Literature in Language Education
Evolving Language Pedagogies and Text Preferences in Contemporary Russia

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Abstract. The use of authentic texts, including literature, as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) resource has gained wider currency in classrooms, notably in Europe and Asia, where this integration is being encouraged as linguists acknowledge the vital importance of lexical knowledge to foreign language acquisition. The adoption of communicative language teaching (CLT) methods, pointing to a shift away from teacher-centric models of language pedagogy, has also led to a greater emphasis being placed on the use of authentic texts, including literature, which has, in turn, given rise to debates regarding appropriate teaching techniques, methodology and text selection. In terms of foreign language education in Russia, literature has a storied history of use, although relatively few empirical studies exist on contemporary teacher practices and how these have evolved in the post-Soviet era. Indeed, as teaching practices evolve to incorporate authentic texts in EFL education in Russia, it is important for all stakeholders to understand what texts are actually being used in classrooms and in what way. To address this gap, data, as part of an exploratory study, was collected from 152 Russian EFL teachers via a semi-structured questionnaire. The results show that while Soviet teaching practices continue to influence, to some extent, teaching approaches and text selection with regard to literature in language education (LLE), there are notable shifts in teachers' attitudes towards learner interest and ability that reveal evolving teacher priorities and motivation.

Keywords: language education, EFL, text selection, language skills, literary texts, communicative competence, teaching methods.

1. Introduction

The use of literature in the foreign language (FL) education context has been attracting growing attention over the last few decades, as evidenced by the publication of numerous resources for teachers [McKay, 1982; Collie, Slater, 1987; Duff, Maley, 1990; Carter, Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993; Carter, McRae, 1996; Kennedy, Falvey, 1999; Inan, Yüksel, 2013] and state-of-the-art papers [Lott, 1988; Gilroy, Parkinson, 1996;

Paran, 2008; Tatsuki, 2015]. Tatsuki [2015] refers to this trend when she notes that literature has been reintroduced into English language programs in Singapore, Malaysia and across Europe. According to Carter [2007, p. 6], this renewed interest in literature in language education (LLE) is linked to the rise of communicative language teaching (CLT), which, in contrast to more traditional teaching methods, focuses on improving learners' communicative ability through the use of authentic situations and texts. CLT uses grammar, phonology and lexis as tools to overcome the language barrier, and not as objects of study, a fact that differentiates it from the more traditional grammar-translation method (GTM) of language education. Literature, as an authentic source of language, is viewed positively within the CLT framework in the sense that it can contribute to improving not only learners' vocabulary knowledge, but also their reading and critical thinking skills through its more creative and "authentic" use of language. In Russia, too, literature in language education is being revisited in the CLT context due to its ability to contribute to learners ' understanding of different cultures [Ter-Minasova, 2000; Zagraiskaya, 2009; Anosova, 2013; Belkina, Stetsenko, 2015, Zagryadskaya, 2017], their personal development and critical thinking skills [Shevchik, 2008; Klementsova, 2012; Eryomina, 2013; Belkova, Chubak, 2016], as well as improving their communicative ability and language skills [Zhuvikina, Feoktistova, 2011; Rogacheva, 2015; Zhirkova, 2016]. According to Davidenko [2003, p. 90], for example, literary texts help develop creative thinking skills in learners because they encourage them to consider an imaginary situation from the point of view of another person. Nevertheless, while LLE has been attracting greater attention recently, there are relatively few empirical studies on how contemporary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers actually approach the use of literary texts in language education in Russia. Most studies to date focus on teachers' personal accounts or LLE's theoretical benefits, while not always providing concrete comparisons with regard to how the current state of LLE differs from its previous incarnation during Russia's Soviet years. Indeed, while there appears to be a renewed focus, to some extent, on LLE (in the wider context of authentic texts) within a CLT framework in Russia, the use of literary texts and materials in EFL education in Russia has a long, if not always fondly remembered, history.

