



Dogme Teaching Approach as A Revolutionary Teaching Philosophy against Textbook Teaching Based Approach

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Abstract

Teaching English language in its traditional mode is excessively based on textbook which represents a useful resource for both teachers and learners. Nonetheless, it has some drawbacks such as the content may not be relevant , inauthenticity, regarding it as the sole source of information, not considering the students' background knowledge and tendency of over reliant on textbooks . Dogme is a communicative approach to language teaching which involves free published textbook class and interactive conversational communication among learners. It is evolved in 2011 by Scott Thornbury and Luke Meddings who design it as free instructors from a dependence on materials and technology and work with nothing more than the interests of the people in the room. It is a teaching philosophy which goes beyond the standard pedagogical methods and it is a textbook free zone. It has various principles interactivity, engagement, dialogic processes, scaffolded conversations, affordances, empowerment, relevance and critical use. The main precepts of Dogme are conversation-driven teaching, materials light approach and emergent language. It is compatible with reflective teaching and it recognizes the legitimacy of learners needs and expectations.

Keywords: Dogme teaching, textbook , scaffolded , interactivity , unplugged teaching

1.0 Introduction

Teaching English language in its traditional mode is excessively based on textbook, teaching aids and electronic literacy, such as accessing, evaluating, and utilizing information. Moreover, a textbook designed by language policy makers as a dominant factor in English class and a teacher is another dominant factor in instructional processes and conceptualization. Additionally, Most of English classrooms use a standard textbook series depending on the design and focus of the curriculum, the mandates of the administration, and the level of expertise on the part of classroom teachers. Hence,

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excessive teacher talking time is another dominant factor. In a traditional teaching approach, language is treated as a series of objects, which like numerous bricks are assembled for communication. Instruction commences with the introduction of grammatical objects for learners to recognize as parts for assembling into pre-arranged sentence patterns. The rules for assembling parts into patterns need to be learned. The sequencing of grammatical items, rules and forms are illustrated in decontextualized sentences or dialogues. The grammar is practiced repetitively in exercises without meaning. Vocabulary items are memorized as lists and tested in gap filling exercises, which are not functional. In this prototypical approach to language teaching, grammar and words have been extracted from texts. Removed from contexts, the grammar and words no longer resemble parts of texts. Nor do they function as parts of texts. Nor are they practiced as parts of texts. As isolated text elements they do not suffice for learners to reassemble into texts. Nonetheless, language learning and teaching involves social context which involves mutual interaction and participatory aspect in terms of dialogic and dogmatic perspective. The need to redesign teaching to achieve communication as an ultimate goal of instruction requires Dogme teaching which involves learners in learning and teaching process. Moreover, The main goal of teaching process is to activating high order thinking (HOT) and setting real life context entailing communication and liberating learners from being slave of textbook. Scott Thornbury and his colleagues proposed Dogme ELT, a similarly spelled word (dogma). He and his colleagues realized that too many classes were being invaded by lesson plans, textbooks, workbooks, tapes, transparencies, flashcard and tapes which deviates the students from being the focus of teaching and learning process.

2.0 Definition of Dogme ELT

Dogme is a communicative approach to language teaching that encourages teaching without published textbooks and focuses instead on conversational communication among learners and teacher. Furthermore, it intends to humanize the classroom through a radical pedagogy of dialogue(Thornbury,2002).It is evolved in 2011 by Scott Thornbury and Luke Meddings who inspired its name from an analogy with Dogme 95 film movement initiated by Lars von Trier. The Dogme approach is also referred to as Dogme ELT, which reflects its origins in the ELT (English language teaching) sector. The Dogme ELT approach is designed free instructors from a dependence on materials and technology and work with nothing more than the interests of the people in the room. Dogme is a teaching philosophy which goes beyond the standard pedagogical methods and it is a textbook free zone.

3.0 Dogme's Key Principles:

Dogme ELT has ten principles:

3.1.1 Interactivity: Interactivity between teachers and students and amongst the students themselves.

3.1.2 Engagement: students are most engaged by content they have created themselves

3.1.3 Dialogic processes: learning is social and dialogic, where

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knowledge is co-constructed

3.1.4 Scaffolded conversations: learning takes place through conversations, where the learner and teacher co-construct the knowledge and skills

3.1.5 Emergence: language and grammar emerge from the learning process. This is seen as distinct from the acquisition of language.

3.1.6 Affordances: the teacher's role is to optimize language learning affordances through directing attention to emergent language.

