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REVIEW OF THE ARTICLE ENTITLED "DIFFICULTIES IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH READING SKILLS AMONG EFL LEARNERS" BY OYDIN ALIXANOVA ENGLISH TEACHER AT SCHOOL NO. 33, NAMANGAN

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Abstract

The article under review addresses an important issue in foreign language education, namely the difficulties that learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) encounter when developing their reading skills. Reading comprehension gives learners access to academic, professional, and authentic information, so problems in this area directly affect their studies and their later professional development. The article focuses on several factors that may cause these difficulties: limited vocabulary, trouble identifying the main idea, problems with inference, unfamiliar grammatical structures, and slow reading speed.

Introduction

The relevance of the topic is clear from the Introduction. The author explains that many learners understand individual words but cannot identify the main idea of a text, and that implicit information and culturally specific references create additional obstacles. The author also points to the role of vocabulary knowledge and reading strategies, and to the habit of translating every word into the first language, which can slow reading and make longer texts harder to process. The purpose of the study and the three research questions are stated clearly and logically follow from the problem described.

One of the positive aspects of the article is its well-planned methodological design. The author proposes a mixed-methods approach that combines a learner questionnaire, a reading comprehension test, and semi-structured interviews. This combination is appropriate for the research questions, because it allows learners' own perceptions of their difficulties to be compared with their actual performance. The proposed participants (50–100 university-level learners at a similar B1–B2 proficiency level) are reasonable for comparison purposes, and the article also mentions voluntary participation, informing participants about the purpose of the research, and confidentiality.

The article describes its research instruments in sufficient detail. The questionnaire covers vocabulary, main ideas, details, inference, grammatical structures, reading speed, and unfamiliar topics and cultural references. The comprehension test includes questions on the main idea, specific information, references, inference, and vocabulary in context. The data collection procedure is presented in a logical order, from the questionnaire to the test and then to the interviews, and the planned analysis (descriptive statistics, correlation analysis where appropriate, and thematic analysis of interviews) matches the type of data to be collected. This makes the study easy to follow and, in principle, possible to replicate.

At the same time, the article is in its present form a research plan rather than a completed study. The Results section states that it should be completed after data collection and gives no findings; the Discussion section describes in general terms how possible findings might be interpreted; and the Conclusion repeats the aims of the study. The wording throughout the Abstract and Methods ("can be employed", "may consist of", "can be analysed") also shows that the research has not yet been carried out. In addition, the References section contains a description of the kind of sources that should be included, but no actual references, so the Introduction and Discussion do not cite any previous studies of EFL reading comprehension. These are the main shortcomings that need to be addressed.

The practical significance of the article lies in the possibility of using the described design to identify specific reading difficulties among university-level EFL learners. Once the data are collected, the results could help teachers and curriculum developers to focus reading instruction on vocabulary development, identifying main ideas, inferencing, and prediction, rather than only on answering comprehension questions, as the author rightly suggests. The effectiveness of this contribution, however, depends on carrying out the study as planned and reporting the results with real data.

In general, Oydin Alixanova's article addresses a relevant topic, formulates clear research questions, and offers a sound and well-organised methodological design for studying reading difficulties among EFL learners. It is of potential interest to English language teachers, educators working in higher education, and researchers concerned with EFL reading. However, because the empirical results, the discussion based on them, and the list of references are still missing, I recommend that the article be revised and completed before publication; after that, it may be recommended for publication in an appropriate scientific journal.