Article Review One

**Your Name:** Dustin Mees

**Article title and source (include all identifying information):**

Badge, J. L., Dawson, E., Cann, A. J., Scott, J. (2008). Assessing the Accessibility of Online Learning. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *45*(2), 103-113.

**Background or introduction:**

This research was a pilot study to see how students with disabilities would respond to instruction that used interactive media such as Power Point. The idea is that students who have a visual disorder such as dyslexia will have a better time comprehending material presented in a digital, interactive, nature. Because this is a pilot study and there are three different presentation tools being presented (Adobe, Flash, and Impatica), the testing tools needed to be created by the conductors of the experiment. Tests were made for each different presentation tool. After using the three different tools, users were asked several questions. The responses to these questions and observation of the user interacting with the tools were then analyzed to reach statistical results.

**Research question:**

  In this pilot study there is not a clearly stated research question. It is clear, however, that the research being conducted is trying to prove if students with disabilities (primarily those with dyslexia) would benefit more from instruction that uses interactive media than instruction that does not.

**Literature review:**

  With the ongoing growth of technology, the researchers in this article are setting out to see if they can take old technology and enhance it with newer technologies in order to benefit all students, primarily those with disabilities. They believe that can achieve this by taking files such as existing Power Points and making them more interactive with programs such as Flash, Adobe, and Impactica. The authors are upfront about the fact that this is a pilot study and that their results will only serve as a spark for more in depth research in this area. This pilot is not based on prior research, nor does it reflect upon similar research conducted in the past. The article is well written and is outlined in an attempt to make the information easy to understand. By creating this outline and using descriptive headings, the information is easy to interpret and they are successful at making their case for more research in this area. The authors also include visuals such as graphs and charts of their data in order to help readers interpret the results of their research.

**Method:**

Because this is a pilot study and there are three different presentation tools being presented (Adobe, Flash, and Impatica), the testing tools needed to be created by the conductors of the experiment. Tests were made for each different presentation tool. After using the three different tools, users were asked several questions. The responses to these questions and observation of the user interacting with the tools were then analyzed to reach statistical results.

**Findings:**

The results of this study were inconclusive based on the fact that this was a pilot study and that the sample size was too small to directly relate to a larger population. Observers noted that users with disabilities were faster at responding to the tools that could be manipulated and that in the question response these users noted that they were able to benefit highly from and enjoyed working with these presentation tools. Students without disabilities were much slower at using the manipulative tools, if at all, and were not as responsive about using this technology as an instructional tool.

**Article conclusion:**

In the conclusion portion of this study, it is discouraged to reach any generalizations based on the findings of this study, partially because of the fact that this is a pilot study and also because the population size was so small that it cannot be compared to the larger general population. These results do, however, encourage further research to see if there can be a breakthrough in the education of students with disabilities by instructing with the use of technology and interactive programs such as Adobe, Flash, and Impatica. These programs may help with certain disabilities as dyslexia, but would have to be further researched to see how these and other technologies could positively impact students with other disabilities.

**Good points of article:**

There are several good points for this article. Even though it is a pilot study, the authors do a great job to explain their research, how it was conducted, and what their results were. They also go into great detail in their testing process and explain how they acquired their participants. I also like how the authors included visuals such as graphs and charts to display their research results. I believe that the conductors achieved their goal in making a case for more research to be conducted in this field of study.

**Poor points of article:**

As much as research has to start somewhere, the fact that this is a pilot study hurts the reliability and validity of the test results.  The validity for the results of this experiment is weak because the population used for the testing was too small to make any inferences as to how the results would be generalizable to the greater population. As far as reliability, I would also say, for this experiment is also very weak. The bulk of the data being collected was observable evidence that is too subjective to be reliable. Also, the questions that were considered in the creation of data may have been biased in favor of positive results from users with disabilities. I would say that the findings from this experiment encourage further research in this area, but the results cannot be labeled reliable or valid.