PUBLICATIONS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology

NATALIA KORICHEVA

Foreign Language Teaching Toolkit To Foster Young Learners To Communicate in English

Russian Preschool Context

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Publications of the University of Eastern Finland
Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology
No 172

University of Eastern Finland
Joensuu
2021

Grano Oy
Jyväskylä, 2021
Editor: Tuula Keinonen
Sales: University of Eastern Finland Library
ISBN: 978-952-61-3772-8 (print)
ISBN: 978-952-61-3773-5 (PDF)
ISSNL: 1798-5625
ISSN: 1798-5625
ISSN: 1798-5633 (PDF)

Koricheva, Natalia
Foreign Language Teaching Toolkit to Foster Young Learners to Communicate in English. Russian Preschool Context
Joensuu: Itä-Suomen yliopisto, 2021
Publications of the University of Eastern Finland
Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology; 172
ISBN: 978-952-61-3772-8 (print)
ISSNL: 1798-5625
ISSN: 1798-5625
ISBN: 978-952-61-3773-5 (PDF)
ISSN: 1798-5633 (PDF)

ABSTRACT

The topic of early start in foreign language learning has become very popular during the last decades in different countries. For foreign language teaching there is no national curriculum at preschool level in Russia. That is why kindergartens can choose a program and a form of organization for teaching English as the most popular foreign language. All this diversity has caused a lot of discussions about the quality of early foreign language teaching for preschoolers. This study investigates the relationship between communicative English teaching methods and young learners' oral communication in a foreign language in Russian kindergartens.

The goal of my research was to explore how an English language teacher can foster young learners, aged from 4 to 7, to speak English during lessons at kindergartens. For this task a special English teaching toolkit was offered and its effectiveness was tested. In the theoretical part of the research, there were discussed the characteristics of preschool English learners. Also, the concepts of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative were discussed in relation to the preschool age. It was described how to develop these characteristics in young learners.

The experimental part of the research started with exploring the difficulties that the teachers and the learners had during English lessons. The data were

collected using mixed method research methods including observations, a questionnaire and interviews. The research participants included 56 children aged from 4 to 7 and four English language teachers. The results indicated that the communicative English teaching methods used by the teachers had not stimulated the learners to use English for oral communication and the children preferred speaking Russian and avoided using English. The research also highlighted the English teachers can describe how to use communicative English teaching methods but they do not implement them in practice. It was revealed that they needed professional training for communicative English teaching with preschool learners.

For fostering young learners to communicate in English during lessons, the foreign language teaching toolkit was offered. It included five communicative techniques as well as pedagogical instructions for using them to create a foreign language learning environment during the lessons in the kindergarten. Two English teachers in the experimental group were trained to use the foreign language teaching toolkit and integrate it into their lessons.

The results of the assessment of the control and experimental groups demonstrate that integration of the foreign language teaching toolkit appeared to foster learners' oral communication in English. The tool stimulated their language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English in the experimental group. The foreign language teaching toolkit can be useful for preschool foreign language teachers and for professional training of future teachers. The participation of the children in the research offered them the opportunity to learn English through communication. The teachers who participated in the research gained the experience of communicative English teaching.

Key words: early foreign language teaching, preschool, kindergarten, communicative teaching techniques, English teachers, language environment, interest, language awareness, communicative initiative, communication.

Koricheva, Natalia
Vieraan kielen opetuksen työkalupakki lasten englanninkielisen kommunikoinnin edistäjänä venäläisessä päiväkotikontekstissa.
Joensuu: Itä-Suomen yliopisto, 2021
Publications of the University of Eastern Finland
Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology; 172
ISBN: 978-952-61-3772-8 (nid.)
ISSNL: 1798-5625
ISSN: 1798-5625
ISBN: 978-952-61-3773-5 (PDF)
ISSN: 1798-5633 (PDF)

TIIVISTELMÄ

Vieraan kielen oppimisen varhaisesta aloittamisesta on tullut erittäin suosittua viime vuosikymmeninä eri maissa.Venäjällä ei ole kansallista esikoulutasolle laadittua opetussuunnitelmaa vieraan kielen opetukseen. Tästä johtuen opetuksessa käytettävät pedagogiset lähestymistavat ja käytännön järjestelyt valitaan päiväkotikohtaisesti, suosituimpana vieraana kielenä englanti. Tästä seuraava käytäntöjen kirjavuus on herättänyt runsaasti keskustelua esikouluikäisille tarjottavan vieraan kielen opetuksen laadusta. Tämä tutkimus kohdistuu englannin kielen opetuksessa käytettävien kommunikatiivisten opetusmenetelmien ja lasten suullisen vieraskielisen kommunikoinnin väliseen yhteyteen venäläisissä päiväkodeissa.

Tutkimukseni tavoitteena oli tutkia, miten englannin kielen opettaja voi edistää 4–7-vuotiaiden lasten suullista englannin kielen käyttöä vieraan kielen oppitunneilla päiväkodeissa. Tutkimuksen teoreettisessa osassa käsiteltiin kielitietoisuuden, kiinnostuksen ja viestintäaloitteen käsitteitä erityisesti esikouluikäisten lasten oppimisen yhteydessä ja tarkasteltiin, miten näiden käsitteiden sisältämiä ominaisuuksia voi kehittää varhaisessa vieraan kielen opetuksessa ja opiskelussa.

Tutkimuksen kokeellinen osa käynnistettiin tutkimalla englannin oppitunteihin liittyviä opettajien ja oppilaiden vaikeuksia. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin

monimenetelmäisesti havainnoilla, kyselyllä ja haastatteluilla. Tutkimukseen osallistui 56 lasta (4-7 -vuotiaita), jotka opiskelivat päiväkodissa englantia ja neljä englannin kielen opettajaa. Tulokset osoittivat, että opettajien käyttämät kommunikatiiviset englannin kielen opetusmenetelmät eivät olleet kannustaneet oppijoita käyttämään englantia suulliseen viestintään ja lapset pitivät parempana puhua venäjää ja välttelivät englannin käyttöä. Tutkimuksessa tuli myös esiin, että englannin opettajat osasivat kuvata, miten kommunikatiivisia englannin kielen opetusmenetelmiä käytetään, mutta he eivät toteuttaneet niitä käytännössä. Tämä osoitti opettajien tarvitsevan koulutusta kommunikatiivisten opetusmenetelmien käyttämiseksi esikouluikäisten englannin kielen opetuksessa.

Lasten englanninkielisen kommunikoinnin edistämiseen tarjottiin vieraan kielen opetuksen työkalupakki (foreign language teaching toolkit). Työkalupakki sisälsi viisi kommunikatiivista opetustekniikkaa sekä pedagogiset ohjeet niiden käyttämiseen vieraan kielen oppimisympäristön luomiseksi päiväkodin oppitunneilla. Koeryhmän kaksi englannin opettajaa koulutettiin käyttämään vieraan kielen opetuksen työkalupakkia ja integroimaan se oppitunteihinsa.

Kontrolli- ja koeryhmien tulokset osoittavat, että vieraan kielen opetuksen työkalupakin integrointi opetukseen edisti oppijoiden englannin kielen käyttöä suullisissa vuorovaikutustilanteissa. Työkalupakin käyttö lisäsi lasten kielitietoisuutta sekä kiinnostusta ja aloitteellisuutta englanninkieliseen kommunikointiin koeryhmässä. Vieraan kielen opetuksen työkalupakkia voidaan hyödyntää sekä esikoulun englannin kielen opettajien työssä että tulevien opettajien koulutuksessa. Tutkimukseen osallistuneet lapset saivat oppia englantia kommunikoimalla englanniksi, opettajat puolestaan saivat kokemusta englannin kielen kommunikatiivisesta opetuksesta.

Avainsanat: varhainen vieraan kielen opetus, esikoulu, päiväkoti, kommunikatiiviset opetustekniikat, englannin opettajat, kieliympäristö, kiinnostus, kielitietoisuus, kommunikatiivinen aloitteellisuus, kommunikaatio.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation has become an important step in my work as an English teacher and the opportunity to try myself in the role of a scientific researcher. This study allowed me to take a deeper look at how young learners study English, and how teachers show their professional skills helping them to achieve good results. I was interested in the question of designing a language environment and applying the principles of bilingualism in kindergarten in my bachelor's degree, and then continued it in my master's study in Herzen University, Russia. Now it is time to thank those who supported me and guided me during my doctoral studies.

I would like to pay my special regards to my main supervisor, Professor Ritva Kantelinen, for her amazing sensitivity and tact in guiding my dissertation. Every discussion and commentary were important steps towards the ultimate goal of the research. In minutes of doubt and uncertainty you resisted my confidence and helped me through the difficulties. Thanks to you, I felt the freedom to explore and really enjoyed my research. It is whole-heartedly appreciated that your great advice for my study proved monumental towards the success of this study. I also want to thank my other supervisors, Professor Victoria Pogosian and Professor Antti Juvonen for your professional support of my research. You helped me look at the research topic from different angles, see new aspects and take them into account that greatly enriched my thesis.

I would like to thank the reviewers of my dissertation, Ph.D, Docent, University Lecturer Emerita, Leena Kuure and Associate Professor Irina Vronskaia, for a deep reading of my dissertation, valuable questions and comments that helped me improve my research. I also want to thank Professor Irina Vronskaia for being my opponent at the public defence of my dissertation.

I want to thank my family and friends who supported me, encouraged me and did not doubt that someday I would defend my thesis. You believed in my successes and worried about me. I especially want to thank my mom and husband. Without you, this research would never have happened.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my late nephew who was so proud of me and believed in me. I hope that you are now as happy as I am.

Many thanks to all who have been involved in supporting me in my journey through my dissertation.

Saint Petersburg, May 2021
Natalia Koricheva

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACTFL – American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
CI – Communicative initiative
CLIL – Content and language integrated learning
df – Degrees of freedom
EFL – English as a foreign language
ELT – English language teaching
EmR – Empirical research
ExR – Experimental research
FL – Foreign language
FLL – Foreign language learning
FLLE – Foreign language learning environment
FLT – Foreign language teaching
FLT toolkit - Foreign language teaching toolkit
LA – Language awareness
RQ – Research question
SD – Standard deviation
TPR – Total physical response

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the research

Over the last ten years, the system of Russian preschool education has changed. Firstly, a new Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education was accepted in 2014. The new standard[1] is distinguished from the previous one, as it emphasizes the value of childhood and personal development of preschoolers and their socialization in Russian society. The process of socialization means involving a child in communication with teachers, peers and other people. Socialization has provided the base for changing all the educational programs of preschool education which are aimed at development of such aspects of a child's life such as multiculturalism, tolerance, living a healthy life and many others. One of the main tasks of preschool education is development of a child's self-identity in the surrounding world: in the family, in the region, in the country.

Early foreign language education is not a compulsory part of preschool education in Russia. That point makes the English language teaching (ELT) process more complicated, as teaching English to young learners is not standardized. The key aim of teaching English to preschoolers is to develop their communicative competence in a foreign language. However, English lessons in the kindergarten often have the form of school lessons that do not meet preschoolers' interests and special characteristics, which typically include the dominance of play activities (Nikitenko & Nikitenko, 2017:26). English teachers avoid using children's native language or, conversely, Russian language is widely spoken during the English lesson in the kindergarten (Avdulova & Krotova, 2015:9). Nikitenko and Nikitenko (2017:26) write that sometimes preschool English lessons turn into learning words, phrases or

[1] Prikaz Ministerstva obrasovaniya i nauki Rossiiskoi Federacii ot 17.10.2013 №1155 "O Federalnom Obrazovatelnom Standarte doshkolnogo obrazovaniya" [The Act of Ministry of Education and Science of Russian Federation from 17.10.2013 №1155 "Concerning the Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education"]. Online. Retrieved 7.05.2015 from минобрнауки.рф/документы/6261. The text is not translated in other languages.

poems by heart instead of providing communication in a foreign language. However, I see the process of English teaching not as teaching words and grammar. A teacher should develop and support young children's positive attitudes towards communication in a foreign language; and give the learner an opportunity to have successful experiences using the foreign language in the classroom. That is why stimulating young learners' interest in speaking English, being aware and active users of this language is the focus of my research.

Finally, the absence of continuity between preschool and grade school education influences the quality of early FLT, because foreign language learning starts in the second grade at school (7–8 years) and there is a time gap in foreign language learning (FLL) between the preschool English learning and grade school (Avdulova & Krotova, 2015:12). Gromov and Kazaeva (2017:107) report that Russian parents are interested in early foreign language learning for their children. Parents want FLL to start in kindergarten. Parents expect that if their children have good results in learning English at preschool age, they will be more successful in learning English at school. Teaching foreign languages to children aged from 4 to 7 is an integral part of modern preschool teaching. Nowadays young learners have many opportunities to use foreign languages: watching TV, listening to songs, reading books, communicating with peers via Internet or travelling.

Communicative competence is one of the key aims of foreign language teaching in Russia (Chernichkina, 2012:193). Orlick (2006:38) notes that teachers can drive learners to the process of using the language and promote their interest in it. At the same time, Hiep (2007:194) states that speaking a foreign language is based on the learner's qualities and personal motivation in using a foreign language for communication. The process of communicative competence development includes two areas: English teachers' professional skills to foster young learners to use English for communication in the classroom and children's personal qualities and readiness for speaking English as a foreign language.

Russian researchers in ELT methodology have studied effective teaching techniques, content and conditions for preschool English teaching (Nikitenko, 2003; Malkina, 2004; Kalmar, 2008, Shumskaya, 2016) focusing on a

preschooler as an active learner who needs support for his/her special nature and psychological characteristics as it is stated in the Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education (2013). Methodological literature in the early foreign language teaching field (Garton et al., 2011; Arikan, 2015) has concentrated principally on teaching techniques and developing language skills. Assessment of preschoolers' interest in speaking a foreign language and their level of communicative initiative are in need of detailed investigation.

When I worked as a preschool English teacher in a kindergarten in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2009–2011, I found out that it was a common situation that children started English learning with enthusiasm and later lost it. My colleagues in different schools in Saint Petersburg confirmed that often children came to school knowing a lot of words in English, but they could not speak the language and were not interested in communicating in English. Although parents expected their children to speak English while on trips and at home, it did not happen. Moreover, my colleagues and the parents of my pupils expressed an opinion that parents often have their own negative experience in FLL and transfer this experience onto their children. It can have a poor impact on learners' desire to learn English. Assessment of children's language skills usually includes testing vocabulary and listening skills at preschool age without focusing on speaking (Protasova & Rodina, 2009:24). Therefore, it is necessary to explore the variety of FLT techniques which are aimed at developing young learners' communicative competence in English and which are appropriate for preschool-age teaching.

1.2 Study purpose

The primary goal of my research is to answer the question: How is it possible to foster preschool learners' use English as a foreign language in Russian kindergartens? English teachers need to have some tools to stop children from avoiding the use of a foreign language for communication. This study investigates effective techniques to promote young learners' language awareness in using foreign and native languages, interest in speaking English and children's communicative initiative in it. The focus of the research is on

exploring how children use the languages during English lessons and how English teachers stimulate children's communication in English. The result of the current research is a detailed description of a special foreign language teaching toolkit (FLT Toolkit). This toolkit is designed to support learners' communication in English: the toolkit should be integrated into the foreign language learning environment (FLLE) to stimulate children using English during kindergarten lessons.

1.3 Structure of the study

The study consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of the current research and the context of preschool FLT in Russian kindergartens. This chapter provides definitions of language awareness, interest, communicative initiative and language learning environment in Russian and an international framework of early FLT as the key concepts of the study. Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical background of the research. It presents the concepts of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in the field of FLT; their levels and characteristics in young learners; and their meaning for fostering children to speak English as a foreign language. Chapter 2 also includes a description of the English teachers' role in supporting learners' communication. The chapter outlines the specification of the foreign language learning environment and it provides a detailed description of the FLT toolkit to foster communication in English during lessons. The FLT toolkit description includes presenting communicative techniques for stimulating learners to use English as a means of communication in Russian kindergartens: using a puppet, commenting, language zoning, gestures and intoning. Chapter 3 introduces the research questions and describes the relations between the research questions in the current research. Chapter 4 describes the research design: the methods, materials and participants of the study, including interviews, a questionnaire and observations as the methods for collecting data. Chapter 4 includes a description of data analysis and ethical considerations as the participants of the research are teachers and preschool children aged from 4 to 7. Chapter 5 outlines the results of the empirical

data analysis in connection with the research questions and the description of the experimental research and its results for testing the effectiveness of techniques for fostering preschoolers to use English as a foreign language for communication. Finally, Chapter 6 provides the conclusions including the summary of the main findings of the research; its limitations, pedagogical relevance and recommendations for future research.

1.4 Teaching English at the preschool level in Russia

Preschool education in the Russian Federation involves children aged from 4 to 7 years old and it is not compulsory. However, the majority of parents wants their children to attend kindergarten because, according to their opinions, it contributes to socialization and prepares them for future school education (Nikitenko & Nikitenko, 2017:26). Kindergartens in Russia can be state-funded or private. Both types realize the diversity of educational programs matching the Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education (2013)[2]. The types of preschool education establishments are common kindergartens, kindergartens specialized in development of particular aspects. For example, esthetical development describes when preschoolers are involved in activities connected with art or physical development or when children have additional classes in sports. There are more types of kindergartens: those for special education serving children with special needs (where children are provided medical support); health improvement kindergartens for children with specific diseases (for example, kindergartens for children with allergic disease, or impairment of vision or hearing); kindergartens which combine several groups of children with special needs; and private child development centers (Taratukhina et al., 2007:7).

[2] Prikaz Ministerstva obrasovaniya i nauki Rossiiskoi Federacii ot 17.10.2013 №1155 "O Federalnom Obrazovatelnom Standarte doshkolnogo obrazovaniya" [The Act of Ministry of Education and Science of Russian Federation from 17.10.2013 №1155 "Concerning the Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education"]. Online. Retrieved 7.05.2015 from минобрнауки.рф/документы/6261

The aim of the Federal State Standard of Preschool Education (2013:8-9) provides general child development according to a child's potential. According to the Standard (2013), children can attend kindergartens from 7am until 7 pm. Usually each age group consists of 15–30 children (private kindergartens can have small groups of 6–10 children), two preschool teachers who work in turn during the day and an assistant who washes, sets out the table and looks after the children. Every day preschoolers have two or four classes depending on the age and also free time when children can play, draw and communicate with each other (Federal State Standard of Preschool Education, 2013).

In state kindergartens, English lessons are not included in the curriculum and they are additional lessons requiring a fee. Sometimes state kindergartens do not have such an option. There is no official statistics on the number of state kindergartens which have English lessons for a fee, and this information is rarely indicated on their websites. Most private kindergartens have both compulsory English lessons two times per week and additional lessons in the evening. Such classes are very popular among parents because they consider such lessons as a preparation for school English learning (Malkina, 2008b:29). Commonly, learners have two English classes per week from 15 minutes (for children 3–4 years old) to 30 minutes (for 6–7 years old). There are no state standards for English teaching programs, and teachers can use a ready English teaching course or can design it by themselves.

Kindergartens which offer English lessons try to employ professionally trained English teachers. For example, Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia in Saint Petersburg trains specialists in the field of early FLT according to the Federal Standard of Higher Education (Pogosian, 2008:49). However, according to the teacher qualification requirements, the administration of a kindergarten can employ any teacher who has a high or vocational professional education in the field of pedagogy without special EFLT training.

Since 2000, the number of preschool language centers and courses has been rapidly growing. In 2018, I analyzed[3]websites of 569 private kindergartens and centers in Saint Petersburg providing English teaching

[3] I have analyzed information presented on the websites of private kindergartens in the sections introducing the English teaching programs; lesson schedule and information about English teachers.

classes or language clubs for preschoolers aged from 4 to 7 to explore the forms of English language education (Table 1). Several parameters were chosen for the analysis: ELT program, aims of English teaching, number of lessons per week, native language of English teachers, a description of the language environment, teaching activities.

Table 1. Types of kindergartens in St. Petersburg which have English teaching programs (Russia, 2018)

	Kindergartens offering early ELT N=569		
Form of English teaching	Bilingual kinder-gartens (9%, n=51)	English lessons (74%, n=421)	English clubs (85%, n=484)
Frequency of English lessons	During the whole day	2–3 times per week (15–45 minutes)	2–3 times per week (15–45 minutes)

According to the analysis of the websites in 2018, 9% (n=51) of kindergartens offered bilingual (or immersion) education in Russian and English and employed both native and non-native English teachers. In Figure 1, the types of ELT programs offered at St. Petersburg bilingual kindergartens in 2018 are presented. 83% (n=472) of them claimed that their curricula were based on British or American ELT programs; 11% (n=63) claimed a combination of international ELT programs and programs written by English teachers employed in the centers; and 6% (n=34) of kindergartens offered original ELT programs written especially for their centers.

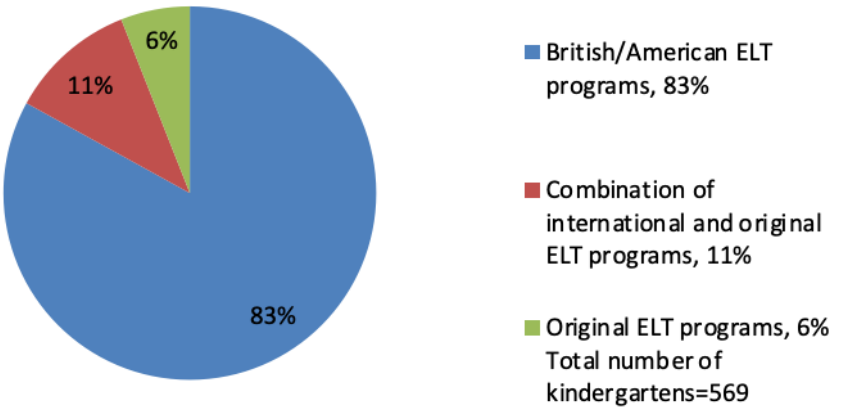

Figure 1. ELT programs of bilingual kindergartens in St. Petersburg (Russia, 2018)

Generally, the goals of English teaching in bilingual kindergartens included such aims as developing intellectual abilities and creativity and developing of children's learning interest. The educational focus in all the bilingual kindergartens was on preparing children for communication in English and developing their communicative skills in English. 74% (n=421) of private kindergartens in St. Petersburg offered ELT programs which included two or three lessons per week. They were also based on British or American English teaching courses (for example, Pebbles, Family and Friends, Helen Doron, The Early Years Foundation Stage and others) for preschoolers or designed by English teachers especially for the particular kindergarten.

85% (n=484) of kindergartens did not include English lessons in the curriculum of the kindergarten but offered English language clubs in the evening two or three times (15-60 minutes duration) per week or on the weekend. The aims of English teaching were similar to ones in bilingual kindergartens – developing communicative skills in English and introducing English-speaking culture. Most kindergartens focused on the combination of a communicative ELT approach and using games and play-roles during English lessons. Native English-speaking teachers worked in 10 of 484 kindergartens.

Besides the kindergartens, I have analyzed 289 websites[4] of English language courses that offered teaching English for preschoolers in Saint Petersburg in 2018. Native English-speaking teachers worked in 42% (n=121) of organizations. 20% (58 kindergartens) offered individual lessons given by English teachers to one learner. 97% (n=280) of courses were based on British or American ELT programs and 3% (n=9) used programs written by English teachers especially for the course. Generally, language courses offered lessons from two to five times per week; the duration of one lesson varied from 45 to 90 minutes. The aims of programs included developing of communicative skills in English and integration of English teaching into other activities (music, dancing or crafts) to motivate young learners to use English for communication.

As specified in the information presented on the websites, all the kindergartens and courses which were analyzed indicated that they used a specially designed language environment for teaching English to young learners. The programs and teaching conditions described the language environment as a complex of authentic materials (books, posters, toys, videos and songs). Most of the organizations claimed that their language environment was safe for preschool children and that they provided emotionally comfortable and positive conditions.[5]

Kindergartens in St. Petersburg offer a lot of forms of teaching English to preschoolers; this service is much in demand among parents, but early foreign language education is not included in the Federal State Education Standard of Preschool Education in Russia. This contradiction causes difficulties when administrations and English teachers include English in the curriculum (Nikitenko & Nikitenko, 2017:26) because there is not a common program or recommendations for preschool education. That is why English teachers have to adapt ELT programs to the new Education Standard and its goals.

[4] I have analyzed information presented on the websites of English language courses in the sections introducing the English teaching programs; lesson schedule and information about English teachers.

[5] An example of a website of a kindergarten offering English teaching for preschoolers: https://spb.poliglotiki.ru/anglijskij-yazyk-detskij-sad.html (visited on 24.05.2020).

According to the Federal Education Standard of Preschool Education, there can be several objectives of early FLT (Nikitenko & Nikitenko, 2017:28-29): cognitive development (the development of auditory vigilance and phonemic awareness); speech development (the development of language and speech ability through playing games); communicative development (the development of ability to use foreign communication: start the conversation, support it, ask something, thank and finish the conversation); and ethic development (the development of personal qualities which are necessary for interaction with the representatives of different cultures).

These aims imply the designing of special teaching conditions which support learners' desire to use English as a tool of communication; develop learners' communicative skills in both native and foreign languages; stimulate cultural and language awareness of young children; and have impact on learners' personal development. Consequently, the focus of the research is to explore a FLT toolkit to support young learners' communication and interest in speaking English as a foreign language in the kindergarten through designing a special language environment which helps to develop children's language awareness, their communicative skills in English and fosters their interest in using English in different activities.

1.5 Definitions of concepts

This study relates to various areas in the context of preschool education: foreign language teaching, pedagogy, psychology and psycholinguistics. Defining the main concepts of the study is essential to provide a common understanding within the scope of the study. The early foreign language teaching process includes a range of techniques for stimulating young learners to use English during lessons, their interest and motivation for speaking English. This methodological area is very wide and includes many components and factors. That is why it is necessary to make a point of the key concepts of the research: communication, language awareness, interest, communicative initiative and the foreign language learning environment (FLLE). The concepts used in this research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Research concepts

Concept	Definition
Communication	- a process of information exchanging between individuals using a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior (The Merriam Webster's dictionary[6], Newstrom, 2008:709).
Language awareness	- children's ability to choose the language of communication in various circumstances and their ability to switch the language code (Svalberg, 2009:246).
Interest in using a foreign language	- a psychological state of a learner which provides a high level of attention, intensity of efforts and sustainable engagement related to communication during the lesson which is accompanied by a feeling of pleasure and a sense of achievement (Hidi & Renninger, 2010:112).
Communicative initiative	- learner's readiness to participate in communication in a foreign language and his or her interaction with other people in the target language (Tarasyk, 2003:12).
Foreign language learning environment	- a system organized in a certain way which includes speech and language material, physical environment, teaching tasks and management (Orehova, 2003:8).

Communication

In a narrow sense, communication means learners' use of a foreign language for interaction during a lesson (Tarasyk, 2003:12). However, in international and Russian foreign language teaching methodology, the concept of communication is defined in various ways and contexts. According to the definition by Brown (2013) the process of communication must be successful; meaning the receiver (a learner or a teacher) is able to understand the message. Some researchers (e.g. Bodalev, 2007:85) highlight that one of conditions for successful communication is the learner's wish or readiness to communicate with other people using a foreign language. Halyapina (2017:303) states that interest in communication can be stimulated during English lessons and in other communicative situations outside the kindergarten. The promotion of children's interest in the learning process is one of the aims in preschool English education (Nikitenko, 2003:34). Pedagogical psychologists suppose

[6] Retrived from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communication

interest to be a base of positive attitude to foreign languages (Ryan & Deci, 2009:173) and one of the most stable motives for learning a particular subject (Radchenko, 2009:134).

Language awareness

However, when speaking about communication of preschool children, their native language cannot be ignored, as the mother tongue is preschoolers' dominant language of interaction with other people. Deller and Rinvolucri (2008:35) write that using the mother tongue during English lessons allows young learners to give feedback about activities in English and support their fluency in using English as a foreign language. The native language can be used for explaining new words and meanings, giving instructions for activities, checking learners' understanding or discussing something (O'Keeffe, 2011).

Spada and Lightbown (2008:4) note that avoiding the mother tongue has negative effects on learners and decreases their interest in using a foreign language. The target language should be used throughout lesson, although avoiding children's native language is impossible, as young children cannot understand all the explanations and instructions in the target language (Er, 2014:831). Native language should be used for checking learners' understanding of words and phrase meaning or solving learners' personal problems. Using learners' mother tongue helps to reduce stress and make input clear and comprehensible for them. Although, the task for an English teacher is to find the balance between using native and foreign languages during the lesson and foster children's desire to use English instead of Russian for communication (Swan, 2013:68). The balance can be found through making rules for using both languages by children.

Language awareness affects children's desire to choose English or Russian for speaking with their teacher or peers. Traditionally, in a broad way, language awareness is defined as a person's sensitivity to various aspects of the language and its use in various situations (Svalberg, 2009:244). In this research I concentrate on the phonological aspect of language awareness defined by Svalberg (2009:246). For preschool learners of English, awareness of code-switching is necessary for conscious use of English during lessons. The idea is that if young learners are interested in using English, they will

choose English for communication instead of Russian consciously. On the other hand, if young learners are given rules explaining when English and Russian should be used, they can use Russian and keep their identity safe if they need.

The issue of language awareness in preschool foreign language education is not widely studied. However, Er (2014:829) confirms that young children can make conscious choices in learning. Developing language awareness supposes using children's native language that is necessary for preschoolers because of their reduced language and speech skills in English as a foreign language. Consequently, stimulating young learners' interest in using English provides the development of their language awareness manifesting in conscious code-switching between Russian and English during the lesson.

Interest

Russian psychologist Rubinshtein (2003:453) considers interest to be a manifestation of intellectual and emotional activity. Russian psychologists Markova and Matis (2005:17-18) define the concept of interest as a person's cognitive attitude to reality. In this study, the definition relevant for any age by Hidi and Renninger (2010:112) is applied: the learner's interest is a driver for using a foreign language during the lesson. Successful communication includes two important elements: readiness for communication and the process of communication itself. A learner's readiness can be attained with a sufficient level of communicative interest that spurs a child into using a foreign language and supports his or her initiative in speaking English.

Communicative initiative

Stern (1992:177) stresses that communicative initiative means involving young learners in "real" communication. He focuses on using the language for communicational purposes according to circumstances, in other words, according to the context of the communicational situation. In this thesis, the concept of communicative initiative is defined as a learner's participation in communication (Tarasyk, 2003:12). It supposes the interaction with other people in English; using a foreign language for communicative purposes. In other words, if a child is interested in speaking English, he or she will use it a

lot by asking questions, repeating words and phrases (Nikitenko & Nikitenko, 2017:28).

Communicative English teaching is focused on language as a communicative tool not as a set of grammar rules and phrases (Er, 2014:830). Following the communicative approach, young learners' communicative skills in a foreign language are developed, such as asking, inviting, agreeing or disagreeing. This approach supposes that if learners are interested enough, they use the language for communication. English lessons should give opportunities to use real language through various communicative activities for learners; even if they use any foreign words or phrases they know in a foreign language – they communicate (Harmer, 2008).

Foreign language learning environment

The organization of communication in a foreign language demands creating special conditions which foster young learners to speak English and develop their language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English. The foreign language learning environment (FLLE) can be a condition which accumulates motivational factors and supports children's foreign language speaking. The foreign language learning environment is a kind of artificial language environment created for foreign language teaching. In this research, FLLE includes participants, visuals, foreign and native input and output and English teaching techniques (adapted from Orehova, 2003:8). Environment as a strong motivational factor in the foreign language learning process and environmental approach provides opportunities to realize preschoolers' communication needs (Thornburn & Marshall, 2014:5). Place-based learning inspires young children to experience complementary dimensions of their intellect: investigation, observation and application of the language (Orr, 2013:186). FLLE can stimulate learners to use English as a foreign language. However, an English teacher needs to organize FLLE and influence children's communication.

Muñoz (2017:71) states that FLLE involves the learner's personal experience in classroom activities that raise children's interest and motivation for learning English as a foreign language. FLLE allows realizing key ideas of the State Federal Standard of Preschool Education as supporting children's unique

characteristics which are important at preschool age: activeness and need in playing activities. FLLE makes the English learning process learner-centered where an English teacher is a facilitator (Armstrong, 2012:6). After clarifying the concepts of the research, it's important to analyze which conditions and parameters can be managed using the FLT toolkit.

2 Fostering young learners' communication in English: theoretical background

This section introduces the role of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in preschool children's use of English as a foreign language for communicative purposes. The section includes the description of a special foreign language learning environment as a key methodological element providing the complex of motivational and communicative factors for stimulating young learners' English speaking. The section concludes with a detailed description of an English teaching toolkit which consists of communicative techniques for fostering and supporting children's language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English during the kindergarten lessons.

2.1 Language awareness for differentiating the languages

When young children start learning a foreign language, their linguistic view of the world changes (Orehova, 2013:10). Language awareness at preschool age refers to the individual child's implicit and explicit sensitivity to the language and its use (Duff and Tomblin, 2018:1). Leaning a foreign language, children become aware of the phonology of their native and the target languages. This phonological aspect of language awareness is focused in the current research as preschoolers use oral communication only without writing or reading in English as a foreign language.

The first difference children face is the language contrast– between their native and a foreign language. Preschoolers do not have the cognitive maturity of adults; children study the language without conscious learning at the early stages (Er, 2014:830). Some children engage in communication in a foreign language easily even having limited language proficiency; some children prefer listening to speaking; and others avoid speaking a foreign language because they feel frustrated due to the unrecognized speech.

The last two groups of children can potentially have difficulties in learning a foreign language and they need special support from the teacher.

Carter (2003:64) states that language awareness is characterized by a person's sensitivity to the functions of language and to its properties. The main language function to fulfill is communicative, as it is an estimated aim of using any language. Young children of preschool age are to analyze the language codes of native and foreign languages as symbolic systems (Roberts, 2011:45). Language awareness development at preschool age has not been widely researched in the field of early FLT and is focused on separate types of awareness, such as phonological or written (Berk, 2013:73; Trawick-Smith, 2014:89; Yopp & Yopp, 2009). However, the analysis of methodological literature in the field of FLT makes it possible to highlight several stages of language awareness development in children aged from 4 to 7 years learning English as a foreign language in the kindergarten. The stages are presented in Figure 2.

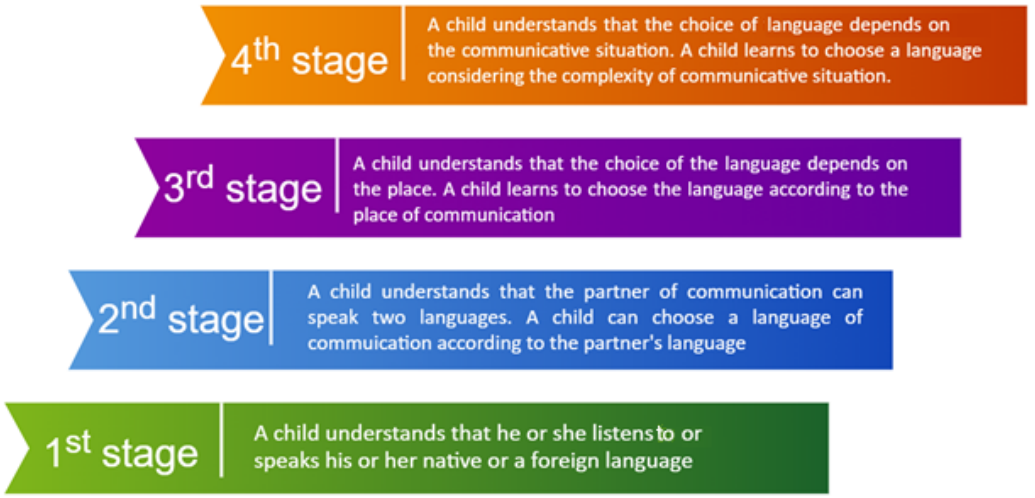

Figure 2. Stages of language awareness development at preschool age (Svalberg, 2007)

Language awareness development is based on the level of communicative skills of a learner in his/her native language (Svalberg, 2007:290), because the choice of language requires analysis of communicative situation. In the current research, the stages are described for oral use of the languages

as this is a dominant way of communication in the beginning of learning foreign languages at preschool age. Initially, at the first stage, a child begins to differentiate that he/she hears or speaks words in their native or a foreign language. At this stage the learner's emotional comfort is very important (MacIntyre, 2002:49). If a child feels frustration caused by misunderstanding foreign speech, he or she will avoid speaking a foreign language. Then, at the second stage, a learner begins to analyze and understand that the language can be chosen depending on the partner of communication. An English teacher helps a learner to practice choosing native of foreign language with peers, a teacher or a puppet. If a child feels confident, he or she will choose English for communication. If not, children will prefer speaking their mother tongue. The realization of this function encourages children of preschool age to choose the language for communication according to their conversation partner (Frumkina, 2006:196). Children must speak English with an English-speaker and speak Russian with a Russian-speaker. Children's language awareness is indicated when children choose the language of communication according to the partner (or interlocutor) of communication; the place of communication; or, generally, to the situation of communication (Frumkina, 2006:196-201). Such a choice becomes possible at the age from 5 to 7 when a child's language and abstract thinking are developing (Golinkoff et al., 2006:5). But children younger than 5 can develop this skill with the teacher's tasks which include clear instructions (Malkina, 2008a:22). Development of language awareness helps learners to become active learners who can choose partners and the language of communication.

At the third stage, a learner takes into account the place of communication as his or her awareness is growing due to a deeper understanding of communicative circumstances. It is a higher level of language awareness because sometimes the language of the particular place and the partners can be different. If a learner's interest in using a foreign language is sufficient, he or she will choose English more often. The final, fourth, stage of language awareness development is described as follows: a preschooler learns to analyze the communicative situation as multi-component and adjusts his or her language behavior to it. This stage combines children's skills in making language choices developed during the previous stages.

Developing of language awareness stimulates learners to analyze and compare the languages they hear, so, they start to generalize their language knowledge (Lightbown & Spada, 2013:31). Increased language awareness has a positive effect on young learners' desire to speak a foreign language (Tellier & Roehr-Brackin, 2013:93). The process of language awareness development is not easy for preschool children and they need a teacher's support. An English teacher should design a rich foreign language environment which allows young learners to practice and be aware of using native and foreign languages. Practical experience in making language choices allows children to feel confident in speaking English as a foreign language without being frustrated and avoiding it.

In the beginning of learning a foreign language, children often mix the words from native and foreign languages. This is due to the fact that preschoolers' lexical skills are not developed enough in both languages (Ballantyne et al., 2008:25). If a child is provided rich input in the target language, which is adjusted for a learner to understand, the child's use of foreign words will progressively grow. The process of language awareness development is supposed to foster children's communication in a foreign language with a teacher's support. This idea derives from the theory of proximal development by Vygotskiy (2005:118), which states that a child can learn and achieve by himself and with the guidance of the teacher. The proximal development zone lies between children's own abilities and their success with a teacher's help. If an English teacher supports a learner's language awareness and helps them practice making language choices, this develops preschoolers' understanding of the communicative situation and their confidence in using a foreign language for communication.

The analysis of methodological literature in the field of FLT allows highlighting levels of language awareness. It is based on children's ability to choose the language of communication depending on various communicational contexts. The levels are presented in Table 3, adapted from Svalberg (2007:289-290) and Berry (2014:22). The level of a learner's language awareness depends on several things. Firstly, a teacher can notice if a learner can make a choice of a partner or a place of communication according to the language of communication. Secondly, a young learner can prefer or avoid

using a foreign language for communication. Finally, the level of language awareness depends on the child's independence in making language choices or his/her need for a teacher's support.

Table 3. Levels of language awareness of preschool learners of English as a foreign language (adapted from Svalberg, 2007:289-290 and Berry, 2014:22)

Low level of language awareness (Stage 1)	**Medium level of language awareness (Stage 2–3)**	**High level of language awareness (Stage 4)**
• a learner has difficulties in distinguishing the differences between native and foreign languages; • a learner does not correlate the language and a speaker; • a learner does not differentiate the situations of using foreign and native languages; • a learner avoids using a foreign language.	• a learner differentiates foreign and native languages; • a learner understands that languages can be used in different situations but can be mistaken in choosing the language of communication; • a child is a dependent learner and needs a teacher's support when he or she has communicative difficulties.	a learner is independent; • a learner differentiates foreign and native languages; • a learner defines the situations of using native and foreign languages and can choose the language of communication correctly; • a learner can choose a language of communication correlating with the speaker's language.

The levels of language awareness correlate with the stages of its development described above. The stages of language awareness include parameters which indicate its level and they can be observed and assessed during English lessons. A low level of language awareness is characterized by a learner's difficulties in choosing a foreign language for communication. He or she cannot differentiate the languages and does not see the link between the language and the partner or the place of communication. The child tries to speak only in his/her mother tongue; his/her language behavior leads to a failure in communication and the child avoids these situations, as they are frustrating for him/her. A learner has a *medium level* of language awareness when he or she can differentiate the languages and tries to make proper language choices but makes mistakes or does not produce enough efforts

to overcome a communicative obstacle because of using two languages. At this level the learner needs an English teacher's help but also tries to behave independently. A learner with a *high level* of language awareness has no difficulties and makes few mistakes in language choices; he or she can analyze the communicative context without a teacher's support or uses it rarely. At this level the child is interested in using a foreign language for communication, as he or she sees the results of communication. At preschool age it can be complicated to indicate the particular stage of language awareness because young learners' skills are not sustainable, but the level can be registered. However, the method to assess the level of language awareness for preschoolers has not been described in the field of FLT.

Language awareness is the first step in building up communication in a foreign language at preschool stage. It can foster young learners to communicate in English as a foreign language and promote their willful use of it. However, development of language awareness requires special teaching conditions and tools which can be used by English teachers during English lessons.

2.2 Fostering young learners' interest in using English

2.2.1 Interest in using a foreign language

The issue of how to foster and facilitate young learners to communicate in a foreign language is connected with the idea of raising interest in using a foreign language during the lessons and is critical in educational theory and teaching practice (Harmer, 2007:23). The reasons why children are interested in a specific topic or a subject and how these interests are developed are really important points which should be taken into account for designing the process of early foreign language teaching in the kindergarten. The understanding of how interest in using a foreign language can be stimulated will assist preschool English teachers in designing programs for teaching English to preschoolers and creating ongoing language activities in which interest can be developed along multiple pathways.

Markova and Matis (2005:17-18) emphasize two types of interest in using a foreign language: interest as curiosity and interest as attitude. Interest is a particular attitude to something, a need in particular emotions during activities. One of the aspects of interest is a strong striving for participation in an activity. Interest as a need in particular emotions is an efficient motive for the specific activity, as well as learning a foreign language. Hidi and Renninger (2010:112) consider that interest provides a link between affective and cognitive elements of motivation, and a psychological state of a learner which is indicated through increased attention and his or her concentration.

Interest is related to intrinsic motivation and reflects if a learner has a desire to know about the language or the task (Renninger, 2009:106). In psychology, motivation is commonly understood as a person's desire to do something (Geen, 1995:43). Moreover, in educational psychology "to be motivated" can be defined as "to be moved to do something" (Deci & Ryan, 2012:89). In general, interest stimulates a learner to do something, particularly, to learn the language. Interest in learning a language should encourage children to communicate in it; even this aspect has not been discussed for preschool learners as the content of learning motivation. Interest as a component of learning motivation is an element of intrinsic motivation. It functions in a special context of learning, as a specific will to do foreign language tasks which can be a challenge for a learner (Stipek, 2002:86). Saeed and Zyngier (2012:255) note that interest is a base for extrinsic motivation which stimulates a learner to achieve a communicative goal during the lesson.

Nikitenko (2003:35) states that interest in using a foreign language is based on internal motives which derive from activities in a foreign language and keeping learners' interest. So, a teacher's task is to support interest linked with the content of the lessons and cognitive motives. In developing interest, it is necessary to pay attention to relations in the social group of children because their social experience and attitudes among peers are strong motivational factors. Russian researcher Bozhovich (2001:17) focuses on the point that interest promotes the learner to be active in solving communicative tasks in a group of peers.

In international literature on pedagogy and psychology scientists divide the concept of interest into two types: individual and situational. Individual

interest derives from the focusing on the person (Krapp, 2005:383). It is a stable motivational orientation and personal disposition which is developed according to the particular topic or subject; individual interest provides a person's desire to learn something and to gain positive emotions and experience during the learning process (Guay et al., 2010:714). This type of interest correlates with the interest-attitude described by Markova and Matis (2005:17-18). Individual interest at preschool age is developed slowly through a learner's constant interaction with the language in a particular environment.

Table 4. Types of situational interest of a foreign language learner (adapted from Schraw & Lehman, 2001:25-26)

Situational interest of a foreign language learner		
Text-based	**Knowledge-based**	**Task-based**
Refers to information which must be learned during the lesson (traditionally, a text) which has an impact on learner interest.	Refers to the prior knowledge of the English learner and is related to personal interest.	Refers to tasks and task environment which increases learner interest.

Situational interest is stimulated with contextual factors and is connected with the definite stimuli of the environment which attract the learner's attention. For example, situational interest can be activated by the foreign language learning environment (Krapp, 2005:384). This type of interest represents an emotional or affective state of a person which can last for a while or ceases after the stimulus effect (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002:111). This research is focused on situational and individual interest and holds that young learners of English can have both situational and individual interest at the same time. Moreover, the stimulation of situational interest in using a foreign language can develop and support learners' individual interest in communicating in English during the lesson. For example, young children can enjoy playing English games and singing English songs, as these activities foster their situational interest; also, games and songs develop learners' individual interest in communicating through playing and singing. This happens because there

are two consequences which are the bases of any interest: a) a need (in some activity) and b) positive attitude to this need (Radchenko, 2010:135). Eccles and Wigfield (2002:112) also point out that there are two valences necessary for developing individual interest: a) an object of interest valences and b) emotional valences. Previous situational interest studies generally can be divided into three categories: text-based, knowledge-based and task-based interest (Schraw & Lehman, 2001), as described in Table 4.

The research on interest in learning different subjects was conducted mostly in the context of secondary school and high education levels (Jenkins and Pell, 2006; Sansone et al., 1999). This research is focused on describing the task-based fostering situational interest of young children who learn English as a foreign language in the kindergarten in a language environment. Chen et al. (2002:253) state that it is a challenge for educators to choose or design interest-based motivation strategies because learners' individual interests can vary a lot and teachers can have enormous difficulties in finding a unified way to teach a particular content. On the other hand, a teacher may have control over various factors which foster the situational interests of young learners through tasks and teaching techniques. The ultimate goal of fostering situational interest is supporting children's developing of individual interest in using English as a foreign language, because experiencing situational interest can promote foreign language learning by increasing engagement and attention directly. If situational interest shifts to individual interest, the child can participate in language activities over time (Harackiewicz et al., 2008). Consequently, interest in using a foreign language during English lessons includes two components: the conscious significance of using the language (a cognitive component) and emotional attraction of speaking English (an emotional component) presented in Figure 3 (Kavé et al., 2008:76).

Any of these components can be dominant and their correlation can differ depending on the level of language learning (Kavé et al., 2008:76). Relative to the EFLT, situational interest is an emotional state related to the language activity or task. This means that the English teaching techniques and language materials should stimulate young learners' situational interest and preserve it. These characteristics depend on the individual significance of a task or a teaching method, their novelty and availability for young children and a degree of learners' communicative initiative during the lessons.

