

# The Use of Swear Words in English and Russian Phraseological Units

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Odjel za anglistiku

Diplomski sveučilišni studij engleskog jezika i književnosti; smjer: nastavnički  
(dvopredmetni)

**Ella Malenica**

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Diplomski rad

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Zadar, 2020.



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Zadar, 28. svibnja 2020.

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## 1. Introduction

The language of swearing has been taboo for many years considering that swear words have always been regarded as offensive, inappropriate and unacceptable in any social context. However, they are also the most powerful words that can express both positive and negative emotions; therefore they are actively used by people of all ages, genders, social statuses and languages. Taking into consideration that swear words and obscenity are common in all languages, there are many similarities and differences between them and their rendition of obscenity. Even though the topic of swearing has been neglected for many years, it is a quite complex one and many discussions and different interpretations can be made. That is to say, the formation of swear words, their functions, degrees of offensiveness, different typologies and classifications can be investigated.

However, in this diploma thesis I will focus primarily on the way how the most common English and Russian swear words are used in phraseology or, more precisely, how different types of phraseological units can be formed by using the most common swear words. Motivation for this topic arises from the fact that swear words have always been ignored in research on language, despite the fact that they indeed are emotionally, socially and psychologically powerful words. As a result, they are worth studying; therefore the main goal of this diploma thesis is to present and compare English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words, explain their meanings and classify them according to classification suggested by Fiedler (2007).

In the following chapters, the methodological procedure of this diploma thesis as well as the collected corpus will be presented and explained. As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, I will firstly begin with the most basic terminology related to the field of phraseology and the main subject of its studies – phraseological unit (PU). The main characteristics of a PU as well as the conventional types that can be found will be explained. What is more, English and Russian classifications of phraseology will be described and the most important typologies will be mentioned. Considering that the topic of this diploma thesis is the use of swear words in phraseological units, the theoretical framework of swearing will be presented in the following chapter. Firstly, I will provide definitions of the term *swear word* and explain the importance of its literal and non-literal meaning when used in swearing. In addition, several interpretations as well as typologies of swearing will be presented and

explained. What is more, an exceptionally rich linguistic system, also known as Russian *mat*, will be mentioned. Except for different classifications and typologies of swearing, I will also list the most frequently used English and Russian swear words. The theoretical overview will be followed with the descriptive analysis of the collected corpus which presents the main part of this diploma thesis. In the analysis, phraseological units will be classified according to the conventional types suggested by Fiedler and their meanings will be explained. In the final part of the paper, the results of the analysis as well as the conclusion of the thesis will be presented.

## 2. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodological procedure of the work will be explained. The main goal of this diploma thesis is to investigate and compare the use of swear words in English and Russian phraseological units. Taking into consideration the works *Frazeologija u rodnome okviru* by Hrnjak (2017) and *English Phraseology* by Fiedler (2007), the paper firstly provides the theoretical framework that is related to phraseology and phraseological units. In addition, classifications proposed by Makkai, Gläser, Roos and Vinogradov, which are stated in the abovementioned works, are also used to provide a better insight into different types of PUs. The focus of this diploma thesis will be on a descriptive analysis presented by Fiedler who differentiates between various conventional types of PUs. Moreover, these types will be listed and described, considering that they are a starting point for the analysis. In addition, swearing as well as different classifications and typologies related to it will be described and classified according to the works of Ljung (2011), Pinker (2007) and Wajnryb (2004).

As aforesaid, in this diploma thesis English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words will be collected, presented and analyzed. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), swear words are regarded as informal and restricted to colloquial styles; therefore they are often seen as vulgar, taboo or slang (Allan and Burridge, 2006). Although there is a great number of various swear words in both languages, my selection of words was based on those that are, according to many linguists, considered the most common and frequently used ones. As a result, the collected corpus includes phraseological units that contain English swear words *fuck*, *shit* and *ass* as well as Russian ones *hui* (хуй) ‘prick’ and *pizda* (пизда) ‘cunt’. Even though the word *fuck* originally refers to a sexual intercourse, it is,



nowadays, mostly used for its emotional meaning considering that it can be used to express anger, surprise, frustration, or to simply emphasize a point (Stuart-Hamilton, 2007). Additionally, the primary meaning of a word *shit* is a quite unpleasant one which refers to excrement. However, when used as a swear word, it usually refers to some nonsense, something of low quality or an unpleasant person and the same can be said for the swear word *ass* (Wajnryb, 2004). As far as Russian language is concerned, I have chosen to analyze the two most frequently used Russian swear words that also present a significant part of well-known Russian *mat*: *hui* (хуй) ‘prick’ and *pizda* (пизда) ‘cunt’. Although these words primarily refer to man and woman’s sexual organs, they are used with multiple meanings. Both words can refer to a person, usually an unpleasant or a stupid one, an unpleasant situation, or they can be used with various verbs to express negative connotations, denote the absence of something or impossibility of doing something (Il’jasova, 1994). All of the abovementioned swear words can have multiple meanings and be used in almost every context, however, in this diploma thesis, I will focus primarily on how they are used in phraseological units and in which conventional types of PUs the majority of them can be found.

