

THE DOGME APPROACH TO IMPROVE THE FOUR ENGLISH SKILLS IN 3RD BGU LEVEL STUDENTS AT REPUBLICA DEL ECUADOR EDUCATIONAL UNIT

EL ENFOQUE DOGME PARA MEJORAR LAS CUATRO
COMPETENCIAS DEL INGLÉS EN ESTUDIANTES DE 3° NIVEL
BGU DE LA UNIDAD EDUCATIVA REPUBLICA DEL ECUADOR

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Summary

The purpose of this study is to propose the use of Dogme method to improve the current English material established by the Ministry of Education in order to enhance the academic performance. Highschool students need to feel more engaged and motivated with their learning process, thus they need more interesting material according to their needs. To achieve this goal, the current didactic material needs to be modified with an innovating content that includes comprehensible input depicted with association. For example teachers can include poems in a zero conditional class to make the content more appealing to the students. The purpose to employ this method is to excel the four English skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening in students of 3rd BGU level of Republica del Ecuador Educational Unit from Otavalo City.

A descriptive investigation was applied using the deductive method with a sample of 45 students, a survey that contained a likert scale was performed on the students. The validation was determined by the technical judgment of three experts and the reliability of 0.749 showed a high internal consistency through the SPSS Statistics Visor. The results indicated the students' necessity of understandable input in the English material as well as the urgency to improve their four English skills.

Keywords: Participation, Motivation, Creativity, Innovation, Complementary.

Introduction

The students from 3rd baccalaureate level of the Republica del Ecuador Educational Unit do not feel motivated enough when they have to make their English homework because of the monotonous nature of the material given by the Ministry of Education that tends to repeat the same pattern over and again. The students usually complain that the weekly English material mostly contains mechanical drills with a few listening tasks. The main emphasized skills are reading and writing, and if we add to this situation the obsolete attitude of some traditional teachers that are not willing to listen to pieces of advice and modify their methods in order to change the learning experience for the benefit of their students, the scenario seems to be hopeless.

The use of the Dogme method is an alternative to modify the English material and make it more appealing to students, thus boosting their interest and motivation to study English. This method offers strategies where teachers can create their own material, and students are more empowered in the learning process because they are also active members in making the new material. In this method, association is an important tactic to reach the desired levels because each grammar topic is associated with an interesting and complementary theme. For example, simple past can be taught with biographies, zero conditional with poems, and first conditional with future goals. Also in building activities, both teachers and students can suggest new ideas to customize the material. There are many important additions to the resource such as video recordings done in class, songs, storytelling, power point slides, dynamic games, virtual role plays, interactive quizzes, etc. All this new input will highly improve the four macro-skills.

General Objective

To propose a new didactic innovating strategy using Dogme method to strengthen the four English macro skills in 3rd BGU students from the República del Ecuador Educational Unit.

Specific Objectives

- To analyze the current curriculum and the resources proposed to the 3rd BGU students.
- To identify the benefits of Dogme method to reinforce the current didactic resources proposed by the Ministry of Education.
- To design a strategy to modify the English material with more appealing content.

Methods and Materials

The nature of this investigation is quantitative (Hernandez, Fernandez, y Baptista 2003) according to them the objective of this kind of research is to measure phenomena and obtain data to find out the common problems that the students from 3rd baccalaureate level have with the English material given by the Ministry of Education. The technique employed in this research is descriptive statistics because it presents the data using absolute and relative frequencies which are displayed on tables and graphics.

This investigation is a non-experimental design, because it does not alter the variables. The type of research is descriptive because it identifies the current characteristics of the English material given by the Ministry of Education and the benefits of using Dogme approach as a method to improve the didactic material and the English skills. This investigation is about population, sample, and statistics. The method employed on this research is deductive because of the use of instruments to retrieve data from the students of 3rd BGU level and identify the characteristics of the problem with the English material in order to provide a pedagogical contribution.

The population is represented by 45 students of 3rd BGU level, the sample of the investigation was retrieved by an eight-question survey with a polychotomous nature with multiple choice selection which was conducted by probabilistic sample. This data was analyzed by a likert scale, and the validation of data was measured by the judgment of three experts.

Description	Population 100%	Sample	instruments
Students	45	36	Survey

The data obtained by the instrument was placed on tables and statistical graphics, and then this information was measured by the Alpha coefficient of Cronbach through the SPSS Statistics Visor Application, depicting 0.749 which is over the standard.

Results

The following data shows the analysis of the data obtained on the survey applied to 36 students of 3rd BGU level from the República el Ecuador Educational Unit in Otavalo. The statistic tables show the information that determines the impact of the Dogme method in current English material from the Ministry of Education and the need of innovation to improve the material in order to enhance the four English skills. According to Hernandez, et al (2014) the analysis of statistic data allows to interpret the values related to information proposed.