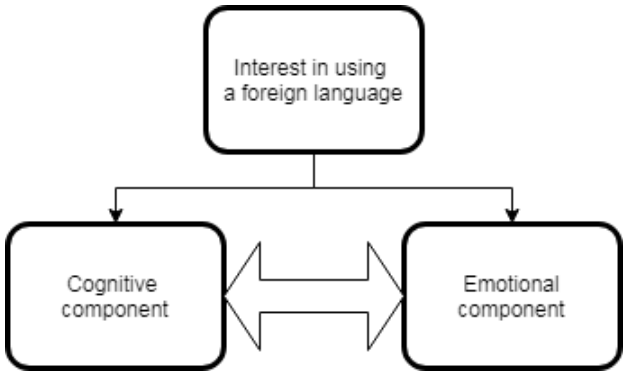

Figure 3. Components of situational interest of a foreign language learner (from Kavé et al., 2008:76)

Focusing on developing individual interest in using English for every learner demands a lot of effort and time from an English teacher. Meanwhile, stimulating situational interest can lead to its transformation into an individual one and promote the development of young learners' intrinsic motivation for learning a foreign language and communicating in it (Guay et al., 2010:721). Some researchers (Hidi & Renninger, 2010:123; Ilyin, 2000:136) confirm the correlation between individual and situational interest in learning a foreign language, as interest-attitude is developed on the basis of enjoying through situational interest. Hidi and Renninger (2010:123-124) describe four stages of developing interest in the classroom presented in Figure 4.

Transition from one stage to another does not mean disappearance of the previous one as all the stages keep together. Moreover, situational and individual interests are not isolated and interfere. According to these stages, interest is developed when situational interest is stimulated in the content of a particular subject. The first phase can prompt a second phase of situational interest, when interest is maintained. When a child is curious and asks questions about a foreign language, it leads to the move from situational interest to emerging individual interest as the third phase. The third phase is characterized with a learner's attempts toward self-regulation, even though this stage needs external support using English for communication, especially at preschool age. Speaking about preschoolers, the fourth phase can be achieved or not, as it demands an increased level of children's self-regulation and identification. The 4th phase is characterized with metacognitive awareness

in the discipline (Renninger, 2009:106). Passing the phases, interest contains both affective and cognitive components, but Hidi and Renninger (2010:124) considered that the strength of the components changes over time.

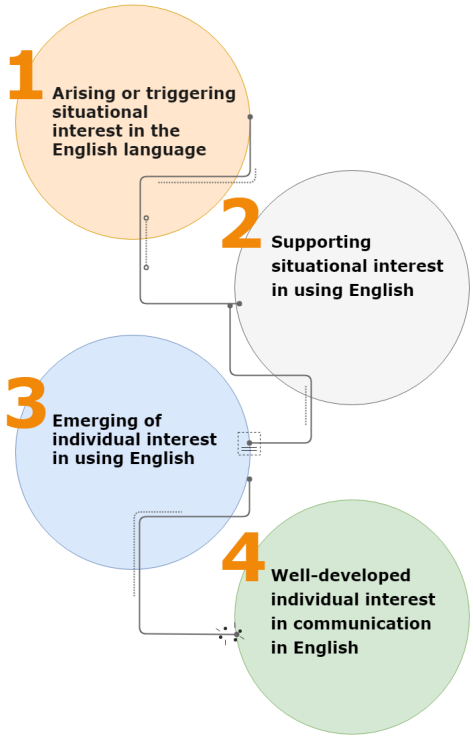

Figure 4. Stages of developing interest in using English by young learners (adapted from Hidi and Renninger, 2010:123-124)

Specially designed communicative situations are supposed to trigger learners' interest, which can develop through such situations over time, becoming more enduring. Firstly, the foreign language learning environment has specific features (e.g. novelty, surprise and ambiguity) which catch the child's attention to language use. This interest can last longer than a single situation if language tasks seem involving for the learner, i.e. if the child perceives this task as enjoyable and valuable. Over time, such triggering repeats and maintains learners' situational interest in using the language and can develop it into a rising individual interest, and the child looks for opportunities to reengage with communication in a foreign language (Harackiewicz et al., 2016:221).

Table 5. How to foster young learners' interest in using a foreign language in the classroom (adapted from Karachenkov, 2017:154-155)

Source of impulses influencing a learner's interest	**Impulses of interest of a foreign language learner**
Teaching content	- novelty of the content (a new interesting fact about a foreign culture; new forms of language activities); - renewal of acquired knowledge (presenting a new point of view about what children already know); - practical need in using a foreign language (communicative tasks, challenge tasks); - demonstration of real-life communication in a foreign language (audios, videos, books).
Teaching process	- using various forms of language activities, including unsupervised activities; - using "challenge tasks" and problem-solving language teaching; - organization creative work; - providing language practice.
Communication in the classroom	- creating positive emotional atmosphere in the classroom; - English teacher's emotional sensibility; - pedagogical optimism (the impetus of the teacher's trust in learners' cognitive and communicative capabilities); - mutually supportive relationship between a teacher and learners; - encouragement.

Karachenkov (2017:153) writes about three sources of interest during a lesson. The first is the content of the teaching which attracts children. The second is the way in which the foreign language teaching is organized. The last source is communication during the lesson. In this case, communication includes speaking both native and foreign languages and interaction between learners and a teacher. Karachenkov (2017:154-155) describes how to foster pupils' interest using each of the sources. In Table 5 I give several examples (applying to the preschool age of English learners) which can be used at the English lesson in the kindergarten.

Shapovalova (2012:179) states that there is an initiative link between interest and its cognitive and communicative manifestation. Krupnov (2006:64)

defines initiative as a person's quality which stimulates his or her actions in any kind of activity. Krupnov et al. (2013:409) emphasize that initiative contains a learner's will to do something and his/her independence in solving learning tasks. In the case of EFLT, initiative can be demonstrated through learners' communication in a foreign language. Karachenkov (2017:155) focuses on interest indicators and emphasizes several manifestations of interest in young children. It is learners' initiative which indicates if a child speaks the English language or not. If a learner asks questions about a foreign language, i.e. he or she develops hypotheses about the language and makes his or her own decisions about using the language; such behavior also indicates a learner's interest in using English. A pupil is interested if he or she asks questions and takes part in speaking the language and in discussions about it or voluntary corrects peers' mistakes, as correcting misstates indicate that children are following the communicational context and are trying to use the language correctly. Observing these indications can allow the teacher to assess the level of pupils' interest in using the language in the classroom.

Generally, interest in using a foreign language encourages students' attitudes toward the language, his or her activity in speaking and comprehending the context during the lesson (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002:111-112). In reviewing the issue of a child's interest in the language learning process, it is sensible to turn to Schiefele (2009:198) who considers that individual interest consists of two components: a) a feeling-related component, when a learner says: "I like it"; and b) a value-related component, when a learner says: "I am interested in it". These components relate to a certain learning activity and to the language learning and using process.

MacIntyre (2002:56) explains why failure in using a foreign language happens and what causes success and how to support it. Without a sufficient level of interest, children cannot accomplish or achieve long-term goals in learning. Researchers (Dörnyei, 2005:110; Blank & de las Alas, 2009:14) indicate that simply a professionally trained teacher and an appropriate curriculum are not enough to support learners' interest in using a foreign language. There must be special conditions to promote and develop children's interest. I have summarized different research efforts of interest focused on using a

foreign language. Several common elements of interest were indicated and these are presented in Figure 5.

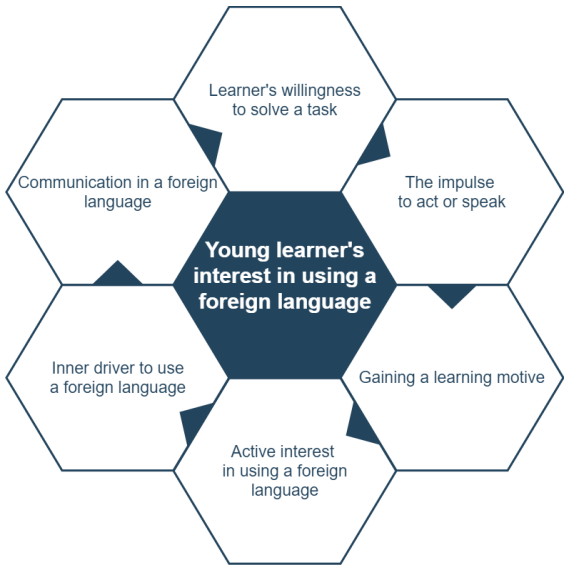

Figure 5. Elements of young learners' interest in using English as a foreign language (adapted from Eccles and Wigfield, 2002)

These elements are included in the concept of interest and are focused on communicational usage of a foreign language during the lesson: a learner's willingness to solve a learning task; the impulse to act in a specific manner (to speak with a teacher or peers); the process of gaining a motive or motives (realization of a child's desire to use a foreign language); the force that stimulates a learner to have an active interest in using the language; the inner drive, impulse, intention that causes a child to communicate in English. As Evans and Fisher (2009:34) state, interest which drives the learning process and learners' achievements is the most important factor grounding successful foreign language using. The components of interest allow identifying the parameters for evaluating the level of young learners' interest in using English for communication.

2.2.2 Interest drivers for English lessons in the kindergarten

For creating special techniques to support young learners' interest in using a foreign language, it is important to take into account different motivational

factors which influence their desire to learn and speak English during lessons. Two intervention approaches can be highlighted to arise learners' interest. The first is triggering situational interest and maintaining it. This strategy includes providing language activities including structural features, i.e., problems to solve, challenges and surprise, for stimulation of learners' attention and their engagement (Palmer, 2009:148). The second is building on emerging learners' individual interest. This strategy means providing content tasks which facilitate connecting language topics with existing personal interests (Walkington & Bernacki, 2014:141).

Motivational factors of interest in using a foreign language can be divided into internal and external. I will start with **internal drivers** of interest in using a foreign language for children aged from 4 to 7. Researchers highlight different internal motivational factors of interest in learning and using a foreign language: linguistic self-confidence (Richard Clement, 1977, in Dörnyei, 1998:123); self-confidence and self-efficacy (Clement and Kruidenier, 1985; Davis, 1999); age, attitude, aptitude and gender (Narayanan & Nair, 2007). Linguistic self-confidence is a strong motivational factor because it is based on a learner's skills using a foreign language (Dörnyei, 2010:78). Young children can learn a lot of words and build up simple grammar structures. If they feel that they are able to do that, they will try it again and again. Young learners do not have well-developped self-regulating skills. That is why they need interest as a motivational factor to concentrate their attention on the language learning process (Duff and Tomblin, 2018:2). There are several individual parameters which ground a child's desire to communicate in English. They refer to individual differences in learning and the communicational process. Such parameters as age, attitude, aptitude, gender and amount of exposure are correlated with the level of motivation for foreign language learning (Narayanan & Nair, 2007).

External drivers of interest in using a foreign language include cognitive learning ability, as children have different levels of learning capacity (Berk, 2009:184). However, interest during the English lesson can stimulate this capability. A teacher's techniques, classroom atmosphere, group work and home support are external factors of interest as well (Lile, 2002). External motivational factors include a teacher as a facilitator of communication in a

foreign language. Stipek (2002:84) considers that research findings confirm that a teacher's enthusiasm is very important because it stimulates the teacher's efforts for organizing the atmosphere and language environment and influences learners' interest in communication in the target language. English teachers can support situational and individual interest through various activities. Kennedy (2006:479) highlighted some implications of brain research which are notable for foreign language teachers. She supposed that it was important to involve learners' senses and being in an enriched foreign language environment for successful communication in a foreign language. This happens because teachers use their emotions in structuring the language materials (what is important to remember, for example); these emotions drive learners' attention, which for its part drives the process of learning and using the language in various aspects of language studying: a) listening, speaking, reading, writing and observation; or according to the Council of Europe (2018:31), b) in interpersonal language (for example, reading as a leisure activity) or in transactional language use (for example, simple information exchange).

Some recommendations to foster learners' interest in using English apply more to situational interest, some to individual interest, but they all apply to both types of interest (Schraw, Flowerday & Lehman, 2001:212-220). To stimulate young learners' curiosity, an activity should include a mystery, a puzzle, a secret or a provocative question. Surprise them: a teacher can give a surprising plot twist or a fact. Providing novelty includes using something unusual, new. To support the relevance of the language topic, an English teacher should answer questions such as: is the topic (or a character) relevant to the children (or a child)? How does it relate to them (her/him)? To develop learners' topic knowledge, a variety of topic-specific language learning materials should be provided. Language materials should be explicit and coherent to suit preschool children's level of language skills in their native and foreign languages.

According to Hidi and Renninger (2010:122), there are three factors for the development of interest: knowledge, positive emotion, and personal value. As young children learn more about the English language and culture, they become more confident in participating in language activities. An increase of

knowledge brings positive effects as pupils feel competent and skilled through engagement in language tasks. Interest factors can be divided into two kinds: catch and hold factors (Hidi & Renninger, 2010:123). Catch factors can trigger learners' interest temporarily and emotionally. Hold factors of interest are able to maintain interest over time while participating in meaningful and involving activities during lessons.

An important motivational factor which supports learners' desire to use a foreign language is atmosphere in the classroom. Moon (2005:98) emphasizes emotional atmosphere in the classroom as a strong factor of raising learners' foreign language communication interest. I strongly agree with this idea. Moon (2005:95-98) suggested how to create a motivating atmosphere during English lessons to foster children's interest; his ideas can also be adapted to the context of preschool FLT. Moon's suggestions are that an English teacher should use activities which attract children's attention and create a positive emotional atmosphere. They can be games, acting out or project work. To create a child-friendly atmosphere, a teacher should use attractive objects to fill the classroom: books, learners' work or toys. These conditions help children "to develop personal reasons for learning English" and using it (Moon, 2005:3).

Following Moon's ideas, teachers should promote learners' awareness of how children communicate in a foreign language, taking into account their needs, interests and age characteristics. As mentioned earlier, there are some obligatory conditions which should be considered as the most appropriate ways to promote interest in communication among preschoolers. According to Moon (2005:10) they are creating communicative situations which foster learners' need to speak English; they are giving children a lot of time to participate in activities in the target language; they let children experiment with their foreign language skills in various situations and practice them in various contexts. An atmosphere should let learners enjoy their communication and help them to find underlying patterns in a foreign language.

These conditions form an environment where children can share their concerns and problems, can speak about their challenges in foreign language learning, can discuss their personal events, as is very common for preschoolers. Such an atmosphere creates a very fruitful background for

discussing rules of behavior and using foreign and native languages in the classroom. Jenkins and Pell (2006:770) concluded that stimulating learners' interest helps to achieve long-lasting and excellent results in the subject; Mitchell (1993:429) noted that group work can spark and foster children's interest, and Chen et al. (2001:396) identified enjoyment as an important factor of interest support in task-based approaches.

Chen et al. (2002:254) identified several potential sources of situational interest: novelty, challenge, attention demand, exploration, intention of a language learning task and instant enjoyment of learning. They believe these determine the extent of situational interest in physical activities, which is very specific for young children. Therefore, situational interest demands a special learning setting where preschoolers can rely on the characteristics of novelty, uniqueness, and surprises in learning tasks to motivate and regulate their learning and communication. Meanwhile, learning a foreign language does not stop outside the English classroom and continues at home, which is why stimulating interest in using English at home is a strong factor. Research confirming a link between parents' involvement and their child's success in learning and communicating in a foreign language is well documented (Pomerantz et al., 2005; Evangelou & Sylva, 2007; Harris et al., 2009). One of the most famous studies was conducted by Gottfried, Fleming and Gottfried (2001:11), who claim that parents' beliefs and expectations also appear to strongly influence children's motivation. If parents cannot help or assist effectively in developing various skills, they can encourage a learner's feelings of positive attitudes and confidence, according to Grolnick (2009:168). Parents can provide strong support of children's interest in communication, as they are claimed to be a motivational factor. However, parents often do not know how to help their child and foster his or her interest in using a foreign language; that is why they need recommendations and tips for this (Lile, 2002). Ronald Ferguson's (2007) research-based tips for high-achievement parenting suggest that parents promote reading at home, discuss reading materials with their children in ways that encourage children to enjoy learning, and seek opportunities at home to discuss and apply what children learn, among other activities. Ferguson further recommends that parents set clear and firm rules to help reinforce English lessons and encourage their

creativity (Ferguson, 2007). Therefore, parents' involvement and capabilities differ based on their unique contexts (Grolnick, 2009:172).

Stimulation of interest is at the beginning of the teaching process, which from that point builds its success and positive results. It is important to notice that interest is a part of a learner's inner world and it is determined based on his or her needs. That is why it is rather complicated to stimulate interest. A teacher can influence interest indirectly by creating conditions which help to foster it and develop learners' personal positive attitude to using the English language. Creating a special foreign language learning environment, which can foster learners' interest in speaking English, is a key task in modern FLT methodology, as it combines all motivational factors and develops communicative skills in young learners through stimulating their interest in using English as a tool for communication. The FLT Toolkit should include the task of developing and supporting learners' interest.

2.2.3 Young learners' interest in using a foreign language

Interest in using a foreign language and ways supporting it are well studied at the compulsory school levels (Halász & Lannert, 2007; Gálik, 2006) and among university-level learners (Dörnyei, 2005) and adults (Ushioda, 2007). However, there is not much research describing interest in using a foreign language among children aged from 4 to 7 who learn English or another language in kindergarten. To analyze the uniqueness of children's interest, it is necessary to understand their psychological nature which forms their motives for different actions including communication. Preschooler's potential is rather hidden, making this a difficult task. Such an investigation has a prognostic character. Psychological characteristics of children studying a foreign language in the kindergarten play an important role in developing their interest in learning. Ospanova and Timoshenko (2017:52) note that preschool learners of English are rather emotional. Young children's attention is unstable and involuntary. Often, learners focus on what is catching their immediate interest in the particular context. Anyway, young children can have individual interests which can be developed at English lessons.

In Russian preschool pedagogy there is an approach which describes a learner as an active person who is independent and creative in choosing the

content of his/her action and the way of behavior (Gogoberidze, 2008:18). A child tends to communicate and cooperate with peers. A learner's attitude toward the subject, educational content or activity is a key foundation for developing a desire to do something. Firstly, a child's behavior depends on emotional component: interests and attitudes. This component stimulates a learner's activity; the child then takes part in some activity and makes choices. That is why it is so important to understand what stimulates a child's interest in using a foreign language and which motives appear from this interest as an emotional component; then how this interest stimulates a child's desire to communicate in a foreign language and how he or she is involved in such communication (Lisina, 2009:159-163). The process of development of learners' interest for using a foreign language is presented in Figure 6.

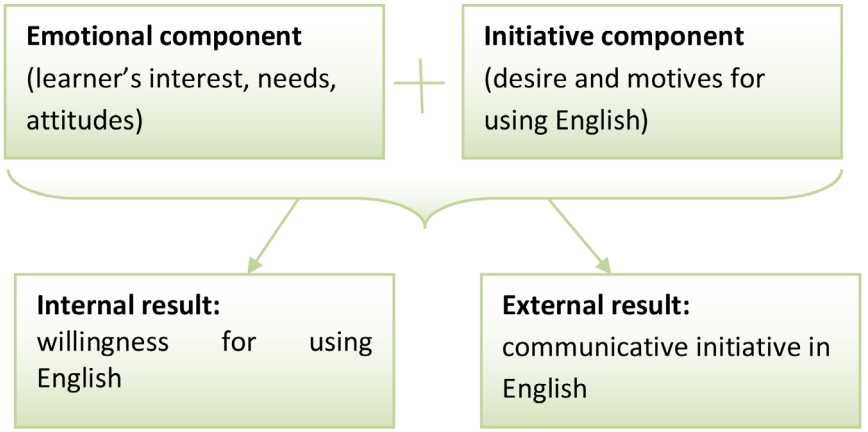

Figure 6. How foreign language learners' interest in communication is developed (adapted from Lisina, 2009:159-163)

Wu (2003) studied children at the age of 5 who learned English as a foreign language at primary school in Hong Kong, in a monolingual Cantonese context. He found that classroom activities could stimulate children's interest. English teachers used various motivational techniques. They created a predictable learning environment and different types of tasks during the lessons. These actions supported the self-perception of target-language competence. Children were free to choose the content and teachers varied their methods in various contexts. This led to encouragement of intrinsic motivation in young

children and raising their desire to speak English. Kennedy et al. (2000:279) found that in spite of preschool learners having a lack of foreign words, they were very proud of their success and achievements in speaking English as a foreign language.

What are the indications of an interest in using a foreign language among young learners? Schukina (2011:34-35) highlighted the manifestations of interest among young children. They are manifestations of intellectual activity (asking questions, using new knowledge); emotional manifestations (general positive attitude to the process of speaking the language, enjoying learning something new and using it); and manifestations of a learner's willingness (focusing on using the language and trying not to be distracted). On the grounds of activity and self-sufficiency of young learners in using a foreign language during a lesson, Schukina highlighted three levels of interest in using a foreign language. Table 6 illustrates these levels.

Djigunović and Lopriore (2011:32) highlighted several criteria to indicate the level of high interest of young learners in using a foreign language: the time the child can concentrate on the task; a learner's dependency and a learner's emotional state. To foster children's interest in something, it is necessary to understand their nature and way of thinking. Generally, every psychological study in the field of preschool pedagogy indicates that children like playing, moving, talking, joking, and singing (Myazin & Matveyeva, 2014). They are much more enthusiastic than adults. However, they can concentrate for a short period of time and lose their interest very easily, they cannot use the language for discussing questions about language and they can avoid anything they do not want to do. All these characteristics must be taken into account when a teacher tries to foster their interest in communication in English as a foreign language.

Table 6. Preschool learners' levels of interest in using a foreign language during the lesson (adapted from Schukina, 2011, 34-38)

Low level of learner interest	**Medium level of learner interest**	**High level of learner interest**
Young learners: - demonstrate cognitive and communicative passivity; - have a lack of independence using a foreign language; - avoid using a foreign language to avoid communicative complications; - avoid learning activities in a foreign language; - express negative emotions when using a foreign language.	Young learners: - demonstrate cognitive and communicative initiative in a foreign language but they need a teacher's support; - try to use a foreign language independently in different situations; - need a teacher's support in solving various communicative tasks; - use both native and foreign languages.	Young learners: - demonstrate high spontaneous activeness in using a foreign language; - use a foreign language independently; - make an attempt to solve communicative tasks in a foreign language; - avoid using a native language and participate in activities in a foreign language with pleasure.

How can these criteria be used for teaching English to preschool children? Gurian et al. (2008:18-21) note that preschool children learn better if they get concrete communicational learning experiences and they prefer to see the immediate results of communication. Young learners are interested in the world around them and topics which relate to their personal experience. Preschoolers have a vivid imagination. Moreover, young children learn through oral language, native and foreign; they can develop oral skills and pronunciation in English and imitate intonation after the English teacher. As playing is a dominant activity of preschool age, children learn well through role-play and dramatization. As young learners of English have short attention spans, the teacher should provide a lot of activities during the lesson. So, young children cannot be concentrated on one language activity for a long time because of their psychological and physiological features. At the age from 3 to 4, children can concentrate for –20 minutes; from 4 to 5 for 10–25 minutes; from 5 to 6 for 15–30 minutes; and from 6 to 7 for 20–35 minutes

(Baskakova, 2013:13). If a child has a high level of motivation for speaking English, he or she is able to participate in activities in English for a long time. If a child has a low level of interest, he or she will give up very soon and avoid situations of speaking English and his or her learning process will not be successful. If young learners are successful in activities in English, they become more motivated for communication (Markova, 2008:32). They will choose more difficult and complicated communicative tasks to solve. They do not avoid challenges in English communication. As a result for their efforts, children have a strong feeling of satisfaction. If children are not motivated enough, they often may avoid difficult language tasks.

Learners with a low level of interest will ask and consult adults very often. Children with strong interest will try to solve the communicative task by themselves. High motivation for communication in a foreign language is connected with positive emotions and satisfaction. Children with a negative emotional state become bored very fast. Young children do not have a special long- or short-term aim to learn English or other foreign languages. They want to play, draw, sing, dance and communicate with peers and adults (Markova, 2008:32). That is why development and stimulating of situational interest in using English is a strong factor of successful teaching and learning. All activities should be organized in a special language learning environment as a compulsory condition of motivational and interest-raising English teaching.

In FLT methodology several approaches and variants of **motivational techniques** are described (Brophy, 2004; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). According to Cheng and Dörnyei (2007:154), motivational techniques are aimed to achieve a systematic and long-lasting and positive effect in the FLT. In the field of educational psychology, several studies can be found containing practical recommendations based on theoretical findings on how to foster pupils' interest in language learning and using (Schunk et al., 2008; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Oxford and Shearin (1994) and Walkington and Bernacki (2014) also gave practical suggestions for English teachers which included the necessity of finding out pupils' actual interest in using a foreign language. Such research can be conducted among preschool children to observe and collect motivational activities which suit their interests and needs in English lessons. This investigation will refer to learners' intrinsic motivation and

their interest in using English as well. It is useful to conduct such research among pupils' parents as they have their own points of view on reasons for using foreign languages, especially at preschool age and they can influence children's interest at home. Oxford and Shearin's (1994:28) next point connected with preschool English teaching is that teachers can show children that the process of communication in a foreign language can be an exciting mental challenge and a tool for developing their cultural awareness as a way to understand one's native culture better through interacting with a foreign culture a foreign culture.

Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) conducted a fundamental research among English teachers in Hungary. They evaluated 51 motivational strategies analyzing how important the strategies are and how often teachers use them. Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2007) studied the English teaching system in South Korea and proposed a way to form the base for motivational activities in the classroom. However, it was not created especially for preschool learners and needs to be adapted for teaching English in the kindergarten with children aged from 4 to 7. A general review of purposes can be suggested for using strategies for stimulating learners' interest in the foreign language classroom presented in Figure 7.

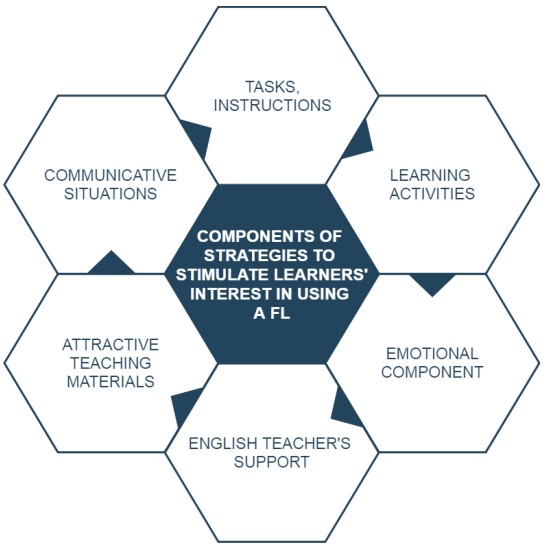

Figure 7. Summing up the components of strategies to foster young learners' interest in using a foreign language in the kindergarten (adapted from Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998)

The components of strategies to foster young learners' interest, firstly, include designing a system of language tasks and activities which help children to evaluate their learning results. This system contains answering questions or doing something while following instructions in a foreign language (Ballantyne et al., 2008:267). Children aged from 4 to 7 cannot see the future perspective of their learning, but they can realize the results of their work here and now during the lesson – their ability to communicate in English. This kind of awareness can stimulate them to make more efforts toward using a foreign language. Secondly, motivational strategies involve learners' emotions and moods into the learning process and communication. This point relates to the nature of children's psychology because their affective system is very labile and has a great impact on a learner's desire to communicate during the lesson. If a pupil is emotionally involved in some activities, it provides more sound results in their foreign language proficiency because children become more motivated. Thirdly, motivational strategies help to follow a special teaching style containing many effective impetuses and external reinforcement relevant to children's age-specific characteristics Such a strategy requires the teacher's active position in the lesson as an organizer who stimulates pupils' interest in using a foreign language (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007:121). Fourthly, motivational strategies suppose using a lot of audiovisual materials and teaching tools during the lesson (Blackwood, 2008:17). It makes it more interactive, intensive and comprehensible for young learners who need support because of their limited skills in understanding the input in the target language. Finally, motivational strategies include designing lots of communicative situations and tasks to practice learners' communicative skills in a foreign language and using English as a means for interaction with other people (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005:21). There is a practical demand for creating motivational techniques for preschool English teaching. There is a need to investigate pupils' communicative interest and their parents' opinion on this issue. Recommendations for using motivational techniques, which take into account the age-specific characteristics of young learners aged from 4 to 7, can be very useful for English teachers in the Russia and European professional communities.

2.3 Using English as a foreign language

2.3.1 Communicative initiative in a foreign language

Communicative initiative is one of the criteria of communicative early foreign language teaching as it is a parameter of communicative competence (Chirsheva, 2008:193). Communicative initiative indicates how often a learner uses a foreign language during the lesson in various communicational spheres and situations. If a child, who learns English is not active in communication, e.g. has a low level of communicative initiative, he or she avoids communicating in English and the teaching process becomes less effective from the aspect of communication. In this case, the learner is not interested in using a foreign language.

Littlewood (2008:8) divides communicative activities in two types: functional (e.g. to solve a crossword, to find the differences) and social (e.g. discussions, debates). Both of these provide fluency in using a foreign language and foster a learner's desire to speak a foreign language. By extension, communicative initiative is manifested as communication in a foreign language. Communicative initiative is a speaker's need to interact with others and getting new information through communication (Dotsenko, 2003:54). On the other hand, can an English teacher assess the level of communicative initiative of a particular learner; or is communication the result of foreign language teaching and learning? The English teacher can assess communicative initiative of the learner as his or her personal quality which becomes visible through communication in a foreign language in the classroom.

Dotsenko (2003:34-37) emphasizes several channels of communicative initiative production. It can be a body contact through touching, sensorial interaction or gestures. Emotional contact includes empathy among a teacher, a learner and peers. Communicative initiative can be manifested through a verbal channel with words and phrases in a target language. Chernichkina (2012:194) marks the general characteristics of communicative initiative: ability to begin the interaction, self-consistent stimulation of interaction and motivation for it. Many researchers (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:14; Thurnoby, 2005:87) state that communicative initiative and interest in using a foreign

language are closely related. This occurs because active participation in activities in English and learners' enthusiasm support children's self-confidence and foster their interest in speaking English during the lesson.

In summary, communicative initiative is an important learner quality that can be identified and measured. However, communicative initiative is commonly based on personal qualities and skills including communicative skills in a learner's native language. That is why it is important to analyze the unique characteristics of communicative initiative of preschool learners of English as a foreign language aged from 4 to 7.

2.3.2 Communicative initiative at preschool age

In Russian methodology in the field of early foreign language teaching, researchers discuss the necessity of the development of communication between preschool learners of English (Galiguzova & Smirnova, 2002:37; Lisina, 2009:13). Psychologists consider that communicative capability forms the base of children's communicative initiative because it provides effective interaction with other people in co-operation. Savenkov (2004:107) considers that communication depends on a child's personal features and appears through resultful solving of communicative tasks. The English teacher should design such tasks for training and developing of communicative initiative. It is necessary because in the classroom young learners can have difficulties in using different elements of communication in English (Ospanova & Timoshenko, 2017:52): starting a conversation and keeping it going, agreeing or denying the opinion of the teacher or the peer, asking questions in English.

Communicative initiative of children learning English includes verbal and non-verbal communication. Researchers confirm that the development of successful communication in a foreign language is based on the development of communicative skills in a learner's native language (Richards, 2006:3; Warschauer & Meskill, 2000:309). I agree that communicative skills both in native and foreign languages confer the development of English communicative activity of preschool children. Communicative skills are based on communicative needs of children. Kolucki and Lemish (2011:18-19) highlight general communication needs at preschool age which are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Young learners' communication needs from birth through 6 years (adapted from Kolucki & Lemish, 2011:18)

Young learners' communication needs
• To know they are loved and safe
• To develop positive feelings about themselves and others
• To know that the range of emotions and fears they have are normal
• To feel good about new learning and experiences
• To develop resilience by learning to "bounce back" and to seek help

These needs are shaped when a child is surrounded with a positive communicative atmosphere supported by parents or teachers in the kindergarten. The more a child is motivated for communication, the more active he or she is in communication (Galiguzova & Smirnova, 2002:24). The same scheme exists during an English lesson. This happens because a communicatively friendly atmosphere motivates young children to learn and use a foreign language as a means of communication. Communicative skills of preschoolers in a foreign language are based on those in the native language (Protasova & Rodina, 2005:20-22 & from Veraksa et al., 2014:78-80). The communicative skills are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Preschooler's communicative skills in Russian as a native language (Protasova & Rodina, 2005:20-22 & Veraksa et al., 2014:78-80)

Preschooler's communicative skills	
Protasova and Rodina (2005)	**Veraksa et al. (2014)**
A child of 3–4 years old: - can follow simple instructions including 2 or 3 commands; - can answer questions, easily understands the content of the conversation; can imagine what is happening in the next room – outside the context; - reacts to speech on TV or radio; - understands approximately 1500 words, can use hundreds of words from different parts of speech; - can say infant poems and songs by heart; - repeats a sentence consisting of 5–10 words; can produce independent sentences of 4–6 words; - uses different means of coherence and can tell about what happened, what will happen; - asks questions and make comments can keep up the conversation; - communicates with peers and adults.	**A child of 3–4 years old:** - can talk to adults about topics which are out of the current context; - can get in contact with peers in role-playing; - can use verbal and non-verbal means for expressing emotions in different activities; - can use language according to common rules; - can express politeness and goodwill.
A child of 4–6 years old: - learns more about the world around him/her, him/herself and their family; - understands almost everything that is talked about at home including speech in whisper; - watches films and understands their content; - is interested in symbols and starts learning to read and write; - pronounces the sounds of the language correctly; the speech is clear and accurate; - has a rich, active vocabulary which grows from 2000 up to 10 000–14 000 words; - often uses speech patterns typical for surrounding community;	**A child of 5–7 years old:** - can communicate with different children (boys, girls, elder children, younger children, peers); - can communicate with a little-known person (a teacher, guests, parents of other children); - can use polite modes of address; - can make a contact with using verbal and non-verbal means (mimics, gestures); - can ask something delicately and with respect; - can ask for help and help to others; - can express opinions, give a piece of advice in cooperation with others; - can participate in the activity with adults or peers without disturbing it;

Preschooler's communicative skills

Protasova and Rodina (2005)	Veraksa et al. (2014)
- has meta-linguistic abilities: e.g., a child can explain the meaning of a word, compare words, point out a sound from the word; - can retell textual information; make a story using pictures, count, use pronouns correctly; - uses words for expressing emotions, agreement and disagreement; can understand partner's opinion and discuss events. The native language is often acquired.	- can show consideration, to defend themself from mocking treatment by adults or peers; - can refuse and stand up to pressure from more active peers.

Learners' communicative skills are developed through practicing and following examples presented by adults and the children try the model of communication and follow it. The focus is on an English teacher's skill to create a special foreign language learning environment which motivates young children for learning and practicing English as a foreign language and supports their communicative skills both in native and foreign languages. Young learners\ initiative has not been widely studied. However, Coyle et al. (2010:38) have observed that any activities organized for using English (for example, a game or any routine) is more attractive to young learners as it includes performing actions and gives the learners a lot of opportunities to practice the target language.

At the English lessons, the teacher faces the task of the assessment of learners' communicative initiative in English. Chirsheva (2008:300) says that its level in young learners relies on two parameters. The first one is temporal – it indicates how often a child uses a foreign language for communication. The second parameter is functional – it includes the data about where, why, and in which situations a foreign language is used by a learner (e.g. in the kindergarten, at home, while playing games or eating). Savenkov (2004:113) also marks several parameters of communicative initiative among primary English learners: initiative in communication (readiness to participate in the conversation, support or stop it); activity in cooperation; the level of domination in a dialogue; and non-verbal manifestations (gestures, intonation, mimics). However, all these parameters refer to primary-level children aged up to 7

years old. Preschool learners of English cannot demonstrate all the markers of communicative activity, but the more frequently the foreign language is used, the higher the level of communicative initiative the learner has.

In methodological literature on FLT there are no particular descriptions of the level of preschool communicative initiative during English lessons. To assess it, some parameters may be pointed out that can be fixed through observation in the English classroom by the English teacher, based on my professional experience as an English teacher in a kindergarten (2008–2011). Such observations can show if a preschooler uses English as a means of communication or not and how often it happens. These parameters refer to temporal aspects because the English teacher can easily use them as an indication of how often a learner participates in activities in English; or how often a learner initiates communication with an English teacher or peers in English.

Young learners of English can have different levels of communicative initiative (Chirsheva, 2008:195). If a child uses English for talking and responses (saying, moving), he or she has a high level of communicative initiative. If a child avoids using English and prefers speaking his or her native language in all communicational situations, the level of communicative initiative is low. Chirsheva (2008:197) also underlines that the English teacher should always foster communicative initiative in learners. I absolutely agree with this point, as the level of communicative initiative can decline if a teacher does not offer a sufficient communicative situation to stimulate children's desire to speak English. Relying on the parameters of communicative initiative, three levels of communicative activity can be highlighted, demonstrated in Table 9.

Table 9. Levels of communicative initiative of young learners of English (adapted from Chirsheva, 2008:195-197)

Low level of communicative initiative	Medium level of communicative initiative	High level of communicative initiative
- The learner does not choose activities where he or she has to speak English or act silently / rarely uses English words or phrases; - in communication with the English teacher and peers, a learner uses Russian more often than English; - a learner can avoid speaking English. Russian is the dominant language of communication during the lesson.	- A learner chooses activities in English selectively, those where he or she does not have to speak English a lot; - a learner initiates communication with the English teacher and peers in English, but does not support the conversation and changes the language of communication into their native language; - Russian and English languages are used equally by a learner.	- A learner wants to participate in every activity in English; - A learner initiates and supports communication with the English teacher and peers in English; - The English language is dominant during the lesson in used by the learner.

Evaluating the level of communicative initiative helps to define the ways of development and its support in preschool learners of English. Stimulating a high level of communicative initiative provides communicative learning for pupils. Its characteristics can be found in Table 10 (Martin & Nakayama, 2010:271).

Table 10. Characteristics of communicative learning during the lesson (adapted from Martin & Nakayama, 2010:271)

Communicative learning includes:
initiative in communication
- fluent understanding and speaking in a foreign language
- focusing on speech activities
- success in learning a foreign language
- effective memorizing of verbal information
- effective interpretation and using non-verbal components of communication

How is it possible to foster and support communicative initiative in children learning English as a foreign language? This can be done through using communicative tasks. Their features are presented in Figure 8 (Hiep, 2007:195). Hiep (2007:195) claimed that an effective communicative activity is characterized by three important features: information gap, free choice of action and an opportunity to give and receive feedback during communication (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2002:129). Again, the process of communication demands that the learner makes a choice when searching for the way of communicating and how to solve a communicative task.

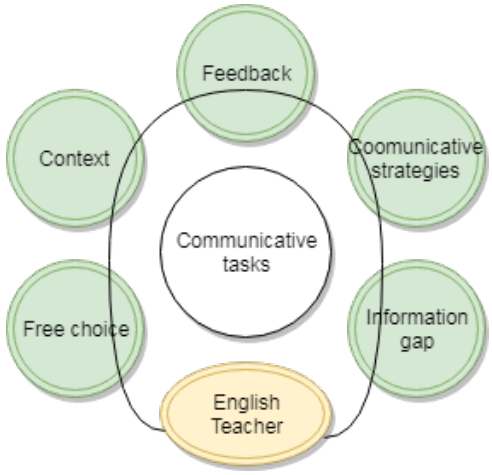

Figure 8. Features of communicative tasks (adapted from Hiep, 2007:195)

Traditionally, communicative approach includes two types of communicative tasks based on creation of communicative situations: activities for developing fluency and accuracy. Brumfit (in Hedge, 2002:57) describes some criteria for developing fluency which are focused on meaning. Communicative tasks need to be used in a context which is comprehensible for learners and motivates them to communicate with each other. These communicative tasks encourage children to use various communicative strategies for finding solutions, especially if there is a gap in understanding (Prabhu in Hedge, 2002:58) which creates a kind of unpredictable discourse. The English teacher is a creator of communicative tasks for learners; the teacher's roles are illustrated in Figure 9 (Gorsuch, 2000:700).

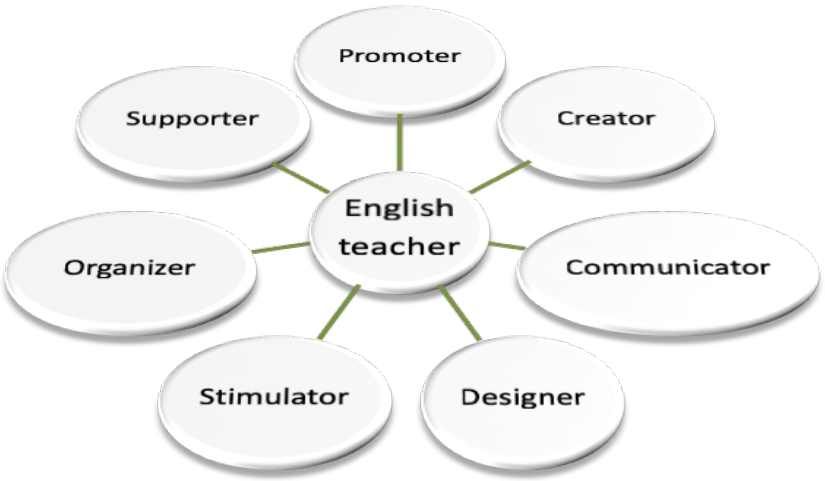

Figure 9. English teacher's functions during the lessons (adapted from Gorsuch, 2000:700)

The teacher's function is to organize and foster communication in a foreign language among children and increase their desire to interact in English (Gorsuch, 2000:700). As an organizer, the teacher chooses the materials and activities, organizes resources, supports children in individual and group work, promotes using communicative strategies and helps them in a motivational way in encouraging them to speak English. The English teacher creates a special environment to motivate learners to communicate in English; this environment is created for and around the children. This idea is taken from Vygotskiy and Peaget's theories (Vygotskiy, 2005:42) when children learn something through physical and social development with the help of an adult who is more experienced.

The English teacher is a person who shares his or her own skills and experience in English through materials and activities. In the meantime, according to Cameron (2001:17), the teacher cannot do that without considering learners' needs and interests. That is why the communicative approach is tightly connected with learner-centered teaching and they both help to organize an effective and motivational foreign language learning environment. Consequently, the foreign language learning environment is full of a variety of communicative activities or tasks. In this case, the environment stimulates interaction in the target language, and young children learn

from each other. The teacher as a facilitator of the teaching process should include not just training of verbal communication but non-verbal aspects too. This is due to the fact that preschool children are very sensitive to the perception and reproduction of non-verbal elements of communication: gestures, mimics and intonation (Gorelov, 2009:56). This happens, as non-verbal communication can be substituted for verbal modes and helps to compensate the lack of language skills in a foreign language (Hargie, 2011:51). The learning environment should include special techniques for stimulating learners' communicative initiative and communication in English.

2.4 Using the foreign language teaching toolkit to foster communication in a foreign language

2.4.1 Functions of foreign language teaching toolkit

An English teacher cause various teaching techniques to foster learners to use English for communication. However, the FLT Toolkit includes the limited number of the particular techniques which derives from the principles of bilingualism (as it will be described below) and help the teacher to organize the foreign language learning environment. The analysis of theoretical literature and modern research in the field of early FLT allows pointing out five techniques for managing a foreign language learning environment and stimulating preschoolers' communication and interest in speaking English during the lesson. They are: using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning. The implementation of these techniques is aimed at performing certain functions. The FLT toolkit enables teachers through using these techniques to develop particular important qualities in learners (Malkina & Koricheva, 2011:64). These functions are illustrated in Figure 10.

Motivational function of the FLT Toolkit provides preschool children's interest in using a foreign language for communication in the classroom. Most researchers arrive at a consensus that playing or game motives are the leading motives at preschool age and it should be incorporated into the base of language teaching – to raise children's interest in the communication process (Gogoberidze, 2009:30; Kisileva, 2011:100; Mirella, 2012:172).

Particularly, interest apparently is a vital component for learning English as a foreign language. Dörnyei (2003:135) noted that a sufficient level of a learner's motivation is necessary to accomplish his or her long-term goals. The FLT Toolkit includes English teaching techniques which stimulate children's motivation for participating in communicative activities, including playing games, and their interest in using English for communication.

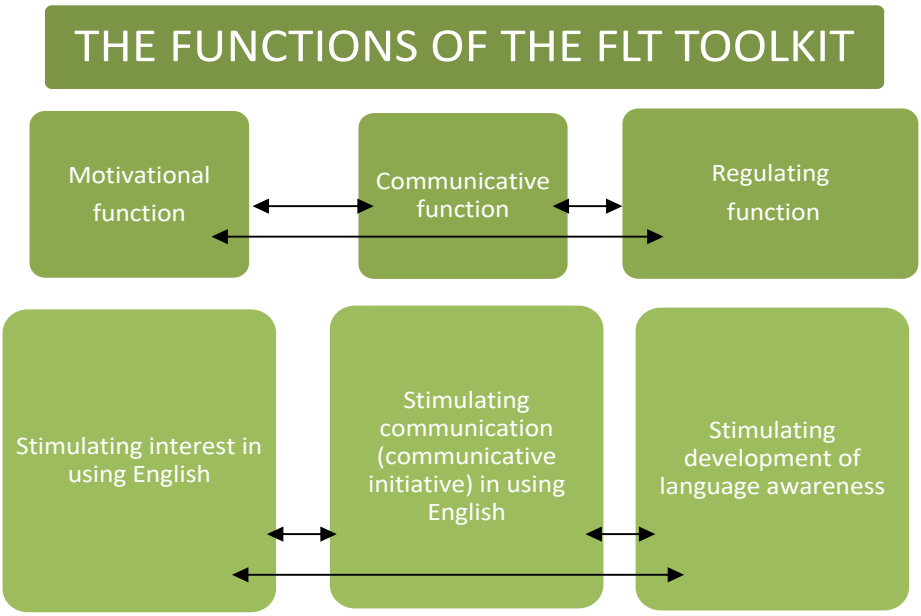

Figure 10. Functions of the FLT Toolkit in FLLE (adapted from Malkina & Koricheva, 2011)

The FLT Toolkit can support children's interest in using English while solving several tasks (adapted from Malkina, 2001:93-94). It can stimulate children's interest in the English language and communication in it in different game situations. The Toolkit can inspire children to begin to communicate in English and inspire children to take part and be active in English communication. It can stimulate children to use English as a means of communication; and divide Russian and English depending on the partner of communication. The Toolkit focuses children's attention on English.

Preschool age is a period of intensive development of their motivational sphere (Gogoberidze, 2009:34-35): from children's interest in playing to

interaction with adults and peers and finally to the cognition of the world around them. The realization of motivational function stimulates young learners' desire to speak English and to do it with pleasure. This is a very important part of children's motivation to communicate in English.

Communicative function of the FLT Toolkit used in FLLE means to foster children's communication in English. Communicative function of the FLT Toolkit will stimulate children to speak English and start dialogs in English. It can promote children to express their ideas in English and it stimulates the development of their communicative skills in a foreign language, i. e. stimulates learners' communicative initiative (Spiridonova & Amend, 2009:7). The realization of this function is connected with preschoolers' development of communicative skills in a foreign language for interaction and communication with other people in a foreign language (Spiridonova, 2011:46). Passov (2003:68-80) highlights the importance and the necessity of communicative skills development and he states that this development is possible with high learner interest in the communicative process. Therefore, motivational and communicative functions are correlated. Communicative skills in a foreign language are based on communicative skills in the native language of children (Savchenko, 2006:42).