3.1.7 Voice: the learner's voice is given recognition along with the learner's beliefs and knowledge.

3.1.8 Empowerment: students and teachers are empowered by freeing the classroom of published materials and textbooks.

3.1.9 Relevance: materials such as texts, audios and videos should have relevance for the learners

3.1.10 Critical use: teachers and students should use published materials and textbooks in a critical way that recognizes their cultural and ideological biases. Christensen,2003).

4.0 Main Precepts

There are three precepts that emerge from the ten key principles:

5.1 Conversation-Driven Teaching

Dogme places more value on communication that promotes social interaction and it also places more emphasis on a discourse-level rather than sentence- level approach to language. ¹Dogme considers that the learning of a skill is co-constructed within the interaction between the learner and the teacher. In this sense, teaching is a conversation between the two parties(Thornbury,2002).

5.2 Materials Light Approach

The Dogme approach considers that student-produced material is preferable to published materials and textbooks. However, there is a debate to the extent that Dogme is actually anti-textbook or anti-technology. Meddings and Thornbury focus the critique of textbooks on their tendency to focus on grammar more than on communicative competency and also on the cultural biases often found in textbooks, especially those aimed at global markets.

Cangarajah (1999:122), among others, has pointed out how imported materials and methods enshrine postcolonial values, reinforcing the dominance of the Western. Using locally produced materials might be one way of responding to the threat; another might be for local teachers to adopt creative and critical instructional practices in order to develop pedagogies suitable for their communities.

1- Dogme Language Teaching intended as a partially tongue-in-cheek attempt to restore the communicative aspect to communicative language teaching and to reject the over- reliance on the seemingly endless material churned out by publishing houses, all of which were seen as a barrier to real communication between the social agents present in the classroom. Dogme's original tenets seem to, that scaffolded conversations are important, and that teachers and learners need to co-construct knowledge and skills, I'd argue that material can frequently offer superior scaffolding myself.

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5.3 Emergent Language

Language is considered to emerge in two ways. Firstly classroom activities lead to collaborative communication amongst the students. Secondly, learners produce language that they were not necessarily taught. The teacher's role is to facilitate the emergence of language(Holliday,2005). However, Dogme proposes that the teacher must encourage learners to engage with this new language to ensure learning takes place. The teacher can do this in a variety of ways, including rewarding, repeating and reviewing it.

5.0 Dogme's Rules

There are Dogme rules that can be followed t in teaching context:

- ❖ Resources should be provided by the students or whatever you come across.
- ❖ All listening material should be student produced.
- ❖ The teacher should always put himself/herself at the level of the students.
- ❖ All language used should be real language and so have a communicative purpose.
- ❖ Grammar work should arise naturally during the lesson and should not be the driving force behind it.
- ❖ Students should not be placed into different level groups. (Meddings and Thornbury,2009)

6.0 Merits of Dogme ELT

-Dogme is compatible with reflective teaching.

-More freedom for teachers and students to conceptualize and implement more appropriate material.

- Students are most engaged by content they have created themselves
- Dogme has the merit of creating a low-affective filter environment in the classroom.
- Learners follow their own pace of learning assisted by the teacher through scaffolding.
- Learning is humanized through a radical pedagogy of dialogue.
- Learners are freed from the ideological load inherent in textbooks generally published in the west and commercialized all over the world.
- Dogme recognizes the legitimacy of learners needs and expectations.
- Dogme gives teachers and learners the possibility to free themselves from the models of teaching and learning imposed by textbook writers.
- Conversations provide the opportunity for learners to analyze, internalize, and practice language.
- Communication is central in the dogme approach.

6.0 Practical Pedagogical Dogme principles (Thornbury, 2002)

1. Teaching should be done using only the resources that teachers and students bring to the classroom .
2. No recorded listening material should be introduced into the classroom: the source of all listening activities should be the students and teacher themselves. The only recorded material that is used should be that made in the classroom itself.
3. The teacher must sit down at all times that the students are seated, except when monitoring group or pair work and even then it may be best to pull up a chair. In small classes, teaching

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should take place around a single table.

4. All the teacher's questions must be real questions.
5. Slavish adherence to a method (such as audiolingual, Silent Way, TPR, task-based learning, suggestopedia) is unacceptable.
6. A pre-planned syllabus of pre-selected and graded grammar items is forbidden. Any grammar that is the focus of instruction should emerge from the lesson content, not dictate it.
7. Topics that are generated by the students themselves must be given priority over any other input.
8. Grading of students into different levels is disallowed: students should be free to join the class that they feel most comfortable in, whether for social reasons, or for reasons of mutual intelligibility, or both. As in other forms of human social interaction, diversity should be accommodated, even welcomed, but not proscribed.
9. The criteria and administration of any testing procedures must be negotiated with the learners.
10. Teachers themselves will be evaluated according to only one criterion: that they are not boring..

