases learners' engagement, promoting more stimulating lessons which may benefit students with ADHD, who are prone to boredom and distraction.

The central idea behind CLT is to teach language through meaningful communication and interactions. Instead of focusing on grammatical rules in isolation, CLT emphasizes the ability to use language effectively in real-life situations (Curran, 1976). The principles of CLT focuses on communication which involves being able to understand and produce language in various social contexts, and interaction with a significant involvement in real and natural communicative situations. Some of the advantages of CLT include promoting active student participation and interaction, the development of practical language skills that are directly applicable outside the classroom, and a concentration on fluency and the ability to think and respond spontaneously in the target language.

On the other hand, TPR strongly emphasizes the connection between language and physical movement, incorporating a multi-sensory approach. The aim of total physical response is to stimulate the students in using their ways to acquire their mother languages in learning a target language (Mariyam & Musfiroh, 2019). Total Physical Response (TPR) can significantly enhance listening skills for high school students with ADHD by integrating physical movement with verbal instructions. There are three activities in teaching and learning process to create a brain link between speech and movement: opening activity, main activity and closing activity (Pramesti, 2021). In the opening activity, the teacher should greet the students and ask a question such as: "Hi everyone, how are you doing today?" while using miming to help the students visualize what they are hearing. Then, depending on the topic of the class, the teacher should introduce some key vocabulary words related to the topic. For example, the teacher might ask, "What's your favorite meal?" to engage the students and connect the vocabulary to their subjective experiences. In the main activity, the teacher should show pictures of food and say the names aloud. Then, the teacher can ask the students to create rhymes for the names of the fruits, making it sound as if they are composing a song. For example, the teacher might say, "I just appeared to eat a pear," and encourage the students to come up with their own rhyming lines to build a playful and melodic sequence. In the closing activity, the teacher will act out actions using some of the food names the students produced. For example, the teacher might mime peeling a banana, and the students will have to guess which fruit is being represented. This interactive activity helps reinforce the vocabulary and makes

the learning experience engaging and fun. Total Physical Response (TPR) offers a dynamic approach to developing listening skills for ADHD students by connecting physical movement with verbal cues. Through structured activities—opening, main, and closing—the method enhances engagement and reinforces vocabulary retention.

Additionally, employing techniques like cooperative learning and gamification can foster enjoyable and effective learning environments, further enhancing students' engagement and proficiency in English (Camacho, 2024). Cooperative learning involves students working together, which can help maintain their focus and encourage active listening through peer interaction and mutual support. Gamification introduces elements like rewards and interactive challenges, making listening exercises more engaging and motivating. These strategies create a stimulating and supportive learning environment that caters to the needs of ADHD students, improving their listening skills.

Developing listening competences in ADHD learners

Since listening is the primary source of linguistic input, it becomes an essential process for grasping the nuances of the language and acquiring proficiency. For ADHD students, who often struggle with focus and motivation, authentic materials, such as real-life conversations, news broadcasts, and songs, can be particularly beneficial. These resources provide exposure to natural language and cultural nuances, which can enhance listening comprehension and retention (Castillo & Vargas, 2023). Moreover, the engaging nature of authentic materials can increase motivation and focus, essential for ADHD learners who may struggle with traditional learning materials. These resources motivate students to acquire and learn the English language in a real context (Castillo & Vargas, 2023).

Understanding the nuances of teaching strategies and support mechanisms is important in catering to the diverse needs of students with ADHD. According to Kormos and Smith (2012), it is recommended that listening texts or recordings contain a reduced number of words that can be confused phonetically. Furthermore, they suggest that these texts be short and accompanied by visual stimuli, such as film excerpts or online broadcasts, which help maintain students' attention and provide additional visual support. It is important that the texts are interesting, contextually relevant, and appropriate to the level of the students. As mentioned by Zeigler (2024), students with ADHD respond well to visual cues and examples, using images, diagrams, or charts can help students visualize the information and improve comprehension.

