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Creative techniques in action: the multiple case study of EAL Russian-speaking migrant children's experiences in London state primary schools.

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Creative Methods in the Research with Children

A 'powerful tool for enabling the **active engagement**' (Kramer-Roy, 2015, p.1207).

'To comprehend better **the structural, situational and personal complexity of children's lives**' (Dona, 2006, p.23).

Defining Creative Methods

'A methodological renaissance' (Hemming, 2008, in Robinson and Gillies, 2012, p.87)

Reducing the **'essentialist conceptualisations of children in difficult circumstances'** (Doná, 2006, p.22).

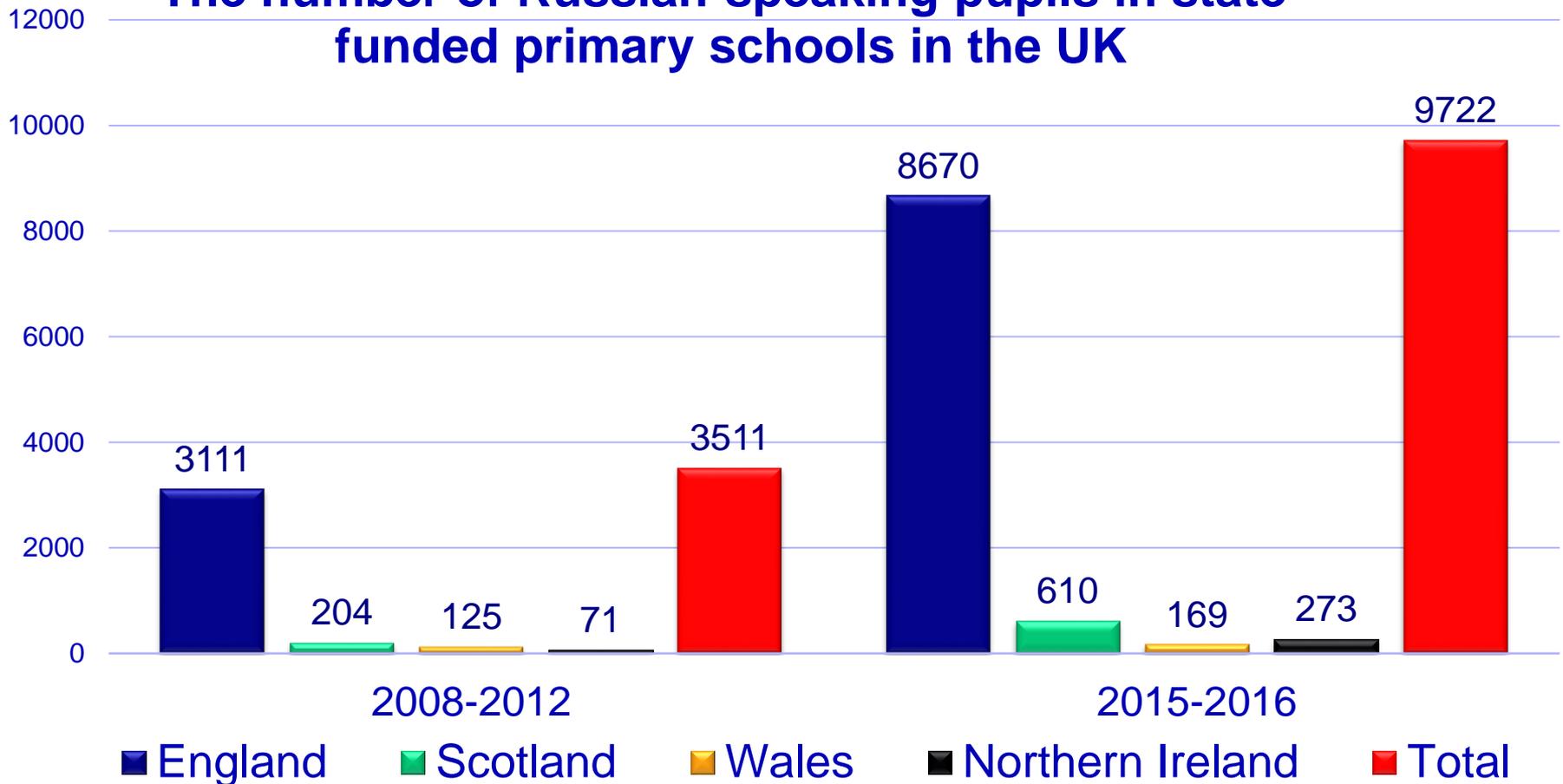
The open-ended approaches used and based around children which is seen as **'an effective tool for democratically engaging [children]'** in the research (Peek et al., 2016, p.90).

Overcoming naivety of the creative methods

- > A creative method is not a 'fool-proof technology for carrying out ethical research with children' (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2005, p.7)
- > An assumption of their 'epistemological and methodological utility' (Gillies and Robinson, 2012, p.161)
- > Understanding and accepting **the 'contradictions and instabilities** inherent in more performative participatory approaches' (Robinson and Gillies, 2012, p.87)

The Overview of the Study

The number of Russian-speaking pupils in state-funded primary schools in the UK



The Overview of the Study (Cont.)

