

## Russian and Swedish Young Learners in Communication in English with the Use of Digital Tools

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### Abstract

This project investigates Swedish and Russian young learners' uses of modern technology in international communication in English. Modern technology plays an increasing role in children's documentation and international communication at schools. The role of the English language in new ways of communicating and interacting is therefore relevant to investigate. The development of new digital tools implies that young learners are not only consumers but also producers of information in English, and that new forms of representations can be used when communicating in English. The present study is a project of cooperation between the universities in Uppsala, Sweden and Kaliningrad, Russia and describes communication between three schools in Sweden and three schools in Russia. The communication at the websites provides useful material of 12-year-olds who used English as their lingua franca and as means of communicating at three common websites with the help of blogs, podcasts and films from September 2012 to May 2013. All the young learners' productions at the three websites were studied in terms of modes of communication, length of contributions, structural complexity in the English language and topics selected in the messages. The results show that young Russian and Swedish learners are able to use the English language in authentic communication by using different digital tools within the topic fields of the levels A1 and A2 of the CEFR. The learners' production showed evidence of the occurrence of complex structures and current non-standard features of the English language with very few instances of misunderstandings or communication breakdowns.