The main aim of this diploma thesis is to compare English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words and to classify them according to different conventional types. As mentioned above, in this diploma thesis I will be using the descriptive analysis according to the principles of classification suggested by Fiedler (2007). The PUs will be classified according to their type and such classification will provide an insight into which of these conventional types can be found within the collected corpus. First of all, every conventional type found will be shortly explained and then the collected PUs that belong to that particular type will be presented. Furthermore, the collected PUs will be listed in tables and their meanings will be explained. In the final part of the paper, the results will be presented and the collected corpus of both languages will be shown in two figures. In addition, the comparison of the collected corpus will provide a clear insight into which conventional types occur more often in which language. What is more, the analysis of the collected PUs will also present whether there is a tendency towards a particular swear word.

### 3. The Corpus

Taking into consideration that this diploma thesis focuses primarily on the use of swear words in phraseological units, I have chosen to investigate the sources that focus on slang, colloquial expressions and obscene language. As a result, the corpus of PUs was collected from various online sources and dictionaries which offer a great variety of obscene expressions. That is to say, the online sources *Online Slang Dictionary* (n.d.), *Oxford Learners Dictionary* (n.d.), *Urban Dictionary* (n.d.) and *Cockney Rhyming Slang* (n.d.) as well as *The Slangman Guide to Dirty English* (2003) by Burke serve as the English corpus of PUs. As far as Russian PUs are concerned, *Dictionary of Russian Slang and Colloquial Expressions* (2006), *Russkij mat* (1994), *Boljšoj slovar' mata* (2014), *Russkij mat: Tolkovyj slovar'* (2000) as well as online sources *Russian Academic Dictionary* (n.d.) and *Russian Slang Dictionary* (n.d.) serve as the Russian corpus of PUs. As far as the collected corpus is concerned, I have focused primarily on searching phraseological units that contain English and Russian swear words that have been mentioned in the previous chapter. As a result, PUs were identified in online dictionaries and their meanings were explained; therefore in the analysis of this diploma thesis I have included both PUs and their meanings. When it comes to Russian PUs, they are presented both in Latin and in Cyrillic. The collected corpus consists of 198 phraseological units that include the abovementioned English and Russian swear words. That is to say, 93 phraseological units with the swear words *fuck*, *shit* and *ass* were found in English language, whereas in Russian, 105 phraseological units with the swear words *hui* and *pizda* were found. As already stated, these phraseological units will be divided and classified according to the classification presented by Fiedler (2007). In order to present the similarities and differences as accurate as possible, the method of descriptive analysis as well as comparison will be used. The PU classification and comparison will be used to show the similarities and differences between the two languages and their ways of forming PUs that contain swear words.

### 4. Phraseology

Every language has fixed expressions that are not produced during the speech, but rather reproduced as lexemes; however, their meanings cannot be interpreted from the literal meaning of its components. According to Hrnjak, phraseology emerges in order to investigate this type of specific fixed expressions (Hrnjak, 2017). Moreover, phraseology is a relatively

young linguistic discipline that investigates a set of linguistic units which are also known as phraseological units (PUs). That is to say, phraseological units present the main subject of its field of study, and can also be referred to as multi-word lexemes, fixed expressions, set phrases, cliché or simply idioms (Fiedler, 2007). As far as the beginning of phraseology is concerned, a Swiss philologist Charles Bally was among the first ones that questioned phraseology from a linguistic perspective and raised a question of defining phraseological units as special linguistic units. Bally considered that there are multi-word expressions which have fixed structure and meaning, and whose components make sense only when used in this fixed combination. This definition was the basis of V. V. Vinogradov's phraseological conception which was, for many years, the most influential and widely accepted one (Hrnjak, 2017).

#### **4.1 Phraseological unit (PU) and its main characteristics**

According to Naciscione, “phraseological unit is a stable, cohesive combination of words with a fully or partially figurative meaning” (Naciscione, 2010, p. 32). However, for the purpose of understanding the definition of a PU better, it is crucial to firstly define its main characteristics. First of all, one of the main characteristics of a PU is that it consists of at least two independent words which makes it a polylexemic item. Secondly, a PU has stable semantic and syntactic structures which present another PU characteristic known as stability. However, this type of stability can be rather called a relative one, due to the fact that a PU can be variable which indicates that some of its elements may vary. This variation refers to the use of function words (e.g. *(as) dry as a bone*), spelling (e.g. *sweet f.a./Fanny Adams*), use of singular and plural forms of constituents (e.g. *down the tube/tubes*), variation of lexical constituents (e.g. *to sweep something under the rug/carpet*) or variation of both grammatical and lexical elements (e.g. *to put/have/lay a/one's finger to/on one's lips*) (Fiedler, 2007). Lexicalization is another important characteristic of a PU which indicates that a PU is considered as a part of language and memorized holistically, due to the fact that it is a fixed unit. As a result, a PU is not produced during the speech, but rather reproduced by a language speaker. Another extremely important characteristic of a PU is idiomaticity which refers to difficulty of understanding the meaning of a PU. That is to say, it is almost impossible to understand the real meaning of a PU from the meanings of its constituents. This characteristic causes many problems and difficulties to language learners, due to the fact that the actual meaning of its constituents does not have anything in common with its real meaning. For