Regulating function of the FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE supposes to avoid turning foreign language teaching into an imitative process when learners just repeat words or phrases in English and repeat actions after the English teacher without understanding the language as a means of communication. This function is also aimed to control the process of speaking in English and it becomes an effective tool for an English teacher to correct children's communicative skills in native and foreign languages (Negnevitskaya, 2004:35-37). The FLT Toolkit realizes a regulating function in (adapted from Malkina & Koricheva, 2011:64) helping a learner to choose the language of communication or the partner of communication. The FLT Toolkit regulates quantity and quality of visual and audio aids to create the situation of communication and helps to support positive emotions of young learners and to regulate their behavior. General conditions for stimulating young learners' communication in English in the kindergarten can be summarized in the following way: FLLE should be structured, bilingual and

communicative; and the FLT Toolkit should include the following teaching techniques (illustrated in Figure 11):

Figure 11. Components of the FLT Toolkit: English teaching techniques

Using a puppet: its communicative function is dominant, it plays the role of a native English speaker in FLLE; it has its own voice and a manner of behavior; it participates and stimulates a lot of communicative situations for children. It should fulfill motivational, regulating and communicative functions as described above. *Commenting*: an English teacher should use commenting very often, making his or her speech simple for young learners' comprehension. Commenting can be used for various objects and situations. This technique should be accompanied with using gestures, mimics and intoning. It should fulfill motivational, regulating and communicative functions as described above.

Language zoning: the language zones of foreign and native languages should be designed and modeled with specific filling (toys, books, posters and others) indicating the language spoken in the zone. Children should be instructed and trained how to behave and speak in each language zone. The teacher, the puppet and the learners should use speech indicators when in specific language zones (the children need to be trained to do this). Language

zoning should fulfill motivational, regulating and communicative functions as described above.

Using gestures and intoning: they should be used consciously by the English teacher; some of gestures or intoning examples can be taught to the learners who can repeat them and use a strategy in the English learning process. Gestures should be used for replacing words in learners' native language in the foreign language zone. Intoning should be used for adjusting English audio text for young learners' perception and help them to orient themselves in the language zones. Gestures and intoning are used for the puppet's actions during the lesson and they fulfill motivational, regulating and communicative functions as described above.

Effectiveness of FLLE for fostering language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in using English by preschool children depends on using special management techniques combined in the FLT Toolkit, in particular, realization of their functions: motivational, communicative and regulating, which are realized not as isolated, but in a complex, forming FLLE and supporting learners' communication and interest in using English during lessons.

2.4.2 Foreign language learning environment in the kindergarten

In this research I focus on the model of FLLE as a way of stimulating communication and interest in using a foreign language in children aged from 4 to 7 learning English in Russian kindergartens. Specialists in the field of early FLT methodology (Dörnyei, 2003; Negnevitskaya, 2004; Orehova, 2003; Utehina, 2012) bring to focus the question of designing a kind of foreign language learning environment (FLLE) as a tool to foster young learners' communication. Moon (2005:68) also emphasizes the need to create a classroom environment in which children can explore their understanding and experiment with language without the fear of being wrong or making mistakes, in order to develop their internal language system.

In Russian FLT methodology the idea of a special environment for teaching languages to children is rather popular. For example, Spiridonova and Amend (2009:6) understand the language environment as a complex of space and people which surrounds the learner and helps him or her to

absorb foreign speech. As this definition refers to natural bilingualism, I follow the point of view by Orehova (2003:8), who describes the educational type of language environment which can be created in the kindergarten. The point is that the concept of language environment has not been described especially for preschool learners aged from 4 to 7. FLLE includes several components which make it a well-organized methodological system to foster learners' communication and interest in using English during lessons. These components are organized by an English teacher and involve all the participants of the English teaching and learning process. The components are described in Table 11 relating to preschool English teaching conditions.

Table 11. Components of the ideal foreign language learning environment in the kindergarten (adapted from Orehova, 2003:35-47)

Component	**Content**	**Example**
Teaching situations	Everyday routine or learners' activities aimed at language learning organized by the English teacher	Games in English; Circle activities in English; Daily activities (while having breakfast or going for a walk)
Participants	Various participants of the English teaching process	Children's affinity groups, English teachers, other teachers, parents, administration
Teaching management	Learner's opportunity to check his/her speech accuracy provided by the English teacher.	Asking questions about mistakes; peers' help and correction; teacher's help and correction.
Visual and audio aids	Teaching aids: audio and objects of reality referring to the English language and culture	Posters, toys, books, films, songs
"Background knowledge"	Facts about English-speaking culture	Proverbs, cultural concepts, semantic connotations

The components of FLLE described in this research are aimed at stimulating young learners' communicative initiative and interest in using English as a foreign language. Various routine communicational situations during the day

(spontaneous or planned) give children opportunities to speak English while eating, playing or drawing; and it widens the spheres of communication in English and involves activities attractive to children. Further, FLLE stimulates the development of children's language awareness in using both native and foreign languages. It is known that preschoolers like to communicate with peers more than with adults (Fawcett & Garton, 2005:158). So, they can repeat English words or phrases after the interlocutor or prompt each other to answer in English. The teacher's task is to organize such communication properly as young learners' positive attitudes in playing and other activities can influence their communication in English during these processes. The uniqueness of learners being in FLLE is that if they can see the example of communicative behavior, they follow it and can correct their mistakes by themselves (Orehova, 2003:48). It helps to support the learner's emotional state because he/she can get a kind of feedback following their responses and actions (Ellis & Collins, 2009:331).

Positive emotions and mood during the lesson can be stimulated with visual and audio aids. Crooks and Lamy (1995:135) conducted research showing that visual aids stimulated children's interest in speech or presentation. Colorful books and pictures support the memorization of the information and its reproduction. The learning environment is a kind of educational space which supports diverse teaching, encourages learners' participation and is safe and stimulating for all the participants of the educational process (Bannister, 2018:4).

Bolandifar (2013:84) found that audio aids foster learners' interest and imagination, as they have to imagine the information. Audio aids enrich foreign input during English lessons and day activities. Both visual and audio aids impact children's interest in listening to English speech and using the language for communication through the presentation of communicative situations and models of behavior during the conversation. Meanwhile, behavior patterns in Russian and English-speaking cultures differ and there can be misunderstanding among interlocutors (Echevarria et al., 2004:54). That is why it is necessary to fill FLLE with cultural information for developing learners' cognitive and communicational skills (Elizarova, 2005:34) including authentic materials and narrations about English-speaking culture. FLLE

models a new world anew; it contains power and action which can involve a child into the world of foreign culture (Azhmyakova, 2002:21). It stimulates children's interest in using a foreign language.

As a result, FLLE created for early FLT should be not a chaotic, but a well-organized space which can be an effective tool for stimulating children's communicative initiative and interest in speaking English. A structured learning environment should be clear and comprehensive. It should be appropriately paced and provide feedback for building new knowledge (Jang, Reeve, & Deci, 2010:589). Orehova (2003:13) suggests including special classroom management techniques for FLLE. In my research teaching management is related to learner-centered education theory (Blumberg, 2004:117), when an English teacher plays the role of a facilitator and provides children with tasks promoting speaking English. This approach is effective for early FLT because it stimulates children's communication and the target language output; it is sensitive to learners' needs (Benson, 2001:86).

Subramaniam (2009:44) indicates that situational interest in learning can be stimulated through the modification of the learning environment which contains a lot of contextual factors (teaching strategies, presentations, and structuring of learning experiences). Subramaniam (2009:46) notes that teachers can control the learning environment and modify or manipulate the learning environment to make it more situationally interesting to influence learner engagement and learning and impact the development of individual interest in learning a foreign language. Situational interest corresponds to the learner's affective reaction triggered by stimuli in the foreign language environment which can have a short-term effect, and can influence a child's knowledge and values. As FLLE is bilingual (an English teacher uses both native and foreign languages for teaching young learners), it should be structured and organized according to the principles of bilingual education which are illustrated in Figure 12 (Chirsheva, 2008:294-296).

Figure 12. Principles of bilingualism and English teaching techniques in the foreign language learning environment in the kindergarten (Chirsheva, 2008:294-296)

The first principle is "one person – one language" which is realized when two parents talk to a child each in their native languages (for example, a mother speaks only in English; a father speaks only in Russian) and they do not mix the languages in communication (Chirsheva, 2008:294). The technique that helps in adapting this principle to the English teaching process is **using a puppet,** which plays the role of a partner in the process of communication in English. A puppet speaks and understands only in English, while an English teacher can speak English or the children's native language. The second principle of bilingual education is "one place – one language" which means dividing the languages of communication depending on rooms or places outside the house where the family live (Chirsheva, 2008:295). **Language zoning** simulates the local principle and supposes dividing class space into two language zones: the Russian zone where the teacher and children can speak in Russian only and the English zone where only English is spoken. These zones determine the choice of the language for communication. The third principle is an outside listener when parents speak with a child in Russian, but they speak with each other in English and the child just listens to them (Chirsheva, 2008:295). **Commenting** includes making comments in English on a child's actions, verbal descriptions of objects and toys which are used by the child and which are around him or her, giving the learners the opportunity to listen to English input (Malkina & Koricheva, 2012:93).

FLLE also includes teaching techniques which make the input more clear and comprehensible for young learners (Orehova, 2003:65). These techniques **use gestures** for semantization of unknown words and for communication among children and an English teacher / a puppet as a part of non-verbal communication; and **intoning** which means a way of transferring emotional and semantic meanings of a word or a phrase through using expressive voice measures (voice quality and pitch, speech melody, etc.). Generally, using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning structures FLLE and foster learners' communication and interest in using English during a lesson. I combine these techniques and call them the "Foreign Language Teaching Toolkit" – the FLT Toolkit.

2.4.3 Foreign language teaching toolkit techniques

2.4.3.1 Using a puppet

One of the communicative techniques to foster learners' communication and interest in using English and to structure FLLE is using a puppet. The description of this technique can be found in many works in the field of FLT, such as Yatskovskaya (1985:13-17), Malkina (2004:22-25), Mirella (2012:171-184). These studies describe the puppet as an important teaching element, especially if it speaks and understands just English. Malkina (2004:22) suggests that an English teacher takes the role of an interpreter and can speak only in Russian and English and the puppet – only in English. This allows separation when using two languages and avoids mixing them up. For example, if a child asks the puppet in Russian, the learner sees that it does not understand him/her shaking its head or asking again. In this way, children begin to be interested in communicating in English. The research of Yatskovskaya (1985) is of exceptional interest because she sets out the puppet's roles during a foreign language lesson.

Yatskovskaya (1985:15) points out that a puppet endowed with human traits is very attractive for preschoolers. This is because a puppet is a game element and serves as a maintaining activity for preschool-age students. Relying upon the methodological literature in the field of FLT, I have identified one more role for puppets during the lesson – a puppet as a partner of communication.

Malkina (2008a:23) considers that using a puppet initiates communication in English, manages the dialogue and helps to organize games with learners and introduces cultural information about English-speaking countries. She states (2008:25): "The teacher can use a puppet for introduction and drilling language material and providing rich input (active and passive)". The puppet's roles are described in Table 12 (Yatskovskaya, 1985:15).

Table 12. Puppet's roles in the foreign language classroom (adapted from Yatskovskaya, 1985:15)

Role	Content of the role	Example
Situation mark	A puppet "marks" different situations. Its appearance gives a signal to learners that now they are going to involve some particular activity.	A puppet as a participant of phonetic drills (children repeat sounds after it every lesson).
Puppet as a mask	A puppet has specific traits which determine its communicational behavior or strategy.	A puppet is very absent-minded and "forgets" phrases or words. It always repeats the questions.
Puppet as a topic	An English teacher and children talk about the puppet, not to it.	A teacher asks to describe the puppet's clothes, its favorite food. The puppet is silent.

The puppet creates a positive emotional atmosphere during the lesson. Malkina (2008a:27) notes that it happens if a puppet is constantly used, has human traits, "its own character" and is attractive for children. Majaron (2002b:6) highlights that a puppet should have its own manner of movement and own voice articulated or not for a child to trust it. Hamre (2002:63) describes the effect of animation: "To animate is to give life and soul to lifeless material... (Which) is based on the perception that things and materials contain energy and inner dynamic".

The puppet translates audio information as its intonation is a source of speech and language material (Malkina, 2004:26); and young children imitate pronunciation repeating after the English teacher and the puppet. It uses gestures for reactions to a child's speech (nodding, shaking its head). Majaron (2002a:62) confirms that learners who experienced communication with a

puppet in the learning process are able to interpret the semantic-symbolic value of visual signals and non-verbal communication.

Meanwhile, researchers do not see a puppet as a technique of structuring FLLE; in spite of this, a puppet can be a participant and a regulator of communicative situations. It creates communicative situation by supplying the game context and promoting children's participation in language activities (Malkina, 2004:28). It can participate in all activities during the day in the kindergarten (when children wash hands, have breakfast and lunch). It can be used at lessons which teachers give in Russian. For using a puppet, it is needed to organize cooperation among an English teacher and other teachers during the day. For example, teachers should be well disposed towards the puppet: talk to it as a participant during the teaching process.

Looking at the puppet, children learn how to react in different situations (for example, asking for help, repeating a question) (Malkina & Koricheva, 2012:93). The findings of the study carried out by Mirella (2012:181) showed that when children were encouraged to communicate with the puppet, it appeared to develop their affective domain, language skills and to promote collaboration between learners and teachers. The puppet also provides teaching regulation in FLLE. Its communicative reactions help the learner to evaluate if his/her answer is correct. For example, the puppet is nodding and says: "Yes! You're right! Well done!" – the child understands that he/she is correct without guessing the meaning of the words. If the puppet is shaking its head and says: "Sorry?" the child has an opportunity to correct the answer.

In summary, the puppet fulfills three functions in the English teaching process for young learners. *Regulating function*: the puppet puts learners in the situation of choice of the language of communication. It demands the development of language awareness in preschool children (Bialystok et al., 2014:181) in choosing the language and the partner (speaking English with the puppet and speaking Russian with the teacher). *Motivational function*: the puppet promotes positive mood during the English lesson as a game element. Playing games makes the learning full of fun and joy (Negnevitskaya, 2004:14). As children want to play, they want to communicate in English. Moreover, as a game element, the puppet stimulates learners' situational interest in communicating with the toy, even stimulates their communicative

initiative in English. *Communicative function*: the puppet creates natural communicational situations through the playing context (Malkina, 2004:30). Playing games, the learners initiate dialogues with the puppet in English, ask questions, and are invited to play. Edvard Majaron (2002a:65) notes that puppets enable children to communicate more spontaneously than with an adult; that is the way their communicative initiative in English is supported. Thus, using a puppet is an important technique to manage FLLE, to involve the learners in communication in English, promoting their language awareness and making the learning process attractive for children.

2.4.3.2 Using commenting

The technique of commenting was described in the1960s by Russian primary teacher Sofia Lysenkova as an effective tool in teaching mathematics to primary pupils (Lysenkova, 2007:13), but it was not used in the field of early FLT. The technique supposed a verbal description of a pupil's actions, describing objects provided by an English teacher in English.

The leading role of the teacher is that young learners cannot name their actions or describe things by themselves in English because of their limited vocabulary and grammar skills. Meanwhile, Doherty-Sneddon (2003:74) notes that commenting is close to children's behavior. They often comment on objects using gestures and movements. Commenting indicates children's interest in the object. The objects of commenting are described in Table 13 according to the visual components of FLLE (Malkina, 2008a:22-23).

Table 13. Objects of commenting in FLLE (adapted from Malkina, 2008a: 22-23)

Object of commenting	**Example in teacher's commentary**
Learner's actions	You are drawing. You're taking a pencil. It is red.
Learner's mood or emotional state	Look! Ann is sad. She is crying. Poor girl.
Environment (furniture, toys)	I see your car. It is blue. What a nice blue car!
Clothes	You have a nice skirt today! It is blue. A nice blue skirt.
Teacher's instructions	Take a bar of soap. Wash your hands.

Commenting as a communicative technique in the context of FLLE provides the enrichment of foreign language input (Malkina, 2008a:23). The puppet also can comment during the lesson or routine situations. This technique is aimed at fostering learners' use of English as a means of communication, attracting him/her and provoking communicative initiative. This happens when an English teacher or a puppet comments on toys, books, clothes or other things. Commenting is directed not to the child but to the environment. This technique initiates speech reactions in young children which can be addressed by the English teacher, the puppet or the other child. Commenting can be addressed to the puppet: in this case, the learners are listeners. Usage of commenting illustrates one of the bilingual principles of language teaching – a principle of an outsider listener (Chirsheva, 2006:187). Listening to English speech is rather complicated for preschool children (Chen, 2005:4). The English teacher should follow some recommendations to make this process less frustrating by: avoiding using long and grammatically difficult sentences; accompanying speech by gestures, mimics and other visual aids; and by using repetitions and paraphrasing. Thus, commenting is a resource of audio aids as its aim is a verbal description of objects in FLLE. This helps to describe the routine and attracts learners' attention to the communicative situations.

Commenting stimulates children to name objects and remember their names in English (Malkina, 2001:138). It is important to notice that remembering lexical items comes unconsciously because commenting does not suppose direct teaching of new words. Consequently, commenting fulfills three functions in FLLE:

Regulating function: A teacher's commentary elicits a child to use English words because the meaning is clear in the communicational context. *Motivational function* is realized when an English teacher comments on objects which are attractive for a child, then young learners try to imitate the teacher's speaking. *Communicative function* involves stimulating a learner's speech according to the principle "communicate with me, communicate like me". The English teacher is the example of what, when and how children can speak English and the teacher gives learners an opportunity to join him or her.

2.4.3.3 Using language zoning

One more FLT Toolkit technique to manage FLLE and to foster learners' communication and interest in using English in the kindergarten is language zoning. This technique has not been described before as used for educational purposes. In this research language zoning is understood as dividing FLLE into two language zones: a zone where children can speak a foreign language, and a zone where they can speak their native language. Language zoning has been identified through the interpretation of a local principle of bilingualism when parents in bilingual families divide space for speaking two languages (Chirsheva, 2006:188). The English teacher and the puppet help the learners to separate languages depending on the language zone and the function of places where parents use different languages goes to the language zones. The idea of zoning of the educational environment is very popular in general in Russian preschool pedagogy (Artamohina, 2007:39; Kiseleva, 2011:99). Although, language zoning serves to regulate and foster the choice of language for communication, this choice made by a young learner is supposed to be conscious and based on his/her language awareness.

Children should be instructed in how to communicate in language zones (Cook, 2010:12): for example, a foreign language is spoken loudly, a native language – in a whisper. The English teacher explains how to communicate in both language zones. Arguably, it is difficult for young learners to use English because of their lack of language and communicative skills. Moreover, using their mother tongue is a "learner-preferred strategy" because they can say all they want. However, children can speak a foreign language during almost all the lesson without using their native language. If a child does not know how to say something in English, he/she can ask in Russian but in a whisper. The English teachers can give English lessons in the English language zone and just organize various attractive activities for children such as music classes, crafts, storytelling and others. Using language zones stimulates children to speak English and brings FLLE to natural communication.

Language zones include everything around the young learners: various objects and teaching aids (Malkina, 2008a:30). There may be authentic books, dictionaries, posters in English; illustrations with see the sights of English-speaking countries; traditional toys and characters from English cartoons

and films; cartoons, songs, films in English; cultural elements (flags, musical instruments, etc.); signs on furniture in English; English games in FLLE (Ardila-Rey, 2008:331-333). Malkina (2008a:32) notes that a well-organized object environment supports game situations and successful communication in English. Cook (2010:13) points out that code-switching is a traditional situation for classroom teaching. Language zoning also includes the indications for speech: speaking English in a full voice and in Russian – in whisper. Such an indication is necessary to give learners an opportunity to use their native language in the English zone; other teachers (who cannot speak English) can use speech indicators to communicate with children.

Using language zoning provides teaching for culture and introducing English-speaking culture to young learners through authentic video and audio aids. Authentic materials have such benefits as learning motivation and real language presentations (Sharkov & Kuimova, 2015:1516). Language zoning stimulates the comparison of native and foreign cultures and languages and sparks learners' interest in foreign cultures and develops their language awareness (Wharton, 2007:13). Language zoning fulfills several functions in the context of FLLE:

Regulating function: children learn to choose the language of communication depending on the place. It develops their language awareness. *Motivational function*: decorations, books and toys of the English zone attract children and promote their communication in English which is also stimulated with the puppet which "lives" in this zone. *Communicative function*: object environment creates conditions for designing lots of communicational situations with things children like: toys, cartoons, books, interesting books and others. Language zoning allows managing FLLE and stimulates children's communication, interest and awareness in using English as a foreign language in the kindergarten.

2.4.3.4 Using gestures

Gestures are included in the FLT Toolkit to manage FLLE and foster learners' interest and communication in English. According to Bazhenova (2001:9) a gesture is defined as any movement of hands or other body parts which is repeated in certain situations and has a constant meaning. Gestures are the elements of non-verbal communication, which is widely studied in the

methodology of FLT and psychology (Gorelov, 2009; Gullberg, 2008). During preschool age, non-verbal communication has a great significance. Gorelov (2009:59) states that preschool children have no difficulties in using and understanding gestures. He confirms that gestures appear before conscious speech. It is very important for the early FLT field, where each word is to be semanticized. In this case, gestures are effective not just for a teacher to explain the meanings, but for learners who can use gestures instead of unknown words in English without using his/her native language. This leads to the absence of code-switching during the lesson (i.e. mother tongue is not used), and communicative aim is achieved (Nimer, 2012:182).

In this research I use a classification of gestures offered by Smirnova (1977:34-38) and used in Russian FLT methodology because it combines types of gestures and verbal or non-verbal information transmitted with them. For example, it includes symbolic or communicative gestures which are traditional and specific for each culture. They can replace such words as "come in" or "hello". The next group is lexical gestures or illustrators which are used to depict actions, images or objects. The content of each group of gestures, their content and some examples are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Classification of gestures (adapted from Smirnova, 1977:34-38)

Type	**Content**	**Example**
Communicative gestures (or symbolic gestures)	For replacing language elements.	Greeting, inviting, agreement
Lexical gestures (or gestures-illustrators)	For a description of different words and senses. They live just in the context of speech.	Gestures of size, place or form
Modal gestures (or gestures-regulators)	For expression of assessment of people, objects and events.	Gestures of approval, joy, surprise
Gestures-adaptors (or motor gestures)	Gestures and movements which are individual for a person and used commonly unknowingly. They can be used for stressing a certain word or phrase.	Scratching, paddling, touching the partner.
Gestures – affecters	For individual expression of emotions or feelings (combined with mimics) as a reaction to a particular situation.	

Meanwhile, traditionally gestures are not regarded as a technique to manage FLLE, although they regulate verbal and non-verbal activities during the English teaching process. An English teacher can use gestures-regulators to organize communication in English because they have an impact on children: they attract learners' attention and support it (Protasova & Rodina, 2009:87). Gestures stimulate cooperation between teachers and children in English. Gestures-regulators can be used for expressing someone's attitude (nodding); and gestures – affecters for expressing emotions (surprise or confusion) (Richmond et al., 2006:169). Looking at the gesture, the child can express his/her own attitude to the process without using native language, e.g. gestures help to choose the language of communication. It is important to note that often gestures are used to make a word or phrase clear for a child. Firstly, a gesture and a word are used together, and then the gesture turns into a clue for the learner to remember or understand the word (Ellis & Brewster, 2002:32). Consequently, gestures facilitate children to speak English and help to cope with communicative difficulties. Some gestures in Russian and English differ, which can be illustrated in the case of developing learners' language awareness (Smirnova, 1977:68).

Thus, using gestures fulfills several functions in FLLE. *Regulating function* consists of avoiding the use of learners' native language by children when they can replace an unknown word with a gesture. The diversity of gestures stimulates communication in English with a puppet in the language zone. The English teacher can use gestures for avoiding direct translation of words and phrases during the lesson. Gestures are used for attraction of learners' attention. *Motivational function* is realized through modal gestures which express emotions. Learners can use them for communicating with a teacher or a puppet (Jokinen, 2008:229). Using gestures motivates children to use them instead of their mother tongue; and it becomes a game with movements or a learning strategy (Ellis & Brewster, 2002:2). *Communicative function* supposes using gestures for communicational purposes by an English teacher, a puppet and learners. They can greet each other, attract attention or use other communicative gestures. Generally, all the gestures are communicative as they are used for transferring information.

2.4.3.5 Using intoning

Intoning as an element of the FLT Toolkit is a way of representing an emotional and semantic meaning of a word or phrase through using intonational voice sources (tune, pitch and melody of a voice) (Kodzasov, 2009:410). Intoning is widely discussed in the field of early FLT (Malkina, 2008a:25; Kráľová & Metruk, 2012:21; Underhill, 2005:45), but it is not discussed as a technique of managing FLLE. However, intoning is very important for teaching children because intonational development takes place at preschool age (Lvov, 2000:225). Lvov (2000:226) considers that children learn to understand intonation before they learn to speak. It confirms that intoning is comprehensible for young learners.

Ceitlin (2000:18) emphasizes two types of intoning: addressed to vision (mimics and gestures) and to hearing (representing speech melody). She states that mimics and gestures can be replaced with verbalization and described in words. The main element of intoning is intonation which includes tune, melody, speed, intensity of speech and pausing (Ceitlin, 2000:76). A change of intonation defines the total emotional coloring of a word or phrase. Intoning helps to show a semantic meaning of a phrase and to control a learner's understanding through emotional tones (Kudzasov, 2009:421). Intoning is used for semanticizing words (Malkina, 2008a:26). Children could guess the word meaning from the context if it was pronounced with specific intonation. For example, it is easy to intone such words like small and big; happy and sad; angry, sleepy, etc. Children become attracted to guessing the word and perceive the English learning process as a game.

Pausing helps to regulate communication. Pausing is an arrangement of pauses and their gradation according to duration (Malkina, 2008a:26). The necessity of correct intonational articulation and specifically pausing in English is caused by some reasons: a) for representing definite syntax and semantic relations; and b) for semantic differentiation. Such an arrangement enables learners to perceive the text not as a large fragment but as divided into small intonational phrases. Intonational phrase is a connected and well-formed piece of the text which can be pronounced as a unit of intonational module.

Using pausing and intoning the English teacher and the puppet can make accent on important elements of the saying (Collins & Mees, 2003:129). For

example, when an alternative question is asked: "Would you like a BANANA or an ORANGE?" the logical accentuation helps learners to see the options for the choice. Consequently, intoning of English speech allows creating the emotional and expressive shape of the word; dividing the text into small pieces for easy perception (Kráľová & Metruk, 2012:21). These actions impact young learners' attitudes and understanding of English speech. Moreover, intoning is a channel of audio aids and can represent such information as size, age, emotions, etc. It makes phrases and words more comprehensible for children (Protasova & Rodina, 2009:37). Using speech indicators (loud voice or whisper) is a kind of intoning. The contrast of a voice attracts children's attention and makes them focused on the speaking Short and clear phrases of the teacher's speech help learners to be oriented in the text. Moreover, children also can use intoning for semanticizing or prompting for their peers (Protasova & Rodina, 2009:38). Intoning is a prompt for future action or meaning (Underhill, 2005:31).

Intoning fulfills three functions in FLLE. *Regulating function* consists in regulating of conversation with attracting learners' attention (changing the tone or using loud voice and whisper); and it regulates the choice of the language in the language zone with speech indicators. *Motivational function*: intoning motivates young learners to listen to English speech with changing of tone and providing emotional expression. It can be used both with an English teacher or a puppet. *Communicative function*: intoning helps to organize communication in English with using pausing and making words more comprehensible for children. It refers to the communicative function of intonation which includes such purposes as distinctive and expressive (Ivanova-Lukyanova, 2000:74).

3 Research questions

The aim of the research is to find out how to foster preschool learners, aged from 4 to 7, to use English at English lessons in the kindergarten. This aim derives from my professional experience as a kindergarten English teacher and opinions of my colleagues who notice that preschool children often avoid using a foreign language during English lessons and prefer speaking Russian. As a result, children do not learn to communicate in English, which contradicts the goals of early foreign language teaching. Moreover, when preschoolers go to school and start learning English in the 2nd grade, their interest in foreign language fades away. There are two important factors influencing the quality of children's communication in kindergarten English lessons. The first one is interest as an impetus for the beginning of communication in a foreign language. The second factor is preschool learners' communicative initiative as a key point for starting to speak English with an English teacher or peers based on children's communicative skills both in native and foreign languages. However, there is an additional factor which influences learners' understanding if they speak their mother tongue or English: language awareness stimulates children to choose the language of communication according to the place, time or a partner of communication. The current research puts forward the idea that using the FLT Toolkit can support young learners' communication in English during the lessons.

While conducting the research, I was a teacher, a researcher and a teacher researcher as demonstrated in Figure 13. Winch et al. (2015:203) state that the role of research in teaching is important because the research contributes to the teaching practice and allows teachers to look at their professional skills and results critically. Cordingley (2015:235) states that a research component in teaching helps teachers analyze and highlight effective teaching activities and techniques.

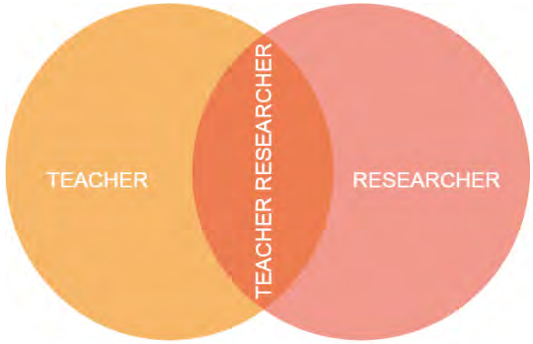

Figure 13. The researcher's roles in the current thesis

Firstly, I am a practicing English teacher and I noticed that preschool learners of English had difficulties in using a foreign language during lessons – they preferred to use their mother tongue. I started to analyze which communicative techniques I and my colleagues used to support children's communication in the target language. The experience of other English teachers also confirmed that their young learners had the same problems of using their native language and avoiding speaking a foreign language in the kindergartens. Then, I assumed the role of a researcher and conducted a survey in the field of EFLT (Malkina & Koricheva, 2011), which indicated that language awareness, interest and communicative initiative has impacts on learners' communication in a foreign language. These findings prompted reflection concerning effective tools to foster learners to use English for communication in the kindergarten. To address this task, I took the role of the teacher researcher and analyzed my practical experience, and also that of my colleagues, to choose the best communicative techniques for preschool children. To test the choice of techniques, I designed methods to explore the level of learners' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English; and English teachers' attitudes toward these techniques. The exploration confirmed the problem: the learners chose to use Russian more often than English. After that, as a teacher, I provided professional training for my colleagues, English teachers, to train them how to use the chosen communicative techniques and I helped them to integrate the techniques into the teaching process. Later, as a researcher, I tested the effectiveness of the techniques to encourage preschoolers to speak English during lessons.

Based on theoretical research and my practical experience, I state the following hypothesis: *The FLT Toolkit (which includes using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning) may be used for encouraging preschool learners to speak English as a foreign language in Russian kindergartens,* which I will try to prove in the experimental part of the research.

To find out if this FLT Toolkit is effective for such a purpose, three research questions were designed which were answered in the experiment organized in the control and experimental groups of children learning English as a foreign language in kindergartens in Saint Petersburg, Russia, 2013-2016:

1. How do young learners communicate during English lessons?
   b) Which languages do they use for communication during the English lessons?
   c) What is their level of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English?

2. How do English teachers foster young learners to communicate in English during lessons?
   a) Which communicative techniques from the FLT Toolkit do they use?
   b) What are their purposes for using communicative techniques during the lessons?

3. What does the FLT Toolkit change in young learners' communication during English lessons?
   a) How does the level of learners' language awareness change?
   b) How does the level of learners' interest in using English change?
   c) How does the level of learners' communicative initiative in English change?

The research questions are not isolated; they are connected and complement each other, forming the unit framework of the study. The coordination of the research questions is presented in Figure 14.

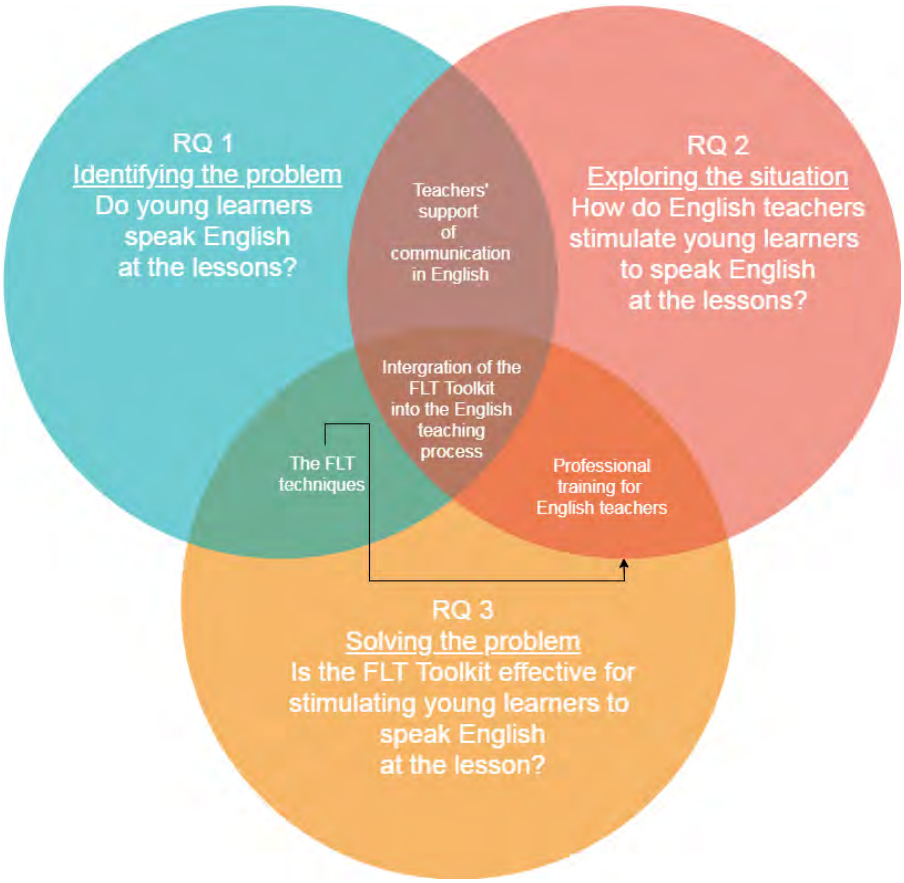

Figure 14. Coordination of the research steps

RQ1 is supposed to identify the problem in the English classroom in experimental and control groups: if preschoolers in experimental and control groups have difficulties communicating in English during the lessons; if they speak English or not. To answer this question, observation of English lessons is used in the experimental and control groups. The results of observation are supposed to indicate which languages young learners use for communication during the English lesson; how often they communicate in Russian and in English; situations in which young learners use their native language during the lesson; and why they avoid speaking English if that is the case.

To find out how children communicate in English, two individual interviews were used with young learners in experimental and control groups. The interviews were aimed at assessing a child's level of interest in using English and the level of language awareness in using native and foreign languages

during lessons. One more observation will be used to assess children's level of communicative initiative in English. The data collected to answer RQ1 is supposed to highlight if children have difficulties in communication in English. This point is a key one to decide if the FLT Toolkit is needed or not for use in the kindergartens to foster young learners' use of English during the lesson. RQ2 consists of exploring how English teachers encourage young learners to speak English in the lessons: which techniques are used? To answer this research question, the observations during English lessons are used both in experimental and control groups. To analyze teachers' attitudes toward the communicative techniques and their awareness in using them, individual interviews and a questionnaire are used for English teachers of both groups. It is necessary to find out how English teachers explain their choice of techniques for stimulating young learners to use English during the lesson; if they are aware of the results of using these techniques with young learners and the ways of organizing FLLE.

RQ3 answers the question of evaluating the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit to foster children to communicate in English. It includes a step of integrating the FLT Toolkit into the English teaching process in the experimental group. The integration is supposed to be organized according to the conditions of using the FLT Toolkit. This stage includes two parts: 1) providing in-service training for English teachers of the experimental group which includes a seminar and giving practical recommendations on how to use the techniques of the FLT Toolkit; 2) use of the FLT Toolkit in practice in the experimental group by the English teachers after professional training. After the in-service training, the English teachers participate in the individual interview which took place in RQ1 again to find out how English teachers explain the choice of the techniques for stimulating young learners to use English during lessons; if the teachers are aware of the results of using the FLT Toolkit in FLLE. These results will be compared with those from RQ2. While integrating the FLT Toolkit, in the control group the English teachers continue English teaching as usual according to the bilingual program accepted in the kindergarten. RQ3 includes interviews with children in both experimental and control groups to assess their level of interest in using English and the level of language awareness. The observation (the same as in RQ1) will be used to assess their

level of communicative initiative in English. The data collected while answering the research questions provides the point of contrast and comparison between the experimental and control groups indicating if the FLT Toolkit is effective for stimulating young learners to use English for communication during English lessons in the kindergarten, and thus to prove or reject the hypothesis of the current research.

4 Research design and methods

4.1 Participants

This study includes two groups of participants which form the control and experimental groups of the research. The groups are located in different kindergartens: the control group in kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" ("From A to Z") and the experimental group are in the kindergarten "Svetlana". Both kindergartens are in St. Petersburg, Russia. The reason for choosing these particular kindergartens is that they provide very similar educational programs for early English teaching in terms of topics, language materials and teaching techniques.

The teachers and children were divided into experimental and control groups (see Table 15) to check the effectiveness of using the FLT Toolkit for stimulating young learners to use English; the experimental group used the FLT Toolkit and the control group did not. All the participants were involved in all the steps of the experiment.

Table 15. Experiment participants

Experimental group Kindergarten "Svetlana" St. Petersburg, Russia		**Control group Kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" St. Petersburg, Russia**	
Subgroup 1 (Teacher 1)	**Subgroup 2 (Teacher 2)**	**Subgroup 3 (Teacher 3)**	**Subgroup 4 (Teacher 4)**
13	14	15	14
Total N: 27 children		**Total N:** 29 children	
2 English teachers		2 English teachers	

Experimental group	Learners' age (N=27)		Learners' gender		English teachers' age (N=2)		English teachers' experience	
	Mean	Range	Female	Male	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
	3.55 years	Min 3–max 4 years	17 (63%)	10 (37%)	26 years	25–27 years	2.5 years	Min 2–max 3 years
Control group	Learners' age (N=29)		Learners' gender		English teachers' age (N=2)		English teachers' experience	
	Mean	Range	Female	Male	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
	3.45 years	Min 3–max 4 years	15 (52%)	14 (48%)	27.5 years	27–28 years	3.5 years	Min 3–max 4 years

This research involves a small amount of the participants – 56 children and 4 English teachers. However, this unique situation allows investigating participants' experience deeply and to develop a rich description of the data. Such a kind of experiment is focused on representativeness, not on frequency (Creswell, 2009:74). There is a description of the kindergartens participating in the research and the reasons for choosing those particular institutions and general information about the kindergarten is presented in Table 16.

Table 16. Information about kindergartens

	Kindergarten "Svetlana" (experimental group)	**Kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" (control group)**
Children's age	2–7	2–7
Funding	Private	private
Preschool program	"From birth to school" (Veraksa et al., 2010)	"From birth to school" (Veraksa et al., 2010)
ELT program	"Stupenki" (Malkina, 2007)	Bilingual program

Kindergarten "Svetlana" (St. Petersburg, Russia): experimental group. Kindergarten "Svetlana" was chosen, as the administration gave a permission to integrate a bilingual English teaching program into the educational process. The organization had experience in interaction with Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia in providing professional practice for future preschool teachers. As a researcher, I organized an experiment for my master's degree thesis. Kindergarten "Svetlana" was founded in 1976 as a kindergarten for children whose parents worked in the "Svetlana" factory. From 1976 up to 2003 it was a state kindergarten funded from the city's budget. During this period, the educational program followed the national curriculum – "General state program of upbringing and teaching children in the kindergarten" by Vasilieva (1985). Teaching foreign languages wasn't included in the curriculum.

In 2003, kindergarten "Svetlana" became a private educational center receiving funding from parents' tuition for the children's care and continued its realization of the national program of preschool education. According to the program, the aim of preschool education was to create a safe environment for children; to develop the basic culture of a child's personality,

his/her psychological and physical qualities according to age and individual characteristics; to prepare a child for life in modern society (Vasilieva, 2003:5). In 2010, kindergarten "Svetlana" changed the curriculum into the program "From birth to school" (Veraksa et al., 2010). According to the program, the aim of preschool education was to create a comfortable environment for children; to develop the basic culture of child's personality, his/her psychological and physical qualities according to age and individual characteristics; to prepare a child for life in modern society, for school education; and to provide a safe existence for children in the kindergarten (Veraksa et al., 2010:3). The program was realized through various activities including cognitive, mathematical, speech, physical, social developments and art and crafts. The center provided care for children aged from 2 to 7 years old and included full-day and part-day groups.

Teaching English as foreign English was included in the curriculum in 2007. The program of early English teaching "Stupenki" ("Steps"), for children aged from 4 to 7 years old (2007), was designed by Natalia Malkina, a professor from Herzen State Pedagogical University (St. Petersburg). The English teaching process included two or three English lessons per week for each age group. There, events and opportunities were organized such as thematic English weeks and festivals in English, reading English literature to children and additional English lessons in the evening for an extra fee. At the time of conducting the research, the kindergarten had four full-day groups of children from ages 2 to 7 and three part-day groups learning English according to the "Stupenki" program.

There were eight preschool teachers and eight assistants, teachers of physical education, music, art, dancing, a physiologist and two speech therapists. Also, there were four English teachers; all the teachers graduated from Herzen University, two of them as specialists in the field of early foreign language education; two as school English teachers. Their professional experience varied from 2 to 4 years, during which they had been working in "Svetlana".

The 3–4 years age group was chosen as an experimental group, including two English teachers who had specialized in early foreign language education. This group of children (27 persons: 17 girls and 10 boys) had attended the kindergarten the year before the research started. Some of children (5

persons) attended additional English lessons in "Svetlana" or other places. There were two preschool teachers in this group: two female graduates from Herzen University, Department of Preschool Education. The teachers had 18 and 21 years of professional experience and they had been working in "Svetlana" for 10 years. In order to conduct the research, informed consent was needed from the teachers and children's parents (Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, Appendix 4).

Kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" (St. Petersburg, Russia): control group. Kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" was chosen because it provided a bilingual English teaching program which was integrated into the national preschool curriculum by Veraksa et al. (2010), as in kindergarten "Svetlana". The English teaching in "Ot A do Ya" did not include using the FLT Toolkit as a separate English teaching method, however, the other English teaching conditions had been similar to those in "Svetlana" during the research (including FLLE), i. e. the data collected in both kindergartens could be compared I order to test the hypothesis about the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for stimulating young learners to use English during the lessons.

Kindergarten "Ot A do Ya" was founded in 2008 as a private bilingual kindergarten providing teaching English and Russian languages to children aged from 2 to 7 years old, funded by parents' payments for their children's care. Now the kindergarten consists of two buildings, to participate in the research, there was chosen the kindergarten at the address Paradnaya Street, 3-2-A, St. Petersburg. The general program of preschool education in "Ot A do Ya" is based on the program "From birth to school" by Veraksa et al. (2010) with priority of realization of bilingual principles of language education. The aim of the program is to create an opportunity for each child to develop his/her capabilities in interaction with the world around them; to get experience in various activities for creative self-actuating. The educational process includes cognitive, artistic social and communicative development of preschool children.

Teaching English is integrated in all educational areas and is realized according to the specially created program aimed at the development of bilingual personality of a child through communication in Russian and English languages according to communicative foreign language teaching and CLIL approaches. Teaching English contains English lessons, thematic festivals and

weeks, using English songs and literature for children. Program lexical topics are combined with those in Veraksa's program. At the time of conducting the research, the kindergarten included four full-day groups of children from 2 to 7 and two part-day groups learning English according to the bilingual program.

There were four preschool teachers and six assistants, teachers of physical education, music, art, dancing, two physiologists and a speech therapist. Also, there were six English teachers: three teachers had graduated from Herzen University as specialists in the field of early foreign language education (two persons); one as a school English teacher; three teachers graduated from pedagogical college № 2 (St. Petersburg) as school English teachers. Teaching English to preschoolers differed among the groups: four groups were supervised by two teachers (an English teacher who spoke English only and a preschool teacher who spoke Russian only) and two groups were supervised just by an English teacher who spoke both Russian and English. The English teachers had one to five years of professional experience.

The 3–4 years age group was chosen as a control group and two English teachers who had specialization in early foreign language teaching. This group of children (29 persons: 15 girls and 14 boys) had attended the kindergarten the year before the research began but the quantity of English teaching was small (two 10-minute lesson per week and everyday short activities in English, mostly games and singing songs). Some children (7 persons) visited additional English lessons in other places. The interaction of specialists involved two preschool teachers of this group: two females who had graduated from Herzen University, Department of Preschool Education. They had 5 and 8 years of professional experience. For conducting the research, the teachers and children's parents were asked for informed consent (Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, Appendix 4, respectively).

4.2 Stages of the research

The data collection process was based on the theoretical information from the literature review: parameters and criteria of exploring the communication of English teachers and young learners in the kindergarten, assessment

of children's level of language awareness, interest in using English and communicative initiative in English, exploring teachers' use of communicative techniques during English lessons. This research includes a complex of research methods oriented at two categories of participants: English teachers and learners of English aged from 4 to 7 years old. The interaction with both groups of participants was organized simultaneously from spring of 2013 to spring of 2016. The research procedure included collecting both qualitative and quantitative data as various aspects were explored, including participants' beliefs, needs and attitudes and frequency of using various English teaching techniques. During the research, I compared the data collected during different steps of the experiment; the data collection is presented in Figure 15.

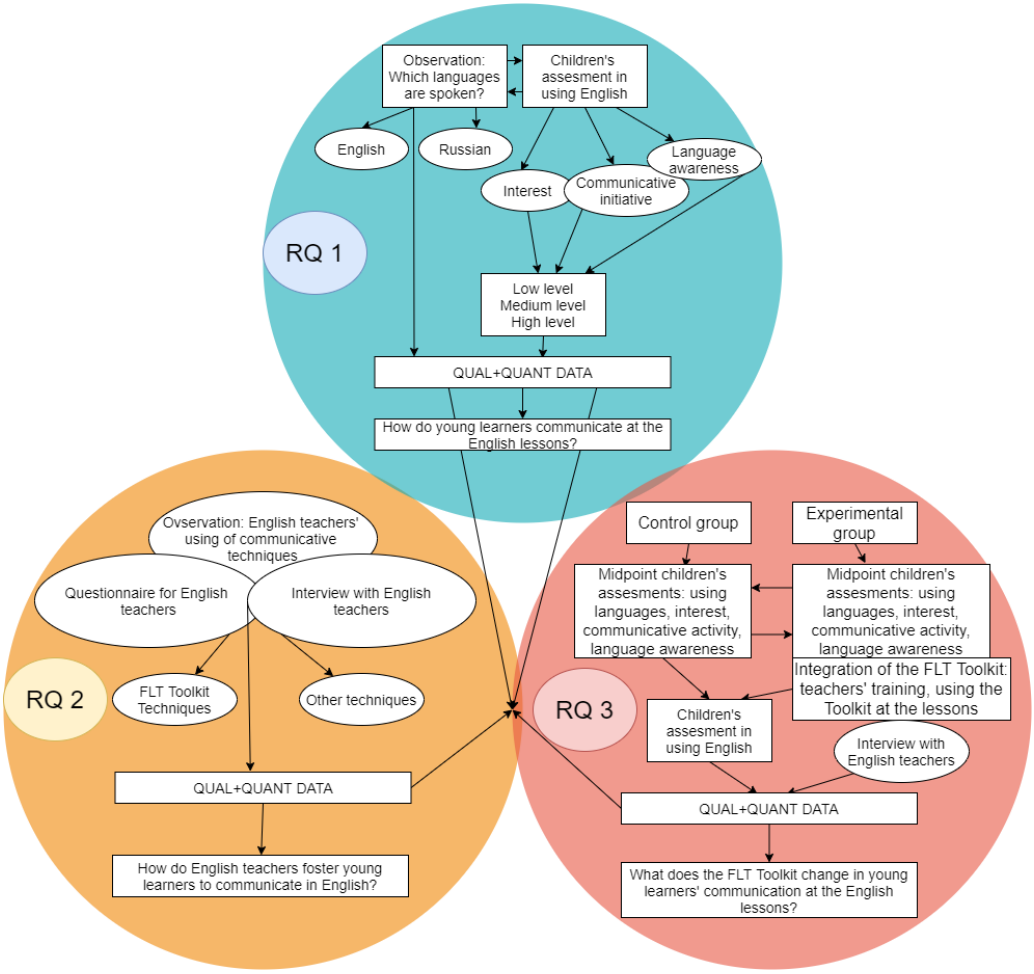

Figure 15. Steps of the experimental part of the research

RQ1: How do young learners communicate at the English lessons? This step included a set of research methods to collect data to answer RQ1:"How do young learners (from the experimental and control groups) communicate during English lessons?" This stage was the first one because it indicated if the children had any difficulties in using English during the lessons and what their dominant language of communication was: Russian or English. Because it could happen that the learners spoke English during the lessons, and they didn't need any special communicative support. To answer RQ1, the observation was carried out to explore how children communicate in English during the lessons and to seek how the communicative techniques used by English teachers influence that process. During the observation, the language or languages the learners spoke with the teacher or their peers was noted; examples of communicative situations were documented.

