PREPARING TO IMPLEMENT DOGME APPROACH IN AN EFL CLASS: RESULTS OF THE STUDENT SURVEY

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The general objective of this paper is to present the results gained at the stage of preparation to implement Dogme approach in a foreign language class in Armenian setting. The main aim of the survey was to detect if students have lessons with the use of Dogme and if they would like to have such lessons. The participants of the survey were from different educational institutions: students from Gavar State University, Yerevan State University, French University in Armenia, and students from Gavar Secondary School No. 2 named after Papin Ghandilyan. The overall number of participants was 56 (27 students and 29 schoolchildren). The age of the participants ranged from 13 to 24. During the research the following methods were applied: theoretical, social and pedagogical, experimental, statistic. Based on the results of the conducted survey, a general conclusion could be drawn that students are ready for teaching sessions based on the key features of Dogme approach: classes delivered without textbooks, material-light and conversation-driven teaching and learning aimed at emphasizing conversation and communication between students.

Keywords: foreign language teaching/learning, English as a foreign language (EFL), Dogme approach, students' attitude towards Dogme approach.

INTRODUCTION

The classical method of teaching no longer satisfies contemporary demands in foreign language teaching and learning, whereas previously special attention was given to the classical method of the fundamental approach, when special emphasis was placed on the study of grammar and occasionally on memorization of list of words and phrases, dialogues and texts. Today educators continue to focus their attention on a variety of communicative ways of teaching foreign languages as the most effective and reliable approach (communicative approach of teaching/learning foreign languages).

In the context of the explicitly communicative way of teaching, educators and researchers have identified one such approach as Dogme. Dogme language teaching has its origins in a piece written by the renowned scholar and teacher trainer in the field of English language teaching Scott Thornbury. He and his colleagues were dissatisfied with the dominant paradigm in second language teaching in 2000, while he was working as a teacher trainer in Spain. The students were just required to study grammar, and the classroom was crammed with activities that interfered with the students' abilities to learn. The individuals present in the classroom were somehow incidental to the teaching process.

The issue appeared to be mostly caused by an overreliance on technical tools and resources. The majority of classroom interactions were settled using "imported" texts. Having no engagement with such texts and the actions they suggested that students interacted at the lowest degree of involvement – similar to vehicle engines that are "idling" but not moving. As a result, they established a pretty strict policy requiring the careful use of materials.

During their training sessions they filmed part of the class discussion and examined it from the perspective of the communication skills shown. The improvement within the quality of the teaching was breathtaking. Amid that time and by chance, Scott Thornbury went to see a Dogme film and got familiar with the Dogme 95 manifesto which opened the way for Dogme approach.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dogme 95 was a film-making movement, started in 1995 by the Danish directors Thomas Vinterberg and Lars von Trier, who established the "Dogme 95 Manifesto" and the "Vows of Chastity".[1] The purpose was to relieve film of an obsessive focus on technique and to reconstruct a cinema that highlighted the inner lives of the characters and the narrative. The triviality and "deceit" of standard film-making was rejected.

Dogme 95-inspired films were typically of a raw, gritty nature and were undoubtedly far from Hollywood's polished artifice. EFL contains certain characteristics of Dogme 95 even if it may appear that it has nothing in common with Hollywood.[2]

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[1] Utterson, Andrew (2005). Technology and Culture, the Film Reader
[2] Thornbury, Scott (February–March 2000). "A Dogma for EFL"

Dogme might be viewed as critical in terms of its anti-establishment approach to language teaching, even though Thornbury claims that Dogme is not fundamentally aiming social transformation and hence does not satisfy commonly accepted requirements for a critical pedagogy.[1]

It has been criticized by a wide range of educators for its apparent opposition to new technology in language teaching and published textbooks. Furthermore, the initial call for a "Vow of chastity" is regarded as being overly conservative, and putting its principles into practice would allow teachers to select materials based on the requirements of a particular class.