example, a PU *to pull somebody's leg* means “to tease somebody” and language learners are unable to understand its real meaning from the words such as *pull* or *leg*. Another important characteristic, especially for this diploma thesis, is the fact that a PU is often used to put emphasis on a piece of writing or speech and to make it more expressive. This characteristic refers to connotations of a PU which can either be stylistic or expressive. When it comes to stylistic connotations, they are used to indicate the relationship between speakers and hearers; however they also denote the communicative situations in which PUs are used (Fiedler, 2007). According to Cowie et al., an idiom marked as formal reflects a distant relationship between the speaker and hearer, whereas an informal idiom reflects an intimate relationship and speaker's relaxed attitude (Cowie et al., 1983). In addition, different style markers are used by dictionaries in order to describe a PU better, for instance literary (e.g. *to give ear to*), archaic (e.g. *in the family way*), foreign (e.g. *per se*), colloquial (e.g. *one too many*), slang (e.g. *to shit bricks*) and vulgar (e.g. *when the shit hits the fan*). This distinction is important for this diploma thesis, due to the fact that its main focus is on slang and vulgar phraseological units. On the contrary, expressive connotations are primarily used to express speaker's state of mind and feelings such as anger, irritation, or frustration. As a result, they are used to provide additional information about the speaker's feelings and attitudes. As Fiedler suggests, the expressiveness of PUs can be increased with the use of rhyme, rhythm and rhetorical devices such as metonymy, metaphor, hyperbole, tautology, comparison, alliteration, parallelism, personification etc. As far as transformational deficiencies are concerned, idioms usually withstand so-called syntactic transformations, for example passivization or topicalization (Fiedler, 2007).

## 4.2 Classification of English PUs

In this chapter I will present different classifications and typologies which are based on both structural and functional criteria. That is to say, these typologies, which were suggested by linguists Makkai, Gläser and Roos, were used as a starting point for Fiedler's classification on which the main focus of this diploma thesis is. Even though these three typologies differ from each other, it can be noticed that there is a great number of similarities between them. As stated by Fiedler, Makkai divides idioms into two different groups: idioms of encoding and idioms of decoding. The latter are more important for this classification considering that they are semantic idioms which can be divided into lexemic and sememic. According to Makkai, lexemic idioms are primarily phrases; thus they can be phrasal verb

idioms (e.g. *to come up*), tournure idioms (e.g. *to miss the boat*), irreversible binomial idioms (e.g. *far and away*), incorporating verb idioms (e.g. *to baby-sit*), pseudo-idioms (e.g. *tit for tat*). However, they also include phrasal compound idioms (e.g. *hot dog*). Sememic idioms are sentence-like constructions that are used to express requests, politeness, warnings etc. (Fiedler, 2007). Makkai divides them into nine different types; however, considering that they will not be discussed in this diploma thesis, they will not be additionally explained. As stated by Fiedler, Gläser divides phraseological units into nominations, which are also known as word-like PUs, and propositions, which are known as sentence-like PUs. The latter can be divided into partial and complete propositions which can be additionally subdivided into different types. For instance, irreversible binomials, stereotyped comparisons, proverbial sayings as well as fragments of proverbs and quotations all constitute partial propositions. On the contrary, proverbs, slogans, routine formulae, quotations and winged words belong to complete propositions (Fiedler, 2007). What is more, Roos divides idioms into semantically and pragmatically defined ones. The former can be additionally subdivided into metaphorical idioms, unilateral idioms, idioms with specialized meanings and idioms with literal counterparts. On the contrary, social formulae, expressive formulae and gambits constitute pragmatic idioms which are identified according to their role in discourse (Fiedler, 2007).

#### 4.3 Classification of Russian PUs

As far as Russian phraseology is concerned, Hrnjak emphasizes that the articles published by V.V. Vinogradov, *Osnovnye ponjatija russkoj frazeologii kak lingvisticheskoj disciplini* (1946) and *Ob osnovnyh tipah frazeologicheskikh edinic v russkom jazyke* (1947), are considered to be the pioneering works of Russian phraseology. As stated by Hrnjak, in the abovementioned articles Vinogradov differentiates between three different types of phraseological units. Firstly, he explains phraseological fusions (*фразеологические сращения*) as completely non-motivated word groups, which means that the meaning of its components does not have any connection with the actual meaning of a phraseological unit (Hrnjak, 2017). For example, *as mad as a hatter* whose meaning, “very silly” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.), cannot be truly interpreted from the lexical meanings of its components. Secondly, phraseological unities (*фразеологические единства*) are partially non-motivated considering that their meaning can be deduced through metaphoric meaning of the whole phraseological unit (Hrnjak, 2017). For instance, *to wash one’s dirty laundry/linen in public* which means to discuss one’s personal affairs, especially something embarrassing,