2. Literature Review
2.1. A history of LLE in Russia

According to Lazaretnaya [2012], English education in Russia in the modern era can be divided into three periods: the Cold War era (1947–1991), Perestroika (1992–1999), and the New Russia period (2000-present). During the Cold War era, the teaching of English was mainly limited to schools, where the children began English lessons in secondary school at the age of 10 or 11 [Lazaretnaya, 2012, p. 11]. Lesson content was strictly controlled and teaching materials were edited by Soviet authors who had inadequate experience with authentic English,

with many of them never having lived in countries where English was the native language [Ter-Minasova, 2005]. In terms of text selection, Russian EFL teachers during this period often used works by Jerome K. Jerome (the novel "Three men in a boat" was especially popular), Jack London, O. Henry, Ernest Hemingway, Somerset Maugham, and John Galsworthy [Ter-Minasova, 2005; McCaughey, 2005; Ustinova, 2005; Lazaretnaya, 2012]. Their approach to teaching English was decidedly "grammar-translation" in terms of method, i. e. memorizing grammatical rules, repetition and translation. As a result, although authentic works were used in English lessons, the language itself was studied as if it were a dead language, with a focus on grammar rather than on learners' communicative ability [Davydova, 2012]. Ter-Minasova [2014], referring to the state of LLE in higher education at the time, writes how students read outdated texts because it was believed that literary texts, in order to be considered classics, were required to have stood the test of time. The situation changed markedly during Perestroika. An abundance of textbooks and teaching materials of questionable quality, the content of which was often poorly understood by students [Ter-Minasova, 2005], replaced the erstwhile shortage of English language teaching materials. During this period, some teachers decided to continue using Soviet-era teaching materials, while others experimented with new materials and techniques, albeit in ways that caused confusion among students [Lazaretnaya, 2012]. This suggests that in the 1990s, a segment of Russian English teachers experimented with new language materials and approaches, although there are no specific details or examples provided as to how they actually did this. Currently, English is an important part of the curriculum in Russian schools and universities. In universities, for example, proficiency in a foreign language is often required for those studying the Humanities and the Social Sciences, although students are not always provided with the means to develop their foreign language abilities in order to interact in broader contexts [Lazaretnaya, 2012]. With regard to the teaching of English in schools, lessons usually start from the second grade and the curriculum is mainly aimed at improving communicative competence and language use in terms of interpersonal and intercultural interaction. The profile of the contemporary English teacher in Russia, meanwhile, has also undergone some noticeable changes. Ter-Minasova [2005], for example, writes that many people have left their jobs to teach English, despite their lack of relevant qualifications; in her opinion, this trend is due to how financially rewarding and prestigious the teaching of English has become. Consequently, the "contemporary teacher of English in Russia is less educated theoretically and more pragmatically oriented" [p. 453].

2.2. What does literature mean in terms of text selection?

Text selection in the LLE context is a multi-stage process that is ultimately determined by how teachers and educationists perceive the nature of literature [Zagryadskaya, 2017]. For example, some believe

that only those great authors, whose works have not only stood the test of time, but who have also won plaudits for their serious study of the human condition, represent literature. Others might feel that literature is a relative concept whose value is determined by societal mores [Carter, 2007]. The literature shows that texts can be selected based on several different criteria. For example, when asking teachers about the texts they use, it is important to know how they relate to literary texts, i. e. whether as works of enduring value or as texts with more functional properties, their value tightly linked to learners' needs [Paran, 2000; Hall, 2015; Luukka, 2017]. There are also issues of lexical complexity and student ability [Zagryadskaya, 2017], as well as how interaction occurs between the text, situation and reader [Luukka, 2017]. Collie and Slater [1987] discuss the importance of the text's cultural significance, as well as student interest. They place particular emphasis on the ability of the text to communicate with students on a personal level. Maley [2001], similarly, strongly recommends that the interests of students be taken into account when selecting texts. In terms of literary periods, Zagryadskaya [2017, p. 22] writes that it is possible to use works from different eras, although she feels that those from the 20th and 21st centuries are more effective because they are "chronologically closer to our time era, are of great interest to students and encourage them to participate in discussions, expressing their attitudes towards the described events". Indeed, given all these different criteria, it is not surprising that the process of selecting texts does not always go smoothly. For example, Morozova [2012], referring to the situation in Russia, writes that teachers face serious problems when choosing appropriate texts because their personal tastes may significantly differ from those of their students. She recommends using a "trial and error" approach to selecting texts [p. 327] alongside frequent consultations with colleagues, arguing that such an approach more effectively takes into account the abilities and interests of students, while also ensuring that the linguistic and cultural content of the text is in line with curriculum requirements at schools and universities. The literature also suggests that literary works that were popular during Soviet times continue to be used. McCaughey [2005, p. 456], for example, says that every Russian student knows the names of W. Somerset Maugham and Jerome K. Jerome, although contemporary American students might not know them. In his opinion, the popularity of these authors in Russia is likely a product of them having been liked by some high-ranking official in the Soviet publishing industry, and not because of the apolitical nature of their works. Nevertheless, while these insights are useful, little empirical evidence is provided as to how widely used these texts really are in today's Russia, in what teaching contexts they are normally used, and how they are incorporated into lessons. Other writers, by contrast, have pointed to changes in the types of texts used by English teachers in Russia. For example, Pitina [2015, p. 565], in her study of English language