Change of sociocultural environment, and consequently language, influences overall psychological and personality development process (Lantolf and Poehner, 2014; Vygotsky, 2005) reinforces

- **Age-specific,**
- **Language Minority,**
- **[Language] Incompetence 'status'** of recent migrant children and associated with these
- **Defencelessness, Vulnerability and Sensitivity** of the participating children.
- **Migration as a 'burden'** (Doná, 2006)

Sample

Russian-speaking pupils	Interviews with children	Participant Observations	Parents	Class teachers, EAL coordinators
Pilot study – Case of Sasha				
Sasha (pseudonym) (10 y.o.) Year 5	4 interviews (120 minutes)	1 month	1,5 hour interview with Sasha's parent	
Main Case Study				
5 recently arrived Russian-speaking pupils at Key stage two	30 minutes twice a month during 8 months	8 months	5 Parents 1-2 1-hour-interviews	5 class teachers 1-2 1-hour-interviews

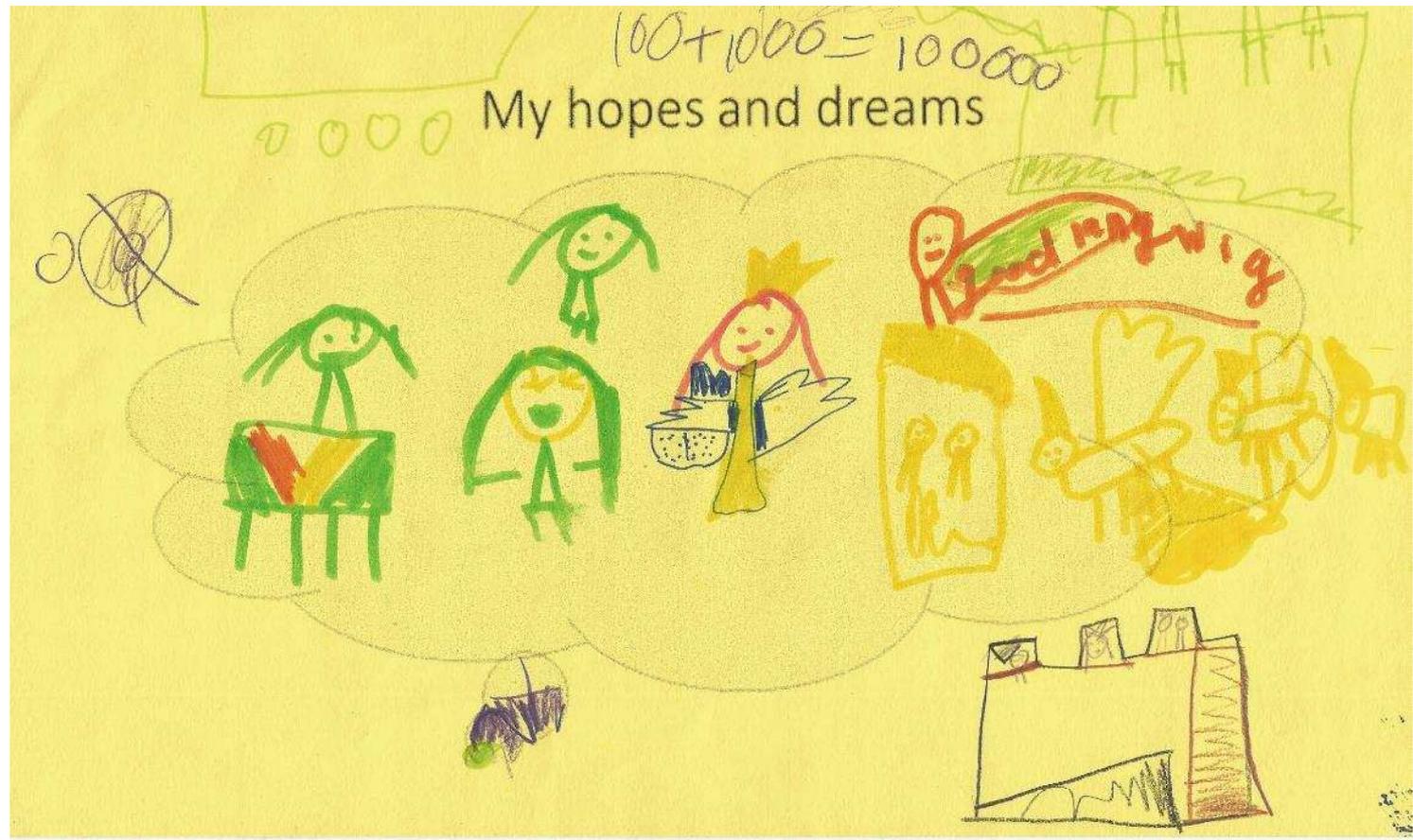
Methods of data collection

1. Ethnographic participant observations during 8-month period, 'shadowing', (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010);
2. 12 Semi-structured interviews using creative elicitation techniques with each child ('researcher-initiated stimuli' (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010, p. 177))
3. Open-ended interviews: with the participants' parents, class teachers and/or EAL TAs.