in public (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Thirdly, phraseological collocations (*фразеологические сочетания*) are considered to have one component which preserves its direct meaning; thus motivates phraseological meaning of the whole (Hrnjak, 2017). For example, *to take exception to* which means “to object strongly to something” (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). That is to say, the bases for Russian phraseology are the works of Vinogradov who classifies phraseological units according to the degree of idiomaticity. However, Shanskij adds the fourth type of phraseological units known as phraseological expressions (*фразеологические выражения*) which are only reproduced during the speech and have permanent meaning and structure. As stated by Hrnjak, Baranov and Dobrovol'ski claim that the most important characteristics of phraseological units are stability, idiomaticity and their polylexemic structure. According to them, there are five types of phraseological units: idioms, collocations, proverbs, grammatical and syntactic phrases (Hrnjak, 2017). Valgina et al. differentiate between sentence-like phraseological units and phraseological units that have a form of a phrase. The latter can be additionally divided into eleven different types according to the way they are combined and parts of speech they include (Valgina et al., 2011).

#### **4.4 Conventional types of PUs in the majority of systemic descriptions**

As it can be observed, there are many interpretations and differentiations of phraseological units in English and Russian phraseologies. Even though many scholars and linguists have classified phraseological units in many different ways, there are some common types of PUs than occur in the majority of these classifications. Nevertheless, in this diploma thesis I have chosen to focus primarily on Fiedler's work and classify PUs according to the most common conventional types; therefore, in this chapter, I will present and describe the conventional types of PUs that can be found in the majority of systemic descriptions. In addition, I will also present special types of PUs as well as their marked uses.

First of all, phraseological nominations are used to indicate people, objects, relations, processes or states; therefore we can classify them according to the word class they belong to: nouns (e.g. *an old maid*), verbs (e.g. *to spill the beans*), adjectives (e.g. *off one's rocker*) and adverbs (e.g. *once in a blue moon*). As Fiedler states, phraseological nominations are “word equivalents which have one common feature – their nominative function” (Fiedler, 2007, p. 39). Second conventional type of PUs are binomials that are also called irreversible, due to the fact that they have fixed order. Mollin defines binomials as “coordinated word pairs whose

lexical elements share the same word class” (Mollin, 2014, p. 1). These word pairs are connected with conjunctions, mostly *and* and *or*, rarely *but* (e.g. *law and order*, *now or never*), or prepositions (e.g. *from top to bottom*) (Fiedler, 2007). Another conventional type involves stereotyped comparisons which are also called frozen similes, due to the fact that they are structurally fixed. According to Fiedler, we can differentiate between two main types of stereotyped comparisons:

- “(as) + adjective + as + noun phrase” (Fiedler, 2007, p. 43).

e.g. *(as) strong as a horse* meaning “very strong” (The Free Dictionary, n.d.)

- “(verb) + like + noun phrase” (Fiedler, 2007, p. 43).

e.g. *eat like a horse* meaning “to eat large quantities of food” (The Free Dictionary, n.d.)

In both of these types the noun phrases may vary; therefore there is a great number of possible comparisons. For instance, *work like a horse/ a dog/ a slave/ a nigger/ a Trojan* (Long, 1979). Furthermore, “proverb is a concise, well-known sentence which expresses a general truth, shared experience, a piece of advice, or a moral principle in an easy to memorize form and is handed down from generation to generation” (Fiedler, 2007, p. 44). It should be stated that the majority of proverbs involves some kind of metaphor, for example *birds of a feather flock together* which means that people who share the same interests attract each other. What is more, they can appear as simple sentences, complex ones or as elliptic constructions without a finite verb. In addition, they are important for every language, considering that they refer to cultural norms, shared values as well as patterns of behavior of language speakers. Proverbs are catchy and easily recognized due to a number of stylistic features such as alliteration, rhyme, assonance as well as syntactic devices such as repetition and parallelism (Fiedler, 2007). Another conventional type of a PU that differs from so far mentioned ones are winged words which are defined according to their origin. That is to say, they have been used by a specific author or they can be found in a historical source such as the Bible, Greek mythology and works of Shakespeare. As a result, they involve various quotations, slogans and catchphrases that are actively used in language. Some of the instances of winged words are *cross the Rubicon* or *to be or not to be* (Fiedler, 2007). Moreover, routine formulae are ready-made units that language speakers can use in specific situations. Furthermore, they can be divided according to the functions or social situations in which they

are used. Roos names them ‘pragmatic idioms’ and divides them into three groups according to the role they fulfill in discourse: social formulae (e.g. *you’re welcome*), gambits (e.g. *believe it or not*) and expressive formulae (e.g. *what the hell*) (Fiedler, 2007).