Dogme is described by Maley as a strategy that "increases the restraints on instructors." According to Christensen, nations outside of Europe, like Japan, may encounter more cultural obstacles when adopting Dogme approach. Dogme's usefulness in low-resource environments and when students are prepared for tests with specified curriculum has also been questioned in recent years.[2]

According to the Dogme approach, teaching should focus on the learner and not be driven by the resources available, including coursebooks, textbooks or teaching manuals. It is a recent approach in ELT, formed by a group of teachers who are against using a lot of resources in the classroom. They contend that if students are not engaged, they won't learn. Hence, all material should be created by the students themselves, with the students leading the sessions, instead of the teachers.[3]

Dogme language teaching emphasizes interaction and involvement between teachers and students as well as between students themselves; it also emphasizes mutual engagement, acknowledgment of students, scaffolded conversation, and the materials' usefulness to students' ideas and knowledge.[4]

A Dogme approach encourages communication as a tool for learning. Students have a greater understanding of their requirements and needs and may investigate and bring an appropriate and compatible source of resources. Thus, a class is seen as a site of gathering where knowledge is explored rather than conducted.

Thornbury confesses that 'there is nothing very original in Dogme'. It incorporates concepts from critical, humanistic, and communicative teaching.[5]

The term "dogme" now appears in methodology books and scholastic journals. It even seems to have outlived its cinematic progenitor.[6]

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[1] Thornbury, Scott (2009-06-10). "Dogme: nothing if not critical". Teaching English.

[2] https://www.outputeducation.com/dogme-language-teaching/

[3] https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/dogme

[4] http://old.hltmag.co.uk/nov03/sart1.htm

[5] https://skyteach.ru/2019/07/16/dogme-language-teaching/

[6] Thornbury, Scott (February–March 2000). "A Dogma for EFL"(153). IATEFL Issues:

In conclusion, Dogme language teaching is considered to be both a methodology, a movement and an approach since it allows each teacher to use all of their skills. This approach aims at freeing instructors from the pressure of an excessive dependence on the coursebook industry, encourage authentic dialogue in the classroom, and assist in bridging the gap between the language taught in the classroom and the language used in everyday discussions.[1]

METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the overall goal of this research, our aim was to observe how Dogme is used in educational institutions while teaching/learning English.

The main aim of the survey was to detect if learners have lessons with the use of Dogme and if they would like to have such lessons. We wanted to know whether the students were interested in such lessons and how Dogme could be applied during their classes.

The participants of the survey were from different educational institutions of Armenia: students from Gavar State University, Yerevan State University, French University in Armenia, and students from Gavar Secondary School No. 2 named after Papin Ghandilyan. The overall number of participants was 56 (27 students and 29 schoolchildren). The age of the participants ranged from 13 to 24.

During the research the following methods were applied:
➢ theoretical: study of relevant scientific literature and electronic sources;
➢ social and pedagogical: observation and monitoring of the teaching/learning process;
➢ experimental: conducting experimental teaching with the implementation of Dogme approach in teaching sessions;
➢ statistic: statistical analysis of the data received.

The following questions have been raised while conducting this study/survey:
• *Are your lessons based on textbooks?*
• *Do you have discussions and conversations during your lessons?*
• *Would it be difficult for you to learn English without textbooks?*
• *Would you like to have lessons without textbooks, that are material-light and conversation driven?*
• *Are your lessons student-centered?*
• *What are the topics you would like to discuss during your lessons?*

When the objective of this study was defined, it was decided that the best option to collect data was through questionnaires. Google Forms were used to develop the survey, which gave us the excellent opportunity to consult the results instantaneously and make statistics with the responses.

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[1] https://www.outputeducation.com/dogme-language-teaching

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Communicative approach called Dogme calls for conversation-driven communication in the classroom and is not dependent on textbooks. Dogme may therefore produce an important language in the classroom and assist teachers in addressing the requirements of the students.

Dogme is different from traditional approaches that have gained recognition and are widely used in teaching and learning English. Many teachers may be using Dogme without even being aware of its existence. So to understand and reveal the application of Dogme, a survey was conducted in educational institutions in Armenia. The conducted survey consists of two constituent parts: a survey conducted among pupils and students, and a survey conducted among teachers and university lecturers. In this paper the results of the student survey are presented.