Creative techniques

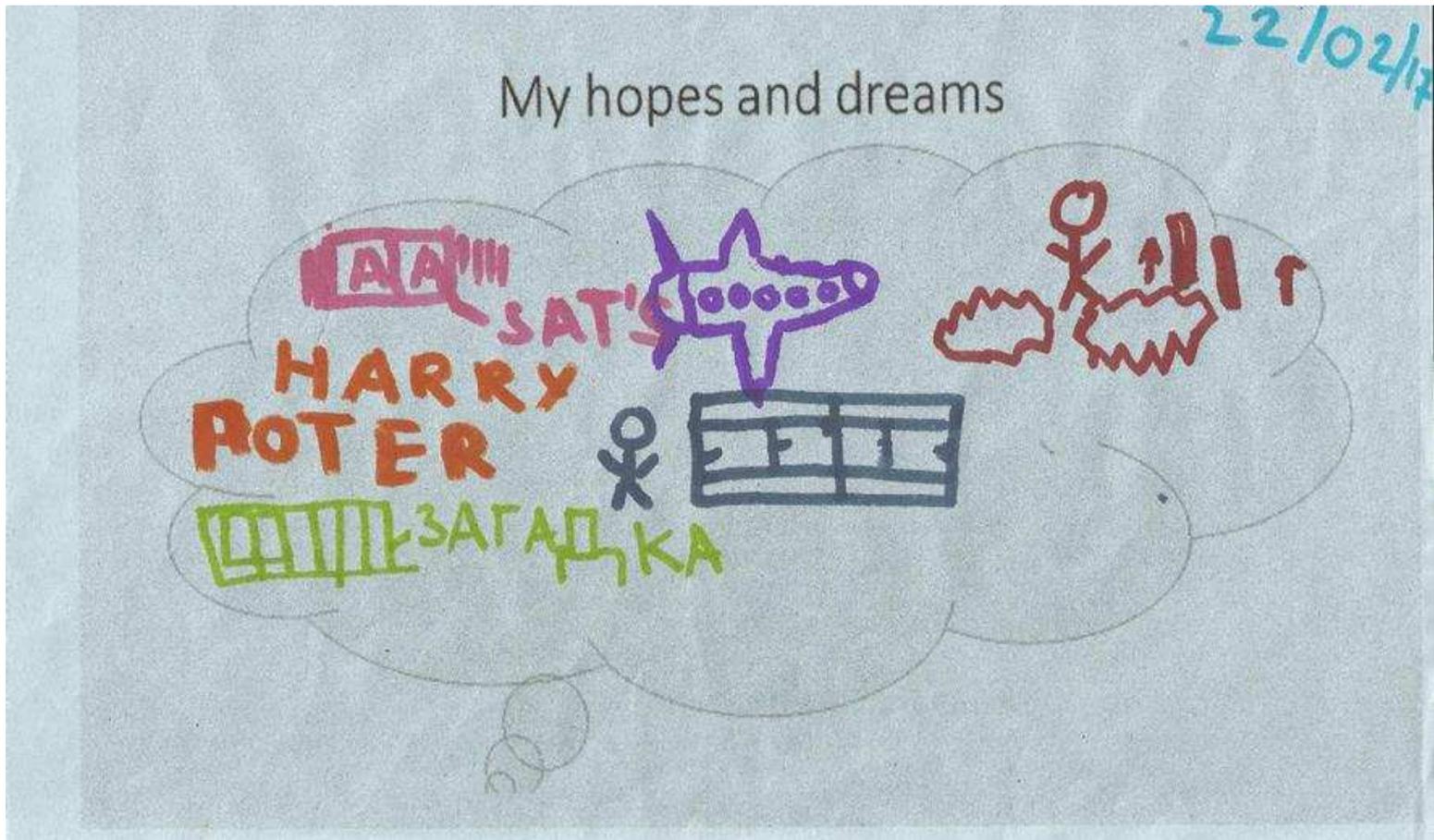
Research Questions	Creative technique
What issues do Russian-speaking migrant pupils face in Key Stage two?	The 'Interview-through-game' (Design adopted from Toth, 1995), Filling-in exercise (Gregory, 2001), Wilson's tree test (Wilson, 2006)
How do they express their Social Actor, Motivated Agent and Authorship levels of Personality Development?	Concentric circles with vignettes ranking Drawings 'My Hopes and Dreams' The 'Interview-through-game'
How do they (issues and the levels) link?	All methods and techniques (Interviews, participant observations)

Drawings 'My hopes and dreams'



A Russian-speaking
migrant pupil,
female, 7 y.o.

A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 11 y.o.