When it comes to special types of PUs, we can differentiate between paraphrasal verbs, restricted collocations, rhyming slang, wellerisms, and PUs with special elements such as color terms, proper names or parts of the body. Firstly, paraphrasal verbs are verbal PUs that include a transitive verb, which usually has a rather wide meaning, as well as a noun phrase that carries the main meaning (e.g. *to make a decision*). Restricted collocations are combinations of words in which one of the constituents is used in a figurative sense. Another special type of a PU that can be found in English language is rhyming slang. Instead of using an actual word, the pattern of rhyming slang includes the use of two words that paraphrase and rhyme with the concept intended, for example *dog and bone* stands for ‘phone’. Rhyming slang is a highly distinctive feature of Cockney language spoken in London’s East End; therefore it can be said that Cockney Rhyming Slang is a well-known one (Fiedler, 2007). According to Mieder, wellerisms are sentence-like PUs that include three items: a statement, an identification of the speaker, and a quite unexpected phrase (Mieder, 1989). For instance, “*Everyone to his taste,*” *said the farmer and kissed the cow*. What is more, there are also PUs with special elements such as color terms, proper names and parts of the body. In addition, PUs containing color terms are important for every national phraseology, due to the fact that they show the relation between language and culture as well as their perception of particular colors. For example, *the black sheep (of the family)* which refers to a person that is different from the rest, probably bad or embarrassing (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.). As mentioned above, PUs can also include terms that denote parts of the body and their figurative meaning is primarily connected with the function of organs. For example, a PU *to lose one’s head*, which means “to become unable to act in a calm or sensible way” (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, n.d.), uses *head* that is responsible for logical thinking. The last ones are PUs containing proper names which are also connected to the cultural tradition of a particular language community. For instance, *I’m all right, Jack* which is used to express that one is happy with one’s life and does not care for other people’s problems. In this example the proper name Jack serves as a prototypical example of a person that is an ordinary one (Fiedler, 2007).



Furthermore, PUs can also be used in a creative way; therefore marked uses of PUs present a type of language play. For this diploma thesis it is important to focus primarily on modifications as such considering that a great number of PUs containing swear words are actually modified. Firstly, substitution is the most common type of modification in which one or several elements are replaced by others. For example, *ready, steady, glow* in which *glow* replaces the word *go*. Expansion is a second type of modification that involves the use of additional constituents which usually add specific semantic components. For instance, *electoral Trojan horse* in which *electoral* has been added to suit and expand the topic of the text. Another type is reduction, or more precisely, the deletion of particular elements such as in the example *birds of a feather* in which ‘flock together’ has been omitted. Moreover, permutation includes reordering of phraseological constituent, for example *Britannia has waived the rules* instead of *Britannia rules the waves* (Fiedler, 2007).

## 5. What is a swear word?

Taking into consideration that this diploma thesis focuses on the use of English and Russian swear words in phraseology, it is also important to provide proper explanation of what a swear word actually is. According to Collins Dictionary, swear word is “a socially taboo word or phrase of a profane, obscene or insulting character” (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). Even though swear words are used to express strong feelings and intensify what is being said, they tend to cause great offense or shock others; therefore they are considered inappropriate in any social context. However, the use of swear words or taboo expressions may indicate speaker’s close personal relationship with others and may even have positive connotations (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In order to understand what a swear word actually is, it is important to investigate the three main aspects associated with the use of swear words: “identifying swear words, measuring their relative frequencies of use, and ranking them in terms of offensiveness” (Beers Fagersten, 2012, p.3). What is more, it should be emphasized that swearing does not only include the use of specific words, but it is rather seen as a type of language that is used in a particular social context. According to Montagu, who investigated the history of swearing, swear words may be defined as “all words possessing or capable of being given an emotional weight” (Beers Fagersten, 2012, p.4) which indicates that almost all words may serve as swear words.

Furthermore, the variation in category membership also presents a problem when defining a swear word. For instance, while the majority would agree that the English words such as *fuck*, *cunt* and *shit* are indeed swear words, the question that arises is how many of them would put the words *cow*, *suck* or *boob* in the same category as the aforesaid words. Even though all of these words can be considered quite unpleasant and insulting in many contexts, it is important to question their frequency of use in order to assign them the label of swear words (Beers Fagersten, 2012). That is to say, if there is a high probability that a word is going to cause offense and insult others, there is also a high chance that a word is going to be regarded as a swear word. In addition, offensiveness of a word is established by the so-called “evaluative and semantic differentiation rating techniques” (Beers Fagersten, 2012, p.8). Swear words can either be slightly or extremely offensive and, as a result, some words are regarded as more offensive than the others. Furthermore, offensiveness is determined through the use of rating tasks whose results presented that the most offensive ones are sexual terms as well as excretory terms (e.g. *fuck*, *shit*, *cunt* and *motherfucker*) (Beers Fagersten, 2012).