8.0 Dogme classroom

Scott Thornbury is the main force behind this revolutionary movement. He and his colleagues realized that too many classes were being invaded by lesson plans, textbooks, workbooks, tapes, transparencies, flashcards, Cuisenaire rods, tapes and other such gimmicks that the students themselves were no longer the focus of the lesson. By inventing Dogme they have put the learner back into learning. The students are not seated behind desks because it is much harder for them to express themselves in this artificial setting. There is no reason why they cannot have some paper and pens but definitely no textbook. The atmosphere should definitely be relaxed. Once the students understand the concept of autonomy and controlling their learning, they are far more willing to participate, lead the sessions and discipline almost becomes a thing of the past (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

8.1 Learner objectives

Before looking at the detail of a lesson itself, a teacher can begin the year by looking very closely at the students' objectives. With younger students the linguistic objectives are more likely to resemble each other, but the older they get the more aware they will be of why they're learning English and what areas they need to work on. However this is not always the case and spending time on this before you launch into a course makes so much sense to the learners themselves as you progress through the year. The advantage of doing this is that each lesson the students can refer back to their personal objective sheet and relate everything they choose to do in class to at least one of their objectives.

8.2 The lesson plan

A teacher can start a lesson by putting the class into three or four smaller groups. How you organize this stage of the lesson will obviously depend on the number of students in the class. Each group decides what they want to work on in the lesson with their objective sheets close to hand. This could take the form of 'speaking skills and practicing talking in front of other people or improve grammatical accuracy when speaking' for example. Then a spokesperson from each

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group goes to the board and writes up in note form a couple of the most popular choices from what the group has decided. This process should be fairly quick and will become quicker as they get used to it.

2-Optimally, Dogme teacher training would instill a relaxed confidence in the use of the language and an intuitive ability to understand the background to problems arising in using language. It would require the instructor to be willing to stand back and let things happen, and to be ready to suggest rather than impose ideas.

Teachers prefer to leave the classroom and return when the time limit is up and the notes are on the board. However for security reasons this is not always possible and with the younger pupils, so they make it clear that they are not going to intervene at all in this process. After that, a teacher can read what the students would like to work on and use this information to facilitate the rest of the lesson. A teacher may find that some students want to concentrate on writing while others on listening. This is up to the students to negotiate whose objectives they are going to work on in that particular lesson and up to you to have activities up your sleeve that enable them to work simultaneously on different skills. A great example of this is a running dictation where some people can work on their writing, some on their listening, some on their reading and others on their speaking.

7.0 Advantages and Disadvantages of Dogme Teaching Approach

Gill, (2002) states various advantages and disadvantages for Dogme teaching approach.

8.1 Advantages of Dogme Teaching Approach

- From a teaching point of view it cuts down tremendously on preparation time.
- The students feel completely in control of their learning and are therefore so much more motivated.
- It keeps you alert and spontaneous as you never know exactly what could happen in class and so must think on your feet.
- You can handle almost anything once you've taught in a Dogme classroom.
- Students are constantly aware of the 'why' behind everything they do.

8.2 Disadvantages of Dogme Teaching Approach

- Some students may feel uneasy about it at first, feeling they're not being spoon-fed a teacher-led lesson.
- It might be daunting for a newly trained teacher to work without the security of a textbook.
- Some teachers may be locked into a specific syllabus.
- English teachers may be working in very large classes where tables are bolted to the floor.
- Some teachers may feel that their role and power is being undermined by this more student-centered approach.

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1.0 Definition of Textbook

Textbook plays an important role in teaching and learning. It represents a useful resource for both teachers as a course designers and learners as persons who are acquiring the English language. However, the use of a ready-made textbook has its advantages and disadvantages. Richards (2001) contends that textbook is a collection of the knowledge, concepts, and principles of a selected topic or course. It's usually written by one or more teachers, college professors, or education experts who are authorities in a specific field. Most textbooks are accompanied by teacher guides, which provide you with supplemental teaching materials, ideas, and activities to use throughout the academic year. The textbook is a book used as a standard source of information for formal study of a subject and an instrument for teaching and learning (Graves 2000: 175). It should be regarded as one of the many sources teachers can draw upon in creating an effective lesson and may offer a framework of guidance and orientation. Additionally, the textbook provides confidence and security for an inexperienced teacher who finds adapting existing textbooks challenging especially for tailored work related courses. It is necessary to emphasize that no ready-made textbook will ever fit perfectly every language program. There is no ideal textbook, ideal for every teacher, ideal for every group of learners and ideal in every teaching situation(Donna,2000). Moreover, teachers' reactions to using ready-made textbooks are manifold. Many teachers are required to use textbooks and are bound to the textbook in its existing form. Since this simplifies class preparation for teachers, this is acceptable for some teachers who eventually begin to over-rely on textbooks and decide to follow the textbook closely, making no or only small essential changes and additions. On the other hand, some teachers reject the textbook approach to learning and wish to make substantial changes to the textbook they need to use (Graves, 1996).