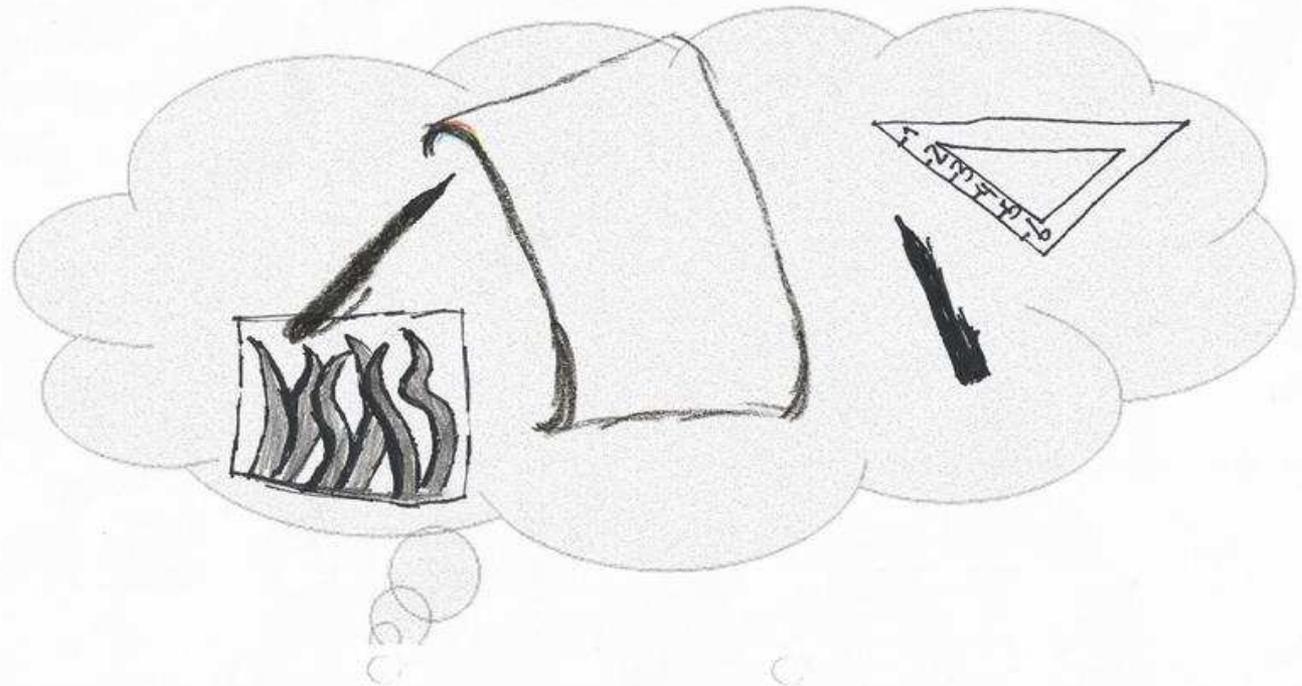
My hopes and dreams

29/3/17

A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 11 y.o.

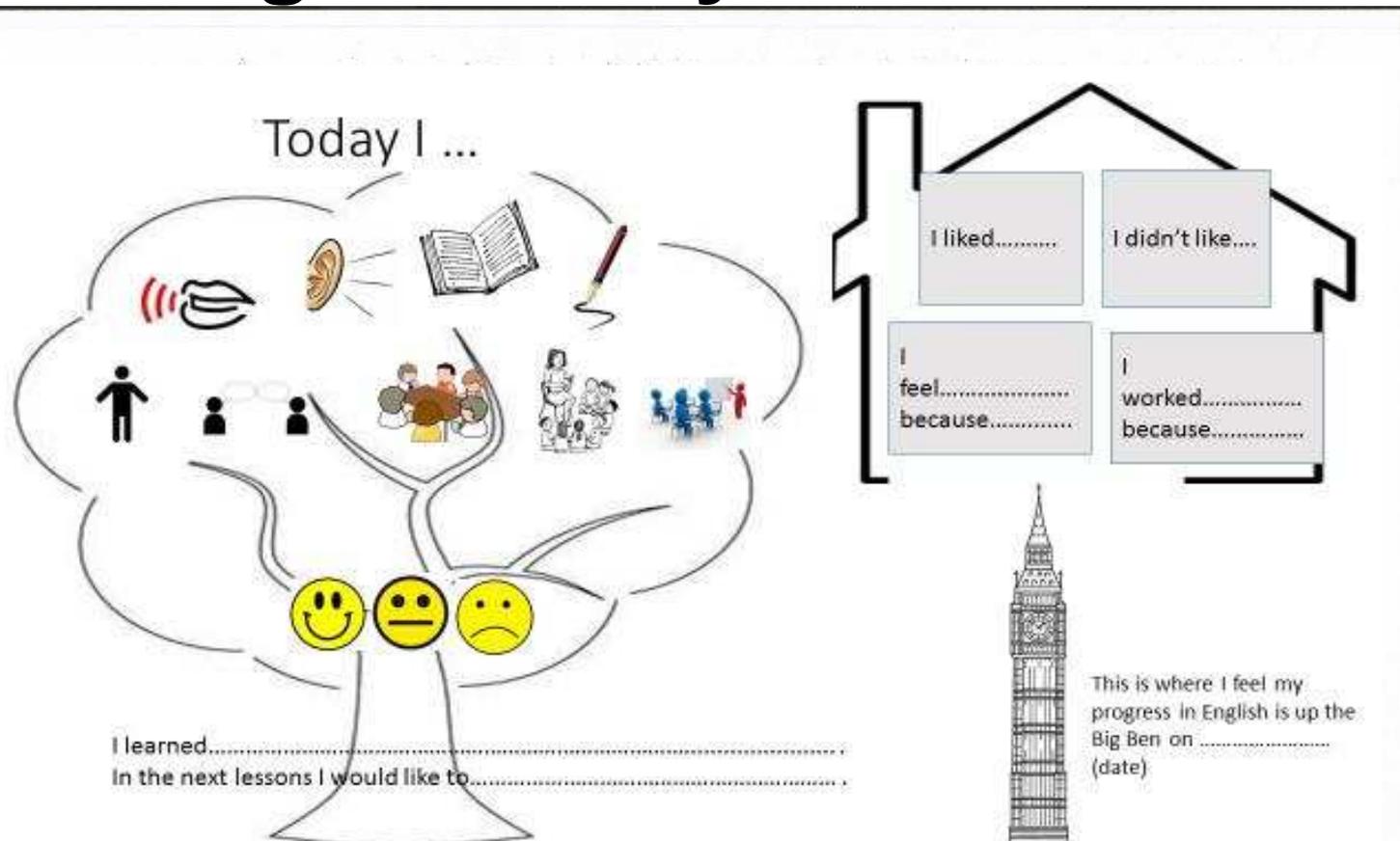


My hopes and dreams



A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, male, 10 y.o.

Filling-in 'Today I...' exercise



Today I ...

I learned.....
In the next lessons I would like to.....