### 5.1 The literal and non-literal meaning of a swear word

Another extremely important feature when describing swear words is whether they are used with their literal or non-literal meaning. As Ljung observes, taboo words, which are used in swearing, do not actually preserve their literal meaning, owing to the fact that taboo words which are used with their literal meaning can simply be not considered as swear words (Ljung, 2011). In order to understand the difference between literal and non-literal meaning in swearing, Jakobson emphasizes the symbol and symptom functions. That is to say, symbolically used words and expressions are those that are used with literal meaning in order to describe and present the world around us. On the contrary, symptomatic words and expressions are simply used to reflect the speaker’s emotions and a state of mind. In order to understand this distinction better, Jakobson provides two examples which present the difference between these two functions by using the swear word *fuck*. In the utterance “They used to *fuck* on the kitchen floor” (Ljung, 2011, p. 13) the word *fuck* has its literal meaning; therefore it serves its symbolic function, whereas in the utterances “*Fuck!*” and “*Fuck* they did!” (Ljung, 2011, p. 13) the word simply serves its symptomatic function (Ljung, 2011).

According to McEnery and Pinter, the word *fuck* may also be replaced by words such as *screw*, *bonk*, *frig* or *shag* which all have the meaning ‘to have sex’, however this synonymy

cannot be applied when these words are used in swearing (Ljung, 2011). Even though *screw* is the closest alternative, Rawson claims that it is rather used as a euphemism, considering that it is not as forceful as the word *fuck* which can be found in multiple combinations (Rawson, 1989). Ljung emphasizes that not too many taboo words for sexual intercourse, sexual organs and excrement may be used in swearing. We can take into consideration two taboo words, for example *fuck* and *shag*, that both have the meaning ‘to have sex’. However, according to Ljung, only the first one can be used in swearing. In addition, he provides examples of well-formed phrases such as *fuck you*, *not give a fuck* and *fucking idiot* with, what he names, the impossible ones such as *shag you*, *not give a shag* and *shagging idiot* (Ljung, 2011). As already stated above, swear words and expressions containing them fulfill the so-called symptom function. That is to say, they are referred to as symptomatic because they are used to reflect the speaker’s emotions and a state of mind. The same can be seen in another example which deals with swearing that is carried out in name-calling with the use of abusive terms such as a word *prick* which has plenty of synonyms such as *cock*, *dick*, *dork*, *pecker*, *pisser* etc. However, when the word *prick* is used in swearing in order to refer to a stupid person, all the above mentioned synonyms cannot be used. For example, “We told him not to touch the gun, but he dumb *prick*/ dumb *dork*/ \*dumb *cock*/ \*dumb *pecker* didn’t listen” (Ljung, 2011, p. 14). As it can be seen, the only literal synonym that can replace the word *prick* is *dork*, while the other synonyms must be excluded in this case. On the contrary, there are many other words that can replace the word *prick*, although they do not have the same literal meaning. However, they fulfill the symptomatic function, or to be more specific they express speaker’s emotions and a state of mind. As a result, words such as *arsehole*, *asshole*, *bastard* and *cunt* are considered replaceable and appropriate considering that they are expressing speaker’s dislike and annoyance (Ljung, 2011).

According to the abovementioned examples, we can conclude that symptomatic function is an essential and basic element of swearing. As it has already been mentioned, the main function of swear words is to express speaker’s emotions and a state of mind which diminishes the importance of the literal meaning in swearing. In addition, when used in swearing, the taboo words do not retain the same synonyms that can replace them in non-swearing contexts. Even though they differ in their literal meaning, they may still replace each other in swearing, due to the fact that they all fulfill the same function – they reflect speaker’s state of mind, feelings and attitudes about something (Ljung, 2011).

## 5.2 Swearing

The study of swearing has been neglected for many years until the 1960s when there was an increased interest in the topic with Sagarin's (1962) and Montagu's (1967) publications (Ljung, 2011). In the following years different studies have been made and the topic of swearing was investigated from a linguistic, social, psychological and neurological points of view. Nowadays, considering that the topic of swearing is a quite complex and wide one, there are many different studies and interpretations of what swearing truly is and how can it be described. Despite their different views and interpretations, there are some basic criteria that, according to various researchers, have to be met so that we can count an utterance as swearing. As Allan observes, swearing can simply be defined as the strong emotive use of taboo words (Allan, 2019). As stated by Andersson and Trudgill (1990) and Ljung (2011), swearing can be defined as the use of language whose expressions refer to something that is taboo and, as a result, their meaning cannot be literally interpreted; therefore they are rather used with their non-literal meaning in order to express strong feelings and attitudes. According to Wajnryb (2004), swearing is both culturally and linguistically shaped which implies that it has its own grammar; nevertheless, the grammar depends on the language in which swearing occurs (Wajnryb, 2004). As Ljung observes, swearing is considered inappropriate, disrespectful and offensive; however, despite many negative characteristics, it is still a part of everyday communication and many people consider it as an ideal tool for emphasizing what has been said (Ljung, 2011). In addition, swearing does not only have sociolinguistic characteristics, but it also has linguistic features that involve vocabulary, grammar as well as meaning, which makes swearing worth studying. As it has already been mentioned, a rather limited quantity of taboo words constitutes the vocabulary of swearing. However, it should be emphasized that these taboo words are not used with their denotative meaning, but they rather present emotive meaning or, to be more precise, they are used to express speaker's feelings and a state of mind (Ljung, 2011). According to Jay, the most frequently used swear words in English are: *fuck, shit, ass, jerk, asshole, bum, bitch, goddam, dink, suck, piss, fag, fuck, creep, pig, bastard* (Jay, 1992).