teachers at Chelyabinsk State University, mentions the names of several contemporary works of literature, such as "Magpie" (1998), "The House in Norham Gardens" (1974), "Black Swan Green" (2006), "Portobello" (2008) and "Waterland" (1983). Belkina and Stetsenko [2015] also write about the use of more contemporary works in English language education at a Russian university. They mention using "Digital Fortress" by Dan Brown, "Annie" by Linda Page, "Shopaholic takes Manhattan" by Sophie Kinsella, and "If Tomorrow Comes" by Sidney Sheldon. All of these texts belong to the 20th and 21st centuries, allowing us to conclude that, at least at Russian universities, some teachers are currently using modern literary texts to teach English.

2.3. Approaches to Teaching Literature
2.3.1 Language-based Approach

The language-based approach seeks to closely integrate language and literature by fostering an activity-oriented, language-sensitive, student-centered classroom environment [Carter, Long, 1990; Van, 2009]. The reasoning is that, by studying the language of literature, learners will not only improve their English language ability, but also develop critical thinking and interpretative skills [Carter and Long, 1990; Lazar, 1993; Van, 2009]. Activities associated with a language-based approach can be summarizing story plots, cloze procedures, debates, making predictions, and rewriting the ending of a story [Van, 2009], as well as role-play and reading comprehension activities like choosing the appropriate title or summary for a text [Lazar, 1993]. Extensive reading and "mining a text for its language" are other interpretations of this approach [Bloemert; Jansen and van de Grift, 2016, p. 176]. The approach is rather broad, and proponents might have different goals: some might use literature as purely a language resource, or they might focus on studying the literary text itself, often employing stylistic analysis, where the text's linguistic features are closely studied so as to gain a deeper understanding of the text [Lazar, 1993]. In the Russian context, there have been a handful of studies on how Russian EFL teachers use the language-based approach in the LLE context. For example, Pitina [2015] discovered that the English teachers she surveyed favored a discursive approach to teaching English through literary texts. In their opinion, this approach, which is language-based, was very suitable for developing the four language skills, i. e. reading, writing, speaking and listening, since it combined the study of authentic examples of spoken and written discourses. Bekisheva and Gasparyan [2014], likewise, in their account of teachers at Tomsk Polytechnic University, revealed that they used several language-based activities like creative writing and role-play when using literary texts in their English language lessons.

2.3.2. The Cultural Approach

The cultural approach is described as a more traditional approach to literature by Lazar (1993) and Savvidou (2004), where, unlike the language-based approach, learners explore a text's historical and socio-political background, learning about different ideologies, cul-

tures, writers, literary movements, philosophies, and religious movements. The text might be discussed in the learners' L1, and it might also be translated from the L2 into the L1 (Lazar, 1993). The literature contained a few personal accounts, in the Russian context, where teachers discuss their own approaches to integrating literature into language education. Belkova and Chubak [2016, p. 1664], for example, discuss using several activities connected with this approach, e. g. discussing the author's biography, providing an explanation of the main features of relevant literary trends, showing the students a portrait of the author, although they also discuss activities connected with the language-based approach. Anosova [2013, pp. 16–17] similarly recommends using the cultural approach when using literary texts in EFL education. She prefers using poetical works, including sonnets by Shakespeare, and designing activities that familiarize her students with the era in which the piece was written. It should be noted that not everyone considers this approach to be effective. Savvidou (2004) contends that this approach is generally not used in Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) because it is considered teacher-centered, providing fewer opportunities to practice language. However, studies by Akyel and Yalçin [1990], Ainy [2007], Rashid, Vethamani and Rahman [2010] and Divsar [2014] show that EFL teachers in several countries continue to use this approach. Teachers who participated in Ainy's [2007] study, for example, justified their preferences by claiming that the cultural approach contributed to their students ' understanding of the text.