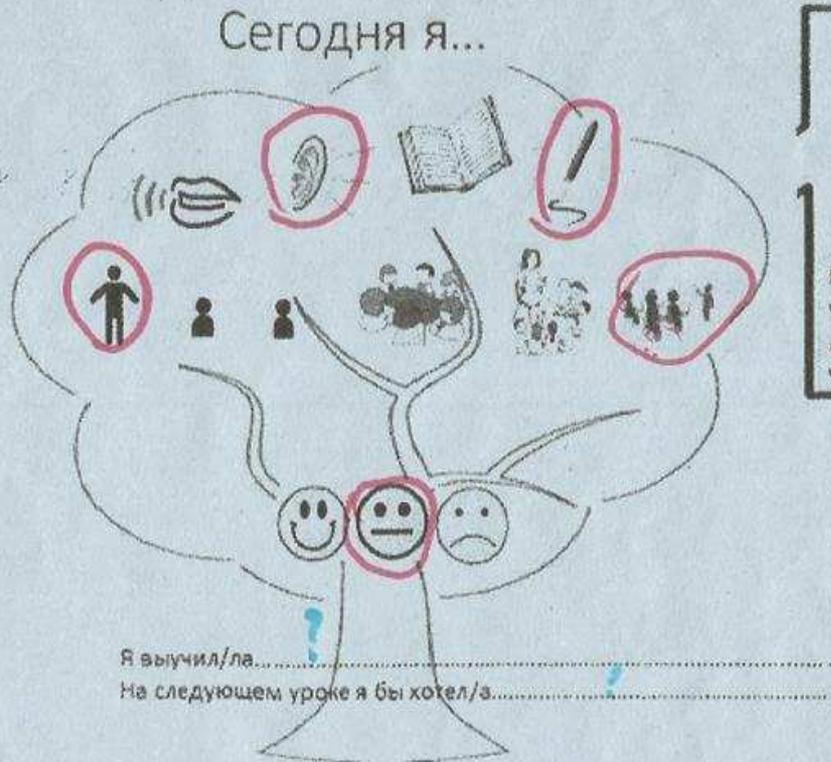
I liked..... I didn't like....

I feel..... because..... I worked..... because.....

This is where I feel my progress in English is up the Big Ben on (date)

The design adopted from Gregory (2001)

Сегодня я...



Я выучил/ла.....
На следующем уроке я бы хотел/а.....



Мне понравилось?	Мне не понравилось?
Я чувствую.....потому, что.....	Я работал/а.....потому, что.....

Я чувствую, что вот так мой успех в английском подвинулся по Би Бену (дата)

A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 10 y.o.

Сегодня я...



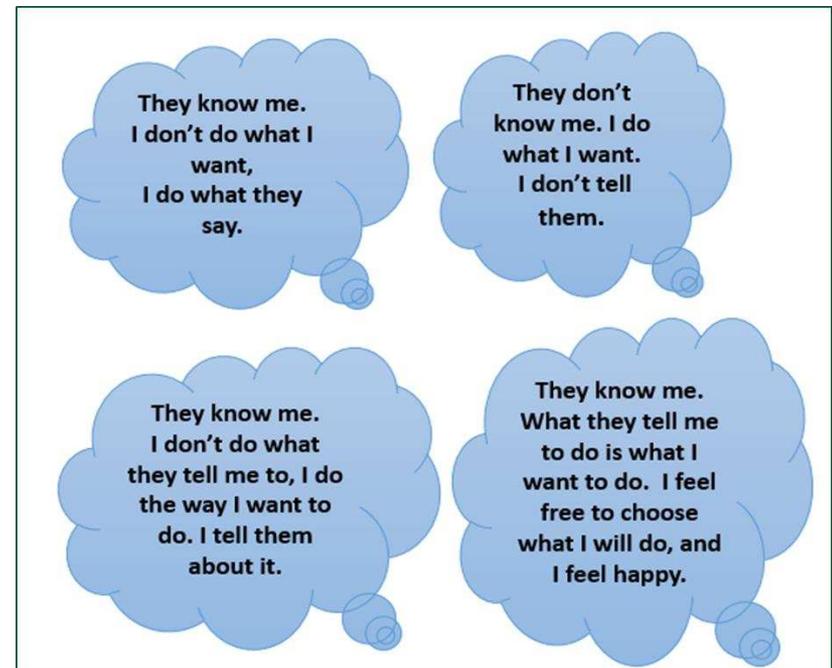
Мне понравилось ?	Мне не понравилось ?
Я чувствую..... ? ...потому, что..... ?	Я работал/а..... ? ...потому, что..... ?