Methodology

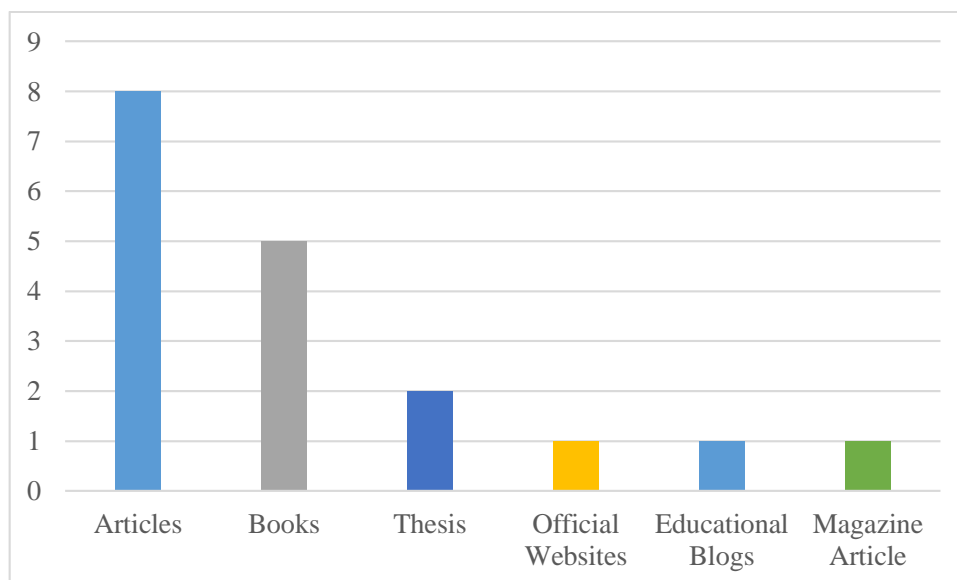
This research study is framed by an explorative-deductive qualitative research design to examine and document effective strategies for enhancing listening skills in ADHD students through an extensive revision of the literature. A qualitative research approach

contributes to build the results considering diverse themes, patterns, and context that emerged across the exploration and analysis of data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996; Creswell, 2017). Through, a neuroscience lens, researchers were able to explore, analyze, describe, and document key features and themes of instructional practices that facilitate and support the development of listening competences in ADHD learners built upon a revision of the literature.

Data collection involved a thorough revision of the literature considering the exploration of 60 of academic resources including scientific articles, digital books, and academic webpages. The revision of the literature was conducted using several academic data bases including Google Scholar, Academic, ERIC, JSTOR, and Dialnet. Table 1 displays the characteristics of the sources reviewed.

Figure 1

Bibliographical Sources



Note: the bibliographic sources used in the present article were scientific articles, books, educational blog, thesis, official website, and a magazine article.

A comparative analysis of these sources was conducted through a constant comparative coding method (Kolb, 2012), to identify themes on the literature associated with methods and language instructional practices for enhancing listening skills in ADHD students. The research focused on the communicative language aspect, exploring how different interventions can be adapted to the specific needs of these students. By analyzing various academic materials, the research aimed to provide insights into successful practices and strategies that can be implemented to support ADHD students in developing their listening abilities.

Results

An extensive revision of the literature was conducted to examine and document methods and instructional practices that support the development of listening skills in ADHD learners. The information was gathered from 60 academic sources including books, articles, thesis, official documents, magazines, and educational blogs found through diverse data bases. The results obtained were organized in themes considering a compilation of studies and strategies reviewed which are further explained below.

Theme 1: Simplified Input & Content

Language instructors teaching English to ADHD learners need to modify the language complexity considering vocabulary, sequences, intonation, and syntactical structures. Rost (2013) and Giles & Smith (1979), agree that one of the most effective strategies to develop listening skills in ADHD students is the simplification of educational content. By modifying complex language to a level that is more comprehensible for second language (L2) learners, thereby making the learning material more accessible. For ADHD students, who may face challenges in maintaining attention, this method is particularly beneficial as it can lead to increased engagement with the material. By simplifying the input, these students are more likely to actively listen, drawing upon their existing knowledge, and make connections with the added information.

Theme 2: One activity at a Time - Clear and Sequence Instructions

Providing clear, concrete, systematic and extensive instructions facilitate understanding and allow ADHD learners to concentrate on a simple and sequence task at time, diminishing limitations due to issues with selective and/or sustained attention. Chamot & O'Malley (1986) y Akbasli et al. (2017), suggest that, when conducting an activity with ADHD learners, explicit, systematic, and extensive instruction is necessary and intricately linked to a clear demonstration of language processes, providing students with a transparent framework of the linguistic elements at play. Mohebbi (2023) highlights the importance of cultivating attentional mechanisms in language learning for students with ADHD, advocating for explicit instruction and scaffolded support tailored to these learners' needs, while Sánchez-Dumez (2020), emphasizes the need for pedagogical strategies that include activities promoting inclusion and attentional control. Such strategies, supported by evidence-based research, can significantly improve the educational experience for students with ADHD, fostering not only better listening skills but overall academic success.