As demonstrated in Figure 1, most of the students, both studying at school and university, 91,1% (51 students) claimed having lessons that are based on their textbooks, and only 8,9% (5 students) stated having lessons not based on textbooks. The results are not quite surprising, as teachers always organize their lessons according to their educational setting constraints. So to say, they have a plan/program to fulfill by the end of the year, which is controlled by administrative staff. In certain circumstances, it can be really challenging to have lessons without textbooks, especially while working with students who have exams to pass.
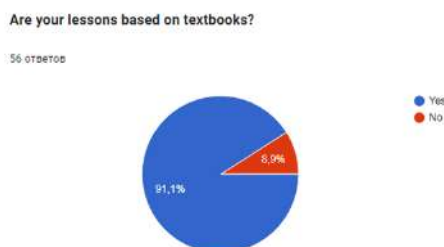

Figure 1. Student survey: question 1.

Discussion during lessons is a technique that enables teachers and students express their thoughts, exchange ideas and enlarge outlook. Students may learn from one another taking an active part in class discussions. According to the survey, 94,6% (53 students) of the participants have discussions during their lessons, so they have an opportunity to speak and express themselves, and only 5,4% (3 students) of them do not have. The results are presented in Figure 2.

Do you have discussions and conversations during your lessons?
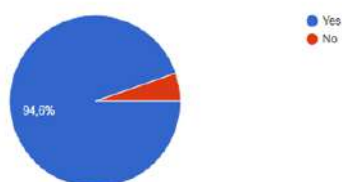
56 ответов

- Yes
- No

94,6%

Figure 2. Student survey: question 2.

Usually students view textbooks as references rather than learning tools. So it is not surprising that most of the students would like to have lessons without textbooks or just would like to try such a lesson just to eliminate the boredom caused by textbooks.

According to the results for 33,9% (19 students) participants learning language by excluding textbooks will not be difficult, 39,3% (22 students) are not sure and for 26,8% (15 students) it will be difficult. The results are presented in Figure 3.

Would it be difficult for you to learn English without textbooks?

56 ответов

- Yes
- No
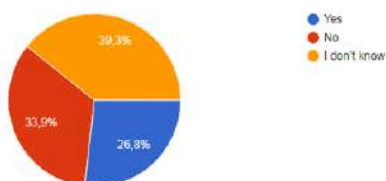- I don't know

39,3%
33,9%
26,8%

Figure 3. Student survey: question 3.

When it comes to language acquisition, it is indisputable, that the use of textbooks is valuable. But as language develops, new methods emerge, that can be beneficial for students to improve their language skills. Sometimes it can be really challenging and frightening for students to put aside their textbooks and learn the language by excluding their use, as students are used to their traditional way of learning. But sometimes it is worth to take a risk and experience new way of learning. Most of the students do want to practice something new and innovative, that would let them enjoy the whole lesson and would give them an opportunity to have lessons that are materials-light. According to the results of the survvey 70,9% of participants (31 students) would like to experience and practice lessons without textbooks, 14,5% of responders (9 students) wouldn't like to have such lessons, and 12,7% (7 students) would like to try it. The results are presented in Figure 4.

Would you like to have lessons without textbooks, that are materials-light and conversation-driven?
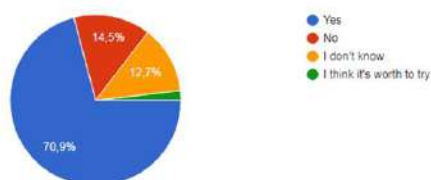
55 ответов

Figure 4. Student survey: question 4.

There are traditional classrooms and student-centered classrooms. In a traditional classroom the center of the lesson is a teacher, who tries to give as much knowledge as possible. Student-centered lessons are those where the center of the lesson is placed on the student, by transferring the responsibility of the learning process in the hands of the students. Though 83,9% of the participants opted for having lessons that are student-centered, we have some doubts concerning the reliability of the result, as in Armenia the main role of instructing the lesson is that of teachers'. Students may take an active part in the learning process but can't have fully student-centered lessons. The results are presented in Figure 5.