5

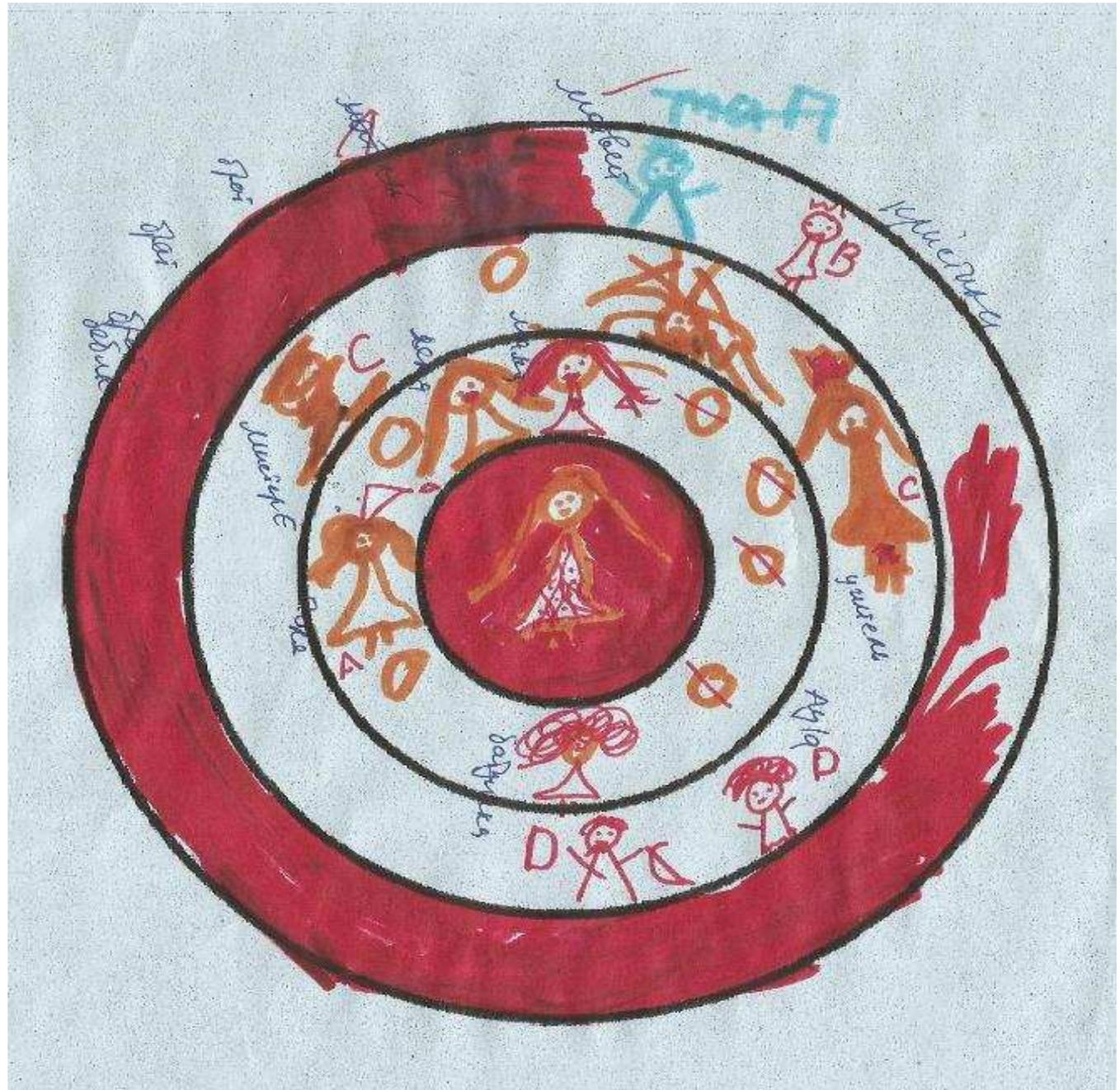
Я чувствую, что вот так мой успех в английском поднялся по Биг Бену (дата)

