Investigating the Effects of Dogme Approach on Improving Delta University Freshmen Students' Speaking Skills and Attitudes toward it

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Abstract

Dogme is a learner-centered teaching strategy that goes above and beyond the other widely used educational approaches. It is based on the theory that students learn best when they are engaged and enthusiastic about a subject. The aim of the current study is to examine the impact of Dogme approach on developing TEFL students' speaking skill. and to determine their attitudes toward this approach in English communication classroom. To achieve these aims, fifty-six freshmen students of English department at the faculty of Arts were participated in this study. They were distributed to two equal groups, an experimental group (EG) and a control group (CG). They attended twelve language speaking sessions. EG were exposed to practice communication skills with Dogme approach, while CG received communicative language teaching traditionally. A pretest-posttest was used to gauge the improvement of speaking skill of the two groups and within the EG. Moreover, an attitude scale was administered to evaluate students' attitude towards this approach. The results of a quantitative two-way ANCOVA study showed that Dogme ELT was more effective in enhancing learners' speaking skills. The study of qualitative data showed that most students had favorable opinions of Dogme. The results of this study indicate that the Dogme approach should be employed for advanced EFL levels, however it should be applied with more care.

Key words: *Dogme Approach, Speaking skill, TEFL Egyptian students, Attitude.*

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1. Introduction

The main purpose of language is communication. However, language learning strategies and resources frequently seem to overlook the reality that conversation is the most common form of communication. Since speaking is regarded as a complex process, most students have found it to be rather difficult. Its complexity stems from the production process itself. It is common to see considerable complexity among TEFL students, particularly in self-study/pair work exercises and communicative activities used in class. Communication, as defined by Natale & Lubniewski (2018), is the process of transmitting information among people, groups, institutions, and organizations in written, oral, or signed forms through any medium at hand.

English language teaching (ELT) has made numerous attempts to use a variety of ways to support English-speaking abilities throughout the past few decades. Dogme ELT is recognized as one among them. The Dogme approach gained its name from a Danish film movement that attempted to liberate cinema from a fixation with technique and an overdependence on technology (Thornbury, 2013). It was inspired by the idea that conventional ELT approaches regard students as passive receiver of structure and vocabulary (Thornbury, 2012). The purpose of Dogme approach, according to Thornbury, was to highlight the overuse of means in ELT classrooms where the authentic communication is "...buried under an avalanche of photocopies." (Abdullah, 2017)

Dogme has its origins in the study of communicative languages. It has been highlighted that Dogme is compatible with insightful instruction and that it aims to "humanize the classroom through a radical pedagogy of conversation" in addition to being compatible with reflective teaching. In terms of methodology rather than philosophy, it also has many characteristics in common with task-based language acquisition. Although there is little research supporting Dogme, Thornbury contends that it is likely to provide outcomes similar to task-based learning because of its similarities. Consider the research showing that when students are completing communicative tasks, they are more likely to engage, generate language, and work together to co-construct their studying. (Daniel, 2017)

The founders of the Dogme ELT movement, Meddings and Thornbury (2009), note that Dogme ELT is "...a special manner of being a teacher." Additionally, they assert that it is a learner-centered method of instruction that allows for spoken interaction between students and the teacher without the use of pre-written materials or lesson plans. They contend that English instructors should only use the materials that the students bring to class. They see Dogme ELT as a critical pedagogy since it encourages teachers to have skepticism regarding resources, such as course books, or resources for listening.

According to Thornbury (2009), listening exercises should not be sourced from pre-recorded recordings but rather from the teacher and students themselves. On the other hand, he thinks that any evaluation procedure's criteria should be decided with the students in order to assess students' development. He believed that in the Dogme ELT classroom, teachers should also be evaluated, but the evaluation should solely take into account whether or not the students are bored.

Briefly, a deeper comprehension of the learner's needs is a basic principle of the Dogme pedagogy in teaching language speaking skills. While acknowledging that there have been more effective approaches that concentrate on different facets of language

acquisition than this, Dogme ELT also bears some of the responsibility for setting up the conditions necessary for meaningful language learning. According to Dogme ELT, there is no specific structure that justifies this as a method. The teacher's position will be diminished, allowing the students to direct the course of the session. With the teacher there, the students will interact without fear. Thus, using Dogme ELT to teach English speaking skills will boost a person's activity level.