The observation in the classroom gave quantitative and qualitative data about the process of children's communication during the lessons. The quantitative data indicated the number of situations when English and Russian languages were spoken; the dominant language of communication during the lessons was identified. The qualitative data were presented with the examples of communicative situations when children spoke English and Russian. The analysis of the quantitative data allowed defining the dominant language of communication for the young learners. The qualitative data analysis allowed exploring the situations when the children had avoided speaking English and preferred their native language; and it also allowed considering the possible reasons for dominance of a particular language during the English lessons. The collected data indicated the necessity of using the FLT Toolkit as a way to foster learners to speak English.

After exploring the process of communication of the learners during the lessons, I concentrated on researching their usage of English. For this purpose, one more observation was organized (Appendix 15). When a learner spoke with his/her teacher and peers in English, the quantitative data indicated the frequency of using English as a means of communication in different communicative situations; according to the chosen criteria the level of children's initiative was assessed. The qualitative data included examples

of communicative situations of using English by the young learners during the lessons.

To assess learners' level of language awareness in using English, the interview method was used (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). During the interview, the learners were asked to choose English or Russian and explain their choice. The quantitative data indicated the level of learners' language awareness in using English; the qualitative data included personal learners' reasons for choosing foreign or native languages.

To assess learners' level of interest in speaking English, the individual interview method was used (Appendix 11, Appendix 12). During the interview the learners were offered to choose the language for communication – Russian or English. The learners also were asked to explain their choice of language. The quantitative data allowed evaluating the level of children's interest in using English for communication. The qualitative data allowed analyzing the reasons why the children avoided speaking the English language. Based on the learners' level of interest in speaking English, communicative initiative and language awareness, the necessity for using special teaching techniques to foster learners to speak English was indicated.

RQ2: How do English teachers foster young learners to communicate in English during lessons? At the second step of the experiment, I answered the question about which techniques English teachers used and how they were applied to stimulate and support young learners in using English as a means of communication. To answer this question, I started with observation of the English lessons to explore the English teachers' repertoire of communicative techniques and finding out if they used the communicative techniques. The results of the observation included qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data described the number of communicative techniques used during the lessons; the qualitative data included the content of the techniques and examples of their use for fostering young learners' communication in English. The qualitative data also illustrated how the application of the communicative techniques could influence children's communicative initiative in English. Generally, the observation indicated the necessity of the diversification of the English teachers' repertoire of techniques to stimulate young learners' communication in English.

After the observation, the English teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaire which was aimed at exploring teachers' attitudes toward the communicative techniques' effectiveness and if they considered the FLT Toolkit to be effective for fostering children to speak English during lessons. The questionnaire collected quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data indicated more and less preferable techniques according to the teachers' opinions; and qualitative data indicated English teachers' readiness to use the FLT Toolkit to foster learners to communicate in English.

At the final stage of answering RQ2, the English teachers participated in the qualitative interview and expressed their personal attitude to the necessity of the special support of children's communication in English during the lessons. During the interview the teachers presented their view of how to encourage young learners to speak English and gave examples of using the techniques from their practice. As a result, the English teachers' awareness in using techniques, including the FLT Toolkit, to foster and support children's communicative initiative in English was assessed. This was accomplished through an analysis of the examples given by the teachers.

The qualitative and quantitative data collected through observation, the interview and the questionnaire were compared to explore awareness or unawareness of the teachers in using techniques and the FLT Toolkit to foster communication in English during the lessons; and to investigate teachers' readiness to try and use new communicative techniques. As a result, I collected the data which defined the necessity and possibility of integration of the FLT Toolkit into the English teaching process to foster young learners to use English for communication.

RQ3: What does the FLT Toolkit change in young learners' communication during English lessons? After collecting the data for RQ1 and RQ2, the experiment continued with integration of the FLT Toolkit into the English teaching process in the experimental group to test the FLT Toolkit's effectiveness and answer RQ3. The English teaching process in the control group was not modified; and the English teachers of the control group continued using the communicative techniques as they usually did without special training. The English teaching process in the experimental group was modified as the FLT Toolkit was integrated. The integration had two steps. Firstly, an in-service

training was organized for the English teachers to teach them how to use the FLT Toolkit to foster young learners to use English for communication. Just after the training, the teachers started to use the FLT Toolkit with children at the English lessons. After integrating the FLT Toolkit, the English teachers of the experimental group participated in the same interview as they had participated in before using the FLT Toolkit. They gave new examples of using the communicative techniques and expressed their attitude towards it from the aspect of stimulation of children to use English. The data collected during that interview was needed to answer RQ3 to evaluate effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit from the teachers' point of view.

To answer RQ3, midpoint observations were conducted on the communication during the lessons (each spring of the experiment) and children's assessment of communicative initiative, interest in using English and their language awareness in the control and experimental groups and all the changes (qualitative and quantitative) were documented and compared with the previous results. The final stage of the experiment was the assessment of learners' level of communicative initiative, their interest in using English and their language awareness in the control and experimental groups before they left the kindergartens for further school education (the same observation and interviews were used as in the beginning of the experiment). The results were compared with the data collected during all the stages of the experiment to test the hypothesis with regard to the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for encouraging preschoolers to use English for communication during English lessons in the kindergarten. Figure 4 illustrates the research stages in a visual form. The figure presents research methods to answer the research questions during the experiment. The lines indicate the data to be compared after being collected.

4.3 Data collection methods

The data collection was completed with the methods presented in Table 17. It describes which data collection methods were used at different steps of the research. It also contains the information about the aims of using

various methods for collecting the data and the participants, teachers and preschool children. Also, information can be found about the period of using the research methods and appendices where the forms are placed. All the data collection methods are divided into three groups to answer the three research questions of the study.

Table 17. Use of data collection methods during the research

RQ	Method	Aim	Participants	Period	Appendix
RQ1	Observation	Identifying the languages used by the learners	Children English teachers	Autumn 2013	Appendix 10
	Individual interview	Evaluating the level of learners' language awareness	Children	Autumn 2013	Appendix 13, Appendix 14
	Individual interview	Evaluating the level of learners' interest in using English	Children	Autumn 2013	Appendix 11, Appendix 12
	Observation	Evaluating the level of learners' communicative initiative in English	Children English teachers	Autumn 2013	Appendix 15
RQ 2	Observation	Identifying the elements of the FLT Toolkit used by the English teachers	Children English teachers	Autumn 2013	Appendix 5
	Questionnaire	Exploring English teachers' attitudes toward the techniques of the FLT Toolkit	English teachers	Autumn 2013	Appendix 6, Appendix 7
	Individual interview	Exploring English teachers' reasoning for using communicative techniques and elements of the FLT Toolkit	English teachers	Autumn 2013	Appendix 8, Appendix 9

RQ	Method	Aim	Participants	Period	Appendix
RQ 3	Individual interview	Exploring the changes in English teachers' reasoning for using communicative techniques and elements of the FLT Toolkit	Exploring English teachers' reasoning for using communicative techniques and elements of the FLT Toolkit	Autumn 2013	Appendix 8, Appendix 9
	Individual interview	Exploring the changes in the level of learners' language awareness	Children	Spring 2014 Spring 2015 Spring 2016	Appendix 13, Appendix 14
	Individual interview	Exploring the changes in the level of learners' interest in using English	Children	Spring 2014 Spring 2015 Spring 2016	Appendix 11, Appendix 12
	Observation	Exploring the changes in the level of learners' communicative initiative in English	Children English teachers	Spring 2014 Spring 2015 Spring 2016	Appendix 15

4.3.1 Young learners' communication during English lessons

4.3.1.1 Exploring learners' communication during English lessons: observation

To find out what languages children from the control and experimental groups (N=56) chose for communication during English lessons, I conducted observations in autumn 2014 and in spring 2015 and spring 2016 (as midpoint observations). Data was registered in the observation map (Appendix 10). The map was divided into three sections containing parameters for possible partners of communication during English lessons: an English teacher, a puppet and peers, as illustrated in Table 18.

Table 18. The structure of observation parameters

	Section 1	**Section 2**	**Section 3**
Partners of communication	Communication with an English teacher	Communication with a puppet	Communication with peers

During the observation the language children spoke was recorded when they talked to the teacher, the puppet or each other including manifestations of learners' communicative initiative in English. The observation map included the space for registering the examples of using English and Russian during the lesson. Observational points are described.

Section 1. Children communicate with the English teacher

Children ask the teacher questions. Children talk to the English teacher. These parameters come from the literature review as children can ask the teacher questions in English or Russian and discuss different topics which sometimes do not relate to the content of the lesson. The focus of observing was the choice of languages (English or Russian) for communication in the classroom.

Children answer the teacher's questions asked in English. Children answer the teacher's questions asked in Russian. These parameters indicate if children divide the languages to answer question in English and Russian; and how they communicatively react to the teacher's questions in both languages.

Section 2. Children communicate with the puppet

Children talk to the puppet. Children invite the puppet to play with them.

Children communicate about the puppet. These parameters derive from the theoretical analysis of the research as a puppet also can be a partner of communication during lessons. As children believe the toy is alive (Majaron, 2002b:6), they can speak with it as with a real person. Thus, they can ask it questions and invite it to join activities offered by the English teacher. Children can discuss the puppet among each other as it is an attractive object in the English classroom. The question is which language (English or Russian) they choose for speaking with and about the puppet.

Children answer the puppet's questions asked in English. Children answer the puppet's questions asked in English. These parameters refer to the literature review and indicate which language (English or Russian) children choose to answer the puppet's questions if it asks them.

Section 3. Children communicate with each other

Children make comments. Children ask each other questions. Children talk to their peers. These parameters derive from the literature review and indicate the choice of languages during interpersonal communication during English lessons. They can comment on the teacher's actions, toys, activities and other things by expressing their opinion or emotions. However, children cannot use English for these purposes effectively as they have limited language skills in English. However, they can use separate words and phrases or use just Russian to communicate with each other.

Children communicate during playing games. This statement refers to the literature review when playing is described as the main activity at preschool age which is dominant at English lessons. That is why it is important to find out which language (English or Russian) children choose when they play in the English classroom during the lesson. The result of observation was a description of situations when the children used English and Russian during English lessons and highlighted difficulties in using the foreign language for communication in different situations. The results indicate whether the FLT Toolkit was necessary or not to foster young learners' use of English.

4.3.1.2 Exploring learners' language awareness: interview

The interview method with questions and game tasks was used for evaluating the learners of both groups' (N=56) language awareness in using English and Russian (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). A lack of language awareness leads to increasing foreign language anxiety which negatively influences learners' wish to use English for communication. The most sensitive and anxiety-provoking aspect is oral activity in a foreign language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:78). Supporting foreign language awareness might raise learners' self-confidence in using English as a foreign language.

The interview consisted of six questions designed to meet three criteria: similarity to children's typical interests or activities; attractiveness to ensure that most children would express initial interest in answering the questions; and amenability of question content for young children (Ospanova & Timoshenko, 2017:51). The children had to identify the language (English or Russian) and choose the language (English or Russian) according to the place and the partner of communication. The results of the interview indicated three levels of young learners' language awareness described in the theoretical part of the research (Svalberg, 2007:289-290; Berry, 2014:22). After each question they were asked to explain the choice with a "why" question to explore their reasoning for language choice. For example, children were asked to choose the language of communication and explain their choice. All the questions have origins in the principles of bilingualism. The interview questions are described in Table 19.

Table 19. Interview structure for evaluating learners' language awareness

Questions (Appendix 13, Appendix 14)	**Parameter**
Question 1 and 4	Learner's ability to differentiate the languages.
Question 2 and 5	Learner's ability to differentiate the languages according to the place.
Question 3 and 6	Learner's ability to differentiate the languages according to the partner.

Question 1 and *question 4* find out if a learner can define and differentiate English and Russian languages. *Question 2* and *question 5* explore if a child can choose a language of communication according to the place of communication and the language used there, following the local bilingual principle. *Question 3* and *question 6* investigate if a child can choose a language depending on the partners of communication language following the bilingual principle "one person – one language".

The parameter of learners' language awareness in choosing English or Russian for communication was assessed according to the criteria described in Shadrova (2014:62) and Berry (2005:13-15) and adapted to the context of

foreign language teaching in the kindergarten. The scale is described in Table 20 and presents a scale for evaluating the level of language awareness in each task according to the child's ability to choose the language depending on the place and the partner of communication, reasons for choosing the language, and need for the teacher's support.

Table 20. Scale for evaluating learners' level of language awareness in choosing English or Russian for communication (adapted from Shadrova, 2014:62 and Berry, 2005:13-15)

Parameter	Criteria for assessment	Score
Language awareness in choosing English or Russian for communication	Lack of language awareness: a child does not understand that two different languages (Russian and English) are spoken; a child does not choose a language depending on the place and the partner of communication; a child uses only Russian; a child cannot explain his/her choice/absence of choice of the language or his/her reasoning is not connected with the question; a child does not use the teacher's support to answer the question.	0
	Low: a child understands that two different languages (Russian and English) are spoken; a child makes mistakes in choosing a language depending on the place and the partner of communication; a child cannot explain his/her choice/absence of choice of the language or his/her reasoning is not connected with the question; a child needs strong teacher support to answer the question.	1
	Medium: a child understands that two different languages (Russian and English) are spoken; a child chooses the correct language depending on the place and the partner of communication; a child cannot explain his/her choice/absence of choice of the language or his/her reasoning is not connected with the question; a child needs the teacher's support to answer the question.	2
	High: a child understands that two different languages (Russian and English) are spoken; a child chooses the correct language depending on the place and the partner of communication; a child can explain his/her reason for choosing the language; a child is independent in answering the question.	3

For each task a child could get from 0 to 3 scores which were summed. According to the scores, the learners were divided in groups of language

awareness levels described in the theoretical part of the research (0–6 = a low level of interest; 7–12 = a medium level; 13–18 = a high level) (Svalberg, 2007:289-290; Berry, 2014:22). Using the interview, I collected quantitative data for language awareness levels and qualitative data in children's reasoning of language choice. This interview was conducted four times during the research in both control and experimental groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for stimulating children to use English during the lessons; each time there were used different toys and pictures.

4.3.1.3 Exploring learners' interest in using English: interview

The interview method was used for the assessment of learners' level of situational interest in using English as a foreign language (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). Situational interest was chosen because it is not temporarily developed over a long period of time and it is triggered by the external factors which can be modeled during the interview procedure. The interview with preschoolers (N=56) was carried out in English classrooms in autumn and spring 2014, spring 2015 and spring 2016.

Karachenkov (2017:153) states that interview can be used for evaluating a learner's level of interest. However, there were some specific dangers in using this method with young children (Wilson & Powell, 2001:47-48): my presence as a researcher could influence the children's answers and reactions; and the setting could be distractive for children and they could pay no attention to the interview questions. That is why the English classrooms were chosen as a familiar place for young learners; the children were accompanied by their English teacher or preschool teacher to support a safe and supportive atmosphere.

All the interviews were individual and organized in the children's native language, Russian, as they were not proficient enough in speaking English (Kalmar, 2008:73). If children did not understand some English words and phrases, I translated them into Russian. The interview was designed including questions with playing tasks for children: conversation with a puppet, using toys and pictures. Interest is a difficult aspect for diagnostics with young children, but role-play promotes effective interpersonal communication and social interaction between the child and the researcher and helps to neglect

children's emotional tension in conversation with the researcher (Liu & Ding, 2009:142).

In summary, the interview consisted of 8 questions created to meet three criteria: similarity to children's typical interests or activities; attractiveness to ensure that most children would express initial interest in answering the questions; and amenability of question content for young children (Ospanova & Timoshenko, 2017:51). The children were to choose what language to use: English or Russian. After each situation the child was asked to explain her or his choice. This step is typical for qualitative research as it answers the 'why' questions and is very important for investigating learners' interest in choosing and using the English language. The interview questions are described in Table 21.

Table 21. Interview structure for evaluating learners' interest in using English

Questions (Appendix 11, Appendix 12)	**Parameter**
Questions 1 and 8	Learner's interest in the English language.
Questions 2 and 3	Learner's interest in the English-speaking place.
Questions 4 and 5	Learner's interest in the English-speaking partner.
Questions 6 and 7	Learner's interest in activities in English.

Question 1 and *question 8* derive from the literature review and reveal if a learner is interested in using English in general and if he or she likes or dislikes saying words and phrases in English. *Question 2*and *question 3* also originate from the theory of the research and indicate if it is interesting for a child to choose an English-speaking zone and to speak English in the English classroom according to the local principle of bilingualism. *Question 4* and *question 5* refer to the bilingual principles and answer whether it is interesting for a child to choose an English-speaking partner of communication. *Question 6* and *question 7* explore if using English in different kinds of activities is interesting for a learner.

The parameter of learners' interest in using English for communication during the lessons was assessed according to a scale adapted from the assessment of children's interest in communication in their native language relating to the context of foreign language teaching in the kindergarten (Baranova, 2005:35-37). The scale is described in Table 22 and presents a scale for evaluating the level of interest in each question according to the child's emotional state, reasons for choosing the language, need for the teacher's support and language preference.

Table 22. Scale for evaluating learners' level of interest in using English (adapted from Baranova, 2005:35-37)

Parameter	Criteria for assessment	Score
Interest in using English as a means of communication	Lack of interest: a child does not answer the question; a child refuses to answer the question; a child is silent; a child expresses strong negative emotions when asked a question; a child chooses the Russian language only; a child says that he/she does not like English or speaking English; a child avoids the teacher's support.	0
	Low: a child answers a question but does not explain the choice of the language; a child answers the question but his/her reason for the choice does not refer to the language preference (he/she just likes a toy or a picture); a child does not react to the teacher's support; a child is not sure in his/her answers; a child asks a teacher to help him/her and just repeats the teacher's phrases; a child prefers Russian more than English.	1
	Medium: a child answers a question but has difficulties in explaining his/her choice; a child asks a teacher to help him/her to answer; a child prefers English or Russian, can change his/her opinion in a short period of time.	2
	High: a child answers a question; he/she can explain his/her choice of the language; explanation of the language preference refers to the plot of the task; a child can use the teacher's support or be independent; a child prefers English.	3

For each question a child could get from 0 to 3 scores which were summed up. According to the scores, the learners were divided in groups of interest levels described in the theoretical part of the research (0–8 = a low level of interest;

9–16 = a medium level; 17–24 = a high level) (Baranova, 2005:71; Shonin, 2017). The interview collected quantitative data in percentages of interest levels and qualitative data in children's reasoning of language preference.

This interview was conducted four times during the research in both control and experimental groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for stimulating children to use English during lessons; each time there were used different toys and pictures.

4.3.1.4 Exploring learners' communicative initiative in English: observation

The observation method was used for assessment of learners' level of communicative initiative in English as a foreign language (Appendix 15). Observation as an assessment tool is flexible and non-intrusive as children are observed in a variety of situations: when they communicate with a teacher and peers, participate in group tasks or work alone (McKay, 2006:47). The observation of preschoolers (N=56) was carried out during English lessons in autumn and spring 2014, spring 2015 and spring 2016.

The learners' communicative initiative in English was assessed according to the criteria of communicative initiative adapted from the assessment of children's initiative in their native language relating to the context of foreign language teaching in the kindergarten (Smirnova, 2005:79; Karachenkov, 2017:153-154). They were the following: 1) a learner asks questions in English, which show his/her cognitive activity; 2) a learner answers questions in English; 3) a learner focuses on using a foreign language and participating in activities in this language. The criteria of solving communicative difficulties and learners' positive attitude were applied to all the parameters of observation, which were rated according to the frequency across a 4-point Likert scale. 7 parameters of observation derive from the content of communicative initiative and learners' communicative skills; the parameters are described in Table 23.

Table 23. Observation structure for evaluating learners' communicative initiative in English

Parameter (Appendix 15)	Meaning
1	A learner participates in activities in English
2, 3	A learner initiates communication in English
4, 5, 6	A learner supports communication in English
7	A learner shows cognitive initiative in using English

A child participates in activities in English. This parameter indicates the child's attitude toward using English in different contexts; he/she can participate in or avoid them because of the necessity to use English. *A child initiates communication with the teacher in English. A child initiates communication with the puppet in English.* These parameters indicate if a child uses English to begin a conversation with other partners of communication in the classroom. *A child speaks English with the English teacher. A child speaks English with a puppet. A child speaks English with other children.* These parameters indicate if a child uses English for communication with all the participants of the lesson; or he/she avoids speaking English and uses Russian. *A child asks questions about using the English language*. This parameter indicates a child's cognitive activity necessary for focusing on communication in a foreign language and solving communicative difficulties (Karachenkov, 2017:153).

The results of observation contained quantitative ordinal data such as Likert-scale points, which were marked as follows: often (4 points), sometimes (3 points), seldom (2 points), never (1 point) to find out the mode and the median (Boone & Boone, 2012). According to the total scores, the learners were divided into three levels: low (1–4 points), medium (5–8 points) and high (9–12 points) – described in the literature review (see p. 39). This observation was conducted four times during the research in both control and experimental groups to evaluate effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for stimulating children to use English during the lessons.

4.3.2 English teachers' tools to foster learners' communication in English

To answer the research question "How do English teachers foster young learners to communicate in English during the lesson?" an observation (Appendix 5), a questionnaire (Appendix 6, Appendix 7) and an interview with English teachers (Appendix 8, Appendix 9) were used.

4.3.2.1 Observation on communicative techniques used by English teachers

To answer RQ2 I conducted the observation (Appendix 5) in autumn 2013. The purpose of the observation was to analyze which techniques the English teachers (N=4) of the experimental and control groups use for stimulating learners to communicate in English; and if they use the communicative techniques during their lessons. To observe the natural behavior of English teachers and children in lessons, it was needed to be as unobtrusive as possible without disturbing the situation because observational data are sensitive to contexts (Cohen, et al., 2011:143). Qualitative observation allows the uncovering of some factors which are important for analysis but they have not been known in the beginning (Atkinz & Wallance, 2012:15). This means that the observation includes not just the direct perception of participants' actions but their simultaneous analysis.

The data was registered in the observation map (Appendix 5). The map is divided into five sections which contain parameters for each of the five communicative techniques: using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning. Each technique was observed using three parameters which derived from the literature review and were connected with the functions of the techniques during the English lesson. Thus, during the observation it was registered if the communicative technique 1) stimulated young learners' interest in speaking English (motivational function); 2) stimulated children's communicative initiative in English (communicative function); and 3) stimulated children's language awareness (regulating function) as a strong factor of frustration when using a foreign language that can negatively influence interest and communicative initiative. The

parameters describe an English teacher's actions in using the FLT Toolkit in the lesson: if the teacher uses it or not and in which situations. These parameters were divided into five sections according to the communicative techniques as illustrated in Table 24.

Table 24. Observation structure for English teachers' use of communicative techniques (Appendix 5)

Section	Parameter	Communicative technique
Section 1	1, 2, 3,4	Using a puppet
Section 2	5, 6, 7, 8	Language zoning
Section 3	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15	Commenting
Section 4	16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21	Using gestures
Section 5	22, 23, 24, 25, 26	Using intoning

Section 1. Using a puppet

A puppet has a rich and vivid "personality". This statement derives from the definition of the puppet and indicates that a puppet's characteristics should attract children, i.e. the puppet is motivational and encourages a learner's interest in communicating with it. *A puppet involves children into interaction in English: asks questions, gives commands, etc.* This parameter is connected with the communicative function of a puppet and derives from the theoretical review. Communicative skills in a foreign language include asking questions, answering them and others. The teacher should demonstrate these skills in English for children using a puppet and stimulating the children to speak English. *A puppet is a partner of communication in English.* This statement refers to the communicative function of a puppet and indicates if the teacher uses the toy as a partner of communication in English with children, or if it plays other roles during the lesson. *A puppet speaks only in English; it does not speak or understand Russian.* This parameter derives from the regulating function of a puppet which develops language awareness in young learners. It indicates if the teacher uses a puppet for differentiating between English and Russian languages, stimulating the children to choose English for communication with the toy.

Section 2. Using language zoning

Classroom space motivates children to speak English: bright toys, colorful books and visuals are used. This statement refers to the motivational function of the language zoning filling which should be attractive for children and encourage them to speak English about interesting objects. *The English classroom is used as a zone of the English language where communication with a puppet is realized.* This parameter derives from the communicative function of language zoning. According the local principle of bilingualism, an English classroom is a zone of the English language and the teacher should foster communication in English in the classroom with a puppet which "lives" in the English zone. Moreover, being in the English classroom means not just playing English games or singing songs, but communicating in English. *An English teacher uses "language markers" (speaking loudly or in whisper) for English and Russian in language zones (in the classroom)*. This parameter originates from the content of the language zoning technique which provides regulating functions and stimulates young learners to divide the languages of communication in the same way as the teacher: speaking Russian in a whisper and speaking English loudly. *Children are involved in situations when they have to choose an appropriate language zone (or the language) according to the language (or the zone/classroom)*. This statement refers to a teacher's task to develop learners' language awareness when he or she gives the children an opportunity to get experience in choosing the language of communication (Russian or English).

Section 3. Using commenting

An English teacher says actions which the children do in English. An English teacher names objects which are used by children in English. An English teacher describes everything that is situated around children in English. Children listen to songs and books in English. These parameters arise from the content of commenting as a communicative technique and indicate the objects of commenting which can be chosen by the English teacher for using this technique and providing its motivation function; as using commenting stimulates learners' interest in listening to the English comments and repeating them. *Children are told to name objects around them in English*. *Children are given tasks to tell something to the puppet in English*. These statements refer to the teacher's realization

of the communicative function of commenting and promoting the children to use English. *An English teacher speaks with a puppet in English as with a real person*. This parameter derives from the literature review and shows if the teacher uses commenting for regulating the choice of languages in children according to the teacher's example.

Section 4. Using gestures

An English teacher uses gestures to attract children's attention. This parameter is connected with the motivational function and is one of the key ones in using gestures for attracting learners' attention and interest, not just to objects but to English words and phrases. The combination of speech and movement stimulates a child to repeat the action and the word in English. *An English teacher uses gestures to illustrate words and phrases in English which are new or difficult for children's understanding. An English teacher uses gestures to overcome communicative difficulties*. *Children are offered the use of only gestures when they speak English to replace words and phrases which they do not know*. These parameters derive from the theory of the study and refer to the communicative function of gestures. The teacher as a facilitator of FLLE should demonstrate gestures, ways to use them in communication in English and let learners gain experience in using them themselves to speak English. *An English teacher uses fewer gestures in Russian speech*. This statement is based on the regulating function of gestures, meaning that using gestures makes an accent on communication in a foreign language, not Russian, when gestures are used as a compensatory strategy to avoid using children's native language during English lessons. *A teacher uses gestures to control the process of communication in English, to begin, to continue, to finish, etc*. This parameter also refers to the regulating function of gestures when they are used to regulate the process of communication in English and to help children to take in the communicative situation in English.

Section 5. Using intoning

An English teacher uses expressive means of intoning to attract children's attention. This statement refers to the motivational function of intoning when diversity in intonation arises learners' interest in speech in a foreign language. *An*

English teacher uses expressive means of intoning for the *creation of a puppet's character*. This parameter has its origins in the content of using a puppet. Creating a vivid personality for a toy includes creating the puppet's voice which promotes learners' interest and their desire to repeat English words and phrases after the puppet. *An English teacher uses intoning for stressing key words in English phrases*. *A teacher uses* the *expressive means of intoning to illustrate* the *meaning of English words and commands*. These parameters indicate the communicative function of intoning. If a child understands the meaning of an English word, he or she can repeat it consciously using intoning. *An English teacher uses various ways of intoning in Russian and in English*. This parameter refers to the regulating function of intoning when a teacher should divide the languages of communication, focusing on English for children.

The result of observations was a description of using the FLT Toolkit by English teachers in the experimental and control groups to foster young learners to use English for communication during the lessons; in which situations they use them, and how they manage FLLE in the classroom. This observation also was used for midpoint observations in the control group and in the experimental group after the integration of the FLT Toolkit to compare the difference in using the communicative techniques to support learners' desire to speak English.

4.3.2.2 Questionnaire for exploring English teachers' attitudes toward the FLT Toolkit

To find out teachers' attitudes toward the FLT Toolkit potential for stimulating children's communicative initiative and interest in using English as a foreign language, a questionnaire was used (Appendix 6, Appendix 7). It was also aimed at evaluating English teachers' readiness to use the classroom environment potential and at involving them into a self-reflection process. The 20-item questionnaire (Appendix 6, Appendix 7) was administrated by me on paper and given personally to the English teachers in both groups (N=4) on 21.09. 2013. The questionnaire was designed for self-filling (Bryman, 2012:232-233). Filling in the questionnaire took place in English classrooms in both kindergartens. The questionnaire was designed to be user-friendly and

interesting to answer for the English teachers and for them not to become tired of filling in the form. For this purpose, explanations were included for teachers about the content of the techniques. The questionnaire was focused on English teachers' self-reflection on the teaching techniques they used in their lessons. Self-reflection is understood as (Richards & Farrell, 2005:7) the process of critical examination of experiences, a process that can lead to a better understanding of one's teaching practices and routines.

All the questions were formulated in the same way beginning with "How do you think?" to find out their attitude toward each communicative technique and its potential. The teachers were asked to rate the frequency of using the communicative techniques across a 4-point Likert scale. All the questions derive from the literature review and refer to the functions of the communicative techniques in FLLE to foster learners to use English for communication. The questionnaire included five sections for all the communicative techniques, i.e. questions about using the puppet, language zoning, commenting, gestures and intoning as illustrated in Table 25.

Table 25. Questionnaire structure for English teachers (Appendix 6, Appendix 7)

Section	Questions (Appendix 6, 7)	Communicative technique
Section 1	1, 2, 3,4, 5, 6	Using a puppet
Section 2	7, 8, 9	Language zoning
Section 3	10, 11, 12, 13	Commenting
Section 4	14, 15, 16	Using gestures
Section 5	17, 18, 19, 20	Using intoning

Section 1. Using a puppet

Question 1 refers to the communicative function of using a puppet as an interest driver for children's communication in English. *Question 2* provides teachers' self-reflection on a puppet's function of dividing the languages of communication. *Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6* are aimed at finding out teachers' attitudes toward using a puppet in different roles during English lessons for communicational purposes: a puppet as a topic (Question 3), as a mask

(Question 4), as a partner of communication (Question 5) and as a situation mark (Question 6).

Section 2. Using language zoning

Question 7 asks about the potential of language zoning in stimulating learners' interest in using English according to teachers' opinions. *Question 8* explores teachers' awareness in using language zoning for differentiating between the languages of communication (Russian and English) for developing learners' language awareness. *Question 9* asks the teachers about their opinion on the communicative potential of language zoning during English lessons.

Section 3. Using commenting

Question 10 explores teachers' awareness in the motivational function of commenting for the fostering of children's interest in using English. *Question 11* refers to teachers' point of view on using commenting as a measure to foster children to choose English as a foreign language more than Russian. *Question 12* and *question 13* examine how the teachers see the influence of commenting on repeating the teacher's language behavior and beginning using English by learners themselves.

Section 4. Using gestures

Question 14 refers to the motivational function of gestures and their potential to promote children's interest in using English during the lesson. *Question 15* refers to the regulating function of gestures and teachers' attitudes toward its effectiveness for developing language awareness of preschool learners of English. *Question 16* asks the teachers about their potential role in regulating children's communication in English using gestures.

Section 5. Using intoning

Question 17 uncovers teachers' attitudes toward intoning as a technique to foster learners' interest in using English. *Question 18* and *question 19* refers to the regulating function of intoning and explores teachers' opinions on its role in developing language awareness of children. *Question 20* asks about teachers' points of view on the communicative function of intoning; if it is

useful for stimulating learners' communicative initiative in English during lessons.

The results of the questionnaire contained quantitative ordinal data in the form of Likert-scale points that were marked as follows: often (4 points), sometimes (3 points), seldom (2 points), never (1 point). This was done to find out the mode and the median values (Boone & Boone, 2012) and to analyze the most frequent responses for each communicative technique to reveal the tendencies in English teachers' attitudes toward them.

4.3.2.3 Interview for exploring English teachers' opinion on the FLT Toolkit

To explore why English teachers use the FLT Toolkit according to their own opinion, an interview was conducted (Appendix 8, Appendix 9) with the English teachers (N=4) in the experimental and control groups in autumn of 2013. For this research, an in-depth interview format was used because it allows development of broad questions about the topic in advance, and thus focus the responses without limiting their scope (Dörnyei, 2007:256). The interview was semi-structured because it consisted of pre-prepared questions: simple and open (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009:69) so the researcher would be aware that all the points would be covered during the interview. The conversation included 1 introductive question and 11 questions about the FLT Toolkit components divided into 5 sections about each communicative technique: using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning as illustrated in Table 26.

Table 26. Interview structure for English teachers (Appendix 8, Appendix 9)

Section	Questions (Appendix 8, Appendix 9)	Communicative technique
Question 1 – a general question for starting the interview.		
Section 1	1, 2, 3,4	Using a puppet
Section 2	5, 6	Language zoning
Section 3	7, 8	Commenting
Section 4	9, 10	Using gestures
Section 5	11, 12	Using intoning

Each section included 2 types of questions: 1) Does the English teacher use the suggested technique at their lessons? If yes, what are the details of the used techniques? 2) Why does the teacher use this technique? This structure of each section is aimed at exploring if the English teachers are aware of functions provided by the FLT Toolkit in the English teaching process; if teachers' opinions on reasons to use the FLT Toolkit correlate with how they use it in practice. For this purpose, the interview involved the participants in discussions of their interpretations of the communicative techniques for stimulating children to use English during the lessons for communication and in saying how the teachers regarded these aspects from their own point of view. This data is subjective but important for the interview as it helps to collect data about teachers' reflection and awareness in using English teaching techniques. Generally, each section included a sequence question (if the communicative techniques are used or not), then a follow-up question was asked to enrich the data being obtained. If it was needed, additional questions were asked which are not included in the list but used for clarifying the information (for example, "Is it correct that you mean that…?"). The description of each interview question is given.

Question 1 is an introduction question to establish the context of conversation for the participant (Doody & Noonan, 2013:29). It can indicate if the English teacher assigns the objective to foster young learners of English to use it for communication during the lessons.

Section 1. Using a puppet

Question 2, question 3 and question 4 refer to the content of the puppet-using technique. *Question 2* and *Question 3* find out if a teacher uses it or not and if a puppet has necessary specific qualities which stimulate learners to use English for communication with the toy. *Question 4* comes from the teacher's practical experience in using the puppet and her opinion on its teaching potential. The examples given by the participant allow identifying which functions of the puppet are fulfilled during the lessons and which roles it plays with children.

Section 2. Using language zoning

Question 5 and *question 6* uncover if an English teacher uses language zoning and how; and what is his/her opinion about this technique (*question 5*). *Question 6* is concentrated on the regulating function of language zoning which stimulates learners to divide the languages of communication and is supposed to motivate children to choose English more often than Russian. This question reveals the teacher's opinion on the languages the learners use at English lessons and how the teacher explains the reasons of choosing Russian during English lessons.

Section 3. Using commenting

Question 7 and *question 8* are focused on the teacher's use of commenting. *Question 7* is aimed at collecting information about the objects of commenting the teacher chooses during the lessons and the reasons for that to trace the functions of commenting which the teacher fulfills. *Question 8* shows if the teacher uses other tools to follow the principle of an outside listener in teaching English to young learners and the objectives for that. This point is important to explore if a teacher is aware of the necessity to enrich input in a foreign language to create FLLE.

Section 4 Using gestures

Question 9 and *question 10* refer to the content of using gestures as a communicative technique. These questions explore if a teacher uses gestures and for which purposes and to find out their functions during the lesson (*question 9*); and if a teacher stimulates her learners to use gestures to communicate in English (*question 10*) as this compensatory strategy is supposed to be specially trained with young learners (Ellis & Brewster, 2002:32).

Section 5. Using intoning

Question 11 is aimed at finding out how a teacher uses intoning at his/her lessons and what functions this technique fulfills. *Question 12* explores the teacher's opinion on the effectiveness of using intoning for stimulating

young learners to understand and use English for communication during the lessons.

The interviews were individual and took place in English classrooms in both kindergartens as it was comfortable and accessible for all the participants and interviews were conducted in Russian. Active listening was used to deepen understanding of interviewees and their interests through empathy and making them feel listened to; this allows the participants to give comments, explain choices, etc. (Potter & Hepburn, 2005:3). The interviews were transcribed verbatim in Russian to catch the content of the answers and document the information for further analysis. The transcript lengths of each interview vary from two to ten pages. Then the interviews were translated into English taking into account communication of the linguistic style and discourse.

The interview data correlates with the results of the observation made during English lessons for exploring how the English teachers used the FLT Toolkit: it allowed evaluation of whether or not English teachers used the communicative techniques consciously. The results of the interview were compared with the data collected with the questionnaire to confirm and widen the findings about teachers' attitudes toward the FLT Toolkit and their awareness of using it. Such triangulation prevents the researcher from relying on initial impressions, it helps to correct for observer biases, and it can enhance the validity of the study (Dörnyei, 2007:35).

The interview with the English teachers of the experimental group was conducted twice: at the beginning of the research and after in-service training for using the FLT Toolkit. This was done to compare the results and evaluate if there were changes in using the communicative techniques to foster children to speak English.

4.4 Data analysis

The data analysis of the current research includes two directions: quantitative and qualitative, depending on the data illustrated in Figure 16. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Dörnyei (2007:163-164) defines the mixed method approach as the following: "integrate the

two approaches at one or more stages of the research process for a fuller understanding of the target phenomenon". Such a combination can increase the accuracy of analysis and interpretation and allows creating a more explicit picture of the described phenomena (Bryman, 2012:84). Creswell (2009:208) also notes that the mixed method approach is expanding as it employs qualitative and quantitative data. Using two paradigms gives a researcher an opportunity to increase the strengths of each and eliminate possible weaknesses at the same time (Dörnyei, 2007:43).

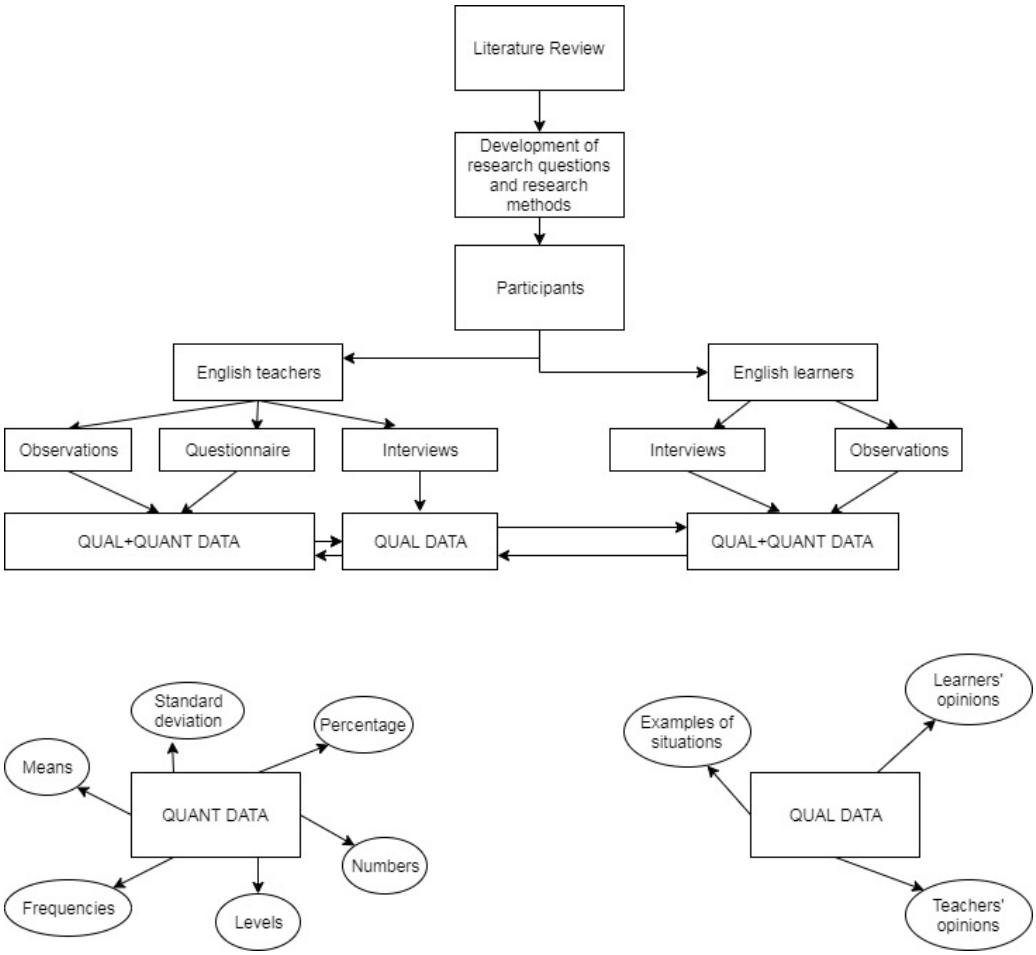

Figure 16. Qualitative and quantitative research data

Mixed methodology is used for a combination of methods during the whole research process. The origins of the mixed methods research come from social

and behavioral studies and are aimed to investigate numerical and textual data for working out effective improvements in the science. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods allows avoiding an overweighed view of the studied problem but to subscribe it in a problem-centered way using a pluralistic approach (Creswell, 2014:10-11). There are several reasons for selecting qualitative research methods for this dissertation using Creswell's (2014:23) paradigm based on epistemological and methodological approaches:

- epistemological: the researcher of this study is not independent because of interest in the area of communication and because of personal English teaching experiences that have shaped the understanding of the research context;
- methodological: the process of studying tools to foster learners' communication in English is an inductive process and context-bound. This research tends to depict the complex picture of the process of English teaching to young learners in the context of FLLE. The factors which influence children's language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in EFL and supportive teaching techniques are analyzed.

The mixed method research model has been used because of its advantages in the field of children's psychology and analysis of data collected with interview, observation and questionnaire (Ulanovsky, 2009:20-22). Firstly, I had an opportunity to observe the English teaching process as it happened in natural conditions of the kindergarten. Secondly, the mixed method research gives insight into analysis of various contexts: social, communicative, pedagogical and others. Context analysis was used for highlighting factors influencing young learners' interest and communication in the English classroom. Thirdly, a combination of quantitative and qualitative interpretation of the data provides a thick description of learners' communicative behavior in a foreign language and English teachers' practices.

Qualitative analysis. The dominant type of research data is qualitative, collected with observations and interviews. This focus is caused by attention to the context of using English teaching techniques. During the experiment, attitudes, reasons for participants' choices and examples of communicative

situations were analyzed; and a rich description of teaching conditions which influence young learners' desire to speak English during the lessons is given. Qualitative analysis included the documentation of the data and the process of its collection (through the texts of interviews and observation materials); searching and explaining the connections of the data from different steps of the research to seek how one concept and teaching technique influenced another (Mayring, 2014:39). The qualitative analysis began in designing the research questions for exploring the English teaching situation in Russian kindergartens, identifying problems in children's use of English as a foreign language and searching for the way to solve these problems effectively.

The qualitative analysis of the data collected during the observations of the children's communication during the English lessons (Appendix 10) included seeking the types of communicative situations when the English language was spoken or not and supposing possible reasons for it. The qualitative analysis of the observation for the evaluating of learners' communicative initiative in English (Appendix 15) was focused on the description of children's communicative behavior and seeking possible connections between their initiative in English and the techniques used by the English teachers during the lessons. The qualitative analysis of the learners' language awareness and their interest in using English (Appendix 11, Appendix 12 and Appendix 13, Appendix 14) was aimed at identifying the reasons for children's language choices.

The qualitative data collected via the observation of the English teachers (Appendix 5), the questionnaire (Appendix 6, Appendix 7) and interviews (Appendix 8, Appendix 9) with them was analyzed using the content method to find relations between teachers' use of the techniques to foster learners to speak English and children's communication in English. The qualitative analysis of the data collected from the English teachers also was aimed at assessment of their awareness in using communicative techniques including the FLT Toolkit and techniques' effectiveness during the lessons.

A constant qualitative analysis in uncovering the reasons for using the FLT Toolkit and the ways of its integration in the classroom was combined with qualitative analysis (Mayring, 2014:123) which provided the description of FLLE and which was structured with the FLT Toolkit and stimulated young learners to use English as a means of communication.

Quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis included a statistical interpretation of numeral information collected with observations, a questionnaire and interviews. The quantitative approach was applied to provide frequencies and percentages. To evaluate the significance of differences caused by the intervention of the independent variables, Wilcoxon Signed-rank test (for analyzing the data within the group) and Mann-Whitney test (for comparing the data between the groups) were used; mean and mode numbers were used for the interpretation of Likert-scale methods (a questionnaire for English teachers and observation of children) (Walker, 2008). No-parametric tests were chosen because of the small size of the samples participating in the research: control group (N = 27), experimental group (N = 29). These inferential statistics provided information if there was the practical significance of the finding and was processed with the help of Microsoft Excel 2010 spreadsheet software and the IBM SPSS Statistics software, version 27. However, the number of English teachers participating in the research was small, and the analysis of their questionnaire and interviews indicated that there were not statistically significant results. The quantitative analysis of children's level of communicative initiative, language awareness and interest in using English allowed proving of the hypothesis of the research in numbers, even though the number of young learners who participated in the research was not large enough to state the validity of the results.

The quantitative analysis of the observation with the learners (Appendix 10) and the English teachers (Appendix 5) was provided with numbers of communicative situations when English and Russian were spoken; and frequency of using the particular English teaching techniques to foster learners' communication in the target language. The quantitative data of the questionnaire for the English teachers (Appendix 6) indicated the frequency of using communicative techniques including the FLT Toolkit and teachers' attitudes toward them. The levels of young learners' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative (Appendix 12, Appendix 14, Appendix 15) were defined based on the quantitative analysis. The results of children's assessment before and after the integration of the FLT Toolkit were analyzed using Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test and Mann-Whitney Test to prove the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit for stimulating young learners to speak English

during the lessons. The results of qualitative and quantitative analyses were compared at all the steps of the experiment to evaluate the changes that happened in the English teaching and learning process.

Table 27 presents an overview of the key investigation points of the current research and shows what type of data is collected with a particular research method during data collection and its analysis.