Table 1.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding appealing material

ALWAYS		FREQUENTLY		SOMETIMES		RARELY		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
12	33.3	20	55.6	3	8.3	1	2.8	36	100
Question 1) Does your English class include interesting material?									

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 1

The study indicates that 20 out of 36 students, which represent 55.6% affirm that the English material is frequently interesting. From here 12 (33.3%) of the Ss consider that the English class always includes interesting material. Then 3 (8.3%) of them believe that the class sometimes includes interesting material. And finally 1 (2.8%) student affirms that the material received is rarely interesting. They state that regardless the limitations on resources from the government. English teachers usually have to go out of the comfort zone and customize the material to provide the best learning experience for their students (Jeyaraj, John Sekar, 2017).

Table 2.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding understandable reading material

A LOT		ENOUGH		SOMEHOW		NOTHING		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
13	37.1	15	42.9	7	20	0	0	35	100

Question 2) How understandable is the reading material that you receive in your english class?

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 2

In this study 15 out of 35, which represents 42.9% affirm that the reading material they receive is enough comprehensible. From here 13 (37.1%) of the Ss consider that the reading material is very understandable. Then 7 (20%) of them believe that the reading material received is somehow understandable. This is the biggest strength from the Ministry of Education. The reading skill is the most emphasized skill. Therefore there are many readings available throughout the whole standardized modules, but unfortunately other skills such as speaking and listening do not contain many activities. Docents are forced to edit the content of readings with more understandable input. The Dogme method helps improve the reading material because it is not limited with formats and standards (Banegas, 2012).

Table 3.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding complementary activities

STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		SOMEHOW AGREE		DISAGREE		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
13	36.1	18	50	5	13.9	0	0	36	100

Question 3) Do the activities presented in class complement the topics taught?

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 3

In this analysis 18 out of 36 students, which represent 50% agree that the activities provided by the teachers complement the topics taught. From here 13 (36.1%) strongly agree that the activities complement the topics. Then 5 (13.9%) of them somehow agree that the activities presented complement the topics taught. This is not easily achieved because teachers usually undergo processes of “material maintenance” to look for complementary activities in order to ensure knowledge acquisition. It’s an innate ability of the English teachers to implement the most comprehensible input to the didactic material regardless all odds. The Dogme approach promotes the creation of innovating activities that complement the topics (Amjad, Shahzad & Tahir, 2021).

Table 4.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding active participation

ALWAYS		FREQUENTLY		SOMETIMES		RARELY		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
21	58.3	14	38.9	1	2.8	0	0	36	100
Question 4) Does your English teacher promote participation?									

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 4

The analysis shows that 21 out of 36 students, which represent 58.3% affirm that the English teacher always promotes participation. From here 14 (38.9%) of the Ss consider that the docent frequently promotes participation. Then 1 (2.8%) student believes that the instructor sometimes promotes participation. The Dogme approach promotes participation with the customized material (Sarani, Malmir, 2019). It’s very important to mention that the government only allows two weekly hours of English which is less than the average compared to other subjects such as Literature and mathematics. The time in live classes is very essential since this is the only mean to measure the students performance and progress through active participation even though some assignments require making of video recording tasks.

Table 5.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding creativity

A LOT		ENOUGH		SOMEHOW		NOTHING		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
14	38.9	16	44.4	6	16.7	0	0	36	100
Question 5) Does the homework assigned to you require creativity?									

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 5

This study states that 16 students out of 36, which represent 44.4% consider that the homework they receive contains enough level of creativity. From here 14 (38.9%) of the Ss consider that the homework assigned requires a lot of creativity. Then 6 (16.7%) of them believe that the assignments somehow require creativity. For example in a homework about breaking news, the students take the role of a reporter and have to tell a special new with an stylish background and music, and all this must be video recorded. English is one of the subjects that incentives imagination, innovation, and creativity since the effectiveness of the learning process depend on how practical is the knowledge (Thornbury S, 2000).

Table 6.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding motivation

HIGHLY MOTIVATED		MOTIVATED		LOW MOTIVATED		NOT MOTIVATED		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
9	25.7	20	57.1	6	17.1	0	0	35	100

Question 6) How motivated are you in your English class?

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 6

In this study 20 out out 35 students, which represent 57.1% believe to be motivated in their English class. From here 9 (25.7%) of the Ss consider to be highly motivated in class. Then 6 (17.1%) of them believes to be low motivated. Motivation is the result of appropriate methodology where the instructor plays a critical role to be reflective with the students in every topic. For example the use of frequent feedback is essential to incentive the students to become active members of the class since it makes them feel that their opinions matter. Negative feedback must be avoided at all costs, constructive criticism must be employed instead (Banegas, 2012) .

Table 7.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding skills to improve

SPEAKING		WRITING		READING		LISTENING		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
12	33.3	9	25	8	22.2	7	19.4	36	100

Question 7) What English skill would you like to improve?