2. Review of Literature

The use of conversation-driven communication in the classroom is required by the Dogme communicative approach, which is not based on textbooks. Any foreign language teacher's major goal is to teach students new language components that they may use to communicate. Dogme can therefore produce the important language in the classroom and assist instructors in addressing the desires of the students. The Dogme approach states that it is up to the students to pick which language components should be learned, not the instructors or the course material. According to Meddings and Thornbury (2009), Dogme allows instructors to reflect more on their instruction in the classroom. Additionally, they give students the chance to study and pick up language through actual discussions.

In one example, Sketchley (2011) used questionnaires with both closed- and open-ended questions to gather information from fifteen teachers and fifteen students to compare the variations in their perspectives on the use of Dogme ELT. Two teachers were also the subjects of interviews. His investigation revealed divergent views among lecturers and students concerning the three fundamental tenets of Dogme ELT (emergent language, materials-light, conversation-driven). Even though some of the study's members were persuaded that Dogme ELT might be used in their lectures, others preferred more structured, materials-based sessions.

Worth (2012) also conducted a study to determine whether course book-based lessons and Dogme ELT were equally well-liked by nine Japanese language students. He employed a Dogme

technique in conjunction with the course text to achieve this goal. He employed open-ended questions, interviews and group discussions with three students as data gathering techniques. It was shown that students strongly linked studying for exams with the course text. Additionally, they valued the Dogme ELT courses when they were taught along with the lessons from the course books.

In order to determine the utilization of Dogme ELT, Xerri (2012) prepared Dogme procedures once every month throughout the course of an academic year. He kept a journal where he recorded the advantages and disadvantages of each lesson. Additionally, he gathered information from students through unstructured interviews and feedback forms. According to an analysis of his data, Dogme ELT may be utilized in test preparation classes as well, despite the perception that it is an uncommon technique. This is because the communication and language that develops in the classroom make it beneficial. He also talked about how Dogme ELT's learner-centered and minimal-materials philosophy could provide teachers more control over their classrooms.

The main objective of the Egyptian study of Mohamed (2019) was to evaluate how successfully Dogme developed the speaking abilities and confidence of the student instructors. To direct this study, two statistical hypotheses were established. To explore the study hypotheses, the research used a one-group research design. The participants were (N=44) first-year English majors at the Beni Suef faculty of education. The study's tools and resources include a pre-post speaking exam, a speaking self-efficacy scale, a speaking skills checklist, a speaking rubric, and ELT Dogme. The study's findings demonstrated that Dogme ELT influenced improving students' speaking abilities and self-efficacy. Both language teachers and academics performing classroom research should consider the consequences of this study.

To find out what EFL instructors and their students thought of Dogme ELT, Abdullah (2017) conducted a study. 38 students and three university EFL instructors participate in the study. instructors were introduced to the tenets of Dogme ELT through pertinent

articles, exercises, and sample lessons. They had to deliver a lesson that adhered to the tenets of Dogme ELT. After then, both teachers and students responded to surveys asking for their impressions on Dogme ELT. The outcomes were encouraging, and it was recommended that Dogme ELT be incorporated into the established EFL programmes.

Furthermore, the study by Sarani and Malmir (2019) tried to investigate the impact of willingness to communicate (WTC) and Dogme ELT on L2 speaking among EFL students at a language institute across a range of skill levels. In three entire classrooms serving as the experimental groups, and other intact courses were chosen to serve as the control groups. These students received conventional communicative language teaching (CLT) for their L2 education. There were thirty 1.5-hour sessions over the course of the two succeeding semesters of treatment. Dogme ELT was found to be more effective than CLT for advanced learners' speaking and WTC, but not for intermediate and upper-intermediate students, according to quantitative data analysis using two-way ANCOVA. Only a few upper-intermediate students and many advanced students had favorable sentiments with Dogme ELT, according to qualitative data analysis. The results of the inquiry point to the usage of Dogme ELT for advanced EFL levels and the need for greater prudence in its implementation.