2.3.3. Personal-response and Reader-response approaches

The personal-response approach, as the name implies, encourages learners to use their personal and cultural experiences to interpret the text and construct meaning [Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993; Savvidou, 2004]. Activities can be both stylistic and interpretative, but learners are encouraged to express their own opinions [Hirvela, 1996]. The reader-response approach similarly encourages learners to engage in independent mean making [Bloemert, et al., 2016]. The two approaches appear to be very similar, although Hirvela [1996, p. 128] argues that, in terms of the interpretative process, the text occupies a position of authority vis-à-vis the learner in the personal-response approach, while the learner plays a more equal role in the reader-response approach. In the Russian context, Belkina and Stetsenko [2015] discuss their use of this approach at Syktyvkar State University when teaching English (they both actively use literature), stating that teachers need to encourage their students to express their opinions and views, and that suitable texts need to be selected so that they reflect learners' needs.

2.3.4. Comprehensive Approach to Literature in Foreign Language Education

Bloemert, et al. [2016] propose a Comprehensive Approach to teaching literature that incorporates four different approaches: language-based, context, reader and text approaches. The text and con-

text approaches are concerned with the study of literature: the text approach promotes the study of formal literary elements via close reading and familiarization with theoretical literary discourse, while the context approach, which appears very similar, if not identical, to the cultural approach, concerns itself with a text's historical and cultural contexts [p. 174]. The language and reader approaches, on the other hand, employ literature as a resource. The Comprehensive Approach is located at the point where these four approaches overlap. Such an approach could ensure that the benefits provided by all four approaches are unified under one approach, although the four approaches are not necessarily accorded equal weight. For example, in their study of secondary school students in the Netherlands, Bloemert, Paran, Jansen and van de Grift [2017] discovered that a majority of students (74%) perceived the language approach as being the most beneficial for EFL literature education, followed by the context approach (56%). The reader (33%) and text (12%) approaches were mentioned by significantly fewer respondents. One possible interpretation of these results could be the need to use a comprehensive approach that focused mostly on the language-based approach, while also incorporating some elements (to a lesser degree) from the other three approaches.

2.3.5. Summary   In general, the literature revealed that there are relatively few studies, in the Russian context, that provide empirical data with regard to the approaches used by Russian EFL teachers when using literature in their lessons or their text selection criteria. The lack of studies also makes it difficult to ascertain what changes have taken place post-Perestroika with regard to how contemporary teachers incorporate authentic texts, specifically literature, into their lessons. Unlike the Russian context, there are many systematic studies on this topic internationally [Fogal, 2010; Ganapathy and Seetharam, 2016; Bloemert et al., 2017; Freyn, 2017; Duncan and Paran, 2017; Luukka, 2017, Syuhada, 2017]. However, while there is a dearth of empirical research on Russia, this does not detract from the fact that there are a number of teaching manuals in Russian [Kutsenko, 2006; Goldman, 2014; Alexandrovich, 2016; Valkovskaya and Ilyushkina, 2016; Vasilenko, 2016] that include strategies and advice on how to use literary texts when teaching English. It is, nevertheless, unclear if teachers actually use these books. Moreover, the literature that does exist on the use of literature in foreign language education in Russia [Zagornaya, 1992; Semenyuk, 2004; Barinova, 2009; Loseva, Kuznetsova and Igeysinova, 2016] is generally theoretical in nature, often without any practical and empirical insights that could reflect the attitudes and experiences of actual foreign language teachers in Russia. This is not to say that studies do not exist. For example, some studies suggest that Russian teachers of English continue to rely on traditional TEFL methods, focusing unduly on writing skills and grammar [Rasskazova, Guzikova and