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive Statistic Analysis 7

This study indicates that 12 out of 36 students, which represent 33.3% affirm that they need to improve the speaking skill above the other ones. From here 9 (25%) of the Ss consider they need to improve the writing skill. Then 8 (22.2%) of them believe they need to improve the reading skill. And finally 7 (19.4%) students affirm they need to improve the listening skill. They usually employ writing to do tasks, listening while singing and receiving instructions, reading while understanding the stories and objectives, but they have a low chance to practice speaking when they are outside the classroom. The Dogme method helps improve the speaking skill because it allows teachers and students to work as a team in the making of speaking material without the use of technological tools (Amjad, Shahzad & Tahir, 2021).

Table 8.

Theoretical Focus(X) regarding if the current material helps improve the four skills

STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		SOMEHOW AGREE		DISAGREE		TOTAL	
F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
10	27.8	21	58.3	4	11.1	1	2.8	36	100

Question 8) Does the current material help you improve the four English skills?

Note: Data taken from the instrument applied to the students of 3rd BGU level

Descriptive statistic analysis 8

In this study 21 out of 36 students, which represent 58.3% agree that the current English material helps them improve the four English skills. From here 10 (27.8%) of the Ss strongly agree that the current material helps them improve the four skills. Then 4 (11.1%) of them somehow agree that the current material helps them improve the skills. And finally 1 (2.8%) student disagree that the current material helps improve the four English skills. As previously mentioned, the material was strengthened by the teachers, and the Ss experienced a new material that caught their attention more than ever. Teachers used complementary activities for each grammar topic and avoided the endless reading tasks from the standardized material. Every activity empowered the Ss in the learning process because there is creativity in every aspect of the work (Jeyaraj, John Sekar, 2017).

Discussion

The Dogme method is a useful tool in the editing of English material from the Ministry of Education because it gives the instructor the freedom to edit the material in order to add interesting input that is urgently needed to improve the teaching-learning procedures (Thornbury S. 2000). According to the experiment, the new material changed the methodology, and it greatly improved the learning experience. Teachers from 3rd BGU level of the Republica de Ecuador educational Unit agreed

to use the edited resources for a whole month, the students were not told about the changes in the material but at the end of the month they recovered some aspects previously lost such as increasing motivation, and active participation. Regardless the improvements, the Ss mentioned that the speaking skill needs to be reinforced.

This emerging method uses a special segment called association which reinforces the topics with appealing material, for example it adds breaking news activities to reported speeches topic, thus the students can boost their interest in the knowledge proposed.

First, it identifies interesting material that can be related to the topic aimed, then it designs activities for live participation. At the end an enhanced homework is crafted which contains meaningful drills and video recordings to strengthen the knowledge.

Second, the content is transferred to Power Point slides for better visuals and improving delivery. In case of presencial classes the teachers will hand in worksheets of the new material to the students in class.

Although the Dogme method can drastically improve the learning experience, it has its limitations because it is not really suitable for beginner levels due to the level of the associating themes which is intermediate. For a striving result, the students from lower levels must take a leveling course in order to keep pace with their colleagues (Sarani, Malmir, 2019).

Conclusion

English teachers face the dilemma of choosing from keeping the standard structure of the material or customizing according to the students' needs. The teachers that prefer to become more reflective will always choose customizing as an improving tool to increase student engagement with language acquisition. Ecuadorian teachers lack government support in terms of innovating content because the material is obsolete and the current administration cut the educational budget, limiting the updates of the English content.

Student motivation is the performance meter of the teacher's methodology, the better the content, the better the methodology. Studies indicate that students with traditional teachers are less motivated than Ss with reflective teachers that are willing to go out of their comfort zone and edit the available content. This is where the Dogme method comes into action because it grants a golden opportunity to modify the material and make it more appealing to the Ss. Under this method, the English teacher can also team up with the Ss in the making of new content. The former version of the Dogme method proved to be radical, but as times change and the knowledge becomes more available to the public, new techniques can be added to the proposed method.

According to this investigation, association is the best technique to include in the Dogme method because it adds interesting input with appealing material that complements the main topic. This associating technique greatly improves the English material and therefore it strengthens

the four macro skills, for example the created content can include crafty activities of random participation to improve the speaking skill, the meaningful drills can enhance the writing skill, the team assignments can help improve the reading skill, and the individual participation can increase the listening skill.

It is highly recommended for English teachers to employ the Dogme method in order to strive in editing the current material. The role of reflective teachers is to keep the material up-to-date with the demands of modern times. Under the current limitations, teachers must incentive creativity in the learning process to counter obsolete methodologies that are merely mechanical.

Recommendation

The Dogme method is a technique subject to improvement due to the constant advances in technology and the changes in social context. Instructors should go out of their comfort zones and improve this method. For example they can search for complementary activities that boost the students' curiosity to strengthen motivation. New studies must be conducted to enhance the efficiency of this method as more teachers include it in their planning phase.

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