Thornbury (2005) concluded that his Dogme ELT system is based on three key principles: conversation-driven studying, the use of light resources, and the emergence of L2 naturally. Dogme approach adheres to the maxim that learning a second language involves speaking in it, and vice versa. It places an emphasis on the language at suprasternal discourse level and facilitates language studying through numerous reliable dialogues. The Dogme method uses a light resources method to be pro-learner, struggling that the use of traditional and prepared resources can frustrate genuine learning due to issues like affordability, availability cultural bias, and digital literacy necessities, even though it occasionally offers

the option of light materials to students and instructors in case these materials are required and positively employed. The ability to speak a foreign language smoothly may not be taught; rather, it must certainly develop via involving in plenty of cooperative dialogues and innovative practice of the language. The instructor can encourage the development of communicative capability by praising students for productive conversations, retelling the exchanges, and analyzing/reviewing the group interactions.

As mentioned in the review above, Dogme ELT has consistently asserted that their ground-breaking approach can especially foster L2 students' speaking and conversational abilities as well as inspire and stimulate L2 English students to be more willing and self-assured to communicate in English. As a result, the current study was started to analytically examine the efficiency of Dogme ELT in contrast to traditional approaches like teacher talk and communicative language education on the speaking ability and communication in English of Egyptian EFL learners.

3. Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of language is communication. However, language learning strategies and resources frequently seem to overlook the reality that conversation is the most common form of communication. There is a risk of instructors and students becoming overly immersed in materials and ignoring the learning opportunities provided by real social interaction in a profession marked by an plenty of published studying resources, materials and websites.

A pilot study was carried out to gauge the speaking proficiency of the students. Thirty first-year students in the English Department of the Faculty of Arts at Delta University made up the sample for the pilot project. The TOEFL ITP test was given. The test's findings revealed that they clearly lack speaking abilities, particularly in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and interaction. Eighty percent of them struggle with sound pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns to the point where their bad pronunciation obfuscates conversation and inhibits them

from conveying their meaning. 90% of students struggle with fluency simply because they don't have the vocabulary or grammar to articulate what they want to say. 70% of pupils struggle with their ability to engage with others.

Previous literature in the Egyptian context, such as those by Mohamed (2019), Sayed (2016), and Aly, et al. (2013), which emphasized that EFL Egyptian students' speaking skills are abandoned and highlighted the crucial necessity for practical teaching approaches to improve speaking skills, have also served to accentuate the problem of the study. It has been determined that speaking is a challenge for student instructors. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to create Dogme-based exercises that will help people improve their speaking abilities and sense of self-efficacy.

4. Research Questions

The following questions can be used to summarize the study problem:

1. What is the impact of Dogme approach on Delta University EFL students' speaking skill?
2. What Delta University EFL students' attitudes toward the effectiveness of Dogme approach for enhancing their speaking skill?

5. Hypothesis of the Study

The following null hypothesis was formed, to fulfill the purpose of the present study:

- There is no statistically significant variance between the mean scores of EG and CG in speaking skills.

6. Importance of the Study

The current study is expected to be of value for:

- English language instructors: to involve their students in determining on their priorities each lesson and plays the role of a facilitator of their purposes.
- Students: to practice related dialogues and develop the meaning which is appropriate to the topic.

- Course developers by giving experimental evidence and more visions regarding the potential of practicing a real learning atmosphere based on the web-based software system for English department learning.
- TEFL researchers by shedding the light to novel research fields since few preceding studies have conducted Dogme for the students at the faculty of Art, English department.

7. Limitations

1. Faculty of Arts, at Delta University.
2. The academic year 2022-2023- Spring semester.
3. English speaking and listening course.

8. Methodology

A. Participants

Sixty freshmen students from the faculty of Arts, English department at Delta University. They were assigned to study "English speaking and listening" course during the spring semester of the 2022–2023 academic year. They were divided to two equal classes (n= 30) to represent experimental and control groups.

B. Instruments

The current study made use of the following instruments:

Speaking placement test

Prior to the treatment, the researcher gave each group a speaking exam to determine whether they were equivalent. The six activities in the TOEFL IBT speaking test range in difficulty from 0 to 4. The total result is then transformed into a scaled score between 0 and 30 using ETS-certified criteria by competent TOEFL raters (suggested by EST website, 2018). The learner is given a prompt on a common issue and has 45 seconds to express his view about it in the team's first task, which is referred to as an independent task (tasks 1 and 2). The participant must speak for one minute about a campus setting or academic subject after reading the text or listening to an audio track for the second pair of integrated activities (tasks 4 and 5). In tasks five and six, which are both integrative in nature, students have one minute to respond to questions after listening to an audio file. The findings show that, prior to treatment (t = 1.03, P 0.05), there was

no statistically significant difference between the two groups' mean speaking proficiency ratings.