11.0 Advantages and disadvantages of using textbooks

The use of textbooks in teaching has both advantages and disadvantages, depending on how they are used and what the contexts for their use are. What one teacher considers an advantage in a textbook, another teacher may consider a disadvantage (Graves 2000: 175):

11.1 Advantages of Textbook Teaching Approach

The following list contains the most frequently stated advantages of using textbooks (Graves 2000: 175; Basturkmen 2010: 149):

- It provides a syllabus for the course because the authors of the syllabus have made decisions about what will be learned and in what order.
- It provides security for the students because they have a kind of a road map of the course: they know what to expect and they know what is expected from them.
- It provides a set of visuals, activities, readings, etc., and so saves the teacher time in finding or developing such materials.
- It provides teachers with a basis for assessing students' learning. Some textbooks include tests or evaluation tools.

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- It may include supporting materials (teacher's guide, cd, worksheets, and video.) -It provides consistency within a program across a given level, if all teachers use the same textbook. If textbooks follow a sequence, as within a series, it provides consistency between levels.

11.2 Disadvantages of Textbook Teaching Approach

Macalister (2010) enumerates that textbooks have several advantages in the classroom:

- Textbooks are especially helpful for novice teachers and they provide teachers with organized units of work.
- A textbook s provides teachers and learners with a balanced, chronological presentation of information (Dudley-Evans and John,1998).
- Textbooks are a detailed sequence of teaching procedures telling what to do and when to do it.
- Textbooks provide administrators and teachers with a complete program and they are superb teaching aids. Besides, they are a resource for both teachers and students.
- Textbooks also have limitations, which can lead to teachers' and learners' dissatisfaction with the course. The following list contains the most frequently stated disadvantages of using only ready-made textbooks (Graves: 175; Basturkmen 2010: 149):
 - The content or examples may not be relevant or appropriate to the group and they may not reflect the students' needs since textbooks are often written for global markets and often do not reflect the interests and needs of students.
 - They may contain inauthentic language, since texts, dialogs and other aspects of content tend to be specially written to incorporate teaching points and are often not representative of real language use(Harding,2007)..
 - The content may not be at the right level. There may not be the right mix of activities, there may be too much focus on one or more aspects of language and not enough focus on others, or it may not include everything teachers want to include (Nation andMacalister,2010).
 - The sequence of units is not in accordance with the real work-related needs.
 - The activities, readings, visuals, etc., may be boring.
 - The timetable for completing the textbook or parts of it may be unrealistic.
 - The textbook doesn't take the students' background knowledge into account.
 - The textbook is design as the sole source of information.
 - Textbook is old or outdated covers a topic or subject area .
 - Textbook questions tend to be low level or fact-based.
 - Textbook doesn't take students' background knowledge into account.
 - Reading level of the textbook is too difficult.
 - Some teachers over rely on textbooks and they ignore other teaching aids and sources of knowledge (Robinson, 1991).

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12.0 Conclusion

Teaching English language in its traditional mode is excessively based on textbook which represents a useful resource for both teachers as a course designers and learner. Nonetheless, over reliant on textbook causes passivity and sense of boredom. Teaching Unplugged is the term used for a teaching method and philosophy which has three primary aims: teaching through conversation, taking out external input such as course book and technology and letting the lesson content be driven by the students rather than being pre-planned by the teacher. ³Dogme is a new form of teaching unplugged which shares the belief with other approaches to language education, such as task-based learning. Dogme does not see the teacher's role as merely to create the right conditions for language to emerge, but he /she must encourage learners to engage with this new language to ensure learning takes place. Indeed, Dogme can be seen as a pedagogy that is able to address the lack of availability.

3- Dogme are interactivity - the belief that the most direct route to learning is to be found in the interactivity between teachers and students and among the students themselves – and dialogic processes, the idea that learning is social and dialogic, and that knowledge is co-constructed

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