Concentric Circles

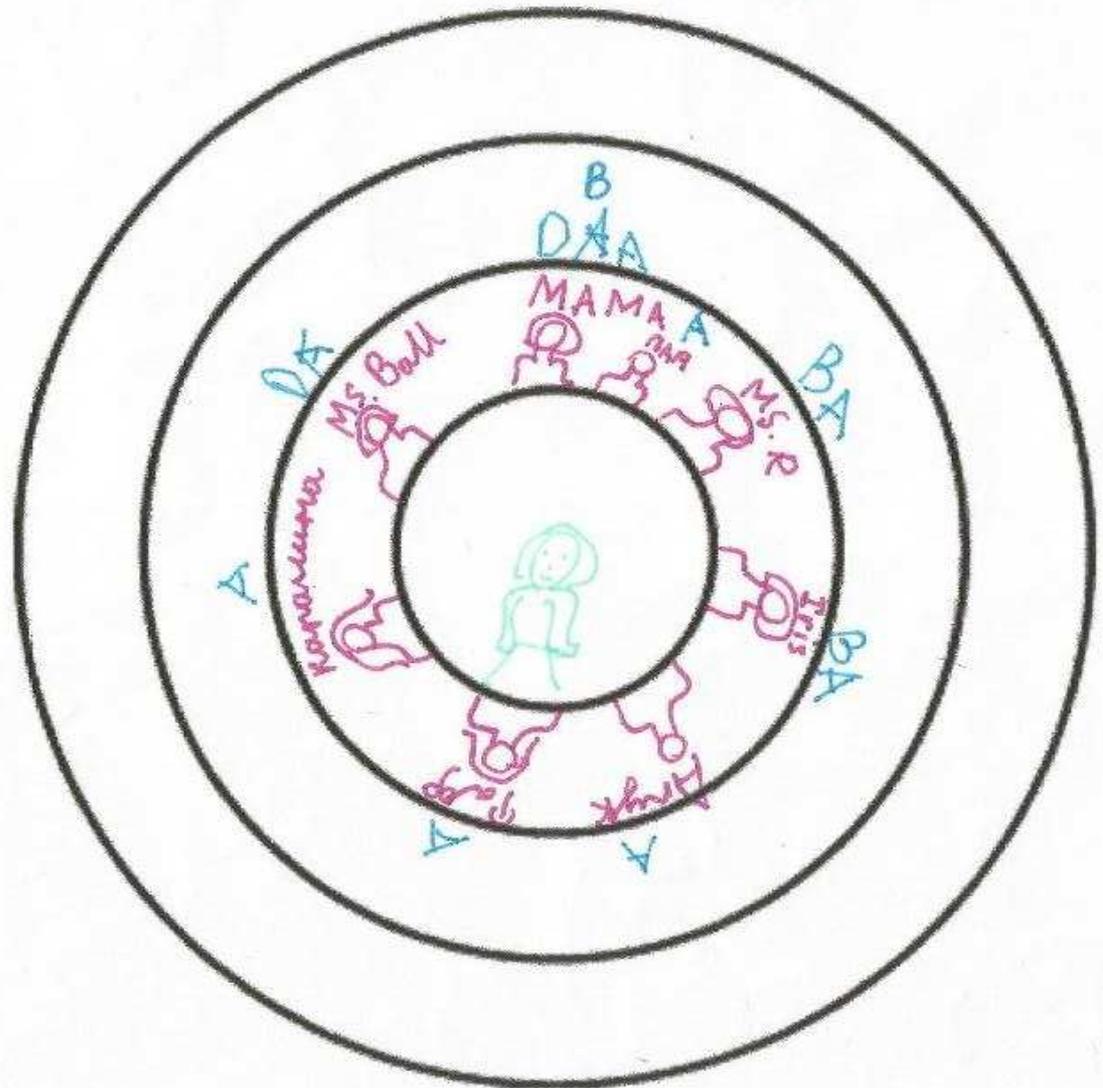


A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 11 y.o.

A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 7 y.o.



A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, female, 10 y.o.



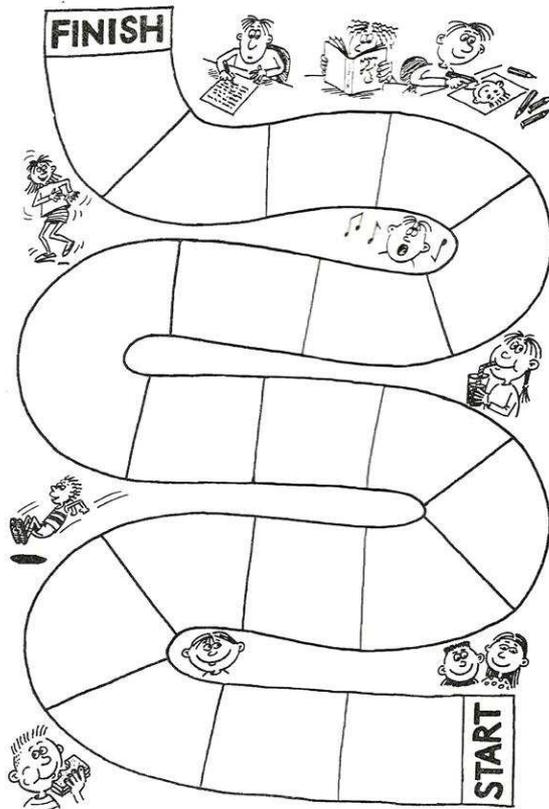
'Interview through game'