Green, 2017], as well as translation [Ivanova and Tivyaeva, 2015]. However, these studies refer to general EFL practices, and do not look at teachers' use of authentic texts, including literature, in their lessons. There are some exceptions to this, notably Bekisheva and Gasparyan [2014], Pitina [2015] and Belkina and Stetsenko [2015], whose works specifically discuss the approaches and texts used by English teachers in the LLE context. Yet, while these studies are informative, they focus solely on the situation at universities and do not offer any insights in terms of what is happening in schools and other teaching contexts in Russia, e. g. language institutes.

3. Methodology
3.1. Research Questions

After taking into account the gaps in information that were identified during the literature review, the following research questions were explored as part of the study:

- What factors do teachers consider to be important when selecting literary texts?
- What teaching approaches do teachers employ when using literary texts?

3.2. Sampling

The study was carried out using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling methods. A total of 158 Russian English teachers participated in the study. The data presented below, however, contains the responses of the 152 participants (117 women, 31 men; 4 teachers chose not to disclose this information) who reported using literary texts in the classroom (30 teachers reported "rarely" using literary texts, with 45 reporting "sometimes", 39 "often" and 38 "almost always"). Participants ranged in age from 21 to 69 years, with the mean age (standard deviation) and median age being 37.39 (10.33) and 35.5 respectively. Teachers who participated in the study reported working in Moscow and other Russian cities. In terms of teaching context, 8 teachers were from primary schools, 28 from secondary schools, 67 from universities, 30 from language institutes, 3 from vocational schools and 14 were private tutors; 2 teachers chose not to reveal where they taught.

3.3 Methods and Instruments

Data was collected via a semi-structured questionnaire, which was presented to the participating teachers in electronic format. After the initial design of the research questions, a draft questionnaire was piloted with a group of 16 Russian EFL teachers from two Moscow schools. Together with several Likert-scale batteries, the final questionnaire included one open-ended question on the titles of literary works (and authors) used by EFL teachers for language education purposes. A link to the questionnaire was emailed to different schools, universities, language schools, teacher associations and forums, as well as tutoring centers, explaining the scope of the study and requesting teacher

participation. The questionnaire remained accessible for participating teachers for 50 days in the summer of 2017. The research data that was subsequently obtained was analyzed using SPSS22 statistical analysis software. A reliability analysis of the relevant questionnaire items indicated a Cronbach's Alpha of .729.

4. Results

Descriptive statistics for text selection criteria can be seen in Table 1. From the data, students' English language ability appears to be the most important criterion for respondents, closely followed by the text's ability to hold the students' interest and age-appropriateness. Vocabulary also appears to be a more critical factor than grammar content in text selection. Genre and the teacher's interests do not appear to be as important to respondents when selecting texts.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics which literary forms participants considered appropriate to teach EFL. The novella received fewer responses than other genres. This might suggest that some respondents do not differentiate between a novel and novella, or that they do not know what a novella is. Participants considered short stories to be the most appropriate form, while the novel was the least popular.

In terms of preferences for literary periods, respondents appeared to overwhelmingly prefer 20th and 21st century literary texts, as can be seen from the descriptive statistics in Table 3.

Table 4 lists respondents' coded responses to the open-ended question on what literary texts (and authors) they prefer when teaching English. Teachers cited a total of 51 authors, including Frank Baum, Gerald Durrell, H. Rider Haggard, Helen Fielding, J. Barnes, J. R. R. Tolkien, James Thurber, Jane Austen, John Fowles, John Green, John Irving, John Steinbeck, John Updike, Jonathan Safran Foer, Kate Chopin, Louis de Bernieres, Mark Haddon, Peter Ackroyd, Richmal Crompton, Truman Capote, Terry Pratchett, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, William Golding, Zora Neale Hurston, A. A. Milne, Aldous Huxley, Agatha Christie, George Bernard Shaw, C. S. Lewis and Charles Dickens (each of these was only cited once). Only those authors have been included in Table 4 whose names were mentioned by at least two respondents. A total of 74 respondents opted to answer the question. 42 specifically gave the names of authors, while 38 specifically cited the names of titles. Many respondents gave the names of both authors and titles. As a result, their responses underwent multiple instances of coding. As the data shows, the most frequently cited author appears to be W. Somerset Maugham. He is also cited in a variety of teaching contexts. The data also indicates that participants overwhelmingly prefer 20th and 21st century authors, as well as some authors who started writing at the turn of the 19th century.