Speaking Pre-/Post-tests

A speaking test that was used as both a pre- and post-test to gauge students' progress was used to gauge their improvement. The following speaking abilities were intended to be measured by the tests: employing several, pertinent words, accurately applying grammatical rules, and speaking with comprehensible pronunciation. communicating well, socializing, and speaking clearly.

Through the review of five TEFL professionals, the legitimacy of the speaking test was guaranteed. The alpha approach was used to gauge the speaking test's dependability. The speaking exam result was 0.82, which was a significant 0.01 score. The researcher scored the tests according to a rubric. It is based on testing students' interactive communication skills, vocabulary development, fluency, and grammatical accuracy.

Students' questionnaire

After the entire experiment, EG students were asked to take part in a questionnaire with twelve Likert-scale items to express their opinions on using the Dogme technique. It was modified from Phisutthangkoon (2012) and sent to five ELT specialists for validation. During the pilot study, the Cronbach Alpha(α) Coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated, and it was r = 0.75. Additionally, the researcher used an attitude questionnaire to collect students' sentiments towards the Dogme technique. Ten items on a Likert scale with a five-point rating range, from very low to very high, make up the survey. The questionnaire was piloted with forty EFL students after the thesis adviser and ELT experts verified its validity; the resulting Cronbach Alpha (α) Coefficient was 0.76.

C. The treatment

It was held in the spring semester of 2023 and lasted roughly twelve weeks. (The first and last ones for the pre-posttests) CG were introduced to the communicative language approach, which is the traditional technique of teaching speaking and listening. While EG were instructed using the Dogme technique. wherein the foundation of the entire educational process is the past knowledge that pupils bring to the classroom. The lesson plan was created through meaningful conversation and actual discourse. The instructor's job is to direct and assist students in giving their learning a thematic structure. All the students were seated in a circle around a table. The instructor guided the free talking to reflect normal conversation, which is characterized by spontaneous spoken words occurring in real time.

According to the of principles Dogme, students select the studied topics. In the current study, they nominated to study conversations related to the following topics:

1. my hometown.
2. my university.
3. A Day with friends
4. Introducing myself.
5. At the beach
6. At a great city
7. my favorite hobbies
8. Sports
9. Cinema and actors.
10. cooking

The lecturer instructed the students to attempt to construct discussions pertaining to each subject at a time, and he assisted them in putting such conversations into action. One session each week for ten sessions totaled the treatment's duration. Two hours were allotted for each session.

Data Analysis and Results

The findings of the current study are presented in terms of the study questions as follows:

The first study question" What is the impact of Dogme approach on Egyptian EFL students' speaking skill?" In response to this question, Independent sample t-tests were conducted. Students' scores on the five speaking sub- skills were compared to get specific data on individual speaking skills. These results are shown in the following table 1.

Table1: T value of CG and EG in the Post- Test of Speaking Adequacy

Speaking sub- skills	N	Mean Score		SD		T Value
		Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	
Comprehensible pronunciation	30	2.334	3.01	.479	.779	-3.57**
Grammatical Rules	30	2.5798	3.0391	.578	.749	-2.38**
Vocabulary	30	2.510	3.0734	.781	.503	-3.07**
Fluency	30	2.1260	2.5766	.449	1.051	-2.34**
Communicative interaction	30	2.33	2.9110	.639	.949	-2.34**
Overall speaking Adequacy	30	11.8760	14.7150	1.036	1.347	-7.93**

According to the above data presented in table 1, there are statistically significant differences between the CG and EG in the post-test of speaking proficiency that favor EG. The EG members received an overall mean speaking score of 14,7150, with a mean score of 3.01 in comprehensible pronunciation, 3.0391 in using grammatical rules, 3.0734 in vocabulary proficiency, 2.5766 in fluency, and 2.9110 in communicative engagement. In contrast, CG had lower mean scores for each sub-skill that was evaluated. The total t-test result shows that the difference is significant at the (0.001) level, with a t-value of (-7.93). As a result, the study's null hypothesis is disproved.