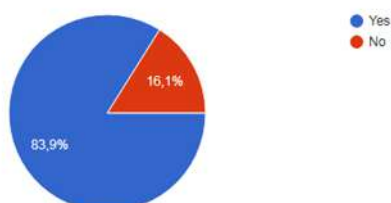Are your lessons student-centered?

56 ответов

Figure 5. Student survey: question 5.

The Dogme approach states that it is up to the students, to choose what should be taught. One of the advantages of Dogme is that students are able to explore their creativity and express themselves freely. The method also encourages students to think critically, as they must decide what to use in their learning process based on their own preferences and interests. So it was of great importance to explore and find out, what are the topics that students would like to discuss during their lessons by putting aside their textbooks. For this questions there were not options to be chosen from. Participants were free to include any topic they were interested in. Here are some of the answers.

What are the topics you would like to discuss during your lessons?

38 ответов

Future profession
About politics
Hobbies, books, films...
Any kind of topics
Topics about motivation
I don't know
Contemporary topics

What are the topics you would like to discuss during your lessons?

48 ответов

I would like to discuss current topics .
Nature, Sport, Food
1)Modern developments in the world 2)Cultures and habits of different countries
Politics.
It depends on your field of study. As a business student I enjoy Business English topics the most.
Friendship, human relationship,
Topics that are modern in our times
About our city and country
Topics about life, people

Figure 6. Student survey: question 6.

CONCLUSION

As an approach of teaching and learning English, Dogme has drawn a lot of interest in the EFL environment. Dogme is one of the innovative approaches in language teaching that has emerged in recent years. Dogme, also known as Dogme ELT or Dogme approach, is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes conversation and communication between students and teachers.

The Dogme approach is based on the belief that language learning should be student-centered, focusing on the learners' needs and interests. According to this approach, teachers act as facilitators, guiding students in their learning process and providing support as needed.

According to the overall objective of the research and based on the data gained at the stage of preparation for implementing Dogme approach or at least some of its elements in a foreign language class in Armenian setting, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. Most of the classes are based on textbooks which is quite predictable as teachers tend to provide teaching sessions according to the work plan and curricula which is strictly based on official textbooks.

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2. Most of classes include elements of discussions and conversations which is an asset in itself since it gives the students and excellent opportunity to enhance their speaking skills, communication skills, express themselves freely, etc.
3. Concerning having classes without textbooks the responders' opinions vary: for 28% of them it will be difficult, 34% opted for classes without textbooks, and the rest are not sure if it would be difficult or not.
4. The greater majority of the participants of the survey (about 71%) opted for classes that are material-light and conversation-driven.
5. 84% of the responders are convinced to have student-centered classes.
6. The topics for the lessons suggested by the participants of the survey include various topics according to the level of the study, level of proficiency of a foreign language, their interests and hobbies, etc.

To sum it up, based on the results of the conducted survey, a general conclusion could be drawn that students are ready for teaching sessions based on the key features of Dogme approach: classes delivered without textbooks, material-light and conversation-driven teaching and learning aimed at emphasizing conversation and communication between students.

References

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7. https://skyteach.ru/2019/07/16/dogme-language-teaching/

ԱՆԳԼԵՐԵՆԻ՝ ՈՐՊԵՍ OSԱՐ ԼԵԶՎԻ ԴԱՍԻ ԸՆՏԱՑՔՈՒՄ ԴՈԳՄԵ ՄՈՏԵՑՄԱՆ ԿԻՐԱՌՄԱՆ ՆԱԽԱՊԱՏՐԱՍՏՈՒՄ. ՀԱՐՑՄԱՆ ԱՐԴՅՈՒՆՔՆԵՐԸ ՈՒՍԱՆՈՂՆԵՐԻ ՇՐՋԱՆՈՒՄ