## 5.3 Classification and typologies of swearing

As Ljung states, there have been many attempts to classify swearing according to the main subcategories and to present a typology of swearing. One of the typologies of swearing is the one introduced by Pinker (2007) who differentiates between five ways of swearing:

descriptive (e.g. *let's fuck*), idiomatic (e.g. *it's fucked up*), abusive (e.g. *fuck you, motherfucker*), emphatic (e.g. *it's fucking amazing*) and cathartic (e.g. *fuck!*) (Ljung, 2011). According to Ljung, Pinker's classification of swearing is not regarded as completely suitable, taking into consideration the full complexity of swearing which cannot be properly analyzed by using only a five-way classification. In his book, Ljung (2011) makes a distinction between functions and themes of swear words. As far as functions of swear words are concerned, Ljung divides them into stand-alones and slot fillers. The former includes constructions with swear words that function as actual utterances and can, clearly, be used alone. According to Ljung, they include oaths, curses, unfriendly suggestions, name-calling, affirmation and contradiction, expletive interjections and so-called ritual insults (Ljung, 2011). On the contrary, slot fillers are "instances of swearing that serve to make up longer strings" (Ljung, 2011, p. 30); thus they can be divided into adjectives of dislike, emphasis, adverbial/adjectival intensifiers, modal adverbials, noun supports and anaphoric uses of epithets. Taking into account the fact that the better part of Ljung's classification focuses primarily on lexemes and different functions a swear word may have, which is not the topic of this diploma thesis, I consider Pinker's classification more appropriate, due to the fact that it differentiates between five different types of swearing, one of which is the idiomatic one. That is to say, idiomatic swearing is the one that includes the use of idioms such as in the abovementioned example in which a PU *fucked up* is used with the non-literal meaning "destroyed". As I have already mentioned, the topic of this diploma thesis is the use of swear words in different phraseological units; therefore, in this case, I find Pinker's classification more suitable.

#### **5.4 Swearing in Russian and Russian *mat***

According to some linguists, Russian language does not only possess a surprisingly large amount of so-called 'dirty words', but it also has a creative set of rules that permit the formation of new swear words and expressions (Ljung, 2011). As Smith (1998) suggests, there are also linguistic reasons for the superiority and originality of Russian swearing:

"...Russian, as a highly inflected language, has a greater capacity than many other languages to generate obscenity, particularly through its highly complex verbal system. This means that *mat* is not simply a collection of dirty words but a set of refined and complex linguistic structures which, to some extent, function as a 'shadow language' of standard Russian" (Smith, 1998, p. 171).

Derived obscene compounds and expressions usually do not have any sexual connotations, but they are rather used to express emotions and attitudes. When it comes to their meaning, it is sometimes quite difficult to interpret it, due to the fact that it depends on the context of use as well as shared values between the speakers (Smith, 1998). The real meaning of these words and expressions can be understood only by taking into consideration the speaker's emotional state – anger, apathy, boredom, or happiness (Mandel', 2014).

When it comes to Russian *mat*, the word *mat* (мат), also known as *matershhina* (матерщина) and *maternyj jazyk* (матерный язык) which can be translated in English as 'obscene' or 'foul language', stands for the most obscene part of Russian language that involves various swear words and expressions that are also known as *maternye vyrazhenija* (матерные выражения) meaning 'obscene expressions'. Furthermore, it presents an extremely expressive substandard language that consists of limitless quantity of words and expressions that can be used in various situations (Dreizin and Priestly, 1982). In addition, the verbs *materit'sja* (материться), *matjugat'sja* (матюгаться) and *matjukat'sja* (матюкаться) are derived from the word *mat* and they all mean 'to express yourself by using four-letter words' or simply to curse using dirty words (Topol, 1997).

According to linguists, Russian *mat* is an exceptionally rich linguistic system which offers a limitless quantity of expressions. That is to say, it consists of basic units and uses rich semantic possibilities of its application. One of the characteristics of Russian *mat* is that it takes over from the standard language word-derivational mechanisms and applies a flexible system of interpretation (Dreizin and Priestly, 1982). As a result, a great number of new nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and phrases can be formed. The basis of *mat* involves swear words and expressions that are primarily related to sexuality, human genitalia and copulation (Kovalev, 2016). Plucer-Sarno (2005), Romodanovskaja (2012) and many other linguists agree that four basic lexical units of Russian *mat* are the words: *hui* (хуй) 'prick', *pizda* (пизда) 'cunt', *ebat'* (ебать) 'to fuck' and *bljad'* (блядь) 'whore'. As Kovalev suggests, the rest of Russian *mat* does not only include sexual and scatological terms, but it also includes words that are sexual in origin, however, they are used in non-sexual contexts such as a verb *pizdit'* (пиздить). Even though the verb is derived from the Russian word *pizda* (пизда) 'cunt', it does not have any sexual connotations, but its meaning is 'to steal'. It is important to emphasize that in both Russian and English sexual obscenities are considered to have much stronger effect than scatological terms and expressions (Kovalev, 2016). Apart from the