Table 5 provides the names of the titles mentioned by teachers in response to the open-ended question. *Harry Potter* by J. K. Rowling

Table 1. **The importance of different criteria during text selection as ranked by participants**

	N	Mean [SD*]	Mdn
Students' English ability	150	4.77 [.58]	5.00
Text's social and cultural context	148	4.28 [.91]	5.00
Ability to hold students' interest	149	4.66 [.63]	5.00
Ability to hold teachers' interest	149	3.83 [1.1]	4.00
Genre	147	3.77 [1.14]	4.00
Grammar content	148	3.85 [.99]	4.00
Vocabulary content	149	4.37 [.81]	5.00
Age-appropriateness	149	4.56 [.75]	5.00
Length	149	4.34 [.88]	5.00

* Standard deviation
Note. 1=Not important; 2=Slightly unimportant; 3=Slightly important; 4=Moderately Important; 5=Very important

Table 2. **The appropriateness of different literary forms as ranked by participants**

	N	Mean [SD]	Mdn
Short Story	150	4.70 [.69]	5.00
Novella	131	3.62 [1.11]	4.00
Novel	149	3.26 [1.21]	3.00
Poetry	141	3.51 [1.2]	4.00
Drama	141	3.36 [1.32]	4.00

Note. 1=Inappropriate; 2=Slightly inappropriate; 3=Slightly appropriate; 4=Moderately appropriate; 5=Very appropriate

Table 3. **The appropriateness of different literary periods as ranked by participants**

	N	Mean [SD]	Mdn
Classical and Medieval	139	2.62 [1.34]	2.00
16th-19th Century	139	3.02 [1.19]	3.00
20th Century	147	4.44 [.80]	5.00
21st Century	145	4.53 [.76]	5.00

Note. 1=Inappropriate; 2=Slightly inappropriate; 3=Slightly appropriate; 4=Moderately appropriate; 5=Very appropriate

Table 4. **Authors cited based on number of participants**

	N	Context	Period
W. Somerset Maugham	14	U, L, S, I	20th Century
O. Henry	8	I, L, S, U	19th-20th Century
William Shakespeare	6	I, P, S, U	16th-17th Century
Ernest Hemingway	5	I, S, U	20th Century
Edgar Allen Poe	4	L, U	19th Century
J. K. Rowling	4	U, L, P	20th-21st Century
Oscar Wilde	4	U, L, P, S	19th Century
Ray Bradbury	4	U	20th-21st Century
Roald Dahl	4	I, Pm, S	20th Century
Arthur Conan Doyle	3	U, P, S	19th-20th Century
F. S. Fitzgerald	3	U, S	20th Century
J. D. Salinger	3	U	20th Century
J. K. Jerome	3	U, L	19th-20th Century
Jack London	3	I, U	19th-20th Century
Rudyard Kipling	3	I, L, Pm	20th Century
Alice Munro	2	U	20th-21st Century
H. G. Wells	2	U	19th-20th Century
Isaac Asimov	2	U	20th Century
John Galsworthy	2	L	19th-20th Century

Note. U=University; P=Professional School; I=Independent Contractor;
Pm=Primary School; S=Secondary School; L=Language Institute

is by far the most frequently cited title (the individual books in the series were not cited by anyone), followed by *Three Men in a Boat* by J. K. Jerome.

Table 6 provides descriptive statistics for how frequently respondents use various activities with literary texts when teaching English. The data shows that summarizing the text appears to be the most frequently used activity by respondents, followed very closely by debate.