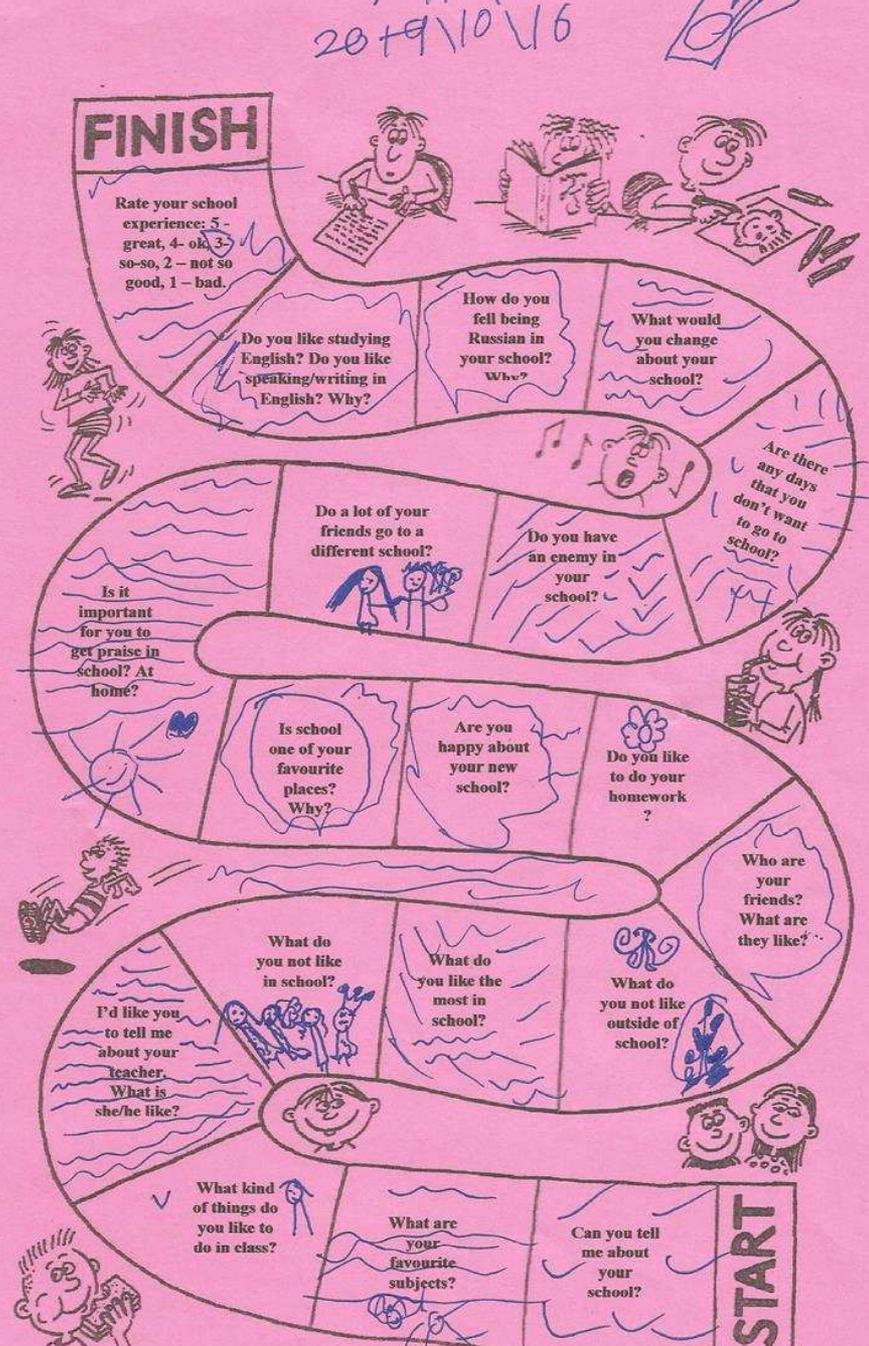
Questions added by the researcher

The pupil added drawings to the game

A Russian-speaking migrant pupil, 7 y.o.



Design adopted from Toth, (1995)





'Snakes and Ladders' with added question marks

**Changing the
interview
questions, and
grammar in the
questions**

A Russian-speaking
migrant pupil, 11
y.o.

Do you like school ~~work~~?
lessons

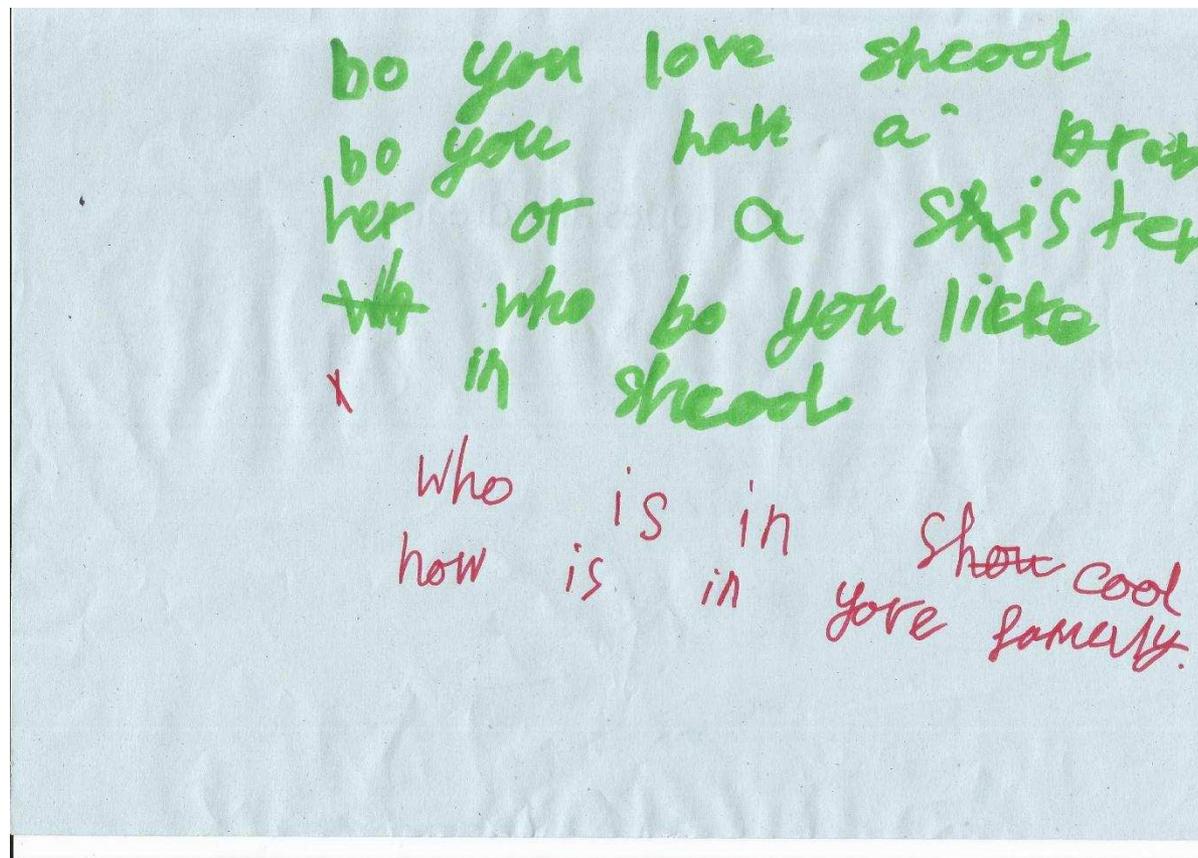
Do you Like school?
why? / what is
school like?

Is it Important to study well in school?

Do Keep trying if hard or not? Or do
something else?

**Adding own
interview
questions**

A Russian-speaking
migrant pupil, 7 y.o.



Bridging L2 migrant children's research and creative techniques

- **Appreciation and representation of the migrant status** - the creative techniques allowed to engage Russian-speaking migrant children to freely use all of the language repertoires;
- **Stimulus and motivation** - allowed children to direct the process of interviews' structure, engage in the games' construction, regulations and adjustment, enabling children to adjust the interview questions (and the interview times) if they felt they needed to;
- **Uniquely 'unlocking'** the experiences, reaching beyond defenceless 'incompetent' migrant positions.