ՍԱՐԻԲԵԿՅԱՆ ԱՐՓԻ

ԳՊՀ բանասիրական ֆակուլտետի անգլերեն լեզվի և գրականության բաժնի
մագիստրատուրայի 2-րդ կուրսի ուսանողուհի
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ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆ ՌՈՒԶԱՆՆԱ

մանկավարժական գիտությունների թեկնածու, դոցենտ,
ՀՊՏՀ լեզուների ամբիոնի դոցենտ,
ԳՊՀ օտար լեզվի և գրականության ամբիոնի դոցենտ
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Սույն հոդվածի գլխավոր նպատակն է ներկայացնել հայկական լսարանում օտար լեզվի դասի ընթացքում «Դոգմե» մոտեցմամբ դասերի կիրառման նախապատրաստական փուլի արդյունքները: Հետազոտության հիմնական նպատակն էր պարզել, թե արդյոք սովորողները դոգմեի կիրառմամբ դասեր են ունենում, և արդյոք նրանք կցանկանային նման դասերի մասնակցել: Հարցման մասնակիցները տարբեր կրթական հաստատություններից էին՝ Գավառի պետական համալսարանի, Երևանի պետական համալսարանի, Հայաստանում ֆրանսիական համալսարանի ուսանողներ և Գավառի Պապին Ղանդիլյանի անվան թիվ 2 միջնակարգ դպրոցի աշակերտներ: Մասնակիցների ընդհանուր թիվը կազմել է 56 (27 ուսանող և 29 աշակերտ): Մասնակիցների տարիքը 13-ից 24-ն էր: Հետազոտության ընթացքում կիրառվել են հետևյալ մեթոդները՝ տեսական, սոցիալ-մանկավարժական, փորձարարական, վիճակագրական: Հիմնվելով անցկացված հարցման արդյունքների վրա՝ կարելի է ընդհանրական եզրակացություն հանգել, որ սովորողները պատրաստ են մասնակցելու դասերի, որոնք հիմնված են «Դոգմե» մոտեցման հիմնական առանձնահատկությունների վրա. դասեր, որոնք մատուցվում են առանց դասագրքերի, փոքրաթիվ դիդակտիկ նյութերով, երկխոսության վրա հիմնված, որոնց հիմնական նպատակն է զարգացնել սովորողների հաղորդակցական հմտությունները:

Բանալի բառեր *՝ օտար լեզվի դասավանդում/ուսումնառություն, անգլերենը որպես օտար լեզու, «Դոգմե» մոտեցումը, սովորողների վերաբերմունքը «Դոգմե»-ի հանդեպ:*

ПОДГОТОВКА К ПРИМЕНЕНИЮ ПОДХОДА DOGME НА УРОКЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА: РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ ОПРОСА, ПРОВЕДЕННОГО СРЕДИ УЧАЩИХСЯ

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Основная цель данной статьи – представить результаты, полученные на этапе подготовки к уроку иностранного языка в армянской аудитории с применением подхода Dogme. Основная цель исследования состояла в том, чтобы определить, проводятся ли с учащимися занятия с использованием данного подхода и хотят ли они посещать такие занятия. В опросе приняли участие представители различных учебных заведений Армении: студенты Гаварского государственного университета, Ереванского государственного университета, Французского университета в Армении и учащиеся 2-ой средней школы имени Папина Гандиляна (г. Гавар). Общее количество респондентов – 56 человек (27 студентов и 29 учащихся школ). В исследовании использовались следующие методы: теоретический, социально-педагогический, экспериментальный, статистический. По результатам опроса можно сделать вывод о том, что учащиеся готовы участвовать в уроках, разработанных с учетом ключевых характеристик подхода Dogme: уроки, которые проводятся без учебников, небольшого количества дидактических материалов, основанные на диалоге, конечной целью которых является развитие коммуникативных навыков учащихся.

Ключевые слова: *обучение иностранному языку, английский как иностранный, подход «Догме», отношение учащихся к подходу «Догме».*