On the other hand, Kormos & Smith (2012), Zeigler (2024), add that this leads to the activation of previous knowledge in the presentation stage, which can be aided by visual stimuli to not only create a stimulating lesson, but also help introduce the activity to the

student and assist them to foster the appropriate mindset for the impending task. This preparatory phase is crucial for aligning one's mental state with the anticipated demands of the forthcoming activities and the environmental auditory input they will encounter.

Theme 3: A multisensorial learning environment through hands-on activities, authentic material, & technology integration

Creating a balanced learning environment that caters to the needs the students, involves a nuanced approach that incorporates both stimulating and quiet elements. A stimulating learning environment can foster engagement and enhance memory and learning by promoting neuroplasticity and neurogenesis (Castillo & Vargas, 2023; Heredia, 2018; Kurbonova & Umarova, 2024). Henderson (2021) remarks that effective instructional strategies for students with ADHD are crucial for enhancing their academic success, including consistent routines, movement breaks and hands-on activities can cater to the kinesthetic needs of these students, allowing them to engage more fully with the material. Also, Manzanares & Salcedo (2022), agree that integrating engaging posters into teaching as a pre-activity can significantly enhance the learning experience for students with ADHD by promoting active participation and cooperation. This visual aid supports the development of language skills as students are consistently engaged in practice.

Furthermore, for students with ADHD, a quiet environment that minimizes sensory overload, as suggested by Zeigler (2024) and Horan (2021) is crucial for maintaining focus and reducing distractions. Therefore, educators might consider implementing flexible strategies that offer a stimulating curriculum within a structured and calm setting, ensuring that all students could thrive academically.

In order of develop listening competences, students will be exposed to certain distracting inputs. Each material, especially authentic will vary in tone, pronunciation, cadence, and accents (Castillo & Vargas, 2023). There will be sounds (car honks, laughs, animal sounds) that are part of the listening experience and could potentially create a small distraction for the student. In this regard, there are strategies that can be applied to support the students' needs. Horan (2021) offers valuable insights into these strategies, for instance incorporating multisensory learning, assistive technologies, and, supported by Kurbonova & Umarova (2024), individualized accommodations to address their unique learning needs more effectively.

Theme 4: Responding to Individual needs

Kašpárková (2019), Marashi & Dolatdoost (2016), Kurbonova & Umarova (2024) concur that, catering to individual needs and exploring the student profile to offer a tailored learning experience is crucial. The application of engaging materials and effective instructional strategies should be tailored to the student's needs. The process of

restructuring the discourse in real-time interactions allows for adjustments based on the immediate needs of the ADHD student, fostering a more responsive and supportive learning environment. This personalized approach not only aids in language learning but also empowers ADHD students to become more confident and proactive listeners. This involves conducting a thorough needs assessment, developing individualized learning plans, and creating a flexible learning environment. During instruction, clear expectations, routines, and multi-sensory strategies should be employed to enhance engagement and understanding. Frequent formative assessments and self-assessment can help monitor progress and provide opportunities for reflection.

Discussion

- Through the revision of several sources of information and compiling diverse perspectives on how to better instruct children with ADHD with a focus on listening and comprehension skills, the process has revealed interesting findings. The key points underscore the critical need for tailored instructional strategies to support ADHD learners in developing their listening skills.
- Given the significance of these findings, it is imperative for language instructors to adopt a more responsive and effective approach when teaching ADHD learners. This requires a shift in instructional practices to embrace individualization by tailoring instruction to each student's unique needs and strengths. By using understandable language, breaking down complex information, teachers can reduce cognitive load and improve focus for ADHD learners. Providing step-by-step guidance, using visual cues, and avoiding multitasking can help ADHD students stay organized and on task. As well as incorporating hands-on activities, authentic materials, and technology can enhance learning and memory retention for ADHD learners.
- Furthermore, offering flexible learning options, providing opportunities for choice, and using accommodations or modifications can help address the diverse needs of ADHD students, accompanied by periodic assessments to monitor progress and necessary adjustments. This personalized approach ensures that each learner can thrive.
- This comprehensive approach fosters an inclusive and effective learning environment for all students. Teachers are encouraged to continuously learn and adapt their teaching practices to meet the unique needs of ADHD learners. By collaborating with colleagues, seeking professional development, and advocating for students, educators can create more inclusive and effective learning environments that support the success of all students.
- The study underscores the significance of the findings and establishes a framework for future research and practical applications. This information can serve as a basis for conducting further experimental studies, both qualitative and

quantitative, to investigate the impact of implementing these strategies in real-world classroom settings. This could involve examining changes in student scores, skill development, learner perspectives, and teacher experiences. Additionally, researchers can investigate specific strategies for applying these ideas in various classroom contexts, such as different age groups, language levels, and cultural backgrounds.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the article presented.

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