

The Effect of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder on Additional Language Learning: Voices of English as a Foreign Language Teachers in Poland

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Abstract : Research on Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is abundant but not in the field of applied linguistics and foreign or second language education. To fill this research gap, the present study aimed to investigate the effect of ADHD on skills and systems development in a second and foreign language from the teacher's perspective. The participants were 51 English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Poland working in state pre-, primary, and high schools. Research questions were as follows: Do ADHD-type behaviors affect EFL learning of the individual with the condition and their classmates to the same extent considering different educational settings and specific skills and systems? And To what extent do ADHD-type behaviors affect ESL/EFL skills and systems considering different ADHD presentations? Data were collected by means of a questionnaire distributed via a Google form. It contained 14 statements on a six-point Likert scale related to the effect of ADHD on specific language skills and systems in the context of an individual with the condition and their classmates and situations related to inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity presentations of the condition, where the participants needed to identify skills and systems affected by the given ADHD manifestation. The results show that ADHD affects all language skills and systems development in both the individual with the condition and their classmates, but this effect is more significant in the latter. However, ADHD affected skills and systems to a different degree; writing skills were reported as the most affected by this disorder. Also, the effect of ADHD differed depending on the educational setting, being the highest in high school and lowest in the first three grades of primary school. These findings will be discussed in the context of foreign/second language teaching in the school context, considering different phases of education as well as future research on ADHD and language learning and teaching.

Keywords : ADHD, EFL teachers, foreign/second language learning, language skills and systems development

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