Table 7 provides descriptive statistics for participants' responses regarding the appropriateness of several different approaches to using literature in EFL education. The data indicates that teachers most strongly favor encouraging students to find a personal connection with the themes found in the text, as well as getting them to use their lin-

Table 5. **Works cited based on number of participants**

	N	Context		N	Context
Harry Potter	5	S, I, L, U	Jack and the Beanstalk	1	Pm
Three Men in a Boat	3	U, L	Jaws	1	L
Peter Pan	2	I, Pm	Just So Stories	1	Pm
Sherlock Holmes	2	I, S	Limericks	1	I
The Great Gatsby	2	U, S	Little Red Riding Hood	1	Pm
The Picture of Dorian Gray	2	U, L	Lord of the Rings	1	S
Theatre	2	S, L	Matilda	1	Pm
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	1	Pm	Robin Hood	1	Pm
English Fairy Tales	1	Pm	Romeo & Juliet	1	U
Fahrenheit 451	1	U	The Firm	1	U
Forsyte Saga	1	L	The Secret Garden	1	I
Howl's Moving Castle	1	U	Winnie-the-Pooh	1	Pm
Illustrated Man	1	Pm	The Wizard of Oz	1	Pm

Note. U=University; P=Professional School; I=Independent Contractor; Pm=Primary School; S=Secondary School; L=Language Institute

Table 6. **Frequency of use of different activities by participants when using literature in EFL lessons**

	N	Mean [SD]	Mdn
Cloze test (or gap-fill exercise)	145	3.14 [1.13]	3.00
Dictation	146	2.33 [1.22]	2.00
Rewrite the ending	144	2.82 [1.15]	3.00
Summarizing the text	147	4.02 [1.13]	4.00
Multiple-choice questions (MCQs)	148	3.40 [1.27]	4.00
Keeping a reading diary or journal	145	2.65 [1.46]	3.00
Role-play	147	3.11 [1.26]	3.00
Debate	148	4.01 [1.13]	4.00
Recital	146	2.68 [1.32]	3.00

Note. 1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Regularly

Table 7. **Participants' opinions regarding the appropriateness of different approaches to LLE**

	N	Mean [SD]	Mdn
Encourage students to find a personal connection (personal experience, feelings and opinions) with the topics found in the literary texts	146	4.48 [.84]	5.00
Provide historical/political/cultural context and background to the literary texts used in the class	147	4.25 [.91]	4.00
Encourage students to use their linguistic knowledge to make personal judgements and interpretations of the literary text	146	4.51 [.69]	5.00
Pre-teach all the difficult words in the literary text	148	3.91 [1.2]	4.00
Translate parts of the literary text from English to Russian	145	3.54 [1.27]	4.00
Enjoy the story as a whole and not specific details	146	3.9 [1.06]	4.00
Focus on reading comprehension of the text	146	3.96 [.89]	4.00
Focus on discussion about the text	146	4.49 [.71]	5.00

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Somewhat Disagree; 3=Undecided; 4= Somewhat Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

guistic knowledge to make personal judgments and interpretations. Translating parts of the text to Russian appears to be the least popular approach.

5. Discussion & Conclusion

In general, while the data indicated some interesting parallels with Soviet pedagogies with regard to LLE, there was also clear evidence of a shift in teaching approaches and methodologies, most likely because of a greater focus on CLT, which requires greater engagement with authentic texts [Svalberg, 2012]. For example, with regard to text selection criteria, participating teachers appeared to attach great importance to the language ability and interests of their students, which is similarly reflected in Maley's [2001, p.184] contention that, when selecting texts, priority should be given to learners' interests. Indeed, English teachers in studies by Tasneen [2010], Belkina and Stetsenko [2015] and Luukka [2017] have similarly written about the importance of prioritizing learners' interests during the text selection process. The data also shows that Russian EFL teachers prefer to use literary texts to improve learners' knowledge of vocabulary as opposed to grammar (see Table 1). One possible reason for this may be that, as mentioned in Brumfit and Carter [1986], literary language is 'distorted' and may present difficulties when organizing grammar lessons. Another possible reason is that, as McNeill [2017] has pointed out, linguists have begun to understand the importance of lexis to language acquisition,

perhaps much more so than grammar. In a CLT context, teachers' use of literary texts as vehicles for vocabulary development as opposed to grammar development might suggest that some EFL teachers have begun placing more emphasis on vocabulary development through the use of authentic texts than in the past, when grammar-translation methods were more popular. In addition, the data indicates that participants prefer short stories to other literary forms. This is not surprising, since short stories have been described as more practical in terms of length, they are less time-consuming, are suitable for different types of lesson, are easy to understand and, unlike novels, their themes can be much more diverse; they are, as a result, more capable of holding students' interest [Collie and Slater, 1987]. EFL teachers surveyed by Ainy [2007] and Baba [2008], for example, said that they used short stories because these not only motivated their students and kept them interested, but their format was also suitable for different types of lessons, and they contained diverse themes.