Table 27. Overview of investigation points, data type and data source

Investigation points	Data type	Data source
Before integrating the FLT Toolkit:		
Learners' using English and Russian languages at the English lessons	Quantitative Qualitative	Classroom observation
Level of learners' communicative initiative in English	Quantitative Qualitative	Classroom observation on children
Level of learners' interest in using English and their language awareness	Quantitative Qualitative	Interviews with children
Communicative FLT techniques used by English teachers to foster learners' using English	Quantitative Qualitative	Classroom observation
English teachers' reasons for using techniques from the FLT Toolkit	Qualitative	Interview with English teachers
English teachers' attitudes toward the FLT Toolkit and FLLE	Quantitative Qualitative	Questionnaire to English teachers
After integrating the FLT Toolkit:		
Changes in using FLT Toolkit techniques used by English teachers to foster learners' using English; changes in children's communication in English during the lesson	Quantitative Qualitative	Midpoint classroom observation
Changes in reasons for using techniques from the FLT Toolkit	Qualitative	Interview with English teachers (the experimental group)
Changes in level of learners' communicative initiative in English	Quantitative Qualitative	Classroom observation on children
Changes in level of learners' interest in using English and their language awareness	Quantitative Qualitative	Interviews (n=2) with children

Scaled interviews and observation were used in the research to collect quantitative data. Quantitative studies are characterized with data which can be quantified. Using this type of data, a researcher is able to trace

correlations and factors which have impacts on the phenomenon, including the communicating process during English lessons in the kindergarten. Quantitative approach gives some measurable results which can be statistically interpreted. Such information is presented with percentages and frequencies in tables and groups are compared. A qualitative description of the English teaching process makes it possible to see the rich and contextualized picture of using teaching techniques by English teachers in the classroom. At the same time, qualitative analysis reflects individual reactions of young learners to teachers' actions during the lessons.

Observation, a questionnaire and interviews were used to collect qualitative data in the research. Qualitative instruments investigate the picture of the participants' experience and beliefs and gain the data with individual cases. The reason for such a choice is due to the advantages which are provided with this approach. Firstly, qualitative methods refer to information about human displays as behaviors, opinions and beliefs which are in the attention field (Morse, 2003:200). Such manifestations are registered in different contexts (English lessons, professional teachers' communication, children's games, etc.), and qualitative methods help to create complex textual descriptions (El-Okda, 2005:38).

However, studying interest and communicative initiative in a foreign language among young learners, using mixed method research, tends to seek convergence and corroboration between the data collected from different methods (Denzin, 2012:82). Credibility of this research is achieved through using various methods of investigation, prolonged engagement into the English teaching process and cyclical data analysis, as it was provided throughout the experiment and includes not just results in the beginning and end of the experiments, but also midpoint assessments were organized. However, the findings from qualitative methods are generalizable and using the same methods in the other research can yield different results compared to those from the current research.

Interviews and observations analysis. The use of oral interviews and various observations was determined with the necessity to explore different ways of learning and teaching experienced by the research participants. Interviews and observations during the lessons were analyzed quantitatively (for

example, the frequency of using teaching techniques or the duration of using a foreign language) and qualitatively to highlight the hidden meanings of children's or English teachers' actions in the teaching and learning processes (Ulanovsky, 2009:22). My role was looking for the correlations between the research participants and the learning/teaching process (Bryman, 2012:75).

The qualitative methods of the current research used for gathering and analysis of the data are aimed at the detailed investigation of an individual way and style of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Qualitative analysis is used to examine any kind of recorded information (Riffle et al., 2014:187). Table 28 illustrates the collected data including more than 10000 examples of communicative situations describing communication between the learners, the English teachers and the puppets; 1000 pages of observation descriptions; 800 pages of transcribed interviews with the preschoolers and the English teachers.

Table 28. Collected research data

Research data	
Participants	4 teachers, 56 children
Textual description of communicative situations	over 10000 communicative situations
Textual description of observation	over 1000 pages
Interview transcription	800 pages

Deep qualitative analysis of interviews and observations helps to summarize the experience of individuals and groups in the educational process (Riffle et al., 2014:64). Qualitative approach highlights the differences in teaching and perception and reasons for that. The main methods of data collection in this research are individual interviews and observations as they allow understanding of participants' (English teachers and young learners) experiences through the dialogue with the researcher (vanManen, 2004:18). For this research, the qualitative relational analysis has been chosen as it is aimed at seeking relations between learners' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in the context of communication in a foreign language and using the FLT Toolkit.

4.5 Ethical considerations

The research was carried out according to the ethical principles of research in human and social studies provided by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK (2019). To conduct the research, the consent of the directors of both kindergartens was taken. The teachers and children's parents gave their written consent for the participation in the research; and they were informed about the aim of the study and the methods used for collecting the data. The participation of the teachers was voluntary. Before conducting the interview or observation, the children were asked about their wish to participate. If a child did not want to be involved, he or she could avoid the procedure, but all the children agreed to participate in the research.

The research avoids mental or physical harm to the participants. During the interview, the teachers and the children were treated politely and respectfully. The research was conducted according to the principles of confidentiality, privacy and data protection. The main concern of the current research was involving preschool children as the participants of the experiment. Children's involvement could not have been excluded, as they were a focus group of the research and the target group of practical implementation of the research. That is why I want to concentrate on the ethics of conducting the research with children.

a) *Harm and benefits.* Conducting observations and individual interviews did not suppose any potential harm to the young learners because they were observed in a familiar environment with their English teachers, whom they knew, which was important for the children's emotional balance (Powell et al., 2011:14). I, as an observer, visited the kindergartens before starting the experiment and participated in the English lessons and other routines and I also was familiar to the children. That is why they did not pay attention to me during the lessons I observed; and all of the learners agreed to be interviewed by me when they were asked. This fact that their English teacher did not take part in the interviews gave an opportunity to get more independent responses from the children (Mudaly & Goddard, 2009:270).

During the research, I minimized sources of distress for the children (Alderson & Morrow, 2011:34), especially when the FLT Toolkit was integrated into the teaching process in the experimental group. For a while, the young learners were frustrated and disoriented, as they had to follow new rules in the kindergarten. This period lasted about a week and all the young participants needed strong emotional support from the teachers, parents or me. Using games and flexible rules in the organization of the FLLE allowed children to adapt to the environment faster. Sometimes several children refused to follow the rules in FLLE because they were scared of using English so often. To calm and comfort them, the teachers and I provided de-stressing and relaxing activities for the particular children and had a talk with the children, so they could share their fears and concerns about the learning process.

The interviews with children were the most concerning part of the research. All the questions, tasks and the environment were adjusted to the learners' needs and age capabilities in a way to ensure that no harm would be caused to the young participants (Solberg, 2012:332). The learners had emotional support and were interviewed in positive and comfortable conditions. During the interviews, nobody refused to participate in or asked to stop the procedure.

b) *Informed concern.* Before the research, consent was obtained from all the young participants (Powell et al., 2011:27). The children were fully informed about the goals of the research in a way they could understand and they were asked for permission to be involved in the research. The learners were informed that they could withdraw their consent at any moment they wished and could refuse to participate if they wanted. Thompson and Rudolph (2000) point out that young children deserve to know what can remain confidential and what may need to be reported. This can be expressed as the difference between what can be "just between you and me" and what may need to be told to others "to stop someone from getting hurt" (Thompson & Randolph, 2000:35).

If a child did not want to take part in any activity, he or she could choose a different activity to participate in or have a rest or a talk with his or her teacher.

c) *Privacy, confidentiality and payment.* During the research, children's right to privacy was respected (Solberg, 2012:335). The learners were ensured that nobody, except the researcher, could get their personal information. However, the administration of the kindergartens, parents and teachers permitted the use of photos taken during the English lessons. The children did not refuse having their pictures taken.

All the observations and interviews were coded without using the real names of the children's and nobody except me had access to the protocols. If I needed to share information with the teachers, they were informed, but not in a detailed way and they did not know the personal information. If a parent or a teacher asked me about personal information collected during the research, they were not told and it was explained to them that they were not authorized to get the information. While observing the English lessons, just I and an English teacher were present in the classroom. However, the English teachers' participation in the interview was unwanted because it could have impacted the children's opinions (Alderson & Morrow, 2011:279). During the interview the children agreed to be asked questions without the English teacher's presence; that allowed avoiding the teacher's influence on the learners' responses. I state that the research participants did not receive any payment or pressure to participate in the experiment.

5 Results and discussion

This chapter introduces the research results of the data collected during the research in the context of mixed methods. Section 5.1 includes the description of data collected to answer RQ 1 about the learners' using native and foreign languages during the English lessons using observation over their communication; the assessment of their levels of language awareness (using interview), interest (using interview), and communicative initiative in English (using observation). Section 5.2 answers RQ2 and includes the results of the observation of English teachers' use of communicative techniques to foster learners to speak English; teachers' attitudes and reasoning for using the FLT Toolkit during the lessons (an interview and a questionnaire). Section 5.3 answers RQ3 and provides the description of integration of the FLT Toolkit into the English teaching process, the changes it has caused in English teachers' attitudes and learners' levels of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English.

5.1 Communication during the English lessons

To answer RQ1, it was necessary to explore how the children used their native language and a foreign language during the lessons. The level of learners' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English and Russian were assessed. The data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results have revealed various hidden tendencies and difficulties the children and the teachers had to cope with.

5.1.1 Using English and Russian in the classroom

Which languages did children use to communicate with the English teacher? During the observation, two directions of communication between the teacher and the learners were documented: initiated by the teacher and initiated by the learners. Speaking about dialogues provided by the teachers, the dominant language of communication was English as the teachers presented an example

of the dialogue in English. The Russian language was used by the pupils when they did not know how to ask a question or to answer in English. In most cases the dialogues initiated by the learners (asking questions or providing comments for the teacher) were in Russian. Sometimes the teachers tried to switch the language of communication into English but commonly answered in Russian. Such use of languages did not foster the learners to use English more often.

> The boy says (in Russian): *А мы сейчас поиграем? (Are we going to play now?).* The teacher answered in English: *Yes, we are going to play right now".* But next lesson, the teacher answered the same question in Russian: *"Да, поиграем, не волнуйся" (Yes, we will play, don't worry).*

There were many situations when the children wanted to share some information with the teachers, and they spoke Russian.

> The girl (in Russian):*"А мы вчера ходили в зоопарк, и я видела там медведя. Он был такой большой!" (Yesterday we went to the zoo and I saw a bear there. It was so big!).*

These situations referred to various topics: children's memories, impressions, wishes and many others. Usually the teachers ignored them or answered "*O.K.*" without trying to involve the children in English communication. It was observed that ignoring learners' wishes to communicate can lead to their desire to stop communication in any language. On the one hand, the children used English more often than Russian when they communicated with the teachers; while on the other hand, the learners used Russian in many communicative situations during the English lessons with each other. Many situations were observed when the language of the learner's reply was the same as the language of the teacher's question or comment

Which languages did children use to communicate with a puppet? Using English and Russian for communication between the puppets and the learners in both experimental and control groups was similar. There were three types of situations that characterize the interaction between the

children and the puppet, depending on the puppet's role during the lesson. The first situation is when a puppet was a partner of communication. The children were interested when the English teacher used the puppet; they came to it, touched it, they told the toy that they liked it. However, the children used Russian for describing the puppet and speaking to it. Sometimes the teacher reminded the learners that they could communicate with the puppet in English. In this case, several children used "*hello*" or separate English words addressing the toy, and then they spoke Russian again. If the puppet did not understand them, they used gestures and mimics.

> The child in Russian: *Floppy, look! What a nice sun!"* The puppet shakes its head and says in English: *What? Sorry?"* The child in English: (waving his hand towards the window):*"Floppy, sunny!"*

The children usually waited for the puppet's appearance during the lesson and asked questions about it.

> Here are some phrases the learners often used in the beginning of the lesson addressing the English teacher in English: *Where is Floppy? Will Floppy come today?" or "Please, call for Floppy!"*

Generally, if a puppet used English, the learners also used English but most of the learners did not have a dialogue with the toy in the target language. This correlation is the same with the learners' language choice when they communicate with the teachers.

The second type of communicative situations was a situation when a puppet was a partner of communication, but it spoke both Russian and English. If a puppet used both English and then Russian to translate the phrase when speaking with children, they used Russian only, even if the puppet switched back to English. Constant switching between English and Russian misled the learners and they chose Russian for communication.

> Pops the puppet (a dog) said in English: *Look! This is a ball. Ball. It's green."* Then it translated into Russian: *"Это мяч. Он зелёный."* Then it

pointed to the green ball and switched back to English: *What is it?"* The children answered in Russian: *"Мячик. Это зеленый мячик." ("Ball. This is a green ball.")*

Or, Pops the puppet said to the children in English: *And now tell me (pause) what's the weather like today?"* The teacher immediately translated the question into Russian and offered the children variants to answer in English: rainy, cold, sunny. All the children answered the puppet's question in Russian.

Mixing English and Russian during English lessons caused a situation where the children did not try to understand the speech in a foreign language and waited for the translation every time. Moreover, the learners did not understand which language to speak. This means that mixing the languages without any clear reason for children can frustrate them and make them avoid using English.

Sometimes the children said to their teachers: *"Я не знаю, как мне ответить." ("I do not know how to answer"); "А почему сейчас мне нужно говорить по-английски? Я не хочу". ("Why should I speak English now? I do not want to").*

The last kind of situation was when the puppet was used just for asking questions, the children did not talk to it except answering its questions. Sometimes the learners demonstrated a negative attitude toward the puppet and did not answer its questions at all. This means that the children expect the puppet to be their partner for communication.

One girl liked the hello song in the beginning of the lesson. Later, Teacher 1 took the puppet named Willy to ask the children where the toys were. The puppet asked in English *"Where is the car?"* or *"Where is the doll?";* and the learners should answer *"Here" or "There".* When the puppet asked one girl: *"Where is the doll?"; she said in English:" Hello";* but Teacher 1 repeated the puppet's question. The girl did not want to

answer and looked upset. After the lesson, the teacher asked her what happened and she said in Russian: *"Я его больше не люблю, ему мое хэллоу не понравилось. Он плохой!" ("I do not love him anymore; he did not like my hello. He is bad!").*

When the teachers did not create situations for communication with the puppet, the children perceive them like toys.

> The girl came to Teddy the teddy-bear and took him speaking Russian: *"А давайте положим медведя в кровать, пусть он там спит" ("Let's put the teddy-bear into the bed, let it sleep there").* After that she put the puppet into the bed and forgot about it.

During the observation in the control and experimental groups, the learners tried to ask the puppets questions or involved them in dialogue very seldom. More often the children just repeated after the teacher or the puppet what they should say or answer. One more interesting aspect was observed in experimental and control groups in the situations when the puppet evaluated children's answers and phrases in English. It was noticed that the puppets' opinion was very important to young children if they communicated with it. Sometimes the children asked the puppet to help them to say something in English.

> The girl said in English pointing to the green ball: *Ball! Ball!* (She was looking puzzled.) *Willy, black?"* Willy the puppet answered in English: *No, it is green."* The girl in English: *Green! Ball green!"* Willy in English: *Yes, the ball is green".* After that dialogue the girl repeated the phrase three times more and the puppet showed that it was happy.

In summary, when there was a puppet at the lesson, it attracted children's attention in some way or another. It was noticed that every time the puppet started to talk to the young learners (in Russian or English), they joined the conversation. Moreover, the children started using English to communicate with each other. Such results confirmed the data presented by the research

about the puppet's effect on English lessons (Malkina & Koricheva, 2011:65). Using a puppet can be a useful communicative technique during lessons because it has an impact on learners' choice of English, but the puppet should be used regularly as a partner of communication in English for children.

Most of the time children spoke Russian during the lessons and did not want to use English for communication. They explained their choice that they did not know English words. Such a reason can be attributed to the language anxiety felt by learners. Chan and Wu (2004) conducted the research and found that learners' low proficiency was a strong source of foreign language anxiety at preschool age. Anxiety happened when children did not know how to answer the English teacher's questions. They became anxious when they could not understand their teacher. This means that an English teacher should use English as a dominant language for children to join communication in English with their teacher. However, the Russian language cannot be rejected, but the children need some clear rules regarding when they may use Russian for communication; and these rules must be constantly followed by the teacher and children. Finally, the observation indicated that the teacher's choice of languages and using a puppet influence the learners' communication in English, but they need to be supported in using English.

Which languages did children use to communicate with each other? The children in both experimental and control groups understood that the English classroom was a specific place where a foreign language was spoken. However, they preferred to use the Russian language for communication among themselves. This kind of communication could be planned by the teacher or not. When the communication was planned, the dominant language was English. When the learners started to communicate spontaneously, they spoke Russian, especially when the learners shared opinions on different things, discussed teaching tasks and activities, shared emotions and experience. However, they used Russian for communication with each other more often than English. This proportion was defined while documenting all the conversations among the children during the observation. The observation was conducted during 20 lessons and during it, 2940 episodes of communication between peers were registered. As registering such a parameter was challenging, some

conversations can be missed. The proportion of using English vs. using Russian is presented in Table 29.

Table 29. Proportion of situations when English and Russian were used for communication between the learners

Experimental group (N=27)		**Control group (N=29)**	
Languages of communication			
English	Russian	English	Russian
560 conversations	1000 conversations	560 conversations	820 conversations
General proportion of using English and Russian			
1120 conversations		1820 conversations	

The number of situations when the children spoke Russian indicates that their speaking English should be stimulated and supported during English lessons. As the FLT Toolkit is aimed at stimulating young learners to use English as a means of communication, the findings of the observations showed the need to integrate it into the English teaching process.

5.1.2 Young learners' level of language awareness

To find out the level of preschool learners' language anxiety, the method interview was used (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). All the children in the control and experimental groups agreed to participate in the interview. Quotes from the children's interviews and examples of situations during the interview are given in italics. When children were asked to greet toy characters in the toys' native language, 79% of children in the control group and 78% in the experimental group chose Russian instead of English for question 1 in the interview (Appendix 13, Appendix 14).

> The boy (in Russian):*"Я буду всем говорить привет, потому что я русский" (I will say 'privet' (hello in Russian) to everyone because I am Russian);*
> The boy in Russian: *"А я не знаю, как с ними поздороваться на других языках" (I do not know how to greet them in other languages);*

The girl in Russian: *"А чего они меня не поймут-то? Я громко разговариваю" (Why do they not understand me? I speak in a very loud voice).*

Most children in both control (74%) and experimental groups (86%) gave the right answers and named English-speaking characters for question 2 in the interview (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). However, some of them had difficulties in explaining the reasons for their choice.

The girl in Russian: *"С Винни-Пухом я буду говорить по-английски, потому что он мне нравится, и дома у меня есть мультик про него" (I will speak English with Winnie because I like him and I have a cartoon about him at home);*
The girl in Russian: *"Это английский кролик, и он говорит по-английски. Скоро он выучит русский, и станет русским кроликом" (It is an English rabbit and it speaks English. Soon it will learn Russian and become a Russian rabbit);*
The boy in Russian: *"Гарри Поттер – английский мальчик, поэтому он говорит по-английски" (Harry Potter is an English boy and he speaks English).*

Answering *question 3* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14), all the pupils in both experimental and control groups identified Santa Clause as an English-speaking character and only one boy as a Russian-speaking one. 34% of children in the control group and 30% in the experimental group could not explain their choice; 17% of children from the control group and 19% from the experimental group had difficulties in explaining the language and they needed the teacher's support. Children's answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 indicate that the young learners mostly do not understand the correlation between the language and the partner of communication.

Answering *question 4* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14), the pupils identified objects which belonged to English culture very well. However, when they were asked in which language they would read an English book, most children in

the experimental (63%) and control (72%) groups answered that they would do it in Russian.

> The girl (in Russian):*"Все книги можно прочитать по-русски, но английские книжки люди читать не могут, они ведь написаны по-английски" (All books can be read in Russian, but people cannot read English books as they are written in English.);*
> The boy (in Russian):*"Ну, смотрите, здесь так много букв. Это вообще не английская книжка, а русская." (Look! There are a lot of letters here. It is not an English book. It is a Russian book).*
> The girl (in Russian):*"Это английская книжка, потому что в ней много красивых картинок." (It is an English book because there are such nice pictures here).*

All the children were very interested in the cultural objects. Answering *question 5* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14), when the children were asked to name the language of communication, most of them in experimental (78%) and control (86%) groups answered that English was the main language in the English classroom. But some children answered that they could not speak English there and Russian was the main language. The learners were asked an additional question: How do you know when to speak English or Russian in the classroom?" 21% of children in the experimental group and 22% in control group answered that they did not know. However, the observation allowed seeing the need for rules for using the languages in the classroom. Children's answers also showed that cultural objects, books and toys can attract them and stimulate learners' interest in using English.

Answering *question 6* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14), the children were asked about the language they used to speak to their English teacher outside the English classroom. 83% of learners in the experimental group and 42% of children from the control group said that they spoke Russian with their teachers.

> The boy (in Russian):*"Мы в этом кабинете говорим по-английски. Это же занятие. А в коридоре мы разговариваем по-русски. Она (педагог*

английского языка) меня очень хорошо понимает" (We speak English in this classroom. It is a lesson. And in the corridor we can speak Russian. She (the English teacher) understands me very well).

The girl (in Russian):*"Я думаю, что английский – это только для занятий. Если мы будем говорить по-английски все время, мы же русский забудем" (I think that English is just for lessons. If we speak English all the time, we can forget Russian).*

The boy (in Russian):*"Я говорю с ней по-русски, потому что она русская" (I speak Russian to her because she is Russian).*

Such phrases mean that English teachers were not associated as English-speakers among the young learners. However, the language of the teacher can stimulate learners to use English, as it was registered during the observation. The results of the assessment of language awareness in English and Russian are presented in Figure 17. The levels of language awareness in using English and Russian were defined with summing the points the learners got for each question according to the chosen criteria described in the section Data collection methods (adapted from Shadrova, 2014:62 & Berry, 2005:13-15). A child can have a lack of language awareness; a low level (if a learner cannot choose an appropriate language of the partner of communication); a medium level (if a learner can choose a language according to the partner of communication but cannot explain his or her choice); a high level (if a learner chooses the right language which is the language of the partner of communication and a child does it reasonably).

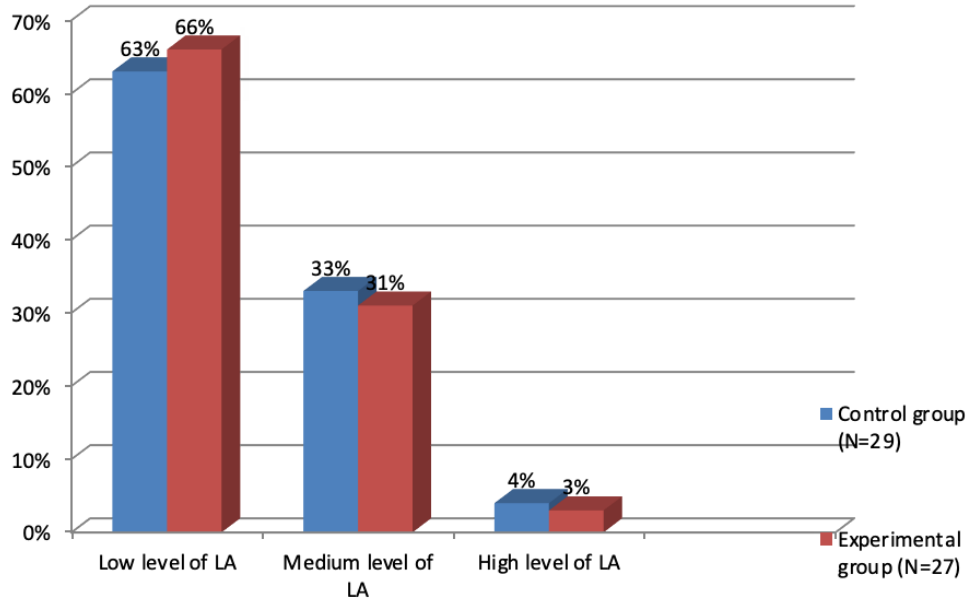

Figure 17. Assessment of learners' language awareness in using English and Russian

The assessment shows that most learners in both control (63%) and experimental (66%) groups had a low level of language awareness in using English as a language of communication; 33% in the control and 31% in the experimental group had a medium level; and a total of only 7% of children had a high level of language awareness in using English and Russian. That indicates that learners' language awareness in using English and Russian should be developed to stimulate them to speak English and give them the rules for using Russian in the classroom.

5.1.3 Young learners' level of interest in using English

To investigate learners' level of interest in using English, the interview method was used (Appendix 11, Appendix 12). Examples of children's phrases are presented in italics.

In *question 1* most of the learners in control (59%) and experimental (70%) groups answered that they liked to speak English. The reasons for that were similar: they played during the lessons; it was easy to learn English and they understood that English was very important for future life. The learners'

reasons for using English are summarized in Figure 18 (N – frequency of children's choices).

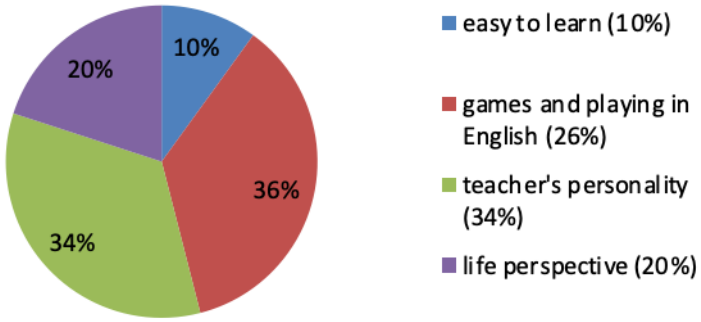

Figure 18. Children's (n=56) reasons for using English

However, 10% of learners said that they did not like to speak English because: it was very difficult; they were bored, or they did not understand what the teacher said. Olshtain et al. (1990:37-39) investigated young children's motivation for speaking English and the respondents had the same reasons for using English.

Answering *question 2* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14), 59 % of the young learners in the control group and 78% in the experimental group said that they preferred a Russian island when they were to choose between an English island where English was spoken or a Russian one.

> The boy (in Russian):*"Я думаю, что русский остров лучше. Я ведь русский и не умею говорить по-английски" (I think that a Russian island is better. I am Russian and I cannot speak English);*
> The girl (in Russian):*"Я не хочу выбирать английский остров. Я не очень хорошо говорю по-английски и сомневаюсь, что меня там кто-нибудь поймет" (I do not want to choose an English island. I do not speak English very well and I am not sure that someone can understand me there).*

These replies indicated that young English learners felt uncertainty in using the foreign language as a means of communication. The learners need to be

emotionally supported in using a foreign language; for example, using the Russian zone could support children's emotional comfort.

In *question 3* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14) the children were asked which language they would like to use in the English classroom and their opinions were also divided. 30 % of the learners in the control and 37% in the experimental group could not give a clear answer, e.g., they did not pay much attention to the choice of the language. They said that they could speak both Russian and English there. Just 20% of the children in the control group and 21% in the experimental group said that they would speak English. The rest of the pupils (47% in the control group and 42% in experimental group) chose the Russian language as it is their native language and therefore easy to use. The data showed that often the learners did not choose the English language. That is why the children preferred to speak Russian during the English lessons. This point is a basis for the idea that the children needed a special English FLLE which should and could support children's interest in speaking English in the classroom through the FLT Toolkit, as respondents' examples confirmed that they should have a chance to use their mother language during the lesson.

> The boy (in Russian):*"Мой английский очень плох. Зато по-русски я говорю отлично" (My English is very poor. But I can speak Russian very well);*
> The girl (in Russian):*"Мне не нравится, когда мне приходится говорить на английском, потому что я не знаю все английские слова" (I do not like when I have to speak English for a long time because I do not know all English words);*
> The girl (in Russian):*"Знаете, я всегда забываю эти английские слова. Мне кажется, что и молчать на занятии не очень-то и хорошо. Поэтому я говорю по-русски" (You know, I always forget these English words. I think that it is not very good to be silent during the lesson. That's why I speak Russian.)*

Answering *question 4* and *question 5* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14) the children were supposed to choose puppets and friends as partners of communication.

In both control and experimental groups, the learners chose Russian-speaking partners. They explained the reason for their choice was that they did not know "all" English words and could have many troubles in speaking English. This indicated that neither using English speaking puppets, nor teachers' strategies stimulated children's interest in speaking English. Moreover, the children in both groups had a fear that they could be misunderstood in English and they avoided using it.

In *question 6* and *question 7* (Appendix 13, Appendix 14) 53 % of the learners in both control and experimental groups answered that they would like to play English games and read books in English. The others preferred games and books in both languages. In *question 8* all the children agreed that they would learn English words and explained it as an effective way to communicate in the English language. The collected data indicated that the children chose Russian as a means of communication more often than English because the learners had a lot of difficulties in speaking the foreign language. However, English was attractive for them but the children were afraid of obstacles in using it: if they forgot English words or could not understand something. It was revealed that a puppet could stimulate learners' communicative initiative because the children wanted to talk to it and ask it questions in English.

The results of the assessment of learners' interest in using English are presented in Figure 19. The levels were defined by summing the points the learners got for each question according to the chosen criteria described in the section Data collection methods (adapted from Baranova, 2005:35-37). A child can have a lack of interest (if a learner cannot answer the interview questions and says that he or she does not like English); a low level (if a learner can answer the questions but he or she cannot explain the choice of the language and prefers Russian more than English); a medium level (if a learner can answer some questions but he or she needs a teacher's support; a learner can prefer English or Russian depending on his or her mood and can change their opinion); a high level (if a learner prefers English over Russian, can explain the choice of the language and does not need a teacher's support).

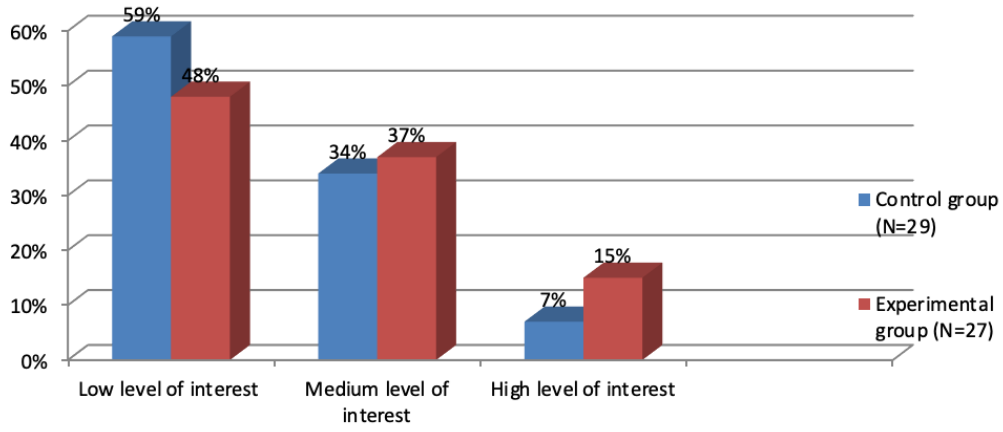

Figure 19. Assessment of learners' interest in using English

Most of the children in both experimental (65%) and control (60%) groups had a low level of interest; 37% of learners in the experimental and 34% in the control groups had a medium level of interest. There were no learners who had a high level.

5.1.4 Young learners' level of communicative initiative in English

The observation of learners' communicative initiative in English (Appendix 15) showed very interesting results. Most of the learners from the control and experimental groups (63% in both) participated in communication in English with great pleasure. However, many pupils became tired of the learning process and gave up doing the teacher's assigned tasks very soon after the beginning of the lessons. One of the reasons for that could be the age of young learners, their short attention span and they could easily get bored after 5–10 minutes (Vygotskiy, 2005:68). Later, the children who avoided participating in activities in English were asked about the reasons for avoiding the activities. The summary of their answers is presented in Figure 20.

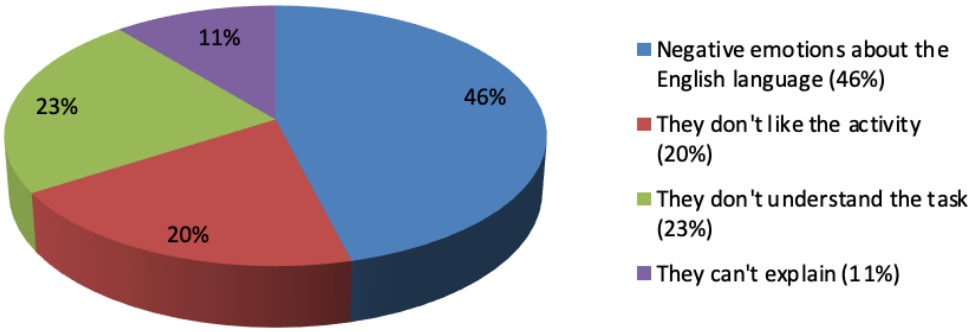

Figure 20. Learners' (n=56) reasons for rejecting participation in activities in English

20% of the pupils said that they had not liked the activity suggested by the English teacher. 23% of the children answered that they had not understood the task or they did not remember English words (of a song, for example). 11% of the children could not explain the reason for giving up the task. But the most interesting is that 46% of the learners refused to participate because of negative emotions caused by the English language.

> The girl (in Russian):*"Я не хочу все время говорить по-английски. Я хочу говорить по-русски." (I do not want to speak English all the time. I want to speak Russian).*
> The boy (in Russian):*"А вот я хочу рисовать, а здесь мне приходится говорить по-английски. Это бесит!" (I want to draw and here I have to speak English. It is annoying!).*
> The boy (in Russian):*"Английский, английский, английский! Да я скоро и русский-то язык забуду. И как я буду разговаривать с мамой?" (English, English, English! I will forget the Russian language soon. How will I speak to my mom?).*
> The girl (in Russian):*"Я не знаю, как говорить на английском. Я очень много слов не знаю. Мне больше нравится говорить на русском. И, кстати, я русская." (I do not know how to speak English. I do not know many words. I prefer to speak Russian. By the way, I am Russian).*

Avoiding communication in English happened even if the teacher had offered suitable tasks which were relevant for the learners' skills. The children did not want even to try to play a game or to repeat the phrase in English. Any asking to say English words made them upset and frustrated. In such situations, the English teachers could not solve the problem and change learners' behavior and attitude; as a result, children missed a lot of lesson time. These cases happened very often in the control and experimental groups. It was difficult for children to communicate in English for a long time, as they felt tired and bored. During the observation it was noted that the more negative emotions the learners had, the less English they spoke.

After the observation, many children said that they needed a place where they could have a rest or where they could speak their mother tongue without breaking the rules of the English classroom. The Russian language zone could be such a place, serving as a zone of language comfort. It would help to divide the languages correctly supporting children's emotional state. Otherwise, negative emotions caused by avoiding speaking English would lead to decreasing pupils' interest in using English and their communicative initiative in it. In all the groups, the children initiated communication in English very seldom. Mostly, there were two typical situations when the pupils talked to the teachers in English. The first one was when they came into the classroom and said "*Hello*" to the teacher; and the second one was after the lesson when they said "*Good-bye*". In other situations, the pupils asked the teacher questions in Russian for translation or tried to say something. However, various activities in English, such as drawing, singing and storytelling, helped to involve the children in communication. In this case, the pupils tried to name objects in English and repeated words and phrases after the teacher.

During the observation, it was noticed that the children in the experimental and control groups liked to communicate with the puppets: to ask and answer questions. Besides, if a puppet did not fulfill the communicational function, the learners lost their interest in it. The children were asked, "*What do you think: can you talk to (puppet's name)*?" The learners' answers showed that in the control group the puppets were seen more as just toys than partners of communication.

The boy (in Russian): *"Как я буду разговаривать с игрушкой? Он же не умеет говорить. Это же игрушка." (How can I talk to the toy? It cannot speak at all. It is a toy).*
The girl (in Russian): *"Флоппи забавный, но он не умеет разговаривать. Наш учитель говорит вместо него." (Floppy is funny, but it cannot speak. Our teacher speaks instead of it).*

In the experimental group all the learners described puppets as persons.

The girl (in Russian): *"Он* (о персонаже) *очень добрый. Мне нравится с ним разговаривать. Кстати, вы знаете, что он из Англии?" (He (*about the puppet*) is very kind. I like to talk to him. He makes jokes! By the way, do you know that he is from England?).*
The boy in Russian: *"Я люблю его! Когда я в следующий раз приду на английское занятие, я поцелую его и скажу хэллоу." (I love him! Next time I come to the English class, I will kiss him and say hello!).*

All the children in the experimental group remembered that the puppets were native English speakers. The young learners were interested in cultural facts and information about English-speaking countries and asked a lot of questions about it. That is one of the reasons for young learners to ask questions, as they were very interested in cultural information. Personal characteristics of puppets stimulated children's communicative activity. Learners supposed a puppet to be a real friend which children wanted to talk to. In both groups, pupils demonstrated very solicitous attitudes to the puppet: they brought the puppet a blanket to put it to sleep, offered sweets to the puppet and other things.

The assessment of learners' communicative initiative showed that the children liked to speak English with English teachers, puppets and each other if they were involved in any communicative activity, especially in games. Games eased contacts among the children themselves and the teacher. However, many communicative activities in the control and experimental groups included answering teachers' or puppets' questions. The learners did not ask questions spontaneously. More often it happened when the English teacher

said: *Ask a question*…" or "*Ask Floppy*…" The children did not communicate with each other in English very often. The teachers explained that fact as a result of learners' limited foreign language skills. The children did not ask questions about the English language. The results of the assessment of communicative initiative are presented in Figure 21. The levels were defined by summing the points the learners got for each question according to the chosen criteria. The content of the levels was described in the sections Communicative initiative in preschool learners and Data collection methods (adapted from Boone & Boone, 2012; Chirsheva, 2008:197): a low level (if a learner does not participate in English-speaking activities, speaks Russian much more than English); a medium level (if a learner chooses English-speaking activities but uses both English and Russian, often avoids using English); a high level (if a learner participates in English-speaking activities with pleasure and tries to speak English very often).

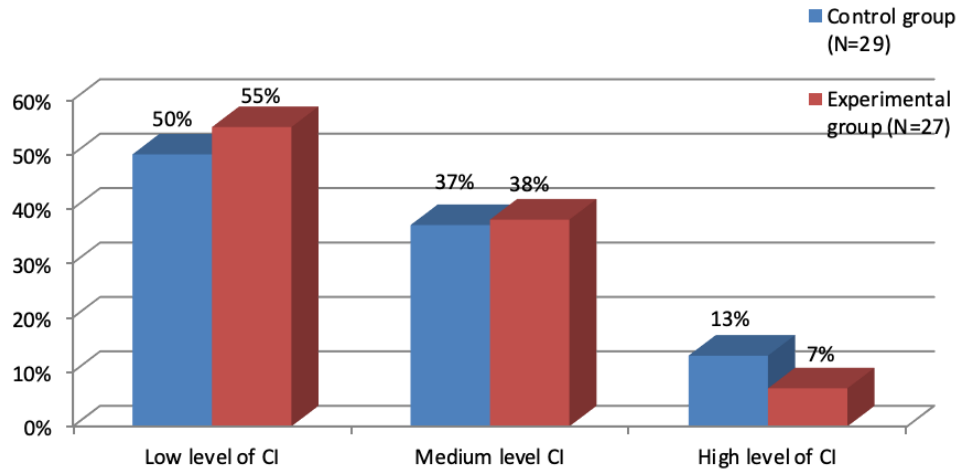

Figure 21. Results of assessment of young learners' communicative initiative in English

Most of the children in the experimental (55%) and control (50%) groups had a low level of communicative activity. A large amount of the children (37% in the control group and 38% in the experimental group) had a medium level of communicative activity. Just 13% of children in the control group and 7% in the experimental group had a high level of communicative activity. The

data gives evidence of the need to develop learners' language awareness, to stimulate their interest in using English and to foster children to communicate in it. However, before offering anything, it is important to find out what tools English teachers have already used and why these tools do not have a strong positive effect on young learners' communication in English.

The results of the assessment of children in the beginning of the research indicated that the majority of learners in the control and experimental groups had a low or medium (closer to the lower bound) level of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English: they wanted to communicate in Russian, waited for translation into their native language and avoided participating in activities in English. This point indicated the necessity to integrate the FLT Toolkit into the English teaching process to stimulate learners to speak English more than Russian during the lessons.

5.2 English teachers' methods to foster communication in English

The aim of the first step of the experimental research (autumn 2013) was to answer RQ2 and examine how the English teachers of both experimental and control groups foster their learners to speak English. The focus of the investigation was on the communicative techniques (puppets, language zoning, comments, gestures and intoning) the teachers used; the teachers' purposes for using communicative techniques and elements of the FLT Toolkit.

Data collection for exploring the usage of the FLT Toolkit included three steps:

1. Observation during the English lessons in experimental and control groups;
2. A questionnaire for the English teachers;
3. An interview with the English teachers.

5.2.1 Using communicative techniques

How was a puppet used? Based on the observation (Appendix 5) data, the English teachers appeared to use a puppet in various functions. In the experimental group in Kindergarten 1 the puppet, a frog named Floppy, was used. The puppet spoke English and took part in any learning or playing activity. The puppet asked children questions and commented on their games and actions. This type of using the puppet was observed during all the lessons included in the observation. The English teacher who used the puppet (Teacher 1) began the dialogue with children and tried to involve them in communication in English. Moreover, the puppet had its own low voice which differed from the teacher's voice and its image was rather attractive for children. The puppet's speech was characterized with a great diversity: questions, narrations, imitative words and sounds. All the children tried to touch it, showing that they liked Floppy. Periodically, the teacher used the puppet in such a way that the toy understood only English speech and that stimulated children to speak English with the toy.

The English teacher used the puppet to involve children in communication in English; that is why it fulfilled the role of the partner of communication. At the same time, the puppet made the atmosphere in the classroom more positive and relaxed, as Floppy supported children if they made mistakes and tried to help them. Therefore, the puppet stimulated children's interest in the English language and promoted children's participation in English communication. However, the puppet was not used in every lesson and it was used in several communicative situations, although not during the whole lesson. In this case, the puppet fulfilled three functions: communicative, regulating and motivational because it played the role of the partner of communication, it was attractive for children and spoke only in English with them. However, the puppet was used very seldom.

The other two English teachers also had puppets and did not include them in all lesson activities. The toys were used occasionally. One puppet (Pops, a dog) spoke English and if the teacher (Teacher 2) saw that children did not understand her, the puppet spoke Russian; and the learners did not try to communicate with it in English. The other puppet (Willy, a boy) spoke only in English and its speech included a rather limited repertoire of patterns:

Hello! How are you? What's this? Where is..? Is it..? In this case, the English teacher (Teacher 3) used the toy for asking questions. The puppet did not communicate with children in other situations.

> When Teacher 3 took the puppet out of the box, one boy said in Russian: *"Опять он будет эти вопросы задавать, все увот да увот. Хоть бы что-нибудь другое сказал" ("He is going to ask all these question again: what and what. He could say something else").* The teacher explained that the boy was afraid of speaking English.

The children noticed that the puppet was used for asking the abovementioned questions. The puppet was not used by teachers for most of the lessons. The observation showed that puppets' actions and conversations could be rather predictable for children and did not attract much attention to the puppets as the partners of communication in English, i.e. the toys did not foster the learners to speak English and communicate with them. Sometimes using a puppet created even a negative and stressful atmosphere among the children during the lessons.

The puppets used by Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 did not fulfill a communicative function as they were not partners of communication; often they did not fulfill a regulating function as they used both English and Russian languages; and they did not fulfill a motivational function as teachers' use of the puppets irritated the learners and did not motivate them to speak English. Very similar results were collected in the research on puppets' roles in the English classroom (Malkina & Koricheva, 2011:64) when it was noticed that a puppet could be distractive for young learners and created a negative emotional atmosphere in the lesson.

The fourth English teacher (Teacher 4) used a puppet (Teddy, a teddy-bear) as a symbol of a situation at the lessons (when using total physical response (TPR) activities) or as an addressee of the conversation. It spoke English and Russian, but this seldom happened and most of the time it was silent. Therefore, children talked a lot about it: mood, tastes, abilities or clothes, in the Russian language.

Teacher 4 said (in Russian):*"Сегодня Тэдди покажет нам, как делать зарядку. Мы посмотрим на него и повторим". ("Today Teddy will show us how to do exercises. We will watch and repeat.")*

Teacher 4 said (in English):*"Look at Teddy. What is he doing?" Then, the children answered in English or Russian but they did not talk to the puppet.*

Consequently, the puppet was not a partner of communication and did not fulfill a communicative function. As a result, children rejected the puppet as a toy. They could take it and play with it speaking Russian. It did not fulfill a regulating function as it spoke two languages, Russian and English. It did not promote learners' interest in using English, i.e. it was not motivational, as it did not communicate with them.

The analysis of the frequency of using Russian and English by the puppets is presented in Figure 22: in 38% of situations when puppets were used they did not produce any speech and did not take part in communication; in 18% of cases puppets spoke English and in 44% of cases puppets mixed Russian and English.

Figure 22. What language do the puppets speak in different communicative situations (N=124)?

These situations can be connected with English teachers' ways of using a puppet during lessons as the frequency of using puppets affected the total amount of English speech. The observation showed that the teachers did not use puppets for building up communication in English and increasing children's interest in using a foreign language purposefully, as it is intended in the FLT Toolkit.

How was language zoning used? The observation on using language zoning during English lessons showed that such a technique was not used by

the teachers. The reason was that the English teaching environment was organized only in the English classrooms in both kindergartens and there was no other place where English language was used.

However, after several lessons in both kindergartens all the teachers told me that dividing the classroom space into two language zones could be very effective for creating a comfortable atmosphere. As preschoolers have a limited vocabulary and not well-developed communicative skills in English; if the children do not know how to say something in English, they prefer using Russian. The Russian language zone could give children an opportunity not to break the rules of communication during the lesson and help them give up avoiding speaking English. There were situations when the impossibility of using the children's mother tongue caused them frustration.

> A boy came to the toy train and said in Russian: *"Мне нравится эта игрушка." ("I like this toy").* Teacher 3 answered him in Russian: *"Скажи это по-английски, пожалуйста. Напоминаю, что это кабинет английского, и ты не можешь говорить здесь по-русски". ("Say it in English, please. Remember that you are in the English classroom, you cannot speak Russian here").* After that, the boy became upset and turned his back without saying anything.

The results of the observation indicated that the classroom environment in both experimental and control groups was rich. There were posters, English books, maps, toys, DVD- and CD-players, various symbols of English culture and other things. However, most of the things were not used during the observed lessons. The children were not permitted to touch the objects. When using the environment, teachers told stories and fairytales to children, read picture books, showed cartoons in English and sang English songs. The children liked such activities, especially playing games with toys or doing exercises in TPR format. Posters and pictures with information about British and American culture were very attractive for the children; they asked questions about them. Their questions confirmed that the young learners understood that such objects referred to English-speaking countries and tried to compare them with Russian culture.

A girl said about Big Ben (in Russian):*"Я раньше видела эту башню. Она не в России. У нас нет такой." ("I have seen this tower before. It is not in Russia. We do not have it").*

Using a loud voice when speaking English or whispering when speaking Russian was a technique used by two teachers during the lessons (Teacher 1 and Teacher 3). After the lesson I asked them if they did it purposely. Both teachers answered that they did not consider speech indicators as a teaching technique. Consequently, observation showed that the classroom environment had had an impact on children's interest using English as a foreign language and it also could stimulate their speaking English with the attractive objects and rules of communication. However, language zoning was reduced to the English zone and did not include a Russian zone as a communicative technique, as it did not fulfill communicative, motivational and regulating functions.

How was commenting used? During the observation, commenting was used in many situations during the English lessons in the experimental and control groups by the English teachers. In Figure 23 the objects of commenting often chosen by English teachers are presented.