Results of Questionnaire

The following statistical information was examined to provide an answer to the second study question about students' opinions and attitudes towards the Dogme Approach at the conclusion of the intervention. First, self-rating scores from the perception questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The findings showed that students had a favorable opinion of employing communicative activities and gave it a very high rating (M = 4.31). The outcomes are displayed in Table 2

Table2: Students' Perceptions toward Using Dogme ELT

Item	Mean	SD
1. Studying through Dogme offers a relaxed environment and I am pleased to practice English naturally.	4.31	.61
2. Studying through real communicative events without assigned materials support me to enhance my speaking skills.	4.41	.58
3. Studying through Dogme procedures improve my self-trust in speaking English.	4.53	.63
4. I recognize the steps of doing the communicative activities evidently.	4.23	.54
5. Dogme procedures inspires us to better stimulate our vocabulary and grammar knowledge.	4.21	.84
6. Studying through open conversations encourage a good relationship among us, and our instructor.	4.21	.84
7. Studying through communicative activities activates our interests and needs.	4.21	.62
8. I recognize that English is significant after practicing through communicative activities.	4.23	,81
9. Studying through communicative activities inspire me to think and enhance my self-trust.	4.28	.76
10. Studying through communicative activities aids me to learn English spontaneously.	4.31	.69
11. Dogme procedure could increase our talking fluency and stream of speaking.	4.38	.63
12. I can apply the knowledge in the classroom to use in my daily life after learning through communicative activities.	4.46	.72
Total	4.32	.69

The overall mean scores of the students were quite high, with a mean score of (4.32), as shown in Table 2. The outcomes were satisfactory, and the students' opinions of the use of activities were favorable. The item with the highest perception was item 3 (M = 4.53). Students who participated in communicative activities attested to an increase in their self-confidence in speaking ability. Item 12 (M = 4.46) had the second-highest perception score. Students said they could use what they learned in speaking class to sharpen their speaking skills for use in daily life. Item 4 (M = 4.23),

item 5 (M = 4.21), item 6, item 7 (M = 4.21), and item 8 (M = 4.23) all had low levels of favorable perception.

Additionally, the students were requested to complete an attitude survey to learn more about their attitudes towards the use of Dogme ELT in the classroom. The results of the students' self-ratings were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that students had extremely favorable opinions towards these activities (M = 4.47). The outcomes are shown in Table 3:

Table3: Students' Attitudes toward Using Dogme ELT

Item	Mean	SD
1. Communication activities in English class are beneficial for me.	4.33	.56
2. The communicative activities are pleasurable, varied and amusing.	4.36	.56
3. The content of communicative activities are suitable for my proficiency level.	4.03	.92
4. The procedures of using communicative activities is clear.	4.18	.64
5. The content and topics the of communicative activities suit my needs.	4.18	.73
6. I practice speaking English as much as possible before I go to class	4.16	.85
7. The communicative activities are stimulating.	3.43	1.02
8.. I feel talkative when participating in Dogme activities in the classroom.	4.34	.64
9. The communicative activities encourage me to speak English out of the classroom.	4.48	.63
10. I feel cooperative when participating in English communication activities in the classroom?	4.46	.64
Total	4.19	.73

The students' overall mean scores for using Dogme techniques in speaking sessions are quite high (M = 4.18), as shown in Table 3. As students answered, item 9 (M = 4.48) received the greatest favorable attitude, indicating that these activities were successful in encouraging them to speak up in public. The students' second-highest positive attitude—that these activities boost their collaboration and propensity to talk—was expressed in response to item 10 (M = 4.46). However, students reported that item 7 (M = 3.43) had the least favorable attitude. Some of them replied that the Dogme activities were difficult.

Discussion

Data analysis indicates that the Dogme ELT is useful for enhancing the speaking abilities of freshmen majoring in English at Delta University's college of arts. The statistics supported the notion that speaking abilities and self-efficacy were both developed by demonstrating that students' scores improved throughout the course of the twelve-week research.