The study also revealed something quite fascinating. Ter-Minasova [2005], McCaughey [2005], Ustinova [2005] and Lazaretnaya [2012] specifically mention several authors who were very popular among Soviet English teachers, e. g., W. Somerset Maugham, Jerome K. Jerome, Jack London, O. Henry and Ernest Hemingway. Lazaretnaya [2012] and McCaughey [2005] also mention the novel "Three Men in a Boat" by Jerome K. Jerome. It was, therefore, interesting that these were among the most frequently cited names when teachers were asked to list the literary texts (and authors) they preferred to use when teaching English [see tables 4 and 5]. Teachers also mentioned several authors from the 21st century, but the fact that some very popular authors from the Soviet era continue to be used for TEFL purposes suggests that contemporary Russian EFL teachers are still somewhat influenced by Soviet pedagogical preferences. This tendency on the part of teachers might be due to the "apprenticeship of observation", where future teachers, having already spent thousands of hours observing their teachers during their student years, sometimes end up teaching as they were taught (Borg, 2004). Nonetheless, while Soviet influences might affect text selection, teachers overwhelmingly expressed a preference for authors from the 20th and 21st centuries. This suggests that they are selecting literary texts that they feel will not only engage students, but also contain language that meets their communicative requirements in the present. Zagryadskaya [2017] has similarly written in support of works from the 20th and 21st centuries, arguing that these are best suited for language education, while Pitina [2015] and Belkina and Stetsenko [2015] are examples of research in a Russian context where texts chosen by teachers are from the 20th and 21st centuries.

In terms of methods, the teachers surveyed showed a strong preference for the language-based approach to LLE, with some cultural approach influences as well. Indeed, their preference for summariz-

ing, debate and multiple-choice questions, all language-based activities [Van, 2009, p.7], are evidence of this tendency. One reason for the popularity of the language-based approach among teachers may be due to the perception that it is considered accessible and motivating for students and meets both their language learning and their literature needs [Van, 2009]. The continued use of some activities tied to the cultural approach, meanwhile, suggests that traditional Soviet pedagogical influences play a tangible, albeit reduced role. Of course, there might be another reason for the continued use of elements connected with the cultural approach in the Russian context. Several writers [Ter-Minasova, 2000; Zagraiskaya, 2009; Belkina, Stetsenko, 2015, Zagryadskaya, 2017] have stressed the need to focus on the cultural aspects of language education, especially when using authentic (including literary) texts, in order to better acquaint learners with other cultures and ways of life. Their approach to LLE focuses, in part, on providing learners with a more comprehensive education, which reflects Paran's observation [2008] that teaching foreign languages is not only a matter of linguistics, but also of education. Consequently, the reason for teachers' use of tasks associated with the cultural approach may be because they consider it necessary to improve the cultural knowledge and intercultural competence of Russian citizens who have to integrate into a globalized world, especially taking into account Russia's erstwhile isolation during the Soviet era.

In conclusion, the data obtained during the study indicates that LLE in the Russian EFL context has notably evolved after the collapse of the Soviet Union, although some influences from the Soviet era have clearly survived, albeit in a weakened state. Indeed, Russian EFL teachers who participated in the study appeared to focus their attention on the interests of their students and approached LLE within a framework that accords priority to more practical language use. As language education, including TEFL, evolves to focus more and more on the study of diverse authentic text [Carter, 2015], empirical studies that analyze teachers' text choices and approaches will become increasingly more important. In the Russian context, where foreign language education is gaining in importance, more empirical studies on LLE, as a subset of authentic text use in second and foreign language acquisition, would help provide a more complete picture of current practices in this field.

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