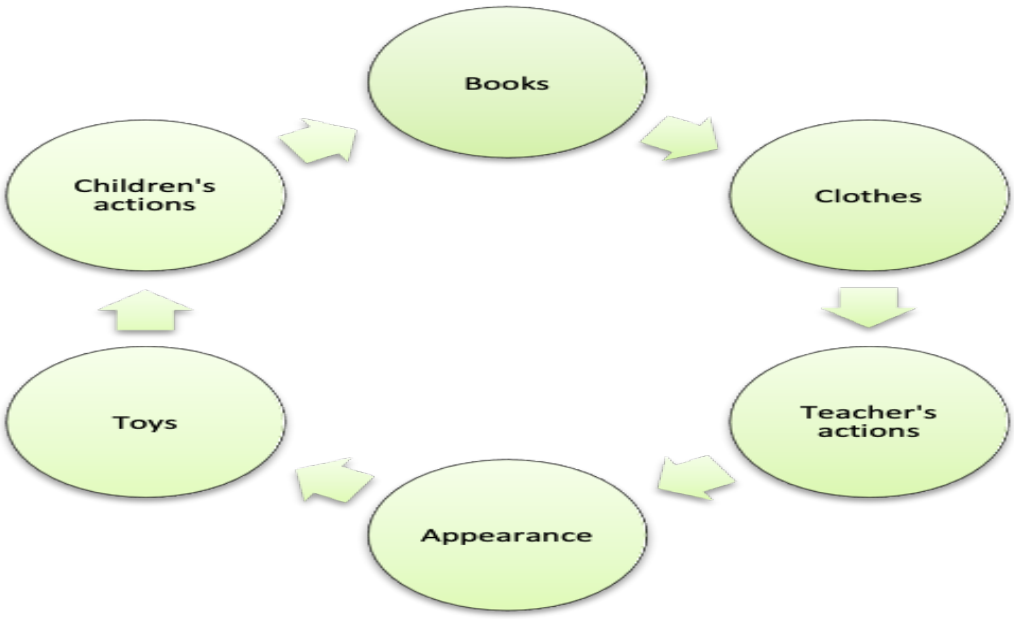

Figure 23. What do teachers comment on in English during the lessons?

Mostly the English teachers described clothes (25%) and toys (32%); they used English songs and storytelling to enrich the English language input.

> Teacher 2 commented on the car the boy was playing with (in English):*"- Look! This is a car. It is blue. It is not big. It is small. A blue car. How nice!"*

Less often the teachers commented on pictures in English books (11%).

> Teacher 1 was commenting on pictures in "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by E. Carle: *Look at this apple. It is red. Mmm, yummy! A red apple."*

The English teachers gave comments on their own actions.

> Teacher 3 commented in English: *I am looking for my pen. I cannot see it"* or *"Oh, I need a chair. Here it is. It is brown."*

However, such comments were pronounced in a low voice that meant that they were not intended for learners' perception. Anyway, the children listened to those comments and repeated separate words in their own speech.

> After the teacher's comments about her pencil a girl said in English pointing at her pen: *Pen. Me pen. It green."* In spite of the fact that her phrase was not correct, it illustrated that the teacher's comments were heard and understood. After the girl's response the other children pointed to their pens and named their colors.

Many situations were observed when the children started to describe their clothes and toys in English after teachers' comments. The same effect was noticed when the English teachers communicated with the puppet or made comments about its actions. This fact provides a basis for supposing that commenting provided by English teachers stimulates learners' communicative initiative in English; although it was noticed that teachers did not use this technique very often. The findings based on the observation showed that

English teachers used commenting unknowingly and that is why it could not fulfill all the functions of the FLT Toolkit.

How were gestures used? The observations during English lessons demonstrated that the teachers in both experimental and control groups often used gestures when teaching young children. Mostly, they used gestures for attracting learners' attention (for example, waving a hand) and for communicative process control (for example, when pointing at the child who was to speak next). Nevertheless, teachers did not teach and ask children to use gestures by themselves as an effective non-verbal communicational tool. However, it was noticed that sometimes children used gestures to explain what they wanted (pointing at the object) or to illustrate a word's meaning.

> After repeating the dance movements of Teacher 1, the children began to repeat dance movements themselves (illustrated rain, snow and sunny weather) when they answered the question *"What's the weather like today?"*

The observation showed that using gestures helped the children to avoid using Russian during English lessons and that is an indicator of gestures fulfilling the regulating function. Gestures promoted the learners' communicative initiative in English and fulfilled a communicative function as the children did not feel frustration and repeated gestures with English words. At the same time, gestures helped English teachers organize communication in English and fulfilled a regulating function. Nevertheless, the English teachers used gestures very seldom and not systematically enough in order to foster learners' use of English.

How was intoning used? The observation showed that the English teachers in experimental and control groups used intoning and all the learners demonstrated the understanding of differences in Russian and English intonation. Thus, they used a rising tone to pronounce a name to attract her or his attention. Using intoning, English teachers expressed their agreement/disagreement and they evaluated a child's verbal expressions and actions. For example: the intonation of approval/disapproval (*Yes, it is VERY GOOD!*) or negative intonation (*NO, it is NOT a ball*.). The English teachers controlled

the process of communication with intoning, although it was not used systematically. For example, they used intoning during listening activities for accenting the most important word in the phrase (for example, "*Is it a TRAIN*?").

After lessons I asked the teachers why they used intoning when addressing the learners. All the teachers answered that interrogatory intonation helped children orient themselves in the process of communication or understand that they are supposed to answer the question. There were many phrases pronounced by the English teachers in a very loud or very low voice or very emotionally. They used intoning to attract children's attention.

> The children made a lot of noise and Teacher 1 pronounced in a low voice in English: *"Mmmm, I have a secret. (then, loudly) A secret! This is a surprise for you".* The children turned their attention to the teacher and became quiet.

Teacher 3 used intoning for a puppet's articulation. She tried to use a specific voice for the puppet to differentiate it from hers. The children understood the differences in voices, and they liked communicating with the puppet. Malkina and Koricheva's research (2011:65) confirms that a puppet's speech and articulation is a way to foster children to use a foreign language and raise their interest in communication.

One more way of using intoning as a technique was marked when the teachers used voice for expressing English words' meanings without using Russian translation. For example, they were words like *happy, angry* and *sad* which were illustrated with appropriate emotional intonation. Words like *big* and *small* were illustrated with intoning and gestures. This way of using intoning helped the learners to understand word meanings and attracted their attention to what the teacher was saying. During the observation it was noticed that the English teachers used intoning in combination with mimics and gestures that made the process of communication very easy to follow for the children and they liked such a way of teaching and repeated the teacher's actions.

The English teachers used pausation in communication with children. Often, they used pauses showing that a child should add something ("*This is a*

(pause)…"). In spite of fulfilling all the functions of intoning as a communicative technique (motivational, regulating and communicative), it was used very seldom and spontaneously.

5.2.2 English teachers' attitudes towards the communicative techniques

After the filling in the questionnaire, all the teachers wanted to discuss the questions and provide some comments on their answers, which are also presented in the description of the results.

What were English teachers' attitudes towards using a puppet? English teachers' answers indicated that all of them were not aware of the communicative potential of a puppet. All the teachers chose "often" answering *question 1*, that a puppet arouses interest in children. Answering *question 2*, three English teachers noted that a puppet did not foster children's conscious choice of the language for communication. After answering the questions, Teacher 2 said (translated into English): *I use a puppet for my lessons, but when I ask the children in English, they answer me in Russian in any case*. It is necessary to notice that this teacher used a puppet which mixed both Russian and English. Evidently, in this case children could not see a puppet as an English-speaker who did not understand Russian. This meant that in such a situation, a puppet does not fulfill the purpose of the FLLE and FLLE and does not regulate learners' choice of the language for communication.

Answering *questions 3, 4, 5* and *6,* only two of four teachers who answered the questionnaire chose "often" for a puppet's role as a partner of communication; one teacher marked "sometimes" for the puppet's role as a topic of communication; and one teacher marked "often" for a puppet as a symbol of a situation. Such a result demonstrates that the teachers saw a puppet as a means of influencing learners' communicative initiative in English. However, according to the observation results, all the English teachers seldom used their puppets during the lessons. Two teachers supposed that a puppet was interesting for children only as a toy. One of these respondents thought that using a puppet could be very effective if it was used as a topic of conversation because it gave the children an opportunity to listen to a lot of speech in English and learn new words.

Two English teachers answered that a puppet is very effective for supporting children' interest and communicative initiative in English as a partner of communication. However, during the observation of the English lessons, one of them did not use a puppet in this role. Perhaps, such a contradiction is caused by the unawareness of a puppet's functions during English lessons. Also, the previous observation showed the effectiveness of using a puppet to foster the learners to speak English if a puppet is a partner of communication and speaks English.

What were English teachers' attitudes towards using language zoning? Answering *question 7,* about the fact that dividing the classroom space into language zones could stimulate children interest to speak English as a foreign language, all the teachers marked "often". After the questionnaire, Teacher 4 said (translated from Russian): *Children come to the English classroom and take English books. They like to look at pictures; they ask questions about book characters and English words in books*. All the teachers answered "often" on *question 8,* that using language zoning could stimulate children to choose the language of communication consciously according to the language zone.

Three of the teachers marked "often" and one teacher marked "sometimes" when answering *question 9*. After answering, three teachers noted that using language zoning could help to organize more natural communication in English. Teacher 2 said (translated from Russian): *Children like rules. If they know that speaking English is a rule, they will follow it with pleasure*. In spite of the observation results, which indicated that English teachers did not use language zoning as a technique to foster learners to speak English, they admitted that zoning could be effective for this purpose. The results of the observation of learners' communication during the lessons also highlighted the need for a Russian language zone in the classroom.

What were English teachers' attitudes toward using commenting? Three teachers marked "seldom" when answering *questions 10* and *11*, that commenting could not be effective for stimulating children's communicative initiative and interest in using English. Meanwhile, the results of the observation showed that all the teachers used commenting during their lessons and it stimulated children's communicative response. Moreover, when the teachers commented on pictures, toys and their own actions, children looked

interested and began asking questions. All the teachers answered "never" on *questions 12* and *13*, that using commenting could not impact their choice of the language of communication. Such results indicated unconscious use of commenting for stimulating young learners to communicate in English based on the observations on children's use of English: they started to speak it after the teacher's comments in English.

What were English teachers' attitudes towards using gestures? All the teachers marked "often" when answering *question 14*, confirming the motivational function of gestures. After answering the questionnaire, they commented that children liked guessing the meaning of the gesture and that gestures helped children to remember words and phrases in English. The teachers agreed that by using gestures it was easy to attract children's attention. However, all the teachers answered "never" to *question 15*, that gestures could not promote children's choice of the language of communication. The same answers were for *question 16*: all the teachers neglected the communicational potential of gestures and answered that they could not influence children's communicative activity in English. The results of the observation showed that the English teachers used many gestures for controlling communication in a foreign language. Such results demonstrated that the English teachers did not use gestures systematically and consciously to foster learners' language awareness and their communicative initiative in English.

What were English teachers' attitudes towards using intoning? All the teachers admitted that intoning could be interesting for children (*question 17*). Three teachers answered "sometimes" and one answered "seldom", expressing that using intoning could help children in choosing of the language of communication (*question 18*). All the teachers answered "often" to *question 19*, that using intoning could be helpful in controlling the process of communication in English. Teacher 1 said (translated from Russian): *I can say something with assurance; using a pause signals that a child should continue. Intonation works well*. All the teachers agreed that using intoning promotes learners' communicative initiative in English as a foreign language. All the English teachers answered "often" (*question 20*) that using intoning stimulated children to communicate in English. Teacher 2 said: "*Young learners like to repeat everything. If I say something in an unusual way using intonation, they will*

like it and repeat." The results revealed that the English teachers supposed that the main function of using intoning was communicative; although motivating and regulating functions are very important for supporting children's use of English as a foreign language.

5.2.3 English teachers' reasoning for using the communicative techniques

To find out English teachers' reasons for using their repertoire of the communicative techniques during lessons, the interview method was used. The description of the interview is structured according to the interview questions.

An introduction question: English teachers' opinions on stimulating learners' use of English during the lessons. All the teachers said that the most successful way of motivating learners' speaking was to design interesting and captivating lesson plans which should include various types of activities for children, a plot and interesting tasks. The teachers complained that sometimes it was very hard to motivate children, especially if they could not understand the task or follow the dialogue in English. In these cases, children sometimes refuse to do the task or gave up participating in the lesson.

The English teachers suggested various techniques for stimulating learners' speaking English such as asking questions, singing and playing in English. However, the list does not include any of the communicative techniques. The teachers said that designing communicative situations is an effective way of involving children into communication in the target language; it can be asking questions and playing games. However, the teachers admitted that those techniques could not be as effective as they had planned because children always used their native language for speaking with each other and the teachers. Repeating words and singing songs were suggested as communicative techniques, but the teachers admitted that repetition and singing were not a form of real communication in a foreign language.

All the teachers said that they involved young learners in English dialogue. They defined this action as a separate technique of promoting children's communication during lessons. When the teachers were asked to illustrate how they involved their pupils in dialogues, two teachers were undecided and

said that it was uncontrolled and they did not use anything special for that. Teacher 3 said that she gave children an example of the dialogue and then they repeated phrases after her until they memorized the whole dialogue and could say it by heart. Teacher 4 said that she asked children to repeat after her or the puppet and they learned the dialogue that way. Such examples of stimulating communication in a foreign language do not provide real communication in English; they are aimed at learning the dialogues by heart.

The next tool identified by the English teachers was watching cartoons in English. Then the teachers were asked to illustrate how cartoons in English could stimulate children's communicative activity. All the teachers said that while watching cartoons, children liked to repeat phrases and words after the characters. Moreover, two teachers noticed that such repetitions happened not just while children watched the cartoon, but up to the end of the lesson. It means that cartoons in English motivate children to use English words; moreover, learners do it for a long time. Two teachers suggested singing songs in English as a method for stimulating learners' communication in English. They regarded it as a type of communicative activity in English. Three teachers said that repeating words in English during lexical exercises was an effective way of stimulating learners to use English. All the teachers described different types of exercises with using toys, songs, TPR activities and others. However, such use of English is not exactly an example of interaction; a repetition of words after the teacher is a task but not communication. All the teachers said that playing English imitation games and games in English could stimulate children's speaking. They noted that when playing, young pupils liked to repeat game words. Teachers said that children played those games on the playground.

Do you use a puppet in your English lessons? What is it? All the teachers answered that they used a puppet during lessons.

- Floppy the frog: Teacher 1 described Floppy as a character which had its own low voice which differed from the teacher's voice. She said (translated from Russian): *My Floppy is a magic frog; it can speak like a human being. He is funny and he likes to laugh. My pupils like him very much; they greet him at every lesson*. This puppet wanted to communicate with children, it spoke only in English, it tried to involve the learners in the

dialogue and the children liked it. Such a description aligned with the observation data. The puppet was used as a partner of communication, but it was seldom used.

- Pops the dog. Teacher 2 described Pops as a toy (translated from Russian): *It is a dog, it is brown*. She said that she used the puppet to motivate children because they liked toys. She used it when it was necessary to repeat words and phrases in English. The teacher supposed that her pupils liked the puppet, but the observation results demonstrated that they did not because of didactic purposes of using the puppet; they did not like to repeat words after the toy. I asked her about the language the puppet spoke. She answered that it asked questions in English and then she translated them into Russian with a puppet if children had not understood them.
- Teddy the teddy bear. Teacher 4 described the puppet in the following way (translated from Russian): *It is a Paddington bear. I bought it in London many years ago. I like this toy. And my pupils like it very much. It usually stands on the shelf in the English classroom and helps me to design interesting situations for the lessons that include this bear*. The results of the observation showed that Teddy did not participate in interaction in English, but the teacher preferred to speak about it with the children. I asked her if the toy could speak. The teacher answered that it spoke English because she had brought him from London. However, observation results highlighted that in the situations when the teacher used the toy, it was speaking English and Russian when the children had not understood it.
- Willy, the boy. Teacher 3 said (translated from Russian): "*Willy is an English-speaking boy. My pupils adore it*". Meanwhile, during the lessons observed previously, many young learners refused to do tasks when the teacher used the puppet. It too could speak the Russian language when children did not understand it.

The comparison of the interview and observation data highlighted contradictions when the teachers told about using a puppet for communication in English, but they did not do it in practice and did not evaluate its communicative potential in the questionnaire.

What unique characteristics should a puppet have to be attractive to children during English classes? All the teachers said that a puppet should have an attractive appearance: bright colors, moving elements, funny features and other characteristics. Teacher 3 said (translated from Russian): *The more colorful – the more attractive for children*. Teacher 1 said that a puppet should have its own character and be like a real person. Teacher 4 said (translated from Russian): "*Look at my Floppy. It can be angry or sad, happy or sleepy. Children like it*". Two teachers said that a puppet should have a voice which would differ from the teacher's voice. Here is an example of the reasoning given by Teacher 2 (translated from Russian): *It is rather interesting to see that children are surprised when their teacher changes her voice. It seems to them to be funny and they like such changes*. Three teachers said that the puppet's most important characteristic should be its readiness to communicate with children. Teacher 1 said (translated from Russian): *Firstly, I think that my puppet must speak to pupils because it is the purpose of using a puppet in English lessons*. However, Teacher 2 added (translated from Russian): *The puppet is not an obligatory element of English lessons. The main point is that the English teacher would be interesting and attractive for children, and a toy can distract their attention*. So, all the teachers admitted the motivational potential of a puppet as they did during answering the questionnaire: to attract children and to stir their interest up during the whole lesson. All the teachers said that the animation of their puppet was rather complicated for them. To summarize, the English teachers identified almost all the characteristics of a puppet as necessary for using it as a communicative technique to foster learners' communication in English, however, not all of these characteristics were employed by the teachers in practice.

How do you use your puppet? Could you give some examples of using a puppet during your lessons? Three teachers said that they used a puppet for communication with children and gave their examples. However, only one of them illustrated how the use of the puppet fulfilled the function of the partner of communication; the rest of the examples described other roles of a puppet in English lessons. The examples of teachers' use of a puppet were translated from Russian into English.

Teacher 1 (translated from Russian): *Floppy always speaks to children. He asks them questions about various things, he asks them to name objects in English, and the puppet can make jokes.* The teacher described the puppet as a partner of communication.

Teacher 2 (translated from Russian): *I use the puppet in dialogue with children. It communicates with them. Usually it happens when I check their lexical skills. My puppet asks the names of things in English.* The teacher described the puppet as a symbol of a situation.

Teacher 3 (translated from Russian): *When I take my puppet, children laugh! They touch it and want to play with it. The entertaining function is illustrated.*

Teacher 4 (translated from Russian): *My Teddy likes to communicate with children. It is very interesting for them. That's why we speak about it at every lesson.* The teacher described the puppet as a topic of communication.

All the teachers said that a puppet could be used to entertain learners. However, there were many differences between the observed puppets' using and the examples given by the teachers. This contradiction is illustrated in Figure 24 where the frequencies of using the puppets (124 situations) and choosing of their roles (56 examples) are illustrated.

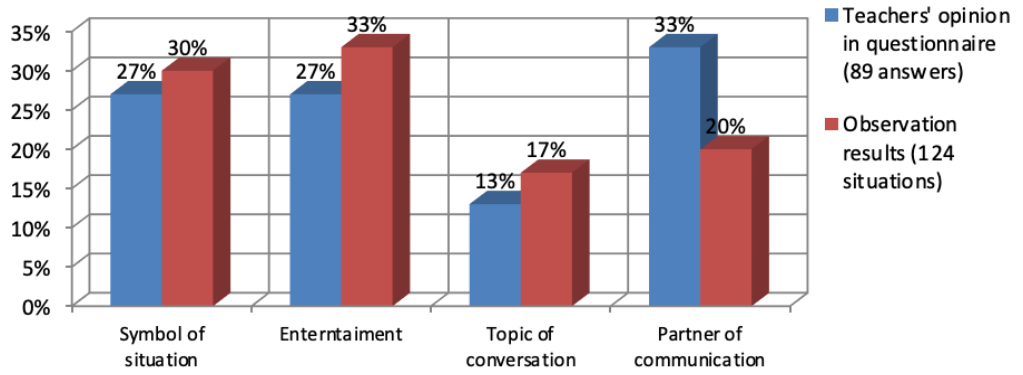

Figure 24. Puppet's roles in a comparison of questionnaire and observations analysis

According to the observation, the most popular of the puppet's functions was entertaining. All the teachers noticed that children liked the puppets; it

was related to their nature as a game element. However, English teachers could not separate the motivational and communicational functions of using a puppet. The teachers had difficulties in defining the role of the puppet as part of the lesson; they used it in very limited situations. The final conclusion of the comparison observations, questionnaire and interview data was that the English teachers were not aware of using a puppet to foster learners' use of English during English lessons. They needed to be trained to use a puppet as a communicative technique to fulfill motivational, regulating and communicative functions in FLLE to promote young learners to communicate in English during the lessons.

Do you divide the classroom space into language zones where children can speak Russian or English? What do you think about this technique? None of the respondents divided the classroom space into language zones. However, all the teachers said that they filled the English class with authentic materials to initiate children's interest. The teachers highlighted the role of the cultural components in the classroom decoration. One teacher said (translated from Russian): *I want the children to feel the special atmosphere of this room. That is why there are so many bright posters with photos from the UK and the USA, authentic toys and books. I often tell my pupils about these things to present the culture of English-speaking countries. They like it*. It shows that the teachers chose the motivational potential of language zoning intuitively. The teachers did not mention that the physical environment could influence children's wish to communicate in English and choose it as a language of communication.

What language do your learners speak more during your lessons? Do they speak Russian, and why? All the teachers said that the children spoke English more than Russian during the lessons. However, during the observation it was noticed that the children used the Russian language more often than English. The languages the learners spoke will be presented in the description of the observation of children's interaction during the English lessons. So, there was a contradiction between teachers' reflection and the real situation in pupils' choice of a language of communication. Meanwhile, all the teachers accepted that their pupils spoke Russian. They were asked to describe situations when it happened.

Each of the teachers said that the children used their native language when they did not understand the teacher's question or phrase; when conflicts happened between the children; or in situations which were dangerous for children's health; and when children did not know how to express themselves in English because of limited lexical and grammar skills in a foreign language. Four teachers said that when children are very emotional, they used Russian. It happened when the learners were offended and angry or very sad, or happy. They had no time to formulate their thoughts in English. Seng and Hashim (2006:35) conducted research that contained the same findings that pupils with lower proficiency in English usually had a lot of difficulties in expressing their thoughts with confidence and accuracy in a foreign language; that is why they used their native language during the lessons, so they should be allowed to fall back on their first language to understand the target language.

One teacher said that if a child is bored during the lesson, he or she would speak Russian. Such situations illustrated the link between children's interest in using English and their communicative initiative in it: if the learners were not motivated, they avoided using a foreign language and preferred the native one.

> Teacher 1 (translated from Russian): *Sometimes I see that the children do not understand me, and I begin to translate English phrases into Russian. I know that it is not very wise but it helps pupils to understand me. Although later they start to wait for my translation every time.*
> Teacher 3 (translated from Russian): *It is difficult for young children to speak English a lot because they have a lack of vocabulary and grammar. Sometimes I cannot explain to them some complicated information in English. For example, we talk about Great Britain and its culture in Russian.*
> Teacher 4 (translated from Russian): *When we play traditional English games, we use English for communication, but when children become carried away with a game, they speak Russian.*

All the four teachers confessed that it was hard for the young learners to speak English during the whole lesson because they were tired, they had limited foreign language skills; that is why teachers had to translate a lot

of information into Russian. The analysis of teachers' answers confirmed the necessity of the Russian language zone in the English classroom as a means to comfort young learners and stimulate them to use English without avoiding it.

Do you make comments (or describe) in English in response to learners' actions? Do you name in English the objects children play with? Why do you do/ not do this? Two teachers said that they commented on their actions in English, but they had never identified it as a separate teaching technique. However, using commenting was indicated during all the lessons observed; that illustrates unconscious use of this communicative technique. Two teachers, who said they used commenting, could not explain the reason for it.

> Teacher 1 (translated from Russian): *I do it… I do not know why… It is like speaking alone to fill the pause.*
>
> Teacher 2 (translated from Russian): *I think that I do it for children so they can listen to English as often as possible.*

What is the aim of using songs and chants during your lessons? Do you use storytelling? What for? All the teachers said that they used songs, chants and cartoons to entertain the learners and present them new words and phrases in English. This gives evidence of the realization of the motivational function of commenting as a communicative technique. Moreover, three teachers out of four said that after listening to songs or watching cartoons, learners remembered some words and phrases and used them for communicating in English. None of the teachers used storytelling during the lessons according to their opinion and the results of the observations. In summary, the English teachers were not aware of how commenting could stimulate children's interest in using English and their communicative initiative in it.

Do you use gestures during your lessons? Why do you use them? Could you give some examples of using gestures during your lesson? All four teachers said that they used gestures during their lessons. They gave a lot of examples of situations when gestures were used to illustrate the meaning of words in English (hello, come to me, to knock, etc.). Also, teachers used gestures to express emotional state (to fling arms up, to shake head, etc.); or to control

the communicative process (pointing to the next to answer, to wave a hand to stop the speaker, to shake head to show that child's answer is wrong, etc.). Gestures were used for attracting children' attention (to knock on the table, to snap fingers, to clap hands, etc.). However, no one said that gestures could foster the choice of the language of communication or influence children's communicative activity in English that correlates with questionnaire answers. The teachers were asked if gestures could help to foster learners' using English.

> Teacher 2 (translated from Russian): *I think that it is impossible to do with gestures. It depends on the whole process of communication.*
> Teacher 4 (translated from Russian): *We should speak with pupils. That's the point. Of course, I use gestures but in the beginning and later I do not need them to communicate with children.*

In total, the English teachers understood that using gestures was effective for teaching English to young learners in aspects of motivation and to control communication; but they neglected the communicative potential of using gestures in English lessons as a communicative technique which could influence learners' wish to speak English.

Do you teach your learners to use gestures for communication in English? All the teachers said that they did not teach their pupils to use gesture for communication in English, but they noticed that children repeated their gestures and used them. The English teachers from the experimental and control groups used gestures in limited varieties of situations and were not aware of using them as a technique for stimulation of learners' speaking of a foreign language during the lessons.

How do you use intoning and its expressive means in your lessons? Could you give some examples? All four teachers said that they used the intoning and expressive means of voice at English lessons for various purposes. The teachers used intoning to illustrate the meaning of the word (happy, sad, big, little, quiet, loud, etc.). Three teachers used intoning for evaluating and checking if a child answered correctly (positive and negative tones, changes in the pitch of a voice, etc.). Two teachers used intoning to control communication

(pausing, interrogatory tone, changes in quality and pitch of a voice, etc.). The teachers gave examples of using intoning.

> Teacher 1 (translated from Russian): *Sometimes it is very effective to use voice to show the meaning of a word without translation into Russian. It works with such words like 'big' and 'little' for example. Pupils remember this presentation and begin to use these words correctly.*
> Teacher 2 (translated from Russian): *If children are very noisy, I speak with a low voice and they listen to me.*
> Teacher 3 (translated from Russian): *When I praise a child or correct their mistakes, I do it using intonation: in praise – more positive and cheerful, in correction – quieter and careful, maybe rather low".*

Three teachers said that they could influence pupils' choice of using the language of communication. This result corresponded with teachers' answers in the questionnaire. Here is one of the examples of their answers (translated from Russian): "*When a child speaks to me in Russian, I usually ask 'What?', and he/she changes the language and speaks in English*.

Is using intoning effective for learners' understanding of English speech? The English teachers admitted that using intoning and expressive means of voice were effective for pupils' understanding of English speech. However, they also answered that they did not see the way in which this technique could support children's communication in English as a foreign language and they did not teach the children to use intoning as a communicative compensation strategy. In summary, the teachers used intoning for its motivational and regulating functions, but the communicative function of intoning as a communicative technique was not implemented.

The research showed a lot of contradictions between English teachers' ideas about their methodological repertoire and what they really did in the classroom to foster children to speak English. The observations in the classroom and the interview with the English teachers indicated that three of them did not use a puppet as a partner of communication but all of them stated that they did. The teachers admitted that using commenting, gestures and intoning was effective in their lessons, but they used these very seldom

and not systematically. The results of the observations, questionnaire and interview with the teachers showed that they used the limited FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE in the classroom but understood its potential in ELT for young learners. Language zoning was not used either. The results of the observations indicated that the teachers did not use special techniques for supporting communicative initiative and interest in learning English of young children, although the goal of the curriculum included the of stimulation learners' communication in a foreign language. The focus of teaching was on teaching language skills, mostly development of learners' vocabulary skills.

The English, teachers did not design FLLE; they did not use the communicative techniques systematically and consciously in the aspects of their teaching potential; gestures and the puppet were used more often but they did not fulfill all the functions influencing learners' communication in English. Also, it appeared to be difficult for the English teachers to define the objectives of using the communicative techniques; they were mistaken in defining the role of the puppet and gestures (saying to use them just for semanticizing); and they could not identify the functions of commenting, although they used it in practice. Generally, the English teachers had a lot of difficulties using the FLT Toolkit for stimulating young learners to use English and they needed to be trained for that.

To summarize, the collected data indicated that the English teachers did not support learners' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English, the children had emotional discomfort and were not confident in communicating in English because of their limited vocabulary and grammar skills; often the learners avoided speaking English and spoke only in Russian. The dominant language of communication among children was Russian.

5.3 Using the foreign language teaching toolkit to foster learners' communication in English

The data collected to answer RQ1 about how the children communicated in English showed that the learners had difficulties in speaking English and

preferred to use Russian; most of the learners had a low level of interest in using English, a low level of communicative initiative in the target language and a low level of language awareness in using both English and Russian, so the children could not choose an appropriate language for communication in various communicative situations during the lessons. Similar situations were observed in both experimental and control groups. The data collected to answer RQ2 about how the English teachers stimulate learners' use of English, including the communicative techniques, demonstrated that most of the techniques were used unaware and they did not fulfill all the functions during the lessons and that is why the communicative techniques were not effective for learners' communication in a foreign language.

The aim of the next step of the research was an integration of the FLT Toolkit into English lessons and an organization of a special bilingual foreign language learning environment (FLLE) to foster children to speak English; then to evaluate if the FLT Toolkit was effective for that purpose.

The assessment included several steps:

1) Professional in-service training of the English teachers in the experimental group and assessment of their awareness or unawareness in using the FLT Toolkit (in kindergarten "Svetlana");
2) The integration of the FLT Toolkit into the educational process in kindergarten "Svetlana";
3) Final assessment of children in both kindergartens in the control and experimental groups (level of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative) to check the effectiveness of using the FLT Toolkit.

5.3.1 Professional training for English teachers

The integration of the FLT Toolkit began within-service training for English teachers from the kindergarten "Svetlana" which was organized in winter, 2013. The workshop included 90 minutes of theoretical teaching and 90 minutes of practice. The theoretical and practical training of the English teachers focused on using communicative techniques for fostering learners to use English in their lessons. Its aim was to train two English teachers from the experimental group to use a puppet, commenting, language zoning,

gestures and intoning in the context of FLLE as communicative techniques to stimulate learners to use English in their lessons.

The goals of professional training included familiarization with theoretical information about the FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE, communicative techniques for stimulating children's language awareness in speaking English and Russian, interest in using English and their communicative initiative in English. The goals also included training practical skills in using the communicative techniques in the context of FLLE. The two teachers were presented the theoretical information including the content of each communicative technique. The functions of the techniques were described and discussed.

> How can you regulate communication using a puppet? Children should understand that the puppet speaks only in English. That's why if a child tells it something in Russian, the puppet does not understand him or her and asks *"Sorry?"* or *"What?"*
> How is it possible to foster learners to choose English as a means of communication? If a teacher's speech is emotional and vivid and concerns children's activities, they will pay attention to it and imitate it. For example, the puppet has got a new hat. The teacher says: *"Hey! Willy has a new hat. Great! It is very lovely, what a nice color. And I have a new jacket (pointing at herself/himself)."* It can stimulate learners to show their clothes and speak about it.

Then the teachers practiced the communicative techniques.

> The teachers design 1–2 situations: communicative, regulating and motivational with using a puppet. Then the situations are discussed.
> Each participant takes a photo of children who are carrying out different actions (playing, having lunch, washing their hands). The teachers comment on those situations. Then discussion takes place.
> Teachers make a list of objects of language zones.
> A teacher is given a card with a word. He/she is to show this word with a gesture. The others guess the word.

Teachers are given cards with words and sentences. They should intone them.

The teachers were given handouts with recommendations for using the communicative techniques (Appendix16, Appendix 17). At the end of the workshop the final discussion and feedback were organized. In a month after the seminar I asked the English teachers to take part in the interview (Appendix 8, Appendix 9). It allowed examining if English teachers used the described techniques and how they did it.

5.3.2 Changes in English teachers' reasons for using the foreign language teaching toolkit

Both English teachers of the experimental group could name important characteristics of the puppet (voice, history, using English only). They admitted the necessity of constant use of the puppet in the teaching process. Research conducted by Vida Zuljevic (2005) confirmed that the often use of a puppet in the classroom increased learners' interest, supported their involvement, oral language and communicative skills.

Significantly, the English teachers gave correct examples of using a puppet in different functions (as a partner of communication, mask, situation mark and a topic). They admitted that the function of a partner of communication was dominant. Teacher 1 said (translated from Russian): "*I was sure that my puppet communicated with the children, but it was not so. Now I see my mistakes in animating it and use the puppet in a different way. I know how to make it interesting for learners as a puppet and as an interlocutor*." All the teachers recognized that language zoning was an important communicative technique. They could provide reasonable details about zones filling including teaching culture.

The teachers said they used commenting as a technique, defined the aims of its use and gave examples. Teacher 2 said (translated from Russian): "*I cannot engage the children in the dialogue during the whole lesson, but when they draw, I describe their drawings and they begin repeating the words*." The English teachers could define the aims of using gestures: how to motivate learners and control the conversation. The teachers defined the aims of using intoning

and saw the correlation between using intoning and gestures. Teacher 3 (translated from Russian): "*It is better to combine gestures and intoning. This way the meaning is more explicit for learners*". Conscious use of the FLT Toolkit techniques is a basis for its effectiveness during English lessons. Now the teachers of the control group know the content of the techniques, purposes of their use and have analyzed their previous purpose of using the techniques before the professional in-service training.

5.3.3 Integration of the foreign language teaching toolkit into the English teaching process

After in-service training, the process of integration of the FLT Toolkit began. This step lasted for three years. Before starting, the conditions of the English teaching process in the experimental group were changed and adjusted to the bilingual program in the control group. At this step in the experimental and control groups there were two teachers at the same time: an English teacher who spoke English and Russian if needed and a preschool teacher who spoke only in Russian. The teachers were in the groups together from 8:30 am until 2:00 pm. Such a condition was necessary for FLLE organization and increasing the amount of input in the target language. The English teachers in experimental and control groups gave English lessons according to the topics of the curriculum of the kindergarten (Veraksa et al., 2010).

The outline of the English teachers' work on both kindergartens was as follows: 1) meeting the children; 2) providing circle activities (with preschool teachers) and individual work with children; 3) giving lessons in English and Russian in cooperation with preschool teachers if needed (nature studies, mathematics, drawing, crafts, music and physical education); 4) playing games and individual work with children during a walk; 5) reading books before sleeping. English teachers took part in all activities during the day including having meals, washing hands, going for a walk and others; and they gave two lessons of English per week according to the program "Stupenki" (Stairs) by Natalia Malkina (2007, unpublished).

The way of giving the lessons in English and Russian was similar to the CLIL education approach which is aimed to teach both the content and language (Coyle et al., 2010:1). This technique promotes the development of learning

strategies and facilitates the learner's cognitive development (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010:3). However, planning in the CLIL context was a challenge for teachers. That is why English and preschool teachers met each Friday and discussed lesson plans and their language cooperation for the next week (Appendix18). Moreover, the English teachers of both groups (experimental and control) gave recommendations for parents including games, small tasks which parents could do at home if they wished (Appendix19, Appendix 20) and information about the language materials (Appendix 21). Conteh and Kawashima write that "All families have power, and their experience and knowledge can play an important role in the learning process of their children" (2008:123). The family can support children's interest in learning English. Moreover, most parents asked a lot of questions about the program before and after signing the form and agreement to participation in the experiment (Appendix 3, Appendix 4).

The difference between control and experimental groups was that the English teachers in the experimental group used the FLT Toolkit (using the puppet, commenting, language zoning, gestures and intoning) to foster young learners to use English as a foreign language; and the teachers of the control group did not use the FLT Toolkit. The English teachers of the experimental group were specially trained for using the communicative techniques, and they organized FLLE. The English teachers of the control group used traditional techniques for teaching English to preschool children as they usually did. The teachers in both groups registered their individual observations and interesting situations that happened during the teaching process. Anyway, the similarity of the teaching purposes and conditions in both kindergartens let compare the data collected in both experimental and control groups.

Observations and interviews with English teachers supported the teacher's reflection on the process of organization of lessons and contacting young learners of English. It was important for teachers to understand which techniques were used and how they were used in practice. Harmer (2007:33) emphasizes that reflection is a teacher's ability to play different roles during lessons and possess new knowledge and teaching skills.

5.3.4 Testing the effectiveness of the foreign language teaching toolkit

5.3.4.1 Changes in learners' level of language awareness

In spring 2016, the final testing of the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit was organized. To discover the changes in the level of learners' language awareness, the individual interview was used (Appendix 13, Appendix 14): the children of the control and experimental groups were asked to choose a language depending on the place or the partner of communication and the participants gave reasons for their choice. The results showed that the majority of the learners in the experimental group (67%) had a high level of language awareness in using English for communication. The other 33% of children had a medium level. They chose English for talking to the puppet, the teachers and peers. They did not mix Russian and English, they selected the language consciously according to the partner of communication and the place (the language zone). Then, the learners of the experimental group chose the language taking into account that the puppet lived in the English zone. They pointed unmistakably to the objects of Russian and English-speaking cultures; and the children could explain their choice reasonably. The results of the assessment of language awareness in the beginning and at the end of the research are shown in Figure 25. The levels were defined by summing the points the learners got for each question according to the chosen criteria described in the Data collection methods section.

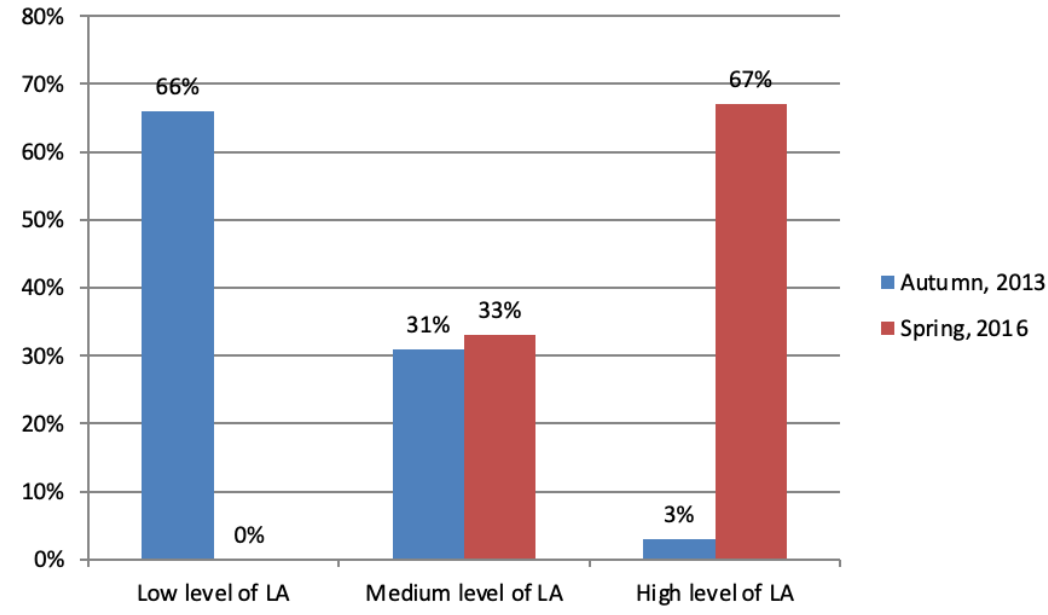

Figure 25. The results of language awareness assessments in 2013 and 2016, the experimental group (N = 27)

The comparison of the results of language awareness assessment before and after using the FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE illustrated positive dynamics: in the beginning of the experiment only 3% of children had a high level of language awareness and 66% had a low level of it. After integration of the FLT Toolkit 67% of children had a high level of language awareness and nobody had a low level. Moreover, this tendency was evident during all three years of the research. The results of midpoint assessments (2013–2016) are shown in Figure 26. Each time the learners were assessed with the same interview, including only small changes in the variety books, toys and illustrations for different questions. The midpoint assessments were done at the end of every academic year during the research period (in April and May). The results are compared with the data collected in autumn of 2013 when the experiment began.

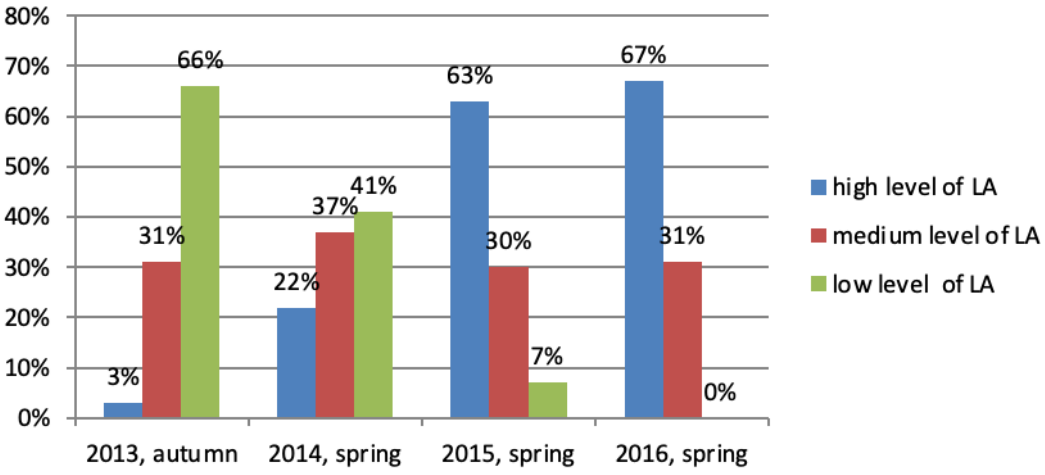

Figure 26. The results of midpoint assessments of language awareness in the experimental group (N = 27)

The results of assessments in the control group also had positive dynamics in young learners' level of language awareness in using English and Russian. The comparison of the results in the beginning and the end of the research is shown in Figure 27.

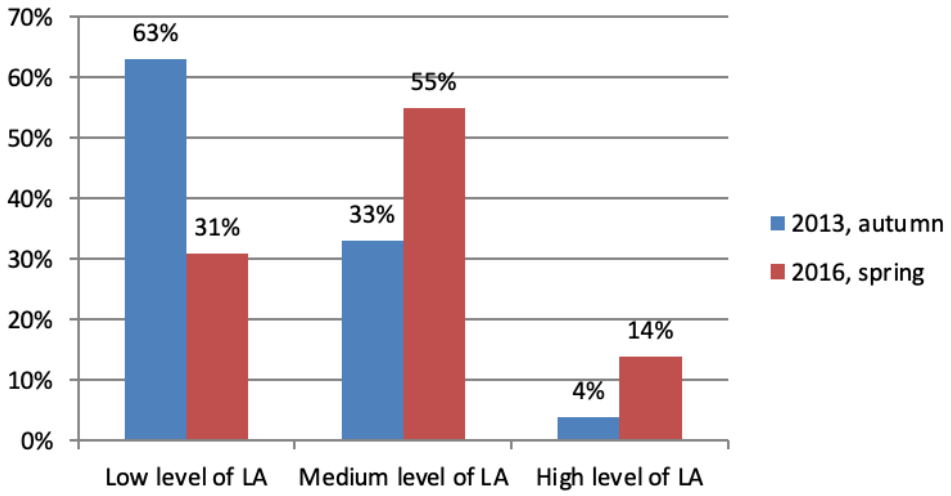

Figure 27. The results of language awareness assessments in 2013 and 2016, the control group (N = 29)

Moreover, the level of language awareness declined during the whole study. The trend is illustrated in Figure 28. The results are compared with the data collected in autumn of 2013 when the experiment began.

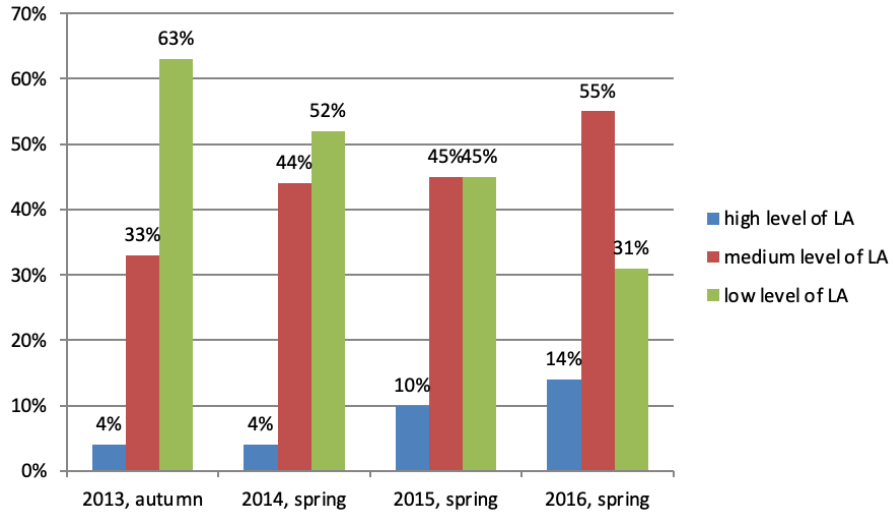

Figure 28. The results of midpoint assessments of language awareness in the control group (N = 29)

The comparison of the results of the final assessment in experimental and control groups shows the difference in number of learners with high, medium and low levels of language awareness in using English and Russian, which is illustrated in Figure 29.

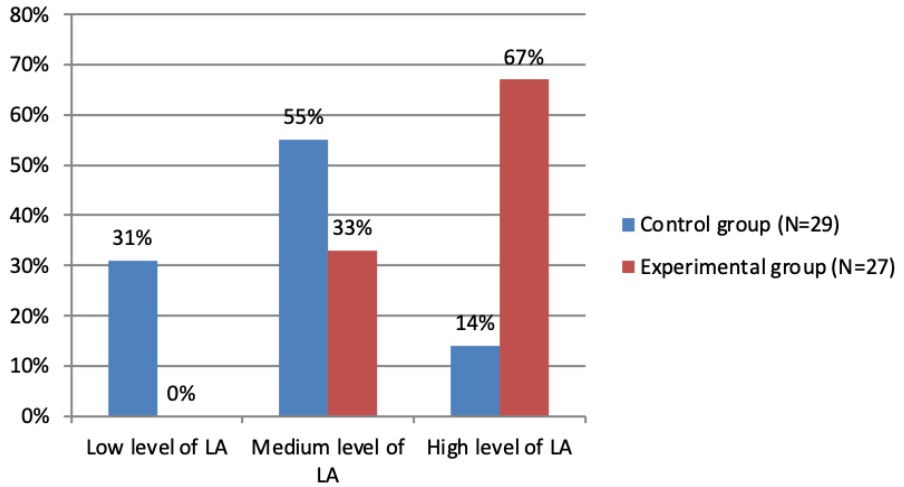

Figure 29. Levels of language awareness in control and experimental groups: final assessment

The results indicate that more pupils of the control group have a medium level of language awareness. However, this does not mean that the results in the control group are higher, because just 14% of the control group have a high level in comparison with 67% of the experimental group. Further, 31% of the control group have a low level, but there are no pupils with a low level of language awareness in the experimental group. To make sure that this significant difference was caused by the intervention of the independent variables, by using the FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE, the statistical analysis was used. The normality of distribution in the samples was not tested because of the small size of the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups.