Previous studies (such as Tomlinson, 2012; Hawrwood, 2016; Sayed, 2016; Mohamed, 2019) have backed up these conclusions. For instance, Hawrwood (2016) argued that books and teaching aids are essential components of instruction for EFL/ESL classes at the elementary and intermediate levels, asserting that "a textbook is an integral part of the course and the syllabus - indeed, in many classrooms the book functions as a de facto syllabus, and institutional and national exams may be partly or wholly constructed around it" (p. 263). The lack of a curriculum and course book, which serve as the foundation of instruction, appears to have been a major factor in the Dogme ELT classes' lower speaking improvement at the intermediate and upper-intermediate levels.

Additionally, the Egyptian research of Mohamed (2019) demonstrated that adopting the Dogme may enhance instruction, instructional conversation, and ongoing speaking skills and self-efficacy growth for all students. The outcomes of the current study could be attributed to Dogme ELT's free nature, which fits the way people live nowadays and what most students want. This study is based on the preferences of the students who chose the course's topics, which deviate from the conventional learning environment of the classroom and the school.

The results of the current study indicated that most students had good sentiments about the effectiveness and usefulness of using Dogme techniques. They stated that speaking more fluently, accurately, and complexly while communicating in English about their favorite subjects and interests can help them improve their speaking skills. Participants also shown passion and motivation when working in groups to create English sentences and practice

communicating with one another. The kids now feel more comfortable speaking English thanks to the ten weeks of practice. These findings are consistent with earlier research by Ellis (2008), MacIntyre et al. (2001), Thornbury (2011), Sarani & Malmir (2019), and Mohamed (2019).

The findings of Nanthaboot (2012) are also consistent with the findings of the present study because these activities gave the students more opportunities to practise speaking in class, improve their pronunciation, have fun in class, and have greater confidence when speaking. These benefits helped the students speak fluently and correctly. The students stated their happiness with communicative activities as a result of these factors. All of the activities were designed to encourage the students to participate in those that would advance their English-speaking abilities. Students subconsciously picked up language by engaging in communicative activities. For instance, the students focused on communicating in English using phrases and focusing on the meaning when they completed the information gap task, simulating communication in real life. After finishing the activities, their speaking ability gradually was improved.

According to the aforementioned discussion, it is clear that studying through Dogme procedure activities qualified students to communicate decisively and their attitudes were reformed positively toward using these activities and procedures in the classroom.

Limitations

The current study has some drawbacks, including a limited sample size and insufficient study participants in each group. Additionally, the customary style of examinations and the conventional structure of Egyptian courses. Additionally, this method of instruction needs a particular kind of administration, teachers, and pupils. It requires professors who are accepting students' differing viewpoints and are open-minded. Additionally, it needs a particular administration that is open to change. Students should express themselves and choose the subjects that are the most

relevant to their needs. To properly reap the benefits of learning, an educator must also be knowledgeable and capable of managing the class, in addition to being open-minded themselves.

Implications and Recommendations

The foundation of Dogme approach is conversational language instruction. It has drawn attention for its compatibility with reflective teaching, as well as for its objective to "humanize the classroom through a radical pedagogy of dialogue" and for its compatibility with reflective teaching. In contrast to the conventional materials-based approach, Dogme ELT allows students enough chances to express themselves verbally in response to the teacher's requests. This gives students the chance to put their newly acquired language skills to use, which boosts their confidence while speaking in day-to-day interactions. Additionally, by using Dogme ELT, teachers can generate unexpected circumstances while also saving time that would otherwise be spent on class planning. However, it would be fair to draw the conclusion from this study that Dogme cannot completely replace the traditional forms of ELT practices but can be used to provide students with some variety throughout the EFL programmes, given the participants' mixed sentiments.

These findings lead to the cautious recommendation that Dogme ELT be used in advanced EFL classes when the teaching and learning processes aim to increase students' speaking fluency and willingness to communicate. Naturally, the results of this study indicate that Dogme ELT should at the very least employ simple instructional materials and an adaptable overall curriculum.

There is a necessity for more empirical studies in which more teachers and students engage with Dogme approach for longer periods of time in several educational levels, given the short period of time during which teachers and students did so, as well as the small number of participants in the EFL university context of the current study. These potential future research projects might push English instructors and researchers to look beyond the box and incorporate Dogme ELT into their regular courses

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