To compare the results of the learners' assessment within the group, a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test for two related samples was used. To compare the assessment between the control and experimental groups, a Mann-Whitney Test for two independent samples was applied. The statistical comparison of language awareness in using English and Russian (control group, N = 29) is presented in Table 30.

Table 30. Inferential statistics for assessing the level of learners' language awareness in using English and Russian (control group, N = 29)

Ranks					**Test Statistics[a]**	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013**
Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013	Negative ranks	5[a]	6.90	34.50	Z Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	-3.457[b] .001
	Positive ranks	20[b]	14.53	290.50		
	Ties	4[c]				
	Total	29				
a. Spring_2016 < Autumn_2013 b. Spring_2016 > Autumn_2013 c. Spring_2016 = Autumn_2013					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the level of language awareness in the control group in English and Russian in spring 2016 (*Mdn* = 10) is higher

than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 6), *Z* = 3.46, *p* < .001, *r* = .69. The positive changes in the levels of language awareness in the control group may be explained by the fact that the children were older and the quantity of input in English increased. However, the results of the experimental group are significantly higher and are presented in Table 31.

Table 31. Inferential statistics for assessing the level of learners' language awareness in using English and Russian (experimental group, N = 27)

Ranks					**Test Statistics[a]**	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Autumn_2013 - Spring_2016**
Autumn_2013 - Spring_2016	Negative ranks	0[a]	.00	.00	Z Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	-4.549[b] .000
	Positive ranks	27[b]	14.00	378.00		
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	27				
a. Autumn_2013< Spring_2016 b. Autumn_2013> Spring_2016 c. Autumn_2013= Spring_2016					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the level of language awareness in English and Russian in the experimental group (*Mdn* = 15) in spring 2016 is higher than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 6), *Z* = 4.55, *p* < .001, *r* = .81. The results in the experimental group appear to be higher than in the control group. To evaluate the differences between the groups, a Mann-Whitney test for independent samples was used. The analysis of the assessment results between the groups in the beginning of the research is presented in Table 32.

Table 32. Inferential statistics of the learners' level of language awareness in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in autumn 2013

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**LA_level_2013**
LA_level_2013	Experi-mental	27	27.87	752.50	Mann-Whitney U	374.500
	Control	29	29.09	843.50	Wilcoxon W	752.500
	Total	56			Z	-.282
					Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.778
					a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the learners' level of language awareness in using English and Russian in the control (*Mdn* = 6) and experimental (*Mdn* = 6) groups was small in autumn 2013, *U* = 374.5, *p* = .78, *r* = .037. Consequently, the groups' levels were approximately similar in the beginning of the survey. The results of the groups in spring 2016 are presented in Table 33.

Table 33. Inferential statistics of the learners' level of language awareness in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in spring 2016

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
LA_level_2016	**groups**	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**LA_level_2016**
	Experi-mental	27	38.94	1051.50	Mann-Whitney U	109.500
	Control	29	18.78	544.50	Wilcoxon W	544.500
	Total	56			Z	-4,649
					Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.000
					a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the level of language awareness in using English and Russian in the control (Mdn = 10)

and experimental (Mdn = 15) groups was large in spring 2016 after using the FLT Toolkit in the experimental group, U = 109.5, p = .0000034, r = .062. As it was mentioned above, both groups had similar teaching conditions. The results of the experimental group indicate that using the FLT Toolkit was effective for stimulating young learners' language awareness in using English and Russian.

5.3.4.2 Changes in learners' level of interest in using English

For the assessment of young learners' interest in using English during the lessons, the same interview as in the beginning of the research was used (Appendix 13, Appendix 14). The majority of learners in the experimental group (56%) had pragmatic motives for learning and using English for communication. The survey by Arikan (2015:79) states that the majority of young learners wanted to study English for talking to friends or foreigners and for reading books or watching cartoons and movies in English.

> The girl (in Russian): *"Я разговариваю по-английски, и это поможет мне, чтобы путешествовать и общаться с людьми из Великобритании и Америки." (I speak English, and it will help me to travel and communicate with people in Great Britain and America).*
> The girl (in Russian): *"Я говорю по-английски и читаю английские книжки. В них очень красивые иллюстрации, и я хочу узнать, что в них написано." (I speak English and read English books. They have very beautiful illustrations, and I want to learn what is written there).*
> The boy (in Russian): *"Мне нравятся английские мультики. Мне нужно выучить много английских слов, чтобы понимать эти мультики. Ну и еще я могу играть в игры на английском." (I like cartoons in English. I need to learn new English words to understand the cartoons. Also, I can play games in English).*

The learners of the experimental group had a positive attitude towards the English learning process. Many parents shared their opinions that their children liked to learn English; the pupils asked their parents to

speak English at home and during trips abroad. There was no one who said that their child did not like to speak English. The general comparison of the results in assessment of learners' interest in the experimental group and the results of midpoint interviews are illustrated in Figure 30. The midpoint assessments were done at the end of every academic year during the research (in April and May). The results are compared with the data collected in autumn of 2013 when the experiment began.

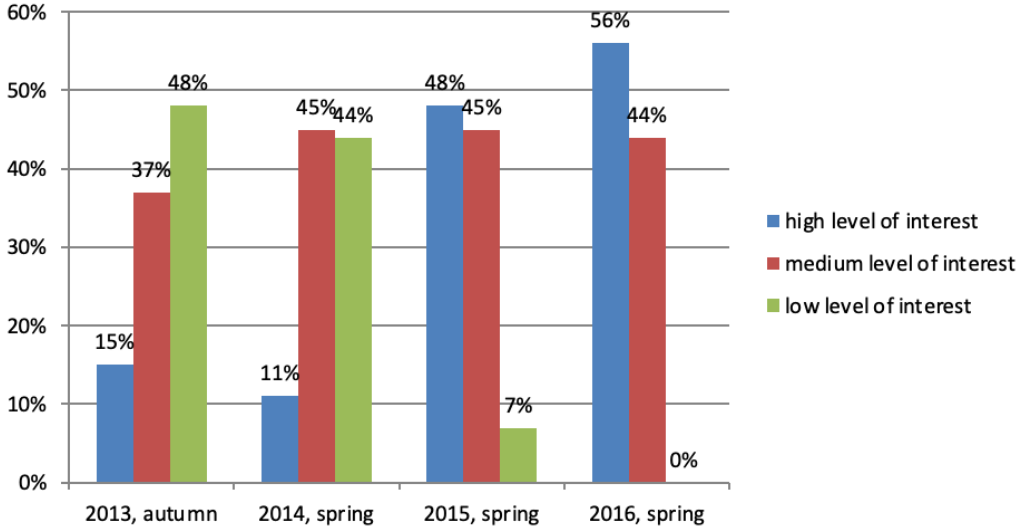

Figure 30. The comparison of the results of midpoint assessments of interest in using English in the experimental group (N = 27)

Figure 31 demonstrates the growth of learners' interest level to the end of the research: a high level from 48% to 56%; a medium level from 37% to 44%; and no child had a low level of interest in using English at the end of the research.

The results of the control group demonstrate negative dynamics. Figure 36 shows the results of interest assessments from the beginning (in autumn, 2013) up to the end of the research (in spring, 2016).

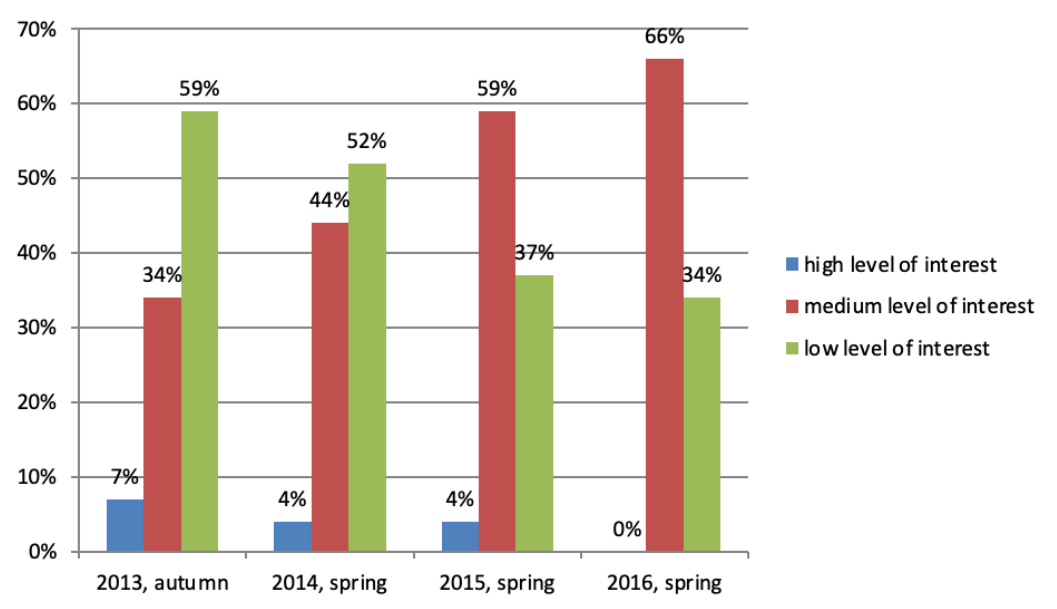

Figure 31. The results of midpoint learners' assessments of interest in using English in the control group (N=29)

The significance of changes in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups was confirmed with a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test for two related samples within the groups, as they are small. Also, a Mann-Whitney Test was conducted for two independent samples to compare the control and experimental groups. The comparison of final assessments of interest in the control group is presented in Table 34.

Table 34. Inferential statistics for assessing the level of learners' interest in using English (control group, N = 29)

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**spring_2016 – autumn_2013**
spring_2016 – autumn_2013	Negative ranks	8[a]	10.06	80.50	Z	-1.498[b]
	Positive ranks	14[b]	12.32	172.50	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.134
	Ties	7[c]				
	Total	29				
a. spring_2016 < autumn_2013 b. spring_2016 > autumn_2013 c. spring_2016 = autumn_2013					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the level of learners' interest in using English in spring 2016 (*Mdn* = 10) was not much higher than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 8) in the control group, $Z = 1.498$, $p < .001$, $r = .32$. The analysis of the results highlights that the magnitude of the differences between the interest levels in the control group is medium. However, the changes in learners' language awareness in English and Russian were large. The results of the experimental group are presented in Table 35.

Table 35. Inferential statistics for assessing the level of learners' interest in using English (experimental group, N = 27)

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**spring_2016 – autumn_2013**
spring_2016 – autumn_2013	Negative ranks	0[a]	,00	,00	Z	-4,547[b]
	Positive ranks	27[b]	14,00	378,00	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	27				
a. spring_2016 < autumn_2013 b. spring_2016 > autumn_2013 c. spring_2016 = autumn_2013					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the level of interest in using English in spring 2016 (*Mdn* = 20) is higher than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 9) in the experimental group, $Z = 4.55$, $p < .001$, $r = .87$. When comparing the results in the control and experimental groups, the level of the experimental group (N = 27) appears to be higher than that of the control group (N = 29) according to a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test. To evaluate the differences between the groups, a Mann-Whitney test for independent samples was used; the analysis of the assessment in autumn 2013 is presented in Table 36.

Table 36. Inferential statistics of the learners' level of interest in using English in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in autumn 2013

Ranks					**Test Statisticsa**	
	groups	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Interest_level_2013**
Interest_level_2013	Experimental	27	27.59	745.00	Mann-Whitney U	367.000
	Control	29	29.34	851.00	Wilcoxon W	745.000
	Total	56			Z	-.414
					Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.679
					a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the level of interest in using English in the control (*Mdn* = 8) and experimental (*Mdn* = 9) groups was small in autumn 2013, $U = 367$, $p = .68$, $r = .054$. In spring 2016 the levels of learners' interest in using English changed. The assessment of spring 2016 is presented in Table 37.

Table 37. Inferential statistics of the learners' level of interest in using English in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in spring 2016

Ranks				**Test Statistics[a]**	
groups	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Interest_level_2016**
Experimental	27	41.00	1107.00	Mann-Whitney U	54.000
Control	29	16.86	489.00	Wilcoxon W	489.000
Total	56			Z	-5.639
				Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.000
				a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the level of interest in using English in the control (*Mdn* = 10) and experimental (*Mdn* = 20) groups in spring 2016 was large after using the FLT Toolkit in the experimental group, *U* = 54, *p* = 1.79, *r* = .75. Such results in the control group are evidence of the need for using special techniques to foster the learners to use of English in the kindergarten. This also supports the fact that the communicative techniques used in the experimental group were effective for stimulating children's interest in speaking English. The results of observations in the experimental and control groups during English lessons and day activities indicated that FLLE helped to create a comfortable emotional atmosphere for using English as a foreign language. The children from the experimental group did not avoid speaking English if they had forgotten a word, for example. The observations indicated that the children learned to use compensatory strategies for communication in English (using gestures, intoning, asking, paraphrasing, etc.). Such results were not detected in the control group in spite of having the similar teaching content and conditions in both groups. Moreover, the learners of the control group were uncertain when the spoke in English and preferred using their native language – Russian.

5.3.4.3 Changes in learners' level of communicative initiative in English

The assessment of communicative initiative of young learners was provided with the same observation as in the beginning of the research (Appendix 15). The majority of children in the experimental group (63%) demonstrated a high level of communicative initiative in English. They began conversations in English easily and they were interested in the contact with their partner of communication. It is interesting to note that the learners initiated talking not just with the teachers and the puppets, but with each other. This observation (Appendix 10) showed that the main language of communication in lessons was English. Other learners (37%) had a medium level of communicative activity. These learners used English easily and initiated conversations in English, but they needed help from the English teachers or the puppets.

The results of the experimental group assessments of communicative initiative are illustrated in Figure 32 (N=27). Generally, there was a positive trend in the level of communicative initiative in English among young learners; and at the end of the experiment no learners had a low level of communicative initiative. The midpoint assessments were done at the end of every academic year during the research (in April and May).

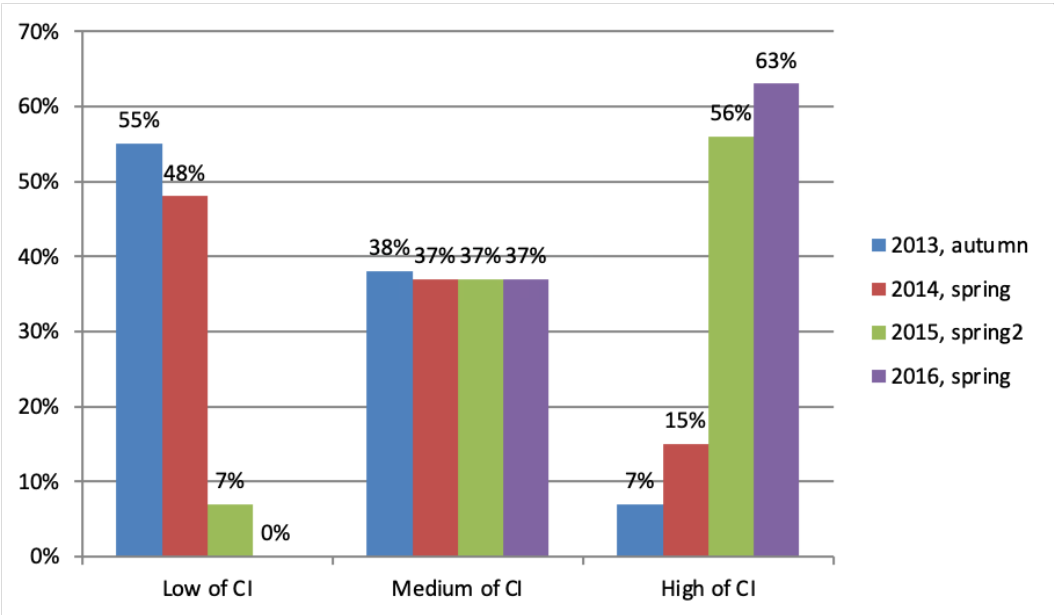

Figure 32. The results of communicative initiative assessments in 2013–2016, the experimental group (N=27)

The comparison of the results in the control group demonstrated a positive dynamic in learners' level of communicative initiative in English including midpoint assessments which are shown in Figure 33 (N=29).

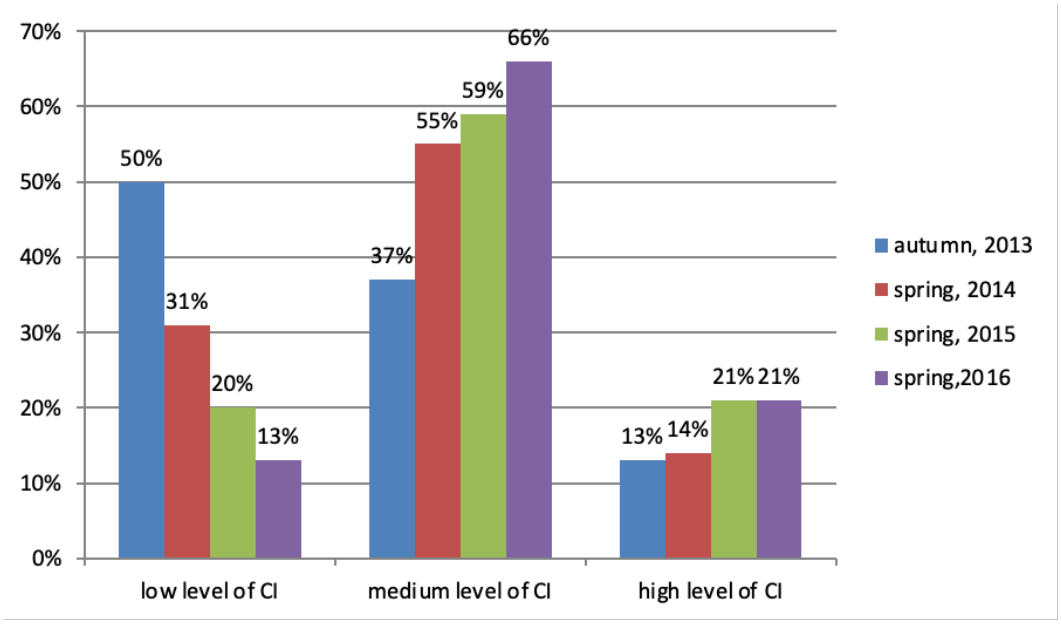

Figure 33. The results of communicative initiative assessments in 2013–2016, the control group (N=29)

If the results of the experimental and control groups are compared, the number of the learners with a medium level of communicative initiative in the control group at the end of the research is higher (37% in the experimental, 66% in the control), but there are 13% of learners with a low level of communicative initiative (there are no children with a low level of communicative initiative in the experimental group) and just 21% with a high level of communicative initiative in the control group (63% in the experimental group). Nevertheless, the majority of learners in the control group had a medium level of communicative initiative, as they had difficulties in initiating the dialogue in English and they needed the teacher's support in participating in the conversations. The qualitative differences between the control and the experimental groups were at the level of learners' autonomy.

The significance of changes in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups was confirmed with a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test for two

related samples within the groups, as they are small. A Mann-Whitney Test for two independent samples was also used to compare the control and experimental groups. The statistical analysis of final assessments of learners' communicative initiative in English in the control group is presented in Table 38.

Table 38. Inferential statistics for assessing learners' level of communicative initiative in English (control group, N = 29)

Ranks					**Test Statistics[a]**	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013**
Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013	Negative ranks	2[a]	4.75	9.50	Z	-3.828[b]
	Positive ranks	20[b]	12.18	243.50	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Ties	7[c]				
	Total	29				
a. Spring_2016 < Autumn_2013 b. Spring_2016 > Autumn_2013 c. Spring_2016 = Autumn_2013					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated a higher level of communicative initiative in English in the control group in spring 2016 (*Mdn* = 8) than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 5), $Z = 3.83$, $p < .001$, $r = .81$. The analysis of the results highlights that the English teaching techniques used by the teachers in the control group fostered the level of learners' communicative initiative in English, as it was one of the dominant aims of the English teaching program in kindergarten "Ot A-do Ya". The analysis of assessment of communicative initiative in the experimental group is presented in Table 39.

Table 39. Inferential statistics for assessment learners' level of communicative initiative in English (experimental group, N = 27)

Ranks					**Test Statistics[a]**	
		N	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013**
Spring_2016 – Autumn_2013	Negative ranks	0[a]	.00	.00	Z	-4.571[b]
	Positive ranks	27[b]	14.00	378.00	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	27				
a. Spring_2016 < Autumn_2013 b. Spring_2016 > Autumn_2013 c. Spring_2016 = Autumn_2013					a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test b. Based on negative ranks.	

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the level of communicative initiative in English in spring 2016 (*Mdn* = 11) was higher than in autumn 2013 (*Mdn* = 4), $Z = 4.57$, $p < .001$, $r = .88$. When comparing the results in the control and experimental groups, the level of the experimental group (N = 27) appears to be higher than that of the control group (N = 29) according to a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test. To evaluate the differences between the groups a Mann-Whitney test for independent samples was used, the statistics are presented in Table 40.

Table 40. Inferential statistics of the learners' level of communicative initiative in English in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in autumn 2013

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
	groups	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**CI_level_2013**
CI_level_2013	Experi-mental	27	28.02	756.50	Mann-Whitney U	378.500
	Control	29	28.95	839.50	Wilcoxon W	756.500
	Total	56			Z	-.218
					Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.827
					a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the level of communicative initiative in English in the control (*Mdn* = 5) and experimental (*Mdn* = 4) groups was small in autumn 2013, $U = 378.5$, $p = .83$, $r = .028$. In spring 2016 the statistical data show the changes in groups' level of communicative initiative which are presented in Table 41.

Table 41. Inferential statistics for assessing learners' level of communicative initiative in English in the control (N = 29) and experimental (N = 27) groups in spring 2016

Ranks					Test Statistics[a]	
	groups	**N**	**Mean Rank**	**Sum of Ranks**		**CI_level_2016**
CI_level_2016	Experi-mental	27	37.06	1000.50	Mann-Whitney U	160.500
	Control	29	20.53	595.50	Wilcoxon W	595.500
	Total	56			Z	-3.894
					Asymp. Sig. (2 – tailed)	.000
					a. Grouping Variable: groups	

A Mann-Whitney test indicated that the difference between the level of communicative initiative in English in the control (*Mdn* = 8) and experimental (*Mdn* = 11) groups in spring 2016 was large and statistically significant. After using the FLT Toolkit in the experimental group, the level of communicative initiative in English among the children of the experimental group was higher, $U = 160.5$, $p = .000102$, $r = .052$. The use of the FLT Toolkit in the FLLE context for supporting communicative initiative in English was effective. Consequently, the results of the research have confirmed that using the FLT Toolkit in the context of FLLE stimulates young learners to use English as a means of communication during kindergarten lessons.

The long-term investigation makes it rather difficult to test the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit in a full way as there are a lot of factors to have impact on learners' initiative, language awareness and interest in using English such as age changes, for example. However, the similarity of teaching conditions and the environment allows rely on the statistics. The influence of other factors on the learners' characteristics is to be tested in another research.

6 Conclusions

Section 6.1 presents the summary of the main findings of the research and a reflection on my position as a researcher. Section 6.2 discusses strengths and limitations of the study in the context of mixed methods research. Section 6.3 discusses some important implications of the research in the practical field. This chapter and the study will be concluded with section 6.4, which contains several suggestions for further research in the field of early FLT in kindergartens and at school from the aspect of the development and support of young learners' communication in English as a foreign language.

6.1 Summary of the main findings

The aim of my research was to find out how to foster preschool learners, aged from 4 to 7, to use English during kindergarten lessons. To answer this question, it was necessary to highlight ways to foster learners' communication in a foreign language. My suggestion was to use a special FLT Toolkit during English lessons in the kindergarten. Based on psychological and psycholinguistic literature in the field of EFLT, I supposed that using a FLT Toolkit can develop three characteristics of young learners: language awareness of using English and Russian, communicative initiative in English and interest in using English for communication. These characteristics have an impact on their communication in a foreign language as interest and the appropriate level of communicative skills in a foreign language are drivers of communication in English for preschool learners. The theoretical analysis was a challenge because the concepts of the research have not been studied deeply for preschool learners.

I explored the concept of language awareness in using English and Russian in the context of preschool FLT. I described how young children aged from 4 to 7 can differentiate their native and foreign languages. Based on the theoretical analysis and my practical experience as an English teacher in the kindergarten (2008–2011), I succeeded in describing the levels of language

awareness in English for preschool learners; the criterion for its assessment in English lessons; and I designed an interview to assess learners' levels of language awareness in the kindergarten.

The concept of interest in using English is also described in this thesis. The issues of developing children's motivation have been studied well, but young learners' interest in communication in a foreign language in the kindergarten is a new topic. I highlighted communicative interest drivers which can be used by English teachers with preschoolers; and described age characteristics of interest in using English for children and its levels. This research also presents the criteria and an interview for assessment young learners' interest in communication during English lessons.

The concept of communicative initiative in the context of preschool children has been traditionally applied to the students' native language. I described communicative initiative in English and its level, especially for preschoolers. I also designed the criteria and an observation for their assessment during English lessons in the kindergarten.

Theoretical analysis indicated that language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using English need to be developed and supported in the English teaching process. To solve this task, I designed a special Foreign Language Teaching Toolkit which included five teaching techniques: using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, gestures and intoning. Such techniques as using a puppet, gestures and intoning have been studied in the EFLT but language zoning had not been described before this study. I outlined all of the techniques in a new and specific way as elements of a FLLE. I described three important functions of the FLT Tool: regulating (for developing language awareness in English and Russian), motivating (for stimulating learners' interest in using English) and communicative (to support children's communicative initiative in English).

To test the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit to foster preschool learners to use English during lessons, I conducted an experiment in which I answered three questions. *The first research question was*: How do young learners communicate during the English lessons? The point was to explore what languages the children use during the lessons and to assess their levels of language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using English.

When I observed the lessons in autumn 2013, it was documented that the learners used English for repeating after the teacher; they rarely spoke English with each other and with the puppets. The results of the observation indicated that the dominant language of communication during the lessons was Russian. Then, children's level of language awareness in English and Russian was investigated via an interview. The findings demonstrated that both control (63%) and experimental (66%) groups had a low level of language awareness in both languages. Moreover, many children avoided using English and were frustrated when trying to speak it. The results revealed that the English teachers need support in developing language awareness in children. The assessment of preschoolers' interest in using English for communication also indicated the low level in the control (60%) and experimental (65%) groups. During the interview the children were not interested in speaking English. The results convinced me that the FLT Toolkit can be useful during the lessons to stimulate learners' interest in speaking English. To assess preschoolers' communicative initiative in English, the observation method was used. The results were controversial. On the one hand, the children tried to speak English with the teachers, the puppets and peers. On the other hand, when they felt it was difficult to communicate, they stopped using English and switched to Russian. The analysis of the data indicated the low or medium (close to the low bound) level of communicative initiative in both groups. The results showed that communication in English should be supported.

I was interested in how the teachers viewed the situation and what they did to improve it. This formed my *second research question*: How do English teachers foster young learners to communicate in English during lessons? Firstly, I used observation to explore teachers' repertoire of communicative techniques. I noticed their ways to stimulate communication in English and focused on whether they used the techniques from the FLT Toolkit and how they did it. The observations showed that the teachers used puppets, but not as a partner of communication. The English classrooms were full of bright toys, books and other interesting objects, but the preschoolers did not play with them. The teachers rarely used commenting in English; they used gestures but the children did not always understand them. Sometimes the teachers used

intoning but they did it periodically. I came to the conclusion that the teachers did not have an effective tool to foster learners' communication in English. Using the techniques was not motivational, regulating or communicative. To broaden the understanding of teachers' expectations and ideas to use communicative techniques, I used a questionnaire and an interview. The analysis of the collected data demonstrated that the teachers see the FLT Toolkit as promising and useful but they cannot apply the tools effectively. For example, they did not know that intoning and commenting were teaching techniques; they could not define which role their puppets assumed during the lessons and how to use them communicatively.

My *third research question* was: What does the FLT Toolkit change in young learners' communication during English lessons? I needed to integrate the FLT Toolkit into the teaching process in the experimental group. To start the intervention, I organized a workshop for the English teachers of the experimental group and trained them to use the FLT Toolkit in the classroom. After training, the teachers started to use the techniques from the Toolkit purposefully to stimulate learners' communication in English. The period of intervention in the experimental group lasted from December 2013 to May 2016. At the end of the experiment, I assessed learners' level of language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using English in the experimental and control groups. The analysis of the results demonstrated that both groups had positive dynamics. However, the results of the experimental group were much higher, as presented in Table 40.

Table 42. Learners' assessment of language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using English in the beginning and at the end of the research

		Control group (n=29)			Experimental group (n=27)		
		low	**medium**	**high**	**low**	**medium**	**high**
Language awareness	2013	63%	33%	4%	66%	31%	3%
	2016	31%	55%	14%	-	33%	67%
Interest in using English	2013	59%	34%	7%	48%	37%	15%
	2016	34%	66%	-	44%	45%	11%
Communicative activity	2013	50%	37%	13%	55%	38%	7%
	2016	13%	66%	21%	-	37%	63%

The comparison of learners' levels of language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using English confirmed the significance of differences in the experimental group. I took into account that the both groups had equal teaching conditions and had the only main difference in using the FLT Toolkit by the English teachers. That proved the hypothesis of the research: *the FLT Toolkit (which includes using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning) may be used for fostering preschool learners to speak English as a foreign language in Russian kindergartens.* Undertaking this research has been a valuable experience for me. As a researcher, I have gained an understanding of the nature of research. Also, I feel how uneasy and sometimes frustrating research can be but also how the results are rewarding and give feelings of satisfaction. As a mentor of the English teachers who participated in the experiment, I have become more aware of an English teacher's responsibilities and have done a lot of self-reflection on the teaching process. As an English teacher and a developer of early foreign language teaching, I am convinced that it is important to find and test new techniques to make the teaching process as close to real communication as possible.

6.2 Strengths and limitations of the study

The aim of my research was to find an effective way to make the English teaching process communicative and comfortable for preschool learners. The study has three main strengths. First, I have practical experience in teaching English to children aged from 4 to 7. Preschool English teaching is my professional interest, as I worked in the kindergarten as an English teacher from 2008–2011. Second, there are not many surveys on preschool English teaching focused on young learners' unique characteristics because it is challenging to investigate this area but it is necessary to enrich and improve the communicative teaching of English. The research proved that preschool children need a special teaching environment in order to be organized in the kindergarten to learn a foreign language. That is a reason for English teachers to develop their professional skills and to learn how to organize the English teaching process using communicative techniques consciously – using the FLT Toolkit. Third, this research allowed collecting a lot of qualitative data which provided rich information about young learners' communication during English lessons; also teachers' views, expectations and understanding of the English teaching process.

Despite the fact that the research questions were answered, the research had some limitations. One of the limitations is the participation of small sample sizes (N = 27, N = 29, 4 English teachers). This might influence the representativeness of teachers' and learners' opinions and attitudes toward the teaching and learning process. However, small samples gave me an opportunity to collect individual data and analyze it deeply. Further, the research includes the interpretation of a large amount of qualitative data collected with interviews and observations. This point implies the potential for missing important hidden information which can influence the results. To overcome this limitation, I collected the information in as detailed ways as possible via recording audio and making notes. Thirdly, the participation of children aged from 4 to 7 was challenging because they are young and their behavior and reactions are unpredictable. They had to answer interview questions and to explain their answers and choices during the assessment. To cope with the assessment, I followed the ethical principles described in

the ethical section of this thesis. It is important to notice that learners' and teachers' opinions described in this thesis cannot represent the opinions of other people. Thus, future research can expand the variety of individual qualitative data on this topic.

6.3 Pedagogical relevance of the study

The main aim of the study supposes a practical response to the question of how to support young learners' communication in English as a foreign language. The field of early FLT is is rapidly developing. New teaching techniques and approaches are designed and used. However, any practical development should have a theoretical ground to yield high educational results; that is to say any practical innovations in education should be research based.

When administrators and teachers claim the aim of effective English teaching, they need to define what they need to develop and support in young learners to become successful participants of communication in English. In other words, there are three important questions: 1) WHAT to develop during the lessons; 2) HOW to DO it and 3) HOW to ASSESS the results. Firstly, young children should understand that there are native and foreign languages which differ not only in sounds, words and grammar, but the languages include different cultural concepts and traditions; and these aspects are to be taken into account when they communicate with other people. To solve this task, English teachers should develop learners' language awareness in native and foreign languages. Secondly, the process of communication in English can be rather difficult for preschoolers. To participate in various speaking activities, children should be interested in using English. This will allow them overcome communicative barriers. Thirdly, for successful communication, learners should have a sufficient level of communicative initiative in English. These concepts of language awareness, communicative initiative and interest in using a foreign language, have not yet been deeply discussed and studied related to the preschool context. This research contains the description of these concepts according to age-specific characteristics of children aged from 4 to 7 who study English in a kindergarten. The theoretical data should

be integrated into the process of professional training of foreign language teachers. Nevertheless, practicing English teachers need not only to have an idea of these concepts, but also understand how to develop and support them as an important condition for fostering learners' communication in a foreign language. To reach this goal, a teacher must be able to create a special FLLE. This research presents and describes the FLLE as a key to help children to learn English in a comfortable and safe way.

However, a teacher has new functions in the teaching process: to design the FLLE, to control it, as the FLLE involves learners in communication in English. My study suggests the FLT Toolkit is a tool to organize the communicative FLLE and stimulate learners to use English as a means of communication. The FLT Toolkit includes five teaching techniques: using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures and intoning. If a teacher uses them purposefully and systematically, the learners become active participants of communication in English during the lessons. The FLT Toolkit fulfills three functions: regulation, motivation and communication which support children's language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English.

Using the FLT Toolkit demands a well-developed professional self-reflection of a teacher or her/his readiness to analyze the English teaching process. Self-reflection allows a teacher to use the communicative techniques consciously and test their effectiveness for stimulating children's communication in a foreign language. This research also includes the description of assessment of preschoolers' language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English. If the level of these characteristics grows, the FLT Toolkit is used successfully; if not, a teacher needs to analyze the process and correct it. The study also includes practical recommendations for English teachers which can help them to use the FLT Toolkit during the lessons in the kindergarten (Appendix 16, Appendix 17).

The FLT Toolkit has the potential to gain the key goals of teaching English to preschool children: use English as a means of communication; be aware of native and foreign languages and culture and have skills to overcome communicative difficulties. The FLT Toolkit can be used for teaching English and other foreign languages. It also can be useful for bilingual kindergartens

which provide teaching young learners' state and minor languages in different countries in the world.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings of this research, future studies should be aimed at several issues. Firstly, the sample size of this study was small. The extension of the research and involving other kindergartens and English teachers can help to collect a lot of quantitative and qualitative data to test the effectiveness of the FLT Toolkit and enrich it with best practices for English teachers. Secondly, the investigation of preschool children's interest in using English can enhance the exploring of preschool motivation in using English as a general concept. The same trend may be applied to language awareness and communicative initiative in English, as these concepts are still not well studied. New educational tools should be designed to collect the data on this topic in a way that is as objective as possible. Thirdly, the FLT Toolkit can be adapted and used in primary schools with young school students who begin to learn English as a foreign language. However, their age-specific characteristics and levels of language awareness, interest and communicative initiative in English should be explored to make the English learning process comfortable, safe and effective.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Informed consent for teachers (Russian version)

Информационное согласие

Данная форма создана в рамках исследования, которое будет проводиться в 2011-2016 годах в данном детском саду для изучения методов обучения детей английскому языку как иностранному с целью развития их общения на английском языке на занятиях.

Исследование включает в себя (для педагогов):

- Заполнение анкеты для изучения профессиональной рефлексии в области методов обучения дошкольников английскому (30 минут)
- Индивидуальное интервью на тему методов обучения дошкольников английскому, используемых на занятиях (30 минут)
- Наблюдение на занятиях

В ходе исследования может проводиться аудиозапись. Собранная информация не будет передана третьим лицам.

Пожалуйста, поставьте галочку там, где считаете нужным. Если Вы не хотите принимать участие в исследовании, оставьте пункты пустыми.

1. Я согласна участвовать в анкетировании
   Да ___ Нет ____
2. Я согласна участвовать в интервью
   Да ____ Нет ____
3. Я разрешаю проводить наблюдение на занятиях
   Да ____ Нет ___

Мое участие добровольно. Мое участие не влечет никакой опасности или выгоды. На меня не было оказано давление для участия в исследовании. Я могу отозвать свое согласие в любой момент. Я могу запросить информацию о результатах исследования.

ФИО_____

Номер телефона_____

Эл. почта_____

Дата_____

Подпись_____

Appendix 2: Informed consent for teachers (English version)

Informed consent for participating in research

This form is created for the research performed in 2011–2016 at the Kindergarten regarding methods of supporting motivation and communicative activity among children learning English as a foreign language.

The research includes (for teachers):

- Filling in the written questionnaire using professional self-reflection on English teaching techniques for preschool children (30 minutes)
- Individual interview about English teaching techniques used in the class (30 minutes)
- Observation of the lessons

During the research, conversations may be recorded via audio tape. The information collected will not be passed on to a third party.

Please put a tick in all the sections you find agreeable. If you do not want to participate in this, you can leave the form empty.

1. I agree to participate in filling in the questionnaire
   Yes ____ No ____
2. I agree to participate in an interview
   Yes ___ No ___
3. I permit to organized observation during my lessons
   Yes ___ No ___

My participation is voluntary. There are no anticipated risks or benefits to my participation. I have not been persuaded to participate in this study. I can cancel my consent at any moment. I can have access to the information about the results of the study.

Name_____

Telephone number_____

E-mail_____

Date_____

Signature_____

Appendix 3: Informed consent for parents (Russian version)

Информационное согласие для участия в исследовании

Данная форма создана для исследования, которое будет проводиться в 2011-2016 годах в данном детском саду для изучения методов обучения детей английскому языку как иностранному с целью развития их общения на английском языке на занятиях.

Исследование включает в себя (для детей):

- Индивидуальное интервью, касающееся опыта ребенка в изучении английского языка (15 минут)
- Наблюдение на занятиях по английскому языку

В ходе исследования может проводиться аудиозапись. Собранная информация не будет передана третьим лицам. Педагог английского языка будет сопровождать Вашего ребенка на каждом этапе. Язык интервью – русский. Исследователь (Наталья Коричева) будет принимать участие в интервью и наблюдении. Если ребенок не захочет участвовать, он или она может отказаться.

Пожалуйста, поставьте галочку там, где считаете нужным. Если Вы не хотите, чтобы Ваш ребенок принимал участие в исследовании, оставьте пункты пустыми.

1. Я согласен (-на), чтобы мой ребенок принял участие в интервью
   Да ___ Нет ___
2. Я согласен (-на), чтобы мой ребенок участвовал в наблюдении
   Да ___ Нет ___

Я даю разрешение на участие моего ребенка (впишите имя ребенка) __ _____ в исследовании.
Мое согласие добровольно. Мое согласие не влечет никакой опасности или выгоды. На меня не было оказано давление для согласия на участие в исследовании. Я могу отозвать свое согласие в любой момент. Я могу запросить информацию о результатах исследования.

ФИО_____

Номер телефона_____

Эл. почта_____

Дата_____

Подпись_____

Appendix 4: Informed consent for parents (English version)

Informed consent for participating in the research

This form is created for the research performed in 2011–2016 at the Kindergarten, regarding methods of supporting motivation and communicative activity in children learning English as a foreign language.

The research includes (for children):

- Individual interview about a child's experience of learning English (15 minutes)
- Observation of the English lessons

During the research, conversations may be recorded via audio tape. The information collected will not be passed on to a third party. Your child's English teacher will follow him or her in each step. The language of the interview is Russian. The researcher (Natalia Koricheva) will participate in interviews and observations. If a child does not want to participate, he or she is free to cancel their participation.

Please put a tick in all the section you find agreeable. If you do not want your child to participate, you can leave the sections empty.

1. I permit my child to participate in an interview
   Yes ____ No _____
2. I permit my child to participate in an observation
   Yes _____ No ____

I permit my child (write his or her name) _____
_____ to participate in the study. I have not been persuaded to give my permission. I can cancel my consent at any moment. I can have access to the information about the results of the study.

Name_____

Telephone number_____

E-mail_____

Date_____

Signature_____

Appendix 5: Map for observation of English teachers' use of the toolkit

Autumn 2013; spring 2015; spring 2016

Teacher's actions	Teacher uses this technique		Examples of situations
	Yes	No	
1. The puppet has a rich and vivid "personality".			
2. The puppet involves children into interaction in English: asks questions, gives commands, etc.			
3. The puppet is a partner of communication in English.			
4. The puppet speaks only in English; it does not speak or understand Russian.			
5. Classroom space motivates children to speak English: bright toys, colorful books and visuals are used.			
6. English classroom is used as a zone of the English language where communication with a puppet is realized.			
7. The English teacher uses "language markers" (speaking loudly or in whisper) for English and Russian in language zones (in the classroom).			
8. Children are involved in situations when they have to choose an appropriate language zone (or the language) according to the language (or the zone/ classroom).			
9. The English teacher names actions children do in English.			
10. The English teacher names objects which are used by children in English.			
11. The English teacher describes everything that is situated around children in English.			
12. Children listen to songs and books in English.			
13. Children are offered to name objects around them in English.			

Teacher's actions	Teacher uses this technique		Examples of situations
	Yes	No	
14. Children are given tasks to tell something to the puppet in English.			
15. The English teacher speaks with the puppet in English as they would speak with a real person.			
16. The English teacher uses gestures to attract children's attention.			
17. The English teacher uses gestures to illustrate words and phrases in English which are new or difficult for children's understanding.			
18. The English teacher uses gestures to overcome communicative difficulties.			
19. Children are offered to use gestures by themselves when they speak English to replace words and phrases which they do not know.			
20. The English teacher uses fewer gestures in Russian speech.			
21. The teacher uses gestures to control the process of communication in English, to begin, to continue, to finish, etc.			
22. The English teacher uses expressive means of intoning to attract children's attention.			
23. The English teacher uses expressive means of intoning for creation of a puppet's character.			
24. The English teacher uses intoning for stressing key words in English phrases.			
25. The teacher uses expressive means of intoning to illustrate the meanings of English words and commands.			
26. The English teacher uses various ways of intoning in Russian and in English.			

Appendix 6: Questionnaire for English teachers (Russian version)

Autumn, 2013

Пожалуйста, ответьте на следующие вопросы. Данное исследование поможет нам улучшить процесс обучения детей дошкольного возраста английскому языку, сделать его более эффективным. Отметьте свой ответ галочкой в подходящей колонке.

Как вы думаете...

		Часто	**Иногда**	**Редко**	**Никогда**
1.	Может ли игровой персонаж вызвать интерес к общению, к участию в разговоре на английском у детей?				
2.	Может ли общение с англоязычным игровым персонажем помогать детям осознанно выбирать именно английский как язык общения?				
	Какая роль игрового персонажа будет способствовать более естественному общению на занятии: (Отметьте свой ответ для каждой ситуации)				
3.	a) Если разговор будет о персонаже (обсуждение его внешности, характере и т.д. с педагогом)				
4.	b) Если персонаж будет участвовать только в определенных частях занятия (фонетическая зарядка, повторение материала и т.д.)				
5.	c) Если персонаж сам будет общаться с детьми.				
6.	d) Если игровой персонаж будет иногда появляться на некоторых занятиях.				
	Языковое зонирование подразумевает разделение пространства кабинета на зону русского языка, где дети говорят только по-русски, и зону английского языка, где дети говорят только по-английски				

Как вы думаете...

		Часто	Иногда	Редко	Никогда
7.	Будет ли оформление зон русского и английского языков стимулировать интерес детей к общению на английском языке?				
8.	Будет ли разделение кабинета на зону русского и зону английского языков способствовать тому, что дети будут выбирать язык общения в зависимости от зоны?				
9.	Будет ли языковое зонирование способствовать более естественному общению на английском языке?				
10.	Будут ли комментарии педагога на английском, описывающие действия детей, вызывать и поддерживать их интерес к использованию английского?				
11.	Может ли педагог с помощью комментариев, которыми он сопровождает деятельность детей, спровоцировать их выбор английского для общения?				
12.	Могут ли комментарии педагога на английском стимулировать у детей коммуникативную реакцию на нем же?				
13.	Могут ли комментарии педагога вовлечь ребенка в общение на английском?				
14.	Могут ли жесты, которые используются на занятии, вызвать интерес детей к использованию английского языка?				
15.	Могут ли жесты влиять на выбор детьми языка общения?				
16.	Может ли педагог с помощью жестов управлять общением на английском?				
17.	Может ли интонирование, используемое педагогом, вызывать интерес детей к общению на английском языке?				

Как вы думаете...

		Часто	Иногда	Редко	Никогда
18.	Может ли использование интонации способствовать выбору языка общения?				
19.	Может ли педагог с помощью интонации управлять общением на английском?				
20.	Способно ли интонирование выстраивать и поддерживать общение детей на английском?				

СПАСИБО ЗА УЧАСТИЕ!

Appendix 7: Questionnaire for English teachers (English version)

Please, answer the following questions. It will help us to improve the process of teaching English to young children; to make it more effective. Mark your answer in the appropriate box.

HOW DO YOU THINK...

		Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1.	Can a puppet help to arouse children's interest in communication and participation in conversations in English?				
2.	Can communication with a puppet in English help children to choose this language as a language of communication consciously?				
3. 4. 5. 6.	Which role of the puppet will promote more natural communication in English? (Tick your answer for each point) - If the puppet is just a topic of communication (discussing its appearance and character with an English teacher) - If children communicate with the puppet during special activities (TPR exercises, greeting, etc.) - If the puppet will always communicate with children. - If the puppet will appear just during some lessons.				
	Language zoning means dividing of classroom space into two zones: the zone of the Russian language where children can speak Russian and the zone of the English language where they can speak only in English.				
7.	Will the content of language zones stimulate children's interest in communication in the English language?				
8.	Will using language zones promote children to choose a language of communication depending on the zone?				
9.	Will using language zoning promote more natural communication in English?				

HOW DO YOU THINK...

		Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
10.	Will English teacher's speech stimulate and support children's interest in using the English language if it accompanies teacher's actions and describes space around children?				
11.	Can teacher's comments in English help children in choosing the language of communication?				
12.	Can teacher's comments in English stimulate children to speak the same language?				
13.	Can teacher's comments in English involve children in communication in English?				
14.	Can gestures used during English lessons stimulate children's interest in speaking English?				
15.	Can gestures support and promote children's choice of the language of communication?				
16.	Can an English teacher control the process of communication in English using gestures?				
17.	Can intoning be used by an English teacher to promote children's interest in communication in English?				
18.	Can using expressive means of intoning help children in choosing the language of communication?				
19.	Can an English teacher control the process of communication in English using intoning?				
20.	Can using intoning support and promote children's communication in English?				

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Appendix 8: Interview with English teachers (Russian version)

Autumn, 2013

Вступительный вопрос

1. Как Вы мотивируете детей к говорению на английском языке на уроках? Какие приемы Вы используете для этого? Приведите несколько примеров.

Раздел 1. Использование игрового персонажа

2. Используете ли Вы игровой персонаж на уроках английского языка? Что это за персонаж?
3. Каким должен быть игровой персонаж, чтобы он был интересным детям?
4. Как Вы используете свой персонаж? Не могли бы Вы привести примеры того, как Вы используете куклу на уроках?

Раздел 2. Использование языкового зонирования

5. Делите ли Вы кабинет на языковые зоны, где дети могут говорить по-русски и по-английски? Что Вы думаете об этом приеме?
6. На каком языке дети больше говорят на занятиях? Говорят ли они по-русски, и почему, на Ваш взгляд?

Раздел 3. Использование комментирования

7. Комментируете(или описываете) ли Вы на английском языке действия детей, называете ли Вы предметы, с которыми они взаимодействуют? Если да, то зачем Вы это делаете / не делаете?
8. С какой целью Вы используете музыкальные фрагменты и чтение книг на английском языке в ходе занятия? Используете ли Вы сторителлинг? Для чего?

Раздел 4. Использование жестов

9. Используете ли Вы жесты на занятии? Для чего Вы это делаете? Приведите примеры.
10. Учители Вы детей использовать жесты самостоятельно для общения на английском?

Раздел 5. Использование интонирования

11. Как Вы пользуетесь интонацией и ее экспрессивными функциями на занятии? Приведите примеры.
12. Эффективно ли интонирование речи для того, чтобы дети поняли смысл высказывания?

Appendix 9: Interview with English teachers (English version)

An introduction question

1. How do you motivate your learners to speak English during the lessons? What techniques do you use and could you give some examples?

Section 1. Using a puppet

2. Do you use a puppet in your English lessons? What is it?
3. What special characteristics and qualities should a puppet have to be attractive to children during English classes?
4. How do you use your puppet? Could you give some examples of using a puppet in your lessons?

Section 2. Using language zoning

5. Do you divide the classroom space into language zones where children can speak Russian or English? What do you think about this technique?
6. What language do your learners speak more during your lessons? Do they speak Russian and why?

Section 3. Using commenting

7. Do you make comments (or describe) in English about learners' actions? Do you name in English objects children play with? Why do you do/do not do this?
8. What is the aim of using songs and chants during your lessons? Do you use storytelling? What for?

Section 4. Using gestures

9. Do you use gestures during your lessons? Why do you use them? Could you give some examples of using gestures during your lesson?
10. Do you teach your learners to use gestures for communication in English?

Section 5. Using intoning

11. How do you use intoning and its expressive means during your lessons? Could you give some examples?
12. Is using intoning effective for stimulating young learners' understanding of English speech?

Appendix 10: Map of observation on children's communication during the lessons

Autumn 2013; spring 2015; spring 2016

Section 1. Children communicate with the English teacher

Children's actions	Languages of communication		Examples of situations
	English	Russian	
Children ask the teacher questions.			
Children talk to the English teacher.			
Children answer teacher's questions asked in English.			
Children answer teacher's questions asked in Russian.			
Children talk to the puppet.			
Children invite the puppet to play with them.			
Children communicate about the puppet.			
Children answer the puppet's questions asked in English.			
Children answer the puppet's questions asked in Russian.			
Children make comments.			
Children ask questions of each other.			
Children talk to their peers.			
Children communicate during playing games.			

Appendix 11: Interview with children: assessment of interest in using English (Russian version)

Autumn, 2013; spring, 2015; spring, 2016

Вопрос 1. Ты любишь говорить по-английски? Почему?

Вопрос 2. (Ребенку показывают 2 картинки, на которых расположены острова).

Посмотри на эти острова. Люди, которые живут на этом острове, говорят по-русски, а на этом острове живут люди, которые говорят по-английски. Какой из островов тебе бы хотелось посетить? Почему?

Вопрос 3. Тебе нравится говорить в этой комнате (класс английского языка) по-русски или по-английски, почему? Скажи что-нибудь по-английски, если хочешь.

Вопрос 4. (Ребенку показывают две перчаточные игрушки, которые здороваются с ребенком по-русски и по-английски). Какая кукла тебе нравится больше: которая говорит по-русски или по-английски? Почему? Если хочешь, поздоровайся с ней.

Вопрос 5. Какого друга тебе хотелось бы встретить: который говорит по-английски или по-русски? Почему? Что бы ты ему или ей сказал?

Вопрос 6. В какие игры тебе нравится играть больше: в русские или английские? Почему? Какая твоя любимая игра?

Вопрос 7. Как ты думаешь, в этой комнате дети должны говорить по-русски и читать русские книги? Или дети должны говорить по-английски и читать английские книги? Почему?

Вопрос 8. Тебе интересно говорить английские слова? Животные, растения, игрушки и другие. Почему? Скажешь свое любимое слово?

Appendix 12: Interview with children: assessment of interest in using English (English version)

Question 1. Do you like to speak English? Why?

Question 2. Two pictures[7] are presented to the child. There are two islands on them. "Look at these islands. People who live on this island speak Russian. People who live on that island speak English. Which island would you like to visit and why?"

Question 3. Do you like to speak Russian or English here (*in the English classroom), why? Say something in English if you want.

Question 4. (Showing two puppets, they greet a child in English and Russian) Which puppets do you like more: which one speaks Russian or English? Why? If you want, greet a puppet.

Question 5. Which new friend will you prefer to meet: an English-speaking or a Russian speaking? Why? What would you tell him or her?

Question 6. Which games do you like to play more: Russian or English? Why? What's your favorite game?

Question 7. How do you think: should children speak Russian, read Russian books in this classroom? Or they should do it in English? Why?

Question 8. Is it interesting for you to say English words: animals, plants, toys and other things? Why? Could you say your favorite word?

[7] The picture of the island was taken from http://clipart-library.com/clipart/rTjRn9Rgc.htm (Accessed 3 August 2013)

Appendix 13: Interview with children: assessment of language awareness (Russian version)

Autumn, 2013; spring, 2015; spring, 2016

Вопрос 1. Послушай и догадайся, на каком языке эти герои поздороваются с тобой.

Вопрос 2. Посмотри внимательно: перед тобой сидят очень интересные гости. Это Винни Пух, Кролик, Питер Пэн и Гарри Поттер. Они живут в Англии. А это Чебурашка, Дед Мороз и Незнайка. Они живут в России. С кем из них ты будешь говорить по-английски, а с кем по-русски? Почему?

Вопрос 3. Перед ребенком ставят 2 игрушки: Санта Клаус и сказочный герой Ваня. Педагог: Догадайся, кто из героев сказал эту фразу: Hello! Nice to see you! А теперь, кто сказал эту: Привет! Рад тебя видеть! Почему ты так решил?

Вопрос 4. (Педагог называет и показывает предметы. На английском: a map, Great Britain, a British flag, "Peter the Rabbit" book. На русском: карта, Россия, российский флаг, книжка Колобок). Покажи мне, какие предметы связаны с английским языком, а какие с русским языком. Почему ты так думаешь?

Вопрос 5. Этот кабинет особенный. Какой язык тут главный? На каком языке нужно говорить больше? Почему?

Вопрос 6. (Имя педагога английского языка) занимается с тобой здесь (прим: в кабинете АЯ) английским языком. А когда ты ее встречаешь в другом месте, например в группе, на каком языке ты будешь с ней говорить? Почему?

Appendix 14: Interview with children: assessment of language awareness (English version)

Question 1. The task is to identify the language of the characters (Toys greet the child in English or in Russian) and the child has to identify the language and explain her or his choice.

Question 2. Look attentively: here are some guests: Winnie-the-Pooh, Rabbit, Peter Pen and Harry Potter. They live in England. And these guests: Cheburashka, Father Frost and Neznayka live in Russia. Which language will you choose to communicate with them? Why?

Question 3. There are two toys in front of the child: Santa Clause and Vanya (a Russian character). The task: Guess who says this phrase: "Hello! Nice to see you!" And that phrase: "Привет! Рад тебя видеть!" ("Hello! Nice to see you! "). Can you explain your choice?

Question 4. (A researcher names objects. In English: a map, Great Britain, a British flag, "Peter the Rabbit" book. In Russian: a map, Russia, a Russian flag, "Kolobok" book). Show me which things or objects are related to the English language and which to the Russian language? Why do you think so?

Question 5. What language is the main one in this classroom? (This question is asked in the English classroom). Why?

Question 6. (Name of the English teacher) teaches you the English language here in this classroom. If you meet her/him outside, what language will you speak to your teacher? Why?

Appendix 15: Map of observation: assessment of communicative initiative in English

Autumn 2013; spring 2015; spring 2016

	Parameter	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never	Score	Examples of situations
1	A child participates in activities in English.						
2	A child initiates communication with the teacher in English						
3	A child initiates communication with the puppet in English						
4	A child speaks English with the English teacher						
5	A child speaks English with the puppet						
6	A child speaks English with other children						
7	A child asks questions about using the English language						

Appendix 16: Recommendations for English teachers (Russian version)

Autumn, 2013

Игровой персонаж

ИП – игровой персонаж; АЯ – английский язык; РЯ – русский язык; ЛДС – лингводидактическая среда.

1. ИП имеет собственное имя. ИП представляется в ситуации общения Hello, my name is Willy. What's your name? .
2. У ИП есть своя история: где он родился, кто его родители, какие у него друзья и т.д. Можно нарисовать портрет семьи ИП, о которой кукла периодически рассказывает в зависимости от лексической темы.

Например:

- Тема My Family: Вилли знакомит детей со своей семьей:This is my family. This is my mummy. Her name is Mary. Далее детям предлагается рассказать о своей семье, маме, сказать, как ее зовут.
- Тема Toys: у Вилли есть маленький брат, который очень любит играть. Вилли рассказывает, какие у него есть игрушки, в какие он играет сам и спрашивает детей о том, во что они играют.
- Тема Vegetables: мама Вилли часто готовит овощной салат. Он рассказывает рецепт, предлагает детям приготовить его, составить свои рецепты.
- Тема African animals:на каникулах Вилли с родителями летал в Африку и видел там много необычных животных. Он их сфотографировал и хочет показать детям.
- Тема New Year:Вилли отмечал новый год в кругу семьи. Он показывает детям, какими игрушками они украшали елку, комнату. Он рассказывает, какие подарки он получил, спрашивает детей об их подарках.
- Тема Insects:на выходных Вилли с родителями ездил за город и видел там много насекомых, он рассказывает детям о них.

- Тема Посуда: вчера мама Вилли ругала его за то, что он неправильно накрыл на стол. Что же он сделал не так?

3. У ИП свой голос, который отличается от голоса педагога.
4. ИП обладает собственным характером: он может веселиться, шутить. Это выражается в том, что фразы произносятся с разной интонацией: веселой, грустной, злой и т.д. ИП реагирует на действия детей: они ему могут нравиться или не нравиться. Если нравятся, то он поощряет собеседника (well done, good). Если не нравятся, то он выражает недовольство, злится.

ИП может шалить и баловаться:

- Тема Clothes:Вилли не хочет одеваться на улицу, потому что ему не нравится зеленая рубашка, он хочет надеть синюю. No! I don't want this shirt. I want that one! I don't like green. I like blue. Затем ИП спрашивает, какая одежда нравится детям, какого цвета.
- Тема Means of Transport:дети собираются на автобусную экскурсию, а Вилли спит и не хочет вставать. Его нужно разбудить, а он недоволен, и на автобусе ехать не хочет, хочет ехать на такси. Его надо уговорить.
- Тема Toys:Вилли спрятал несколько игрушек в группе и не хочет показывать, где они. Нужно их найти.

5. ИП всегда говорит только по-английски и понимает только английскую речь. Если ребенок обращается к нему на РЯ, то ИП не понимает, переспрашивает: What? Sorry?. Поэтому ребенку необходимо найти способ объяснить, используя картинки, жесты и т.д. Посредником может выступать педагог АЯ, который может перевести для ИП на АЯ или пояснить ребенку на РЯ. Таким образом, ИП контролирует язык общения детей.
6. С помощью ИП можно увеличивать количество речевого материала. Это происходит за счет тех фраз, которые произносит персонаж, повторяя слова, речевые образцы в общении с детьми. ИП удобно использовать для презентации диалогических единств, когда с ИП разговаривает педагог, а потом ИП повторяет диалог с детьми.
7. ИП также использует жесты в общении с детьми. Для этого

необходимо подобрать удобную игрушку с подвижными руками. Естественно, ИП не может использовать весь возможный арсенал жестов, но часть ему доступна. Тем самым он показывает детям, что их можно использовать в речи. Наблюдения показывает, что жесты в исполнении куклы вызывают у детей особый интерес, им становится смешно, они начинают этому подражать. Таким образом, ИП становится источником зрительной наглядности.

8. Дети также проявляют интерес к ИП как к игрушке. Именно поэтому кукла легко втягивает детей в разговор во время игры. Приведем несколько примеров:

   Игра Дочки-матери: дети играют на РЯ, к ним присоединяется ИП и говорит:I want to be a father. I'm a father. My name is Tom. Let's play! Если детям нравится ИП, они с удовольствием примут его в игру, но при этом действует правило, что кукла понимает только английскую речь. Поэтому игра переходит на АЯ. Чтобы дети чувствовали себя более комфортно, ИП может предлагать им ситуации общения, которые детям уже знакомы. Например, семья идет в магазин или одевается на прогулку. Такая стратегия включения ИП в игру подходит для любой сюжетно-ролевой игры.

   Игра Прятки: ИП подходит к играющим детям: Let's play hide-and-seek. Who is it? Далее можно выбирать, кто будет водой, использовать английскую считалку, кто будет считать, считать также можно по-английски.

   Такие игры поначалу могут быть непродолжительными, а включение ИП эпизодическим. Постепенно доля АЯ увеличивается, и дети начинают играть на АЯ самостоятельно.

9. ИП нужно включать не только в сюжетно-ролевые игры, но и в любую другую детскую деятельность: вырезывание, аппликация, рисование и т.д. Например, перед рисованием или аппликацией можно обсудить, что именно задумал сделать ребенок, какого цвета будет его поделка или рисунок. Отвечать кукле детям интереснее, чем взрослому. Можно заранее нарисовать рисунок по схожей тематике, который как бы нарисовал ИП. Во время самой деятельности ИП может давать инструкции по выполнению

действий. Например:cut it out, take your scissors, take a blue pencil, paint it yellow и т.д. Важно учесть, что эти виды деятельности в детском саду проводятся воспитателем или специалистом (если они не организованы на занятии по АЯ). Так, в ходе нашего исследования вначале ИП переводил инструкции педагога, который вел занятие. Затем, по мере того, как дети запоминают выражения, отдельные слова, удельный вес АЯ в деятельности детей увеличивается. После выполнения поделки, рисунка и т.д. можно обсудить с ИП результаты: нравится ли самому ребенку, нравится ли ИП, ИП может описать рисунок, постепенно включая в описание ребенка.

10. ИП также включается в занятия, которые проводятся в детском саду. Например, по математике. В ходе занятия педагог АЯ и воспитатель проводят его интегрировано. Воспитатель обращается в ИП через педагога АЯ, прося перевести отдельные слова на АЯ или предлагая ИП дать детям задание. Такая стратегия непрямого обращения к ИП на РЯ позволяет сохранить принцип один человек - один язык. Педагог АЯ переводит для ИП, который дает детям задания сосчитать, назвать число, назвать геометрическую фигуру и т.д. в зависимости от содержания урока.

    Также ИП может участвовать в занятиях по музыке, на которых вместе с ним дети поют песни на АЯ, играют под музыку. На занятиях по физической культуре вместе с инструктором ИП может проводить разминку на АЯ.

11. Также ИП и педагог по АЯ включаются в режимные моменты: умывание, завтрак, одевание на прогулку, подготовка ко сну и т.д. Например, во время завтрака ИП каждому ребенку желает приятного аппетита, спрашивает, что он ест, нравится ли ему блюдо и т.д. Также кукла может рассказать, что она обычно есть на завтрак. Педагог АЯ вводит в эти моменты стихи, потешки на АЯ согласно теме.
12. Когда ИП говорит что-то, то дети часто сами начинают повторять за ним, высказываются самостоятельно (например, называя любимое блюдо). При этом ИП и педагог должны поощрять такие повторы. Таким образом, ИП стимулирует речевую деятельность детей.

13. Когда педагог озвучивает ИП, то следует внимательно следить за тем, чтобы у куклы было хорошее произношение, потому что дети копируют его гораздо охотнее, чем взрослого.
14. ИП может исправлять ошибки детей. При этом он не обязательно делает это напрямую: он может удивиться, не понять, переспросить и т.д. При этом постепенно дети самостоятельно регулировать правильность своего высказывания. Постепенно дети начинают наблюдать друг за другом и замечать ошибки собеседника.
15. Дети часто отвлекаются от деятельности или разговора, поэтому с помощью ИП можно привлечь их внимание. Это можно сделать за счет неожиданного поведения ИП, которое не может позволить себе педагог. Например, ИП может неожиданно заснуть, сам отвлечься, копируя ребенка и т.д. Такие ситуации сразу привлекают внимание ребенка. Также его внимание удерживает яркое интонирование речи ИП: сочетание высокого и низкого тона, пауза в неподходящем месте. Наконец, ИП может просто пошутить, например, назвав яблоко бананом и т.д.
16. Также ИП знакомит детей с родной для него английской культурой. Например, показывает елочные украшения, которые есть у него дома, описывает национальные блюда, проводит экскурсию по Лондону с использованием иллюстраций и т.д.

Комментирование

1. Комментирование заключается в том, что педагог сопровождает речью на АЯ действия, деятельность ребенка. При этом не нужно обращаться напрямую к ребенку. Приведем несколько примеров ситуаций, где уместно использование комментирования:

   Ребенок играет в машинку: педагог подходит, садится рядом и говорит:You are playing with cars. Look! This is a blue car (жест в сторону игрушки). And that car is yellow. You have two cars. Look! And I have a red car. What's the color of that car? It is red. This is blue. Where is a yellow car? Here.

   Дети играют в дочки-матери: педагог находится рядом и говорит:You are playing. Who is a mother? Ann (имя ребенка) is a

mother. Who is a father? Nick is a father. They are family. Where is your child? Here. Poling is a child. She is a little girl.

Дети рисуют: What are you drawing? Flowers. They are very beautiful. Look! Here is a big red flower. Is it a rose? Yes, it is a rose. And what's here? It is a tulip. Ann has a green pencil and a purple pencil. She has two pencils: one, two. Vova has four pencils etc.

Ребенок смотрит книжку: You have a book. This book is about a wolf and the three pigs. One pig, two pigs, three pigs. And one wolf. The wolf is angry. And it is hungry. Look! Three houses for pigs etc.

2. Комментирование осуществляют педагог и игровой персонаж. Когда комментирует ИП, важно не забывать про интонирование его речи. Он также может включаться в деятельность детей.
3. Объектами комментирования могут выступать:

   Деятельность детей: можно называть их действия; их имена; предметы, которыми они манипулируют; считать предметы; описывать цвет и форму предметов; называть роли детей в игре и т.д.

   Игрушки: можно описать ее; придумать ей имя; рассказать, что она умеет делать; придумать ей друзей и т.д.

   Книги: можно описывать иллюстрации, не следуя тексту; придумывать имена героям и т.д.

   Внешний вид ребенка: можно назвать его настроение; описать его одежду по цвету, по предметам и т.д.

   Игровой персонаж: можно описать его внешний вид; то, чем он занимается; его настроение и т.д.

   Также в качестве объектов комментирования могут выступать погода, мебель, отдельные предметы интерьера и т.д.
4. Комментирование постепенно переходит в диалог с ребенком или группой детей. Это происходит, когда описание превращается в вопросы: какого цвета игрушка, что у тебя в руках, сколько у тебя карандашей, что ты делаешь и т.д. Наблюдение и практика показали, что этот процесс начинается произвольно, потому что дети слышат слова, которые описывают то, что находится рядом с ними, начинают повторять. Поэтому целесообразно в комментирование включать

вопросы, но только на том этапе, когда детям уже знакома лексика, и они могут ответить.

5. В ходе комментирования происходит обогащение инпута за счет того, что педагог или ИП постоянно произносят слова, фразы на АЯ, которые уже знакомы детям или еще нет. Наличие в комментировании незнакомой детям лексики не представляет трудности, потому что комментирование происходит в конкретной ситуации, поэтому смысл звучащего текста понят из контекста.
6. 6. Комментирование обеспечивает успешную коммуникацию в зоне английского языка за счет насыщенного инпута, а также в связи с тем, что дети слышать конкретную модель коммуникативной реакции: что говорить, где говорить и когда. Также с помощью комментирования можно поддержать деятельность детей в зоне АЯ в том случае, если им не хватает словарного запаса.
7. 7. В ходе комментирования нужно активно использовать жесты, для семантизации, привлечения внимания, акцентирования смысла высказывания на отдельном предмете и т.д.
8. В том случае, когда комментирования синтезируется с интонированием, дети лучше воспринимают английскую речь, потому что с помощью интонирования можно пояснить значение слова без перевода, сделать акцент в высказывании на главное слово с помощью паузы и т.д.
9. ИП и педагог должны поощрять ситуации, когда в ходе комментирования ребенок начал повторять слова, выражения. Это можно сделать с помощью жестов одобрения, а также включив ребенка в диалог, закрепляя результат.
10. С помощью комментирования можно контролировать и справлять высказывания детей на АЯ. Например, если в диалоге с персонажем ребенок допускает ошибку, то педагог может прокомментировать ситуацию, подсказывая, как нужно сказать верно.
11. Особенно важно комментировать предметы, изображения, имеющие национально-культурную значимость: зачем нужен этот предмет, какой он, что с ним можно делать.

Языковое зонирование

1. В языковых зонах присутствует строгое разделение языков общения. В зоне РЯ можно говорить только на РЯ, в зоне АЯ можно говорить только на АЯ. Ввиду того, что дети не обладают богатым лексическим запасом, многое педагогу приходится пояснять на РЯ (безэквивалентную лексику, информацию о культурных традициях и т.д.), а переходить из зоны в зону неудобно, то следует использовать речевые маркеры. Маркирование речи относится к приему интонирования и подразумевает разную высоту голоса в зависимости от языка общения. Это означает, что в зоне АЯ допускается использование русского языка, но только шепотом.
2. Для того чтобы дети соблюдали правила поведения в языковых зонах, можно использовать ряд упражнений. Например:
   - включите отрывки из русских и английских песен, а дети должны перейти в нужную зону, где эту песню можно спеть. Также можно говорить фразы на разных языках, а дети выбирают, где их можно сказать.
   - попросите детей поздороваться друг с другом в зависимости от того, в какой зоне они находятся. Также можно попросить назвать разные предметы на правильном языке.
3. Языковые зоны должны иметь яркое культурное оформление: плакаты, книги, картинки, игрушки, надписи и т.д. в зависимости от зоны: в зоне АЯ – иллюстрации из английских книг, фотографии с видами Лондона и т.д., а зоне РЯ то, что связано с русской культурой.
4. В зоне АЯ живет игровой персонаж. Языковая зона и собеседник вдвойне обуславливают выбор языка общения. При этом ИП может переходить в зону РЯ в качестве гостя, который знакомится с русской культурой.
5. Предметы, игрушки и т.д. в зоне АЯ должны быть привлекательными для детей, чтобы они чаще заходили туда, чтобы посмотреть, поиграть.
6. Периодически в зону АЯ стоит помещать новый предмет для того, чтобы стимулировать детский интерес, их вопросы. Например, игрушка Jack – in – the- box, с которой играет ИП. Или это может

быть новая книжка, которую детям прочитает ИП, а потом будет обсуждать ее с ними.

7. В зоне АЯ можно реализовывать разные виды детской деятельности. Например, нарисовать портрет ИП, сделать ему открытку к новому году и т.д. При этом эта деятельность будет проходить на АЯ. Для того чтобы активизировать общение детей не только с ИП, но и между собой, можно создавать специальные ситуации. Например, для рисования дать детям меньше карандашей, чем нужно. Как нужно попросить карандаш им покажет ИП.
8. Также в зоне АЯ можно организовывать различные игры, как с участием ИП, так и без него. Это могут быть и настольно-печатные игры, и сюжетно-ролевые. Язык общения в игре – английский. Например, пусть дети поиграют в магазин, где ИП будет продавцом, и поучатся быть вежливыми по-английски. Обратите внимание детей на то, что если они будут невежливыми, то ИП не продаст им товар. Так дети знакомятся с профессией продавца в английской культуре, учатся различиям в выражении вежливости.
9. Если ИП привлекателен для детей, нравится им, они сами будут приходить в зону АЯ, чтобы поздороваться с ним, поиграть, рассказать что-нибудь и т.д.
10. С помощью языковых зон происходит оправданное использование русского языка педагогом АЯ. Это очень важно, потому что, как правило, дети понимают, что взрослый говорит на их родном языке, а персонаж нет. В зоне РЯ можно рассказать об английских традициях, описать правила новой игры и т.д., а потом перейти в зону АЯ и поиграть, порисовать. При этом дети переключаются с одного языка на другой и не путают их при общении.
11. Когда дети находятся в зоне АЯ часто, то они больше говорят на АЯ.
12. С помощью языковых зон можно сопоставлять две культуры: русскую и английскую, учить детей видеть сходства и различия. Например, как благодарят по-русски и по-английски.

    Также с детьми можно сравнить слова-обозначения частей часов в русском и английском языках. По-русски говорят циферблат, минутная, часовая стрелка, а английские часы имеют лицо, поэтому

по-английски – a face of the clock, hands of the clock.В разных языковых зонах часы и части часов будут обозначаться по-разному. Попросите детей сравнить эти обозначения в разных языках. Также детям будет интересно сравнить слова - названия пальцев руки в русском (большой, указательный, средний, безымянный и мизинец) и английском (Thumbkin или Tommy Thumbs, Pointer, Middleman, Ringman, Weeman) языках.

13. Важно, чтобы правила общения в языковых зонах соблюдали не только дети и педагог АЯ, но и воспитатель, который также находится в группе детского сада. Если воспитатель не владеет АЯ, то он не должен общаться с детьми в зоне АЯ.

Жесты

1. Важно условие использования жестов как приема педагогического управления ЛДС это строгое закрепление жестов за словом или ситуацией. Только в этом случае происходит семантизация, ребенок не путается и запоминает жест.
2. Жесты можно включать во все ситуации общения, обучения: в игры, рисование, лепку, рассказывание историй и т.д. Например, в работе можно использовать ситуации-путешествия с использованием звукоподражательных слов (произносимых с использованием интонирования) и жестов.
3. С помощью жестом можно оценивать правильность или неправильность коммуникативной реакции ребенка. В данном случае жесты можно подключить с использованием интонирования: доброжелательная интонация и жест одобрения или вопросительная интонация и жест неодобрения. Такая тактика делает контекст более понятным для ребенка.
4. Если жесты используются регулярно, то постепенно ребенок также начинает включать их в процесс общения с педагогом, ИП или другим ребенком в том случае, если он забыл слово или фразу. Эту стратегию необходимо поощрять. Например, педагог сам может сделать вид, что забыл слово (например, слово большой), но в речи он может вместо него использовать жест, позволяя детям

подсказать слово. Такие ситуации позволяют детям понять, что жесты можно и нужно использовать в общении, что они полезны, если забылось или неизвестно слово, но нужно, чтобы собеседник тебя понял.

5. Особенное значение жесты приобретают в зоне АЯ или при общении с ИП, когда нельзя использовать РЯ. Целесообразно использовать ряд упражнений, чтобы дети включили жесты в арсенал своих поведенческих стратегий. Например:

- Дети переходят в зону АЯ. Воспитатель группы из зоны АЯ называет им слова на русском языке. Задача детей донести значение слова до ИП. Проблема в том, что ИП играет с детьми в молчанку, поэтому все слова нужно показать жестами или движениями.
- В гости к ИП пришла русская игрушка. Что же делать, если ей нельзя говорить по-русски в зоне АЯ, а ИП она не понимает. Задача детей – объяснить русской игрушке то, что говорит ИП, не используя РЯ, т.е. жестами.

6. Если ребенок устал или отвлекается от разговора или деятельности на АЯ, то жесты помогут ему сконцентрироваться.
7. С помощью жестов можно выстраивать диалог между детьми на АЯ. В ходе практики было отмечено, что дети не всегда понимают, когда они должны сказать ответную реплику, спросить и т.д. С помощью указательного жеста, можно сделать очередность в диалоге понятной для детей.
8. Жесты нужно использовать для того, чтобы подсказать ребенку, как значение слова, так и само слово.

Интонирование

1. В первую очередь интонирование выполняет смыслоразличительную функцию в высказывании. Практика показала, что дети легко могут догадаться о значении слова из контекста в том случае, если оно произносится со специфической интонацией.

   Например, так можно проинтонировать слова:small, little, big; old, young; happy, sad, angry, sleepy; slowly, quickly.

2. Следует помнить, что семантизация отдельных слов или выражений эффективнее происходит не только за счет интонирования. При этом можно подключать и другой прием педагогического управления ЛДС – жесты.
3. Прием интонирования реализуется в ходе обучения не только педагогом АЯ, но и игровым персонажем. В этом случае интонирование играет особую роль: оно позволяет сделать речь персонажа живой и интересной. С помощью интонирования создаются эмоции персонажа, его собственный голос.
4. С помощью интонирования происходит регулирование понимания высказывания, контроль правильности высказывания ребенка и т.д. Это происходит за счет произнесения фразы с различными эмоциональными оттенками.

   Например, с помощью недовольной интонации вопроса What? можно показать ребенку, что он что-то сказал неверно.

   Также в начале обучения дети часто не различают, когда к ним обращаются с утвердительным предложением на АЯ, а когда с вопросом. Для того чтобы помочь детям, можно произносить вопросы с утрированной вопросительной интонацией.
5. В процессе интонирования следует делать четкое логическое ударение. Например, при альтернативном вопросе: Would you like a BANANA or an ORANGE? Это помогает детям понять, из чего нужно выбрать.

   Также логическое ударение позволяет управлять процессом выстраивания диалогов, показывая интонацией, кто говорит следующий, регулирует понимание высказывания.
6. Интонирование позволяет разграничить языки общения в языковых зонах с помощью маркирования речи: на английском нужно говорить в полный голос, а на русском - шепотом.
7. Интонирование позволяет привлечь внимание детей в ходе общения. Например, за счет неожиданной смены интонации высказывания, высоты голоса и т.д.

Appendix 17: Recommendations for English teachers (English version)

Using a Puppet

Here you can find tips and suggestions which you can use for your classes. Here you will also find many examples of situations which illustrate how to use a puppet in an effective way.

1. P-puppet; T-teacher

   A Puppet has its own name.

   The puppet greets everyone and says its name addressing a child: Hello, my name is Willy. What's your name?"
2. A puppet has its own history: where it was born, who are its parents, its friends. You can draw some pictures with the puppet's relatives; they will be photos which can be used in teaching vocabulary on various topics.
   - Topic "My Family": Willy (the puppet's name) introduces his family on the photo to the children: This is my family. This is my mummy. Her name is Mary". Then he asks the children to tell him about their families, and to draw them.
   - Topic "Toys": Willy has a little brother who likes to play very much. Willy tells about his toys, how he can play with them. Then he asks the children to tell about their favorite games and toys.
   - Topic "Vegetables": Willy's mother cooks very tasty vegetable salad. He shares the recipe with the children and offers them to cook it and make new recipes for his mother.
   - Topic "African animals: On holidays Willy and his family went to Africa and saw many exotic animals there. He'd taken some pictures and now Willy wants to show them to the children.
   - Topic "New Year": Willy celebrated New Year's Day with his family. He shows his New Year's Day decorations and tells about his presents. Then he asks children about their presents and they can discuss their decorations' shapes and colors.
   - Topic "Insects: At the weekend Willy went to the country with his family and saw many insects there. He wants to tell the children about them.

- Topic “Kitchen Utensils: Yesterday Willy could not set the table correctly. He asks the children for help.

3. A puppet should have its own “voice” which will differ from the teacher’s voice.
4. A puppet has its own character: it can have fun and play jokes. For this, use various intonations: happy, sad, angry, etc. If a puppet likes a child’s behavior or their conversation, it can encourage the child (“Well done!”, “Very good!”). If a puppet does not like something, it can express its feelings (It can be offended or angry or it can protest).
5. A puppet can be naughty like a real child!
   - Topic “Clothes”: Willy does not want to dress up to go outside because he does not like his green shirt, he wants to put on a blue one: No! I do not want this shirt. I want that one! I do not like green. I like blue”. Then the puppet asks the children which clothes they like, and of what color.
   - Topic “Means of Transport: Children are going on an excursion by bus and Willy is sleeping and does not want to get up. A teacher asks the children to wake him up. Willy is a little bit angry and sleepy. Children have to persuade him to go.
   - Topic “Toys”: Willy hid some toys in the class and he does not want to say where they are. Children should ask him questions to find the toys.
6. The puppets always speak English and it can only understand English speech. If a child says something to the puppet in their native language, the puppet does not understand and asks him back: What? Sorry?” That’s why a child has to find a way to explain something to the puppet using English words, pictures or gestures. An English teacher can help the child, translate the puppet’s words or prompt a word to a child. This is the way a puppet regulates using native and foreign languages.
7. A puppet can repeat words and phrases many times to develop listening skills. It can repeat them when talking to a teacher or a child. A teacher can demonstrate dialogs with a puppet for children to listen to and repeat. A puppet can ask again and again to repeat something because it cannot hear well.

8. A puppet can use gestures to communicate with children. For this you should chose a puppet which can move its hands. Of course, a puppet cannot use many gestures but some are available. It can hide its face when scared, or touch something, wave with its hands to greet a child, etc. Using gestures puppet shows that children can use them too.
9. Children like a puppet as a toy. That's why it can involve children into a conversation easily. Here are some examples:

   Game "House": Children are playing the game in Russian and a puppet wants to play with them and says: "I want to be a father. I am a father. My name is Tom. Let's play"! If children like the puppet, they will invite it to play but they should remember that the puppet cannot speak Russian. The teacher can repeat this. That's why children have to use the English language to play a game. For children to feel more confident, the puppet can offer simple and well-known situations to use the language (going shopping or choosing a recipe for salad). This strategy will work for any role-playing game.

   Game "Hide-and-seek: A puppet comes to the children who are playing hide-and-seek and says: "Let's play hide-and-seek. Who is it?" Then they will choose it using an English counting rhyme.

   These games will be very short at the beginning but when children learn more words, games will be more longstanding. Later children will play games in English without a puppet.
10. A puppet should take part not only in games, but in any activity: drawing, crafts, singing songs, etc. For example, children will draw. A puppet can come to a child and ask him about his future picture (what will it be, colors, etc.). Later a puppet can ask the child to describe the drawing. It is more interesting for children to answer questions, not from a teacher but from a puppet.

    A puppet can also give instructions instead of a teacher: cut it out, take your scissors, take a blue pencil, paint it yellow, etc.
11. A puppet can take part in lessons in their children's native language (if it can be organized). For example, a puppet comes to the math lesson in Russian. A teacher who gives the math lesson and speaks Russian can ask children to translate numbers for the puppet. Or the puppet starts

to count in English and a Russian-speaking teacher asks the children to translate. This strategy will help to take into account the bilingual principle "one person (or a puppet in our case) – one language".

12. Also, a puppet can visit musical lessons and offer children to sing English songs. Or it can come to and teach children to do morning exercises in English. Such "visits" by a puppet will enrich input of the English language and show children that they can use a foreign language not only in the English class. A puppet can help children with various situations: in the morning when children wash their faces, when children are going for a walk, when children are preparing for a sleep, etc.

    For example, when children have breakfast, a puppet asks them about dishes or it says the wrong name of a dish and children correct the mistake.

    When a puppet says something, children will want to repeat it again. It is very important to encourage such situations.
13. A puppet can correct children's mistakes. It can do this in many ways: it can be surprised and ask to explain, ask again, etc. It can just laugh and the child won't be hurt if he or she likes the puppet and thinks that it is a friend.
14. Children are easily distracted and a puppet can help to attract their attention. For example, a puppet can suddenly fall asleep and start to snore loudly. Children cannot miss it! Or a puppet can start to whisper or to scream.
15. Also, a puppet can tell children something about the culture of English-speaking countries such as about its home culture.
16. A puppet can comment on children's actions, describe toys, pictures, etc. This can enrich English input and develop listening skills in children.

Here are some examples:

A boy is playing with a car: an English teacher with a puppet comes to him and says (A puppet is communicating with the child):"You are playing with cars. Look! This is a blue car (a gesture in the direction of the toy). And that car is yellow. You have two cars. Look! And I have a

red car. What's the color of that car? It is red. This is blue. Where is a yellow car? Here".

17. To create the puppet's character is a game not only for the children but for the teacher too. At the beginning, it is not very easy to alternate between your own voice and the puppet's voice and create new learning situations with the puppet. It will take some time to become accustomed to these things.

    It will be useful to play and act with the puppet alone in front of a mirror.

    Remember that you are the first one who believes that the puppet is not a toy, but a real person. This person will help you to find new resources for lessons.

    The puppet will let you return to your childhood, have fun and play jokes. Believe that children will appreciate the puppet and love it. Soon you will see the results of this tool.

Commenting

Commenting is a verbal accompaniment of a learner's actions provided by an English teacher. You do not need to address the child. The puppet also can use commenting with your help. Do not forget to use intoning of speech.

1. What you can comment on?

   In children's activities: you can name their actions, objects they play with, toys, count the toys, and describe them.

   Toys: you can describe a toy, give it a name, say what it can do and what it likes.

   Books: you can describe pictures and the content of a story.

   Child's appearance: you can describe his/her mood and clothes.

   You can comment on the weather, furniture and many other beautiful things.

2. Commenting can transfer into dialogue with a child. This happens because your comments concern important thing to them. If a child is interested in your comments, you can ask him/her questions. For example, what color is your car? What's this? Do you like it?

3. Commenting enriches the input in English. However, it includes a lot of unknown words for children. That's why the context is very important. Make your speech short and clear, repeat words and phrases several times, use mimics, gestures and intoning.
4. You and your puppet should support situations where children can begin repeating words after you. You can use gestures and intoning for this.

Examples of using commenting:

1. The child is playing with a car: the teacher comes and sits down near the child saying "You are playing with cars. Look! This is a blue car (*a gesture to the toy*). And that car is yellow. You have two cars. Look! And I have a red car. What's the color of that car? It is red. This is blue. Where is a yellow car? Here".
2. The children are playing house: the teacher sits down near them and says: You are playing. Who is the mother? Ann (*child's name*) is the mother. Who is the father? Nick is the father. They are family. Where is your child? Here. Polin is a child. She is a little girl".
3. The children are drawing: What are you drawing? Flowers. They are very beautiful. Look! Here is a big red flower. Is it a rose? Yes, it is a rose. And what's here? It is a tulip. Ann has a green pencil and a purple pencil. She has two pencils: one, two. Vova has four pencils, etc."
4. The child is looking through the book: You have a book. This book is about a wolf and the three pigs. One pig, two pigs, three pigs. And one wolf. The wolf is angry. And it is hungry. Look! Three houses for pigs, etc."

Language Zoning

1. Languages for communication are strictly divided into language zones. You can speak only in Russian in the zone of the Russian language, and only in English in the English one. But it is very important to take into account the fact that children of pre-school age do not have rich vocabulary in English as a foreign language, that's why an English teacher has to use the Russian language in some cases (for example, to explain culture-specific vocabulary, complicated information about traditions,

etc.). Here one very important question comes up: the teacher has to use Russian in the English zone because it makes no sense to go back and forth between the zones to say some words in the other language. To solve this problem, the teacher can use special speech markers. One of the markers can be using intoning – changing the pitch of a voice depending on the language. It means that the teacher (and children if needed) can speak Russian in a whisper in the zone of the English language.

2. For children to learn the rules of behavior, some simple training exercises can be used:
   - Turn on fragments of Russian and English songs. Children have to choose the language zone depending on the language of the song and go to this zone. Also, the teacher can say phrases in two languages and children have to make the same choice: to go to the zone where this or that phrase can be pronounced.
   - Ask children to greet each other in the zone in the "correct" language.
   - Ask children to name toys in the "correct" language depending on the zone.
3. Language zones should have bright cultural decoration including various recognizable cultural elements: posters, books, pictures, photos, toys, etc., depending on the language zone: in the English zone – everything that can be associated with English culture; in the Russian zone – elements of Russian culture.
4. An English-speaking puppet "lives" in the English language zone. The zone and the interlocutor stimulate and motivate children to choose the English zone and the language to communicate. The puppet can go to the Russian zone as a guest and ask questions about Russian elements, to compare.
5. Objects and toys in the English zone should be attractive for children, to motivate them to visit this zone more often than the Russian one.
6. It is necessary to update objects and cultural elements in the zones to stimulate children's interest, to motivate them to ask questions. For example, to add a new toy or a book with which the puppet can play.
7. Various activities can be organized in the English language zone (for

example, to make a greeting card for the puppet or to draw a picture and describe it). To stimulate communication in English not only among children and the puppet but among children themselves, the teacher should create special situations. For example, give fewer pencils for drawing in order for children to ask each other for different colors in English (as they are in the English language zone). The puppet can show them how to ask each other.

8. Various games can be organized in the English language zone, with or without the puppet's participation. They can be board games or role-playing games. The main rule is that the language of communication in the game is English. For example, children can play shop where the puppet can be a salesperson and motivate them to speak English.
9. An English teacher can tell children about English cultural traditions, explain rules of English games, etc., in Russian in the Russian language zone if this information is too complicated to be announced in English to children. Then children can go to the English zone and play the game in English. Language zones help to choose languages for effective communication without mixing them.
10. Using language zones, Russian and English cultures can be compared. For example, children can learn how to thank others in Russian and in English. Or children can compare names of clock parts in English and in Russian (in Russian they are special words and in English they are names of body parts: the face of the clock, hands of the clock). It can be interesting for children to learn the names of fingers in English (Thumbkin or Tommy Thumbs, Pointer, Middleman, Ringman, Weeman) and to compare them with Russian names.
11. It is very important that these rules of behavior are to be kept, not only by an English teacher and children but by other members of the stuff.

Gestures

1. Remember that the context is important for using gestures with young children. Each gesture should have its own constant meaning.
2. You can use gestures in teaching, communicating, playing, drawing and other activities with children.

3. Gestures can help you to evaluate correctness of children's communicative reactions. Combine gestures and intoning for this purpose: a kindly tone and the gesture of approval; or a questioning tone and shaking your head.
4. If you use gestures constantly, children can begin using them too. It is a good communicative strategy. You can stimulate it. For example, pretend you've forgotten a word which can be replaced with a gesture and ask children for a clue.
5. Gestures can help you to organize the dialogue between the learners. Often children miss their speaking turn. Use gestures to orient them.
6. Stimulate using gestures in the language zones. Here're some tips: a) children enter the English zone. Ask them to mime or present a word for the preschool teacher without using Russian; b) the puppet has a guest – a puppet from Russia. The children's purpose is to explain the English-speaking puppet's words for the Russian-speaking puppet.

Intoning

1. Intoning is distinctive. It helps children to guess meaning. Intoning is "voice gesturing" and depends on the content.
2. Combine intoning and gestures. It provides using visual and audio channels of information.
3. Your puppet also can use intoning in its speech. Moreover, using intoning helps you to animate the puppet and make its voice vivid.
4. Using intoning, you can express different emotions to manage children's behavior.
5. Stress the most important words in the phrase. "Do you like a BANANA or an ORANGE?"
6. Use speech indicators: speak in a full voice in the English zone when you speak English; and speak in whisper if you have to speak Russian. Children should follow the same rules.

Appendix 18: Example of a week's teaching plan

Topic "In the Garden. Fruit"
Objectives:

- to develop vocabulary skills on the topic
- to develop speaking skills (description of fruit)
- to revise count skills and using plurals
- to teach speaking about food children like and do not like
- to develop dialogue skills (asking questions: what's this? Do you like this or that?)
- to develop listening skills on the topic

Vocabulary: an apple, an orange, a banana, a pineapple, a lemon, a grape, a kiwi, a peach, a pear, a garden
Patterns: Give me… Take a…Where is..? I like… I don't like… I want a…

Dialogues:

1. - Where is…?
   - It's here. It's there.
2. - Give me a …, please.
   - Here you are.
   - Thank you.

Communicative situations:

- Willy conducts an excursion around the garden and names fruit.
- Playing "At the shop. Let's buy fruit". Willy is a shop-assistant, children are buyers.
- Playing "At the fruit café". Willy is a waiter, children are visitors.
- Making fruit salad with Willy.
- Willy has forgotten fruit names. Guessing the riddles.
- Counting fruit with Willy.
- Willy has mixed up fruit colors. Let's help him.
- Hide-and-seek with fruit. Let's find them.
- A fruit interview: Do you like…?

Activities:

- describing fruit (This is a... (fruit). It's.... (Color).
- drawing fruit, making clay fruit.
- Coloring fruit.

Songs and poems: a song Five red apples.

Games: Hot apple" (modification of "Hot potato")

Appendix 19: Board information for parents (Russian version)

Appendix 19: Example of board information for parents with home activities offered by the English teachers (Russian version)

Дорогие родители!

Тема этой недели «Домашние животные».

Мы предлагаем Вам следующие виды деятельности:

- Вы можете взять книгу о домашних животных и посмотреть иллюстрации вместе с ребенком. Назовите животных по-русски и попросите ребенка назвать их по-английски. Если Вы можете, спросите его по-английски:“What’s this?”и“What color is it?” Ребенок также может повторить названия животных за Вами.
- Вы можете спросить ребенка подумать о любом домашнем животном. Задайте ей/ему вопросы, чтобы отгадать это животное:Is it big/small? Is it … (color)? Is it a … (animal)?

Пожалуйста, не забудьте похвалить малыша!
Вместе у нас все получится!

Appendix 20: Board information for parents (English version)

Dear Parents!

The topic of this week is “Domestic Animals”.

We offer you the following activities:

- You can take a book about domestic animals and look through the pictures with your child. Firstly, name the animals in Russian, and then ask your child to name them in English. If you can, ask your child “What’s this?” and “What color is it? Your child can repeat the animals after you.
- You can ask your child to think of any domestic animal. Ask him/her questions to guess the animal: Is it big/small? Is it … (color)? Is it a(n) … (animal)?

Please, do not forget to praise your child! We’re successful together!

Appendix 21: Board information for parents: means of transport

Means of transport[8]

Words:

- a bus
- a train
- a car
- a plane
- a taxi
- a ship
- a boat
- a trolleybus
- a tram

Phrases:

- Let's go, run, swim
- Let's take a...
- Let's go by....
- Where is a..?
- I see...

Activities:

- Our trip to Great Britain (game)
- Drawing transport
- Going to the farm
- Singing the BUS Song

[8] The picture of the bus was taken from http://clipart-library.com/clipart/rTjRn9Rgc.htm (Accessed 5 August 2013). The picture of the means of transport was taken from https://balhash.satu.kz/Transportno-ekspeditsionnye-uslugi.html (Accessed 5 August 2013).

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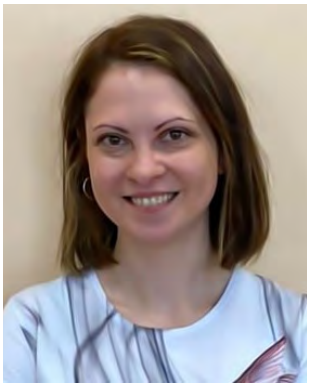

NATALIA KORICHEVA

This research examines how English teachers can foster young learners to speak English during the lessons in the kindergarten. It describes the design of a foreign language environment based on bilingual principles. The research explores a practical foreign language toolkit to develop children's interest, their language awareness and communicative initiative in English. The toolkit includes using a puppet, language zoning, commenting, using gestures, and intoning for preschool children.

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PUBLICATIONS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND
Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology

ISBN 978-952-61-3772-8
ISSN 1798-5625