abovementioned swear words, other frequently used ones are *suka* (сука) 'bitch', *zad/zadnica* (зад/задница) 'ass', *zasranec* (засранец) 'shit', *morda* (морда) 'mug', *zhrat'* (жрать) 'to gobble', *padla* (падла) 'bastard', *svoloch'* (сволочь) 'swine', *gadina* (гадина) 'scumbag', *govno/der'mo* (говно/дерьмо) 'shit', *rylo* (рыло) 'snout' etc. (Ryazanova-Clarke and Wade, 2002). As Smith observes, some of the *mat* words and expressions can have multiple meanings as can be seen in the example with the verb *ebat'* (ебать), meaning 'to fuck', that has several different meanings according to the context such as 'to work', 'to lie', 'to get', 'to lose', 'to deceive', 'to be tired', 'to be bored', 'to go away', 'to beat' etc. (Smith, 1998). With the addition of different prefixes and suffixes, a great number of new *mat* words, especially nouns and verbs, can be formed and they can act as substitutes for Russian nouns and verbs (Dreizin and Priestly, 1982).

## 6. Descriptive analysis

In this chapter the descriptive analysis of the collected corpus, which is based on the classification suggested by Fiedler (2007), will be presented. To be more precise, the collected PUs with English and Russian swear words will be grouped according to the conventional types. Although there is a great number of various PUs collected in both languages, not all conventional types mentioned by Fiedler were found. The ones that were found and classified in this analysis are: phraseological nominations, stereotyped comparisons, proverbs, routine formulae as well as two special types of PUs: rhyming slang and a PU with a proper name. What is more, the analysis will also include modifications of PUs that involve substitution and expansion.

First of all, I will begin the analysis with the conventional types. For every conventional type found, I will, firstly, explain it shortly and then provide a table with English PUs and their meanings which will then be followed by Russian ones. As far as Russian examples are concerned, they will be presented both in Latin and Cyrillic. All of the collected PUs will be written in italics and the swear words included in them will be highlighted in bold. In order to provide a clearer picture, in this analysis I will be using tables with two and three columns. As far as presentation of the conventional types is concerned, I will be using two-column table in which I will list the collected PUs in the first column, whereas their meanings will be explained in the second one. When it comes to modifications of PUs, I will be using three-column table which I find more appropriate for the proper presentation. That is

to say, in the first column I will list modified PUs with swear words, whereas the second column will present the original PUs that are used in English and Russian. In the third column, their meanings will be explained. Interestingly enough, some of the collected PUs share the same meaning; therefore, in some cases, several PUs will be listed under the same meaning. Furthermore, the tables that present the collected PUs which belong to a particular conventional type will be shortly explained in order to provide better explanation of what has been presented in them.

## 6.1 Conventional types of phraseological units

### 6.1.1 Phraseological nominations

As already explained, phraseological nominations are types of PUs that are used to indicate people, objects, states, processes or relations, and can, therefore, be divided according to word classes they belong to such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs (Fiedler, 2007). Interestingly enough, the majority of the collected phraseological units in both languages belong to this conventional type of PUs. Within the collected corpus 73 English and 84 Russian phraseological nominations were found and explained. The collected corpus of phraseological nominations will be classified according to the word class they belong to and they will be presented in eight tables. For every word class I will, firstly, provide a table with English PUs which will then be followed by a table with Russian PUs. After presenting the tables with examples for a particular word class, there will be a short explanation of the presented PUs.

Nouns:

**Table 1**

*English PUs classified as phraseological nominations (noun)*

| <b>ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL<br/>NOMINATIONS (NOUN) WITH A<br/>SWEAR WORD</b> | <b>MEANING</b>   |
|--|------------------|
| <i>a crock of <b>shit</b></i>  | ‘a mass of lies’ |



|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>a piece of <b>shit</b></i>   | ‘a despicable person or an object of poor quality’ |
| <i><b>ass</b> in a sling</i>    | ‘a severe punishment’                              |
| <i>a pain in the <b>ass</b></i> | ‘someone or something annoying’                    |
| <i><b>shits</b> and giggles</i> | ‘fun’  |

**Table 2**

*Russian PUs classified as phraseological nominations (noun)*

| <b>RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGICAL NOMINATIONS (NOUN) WITH A SWEAR WORD</b>  | <b>MEANING</b>                    |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i><b>hui</b> morzhovyj/gollandskij/mamin/s gory<br/>/oslinyj<br/>(хуй моржовый/голландский/мамин/с<br/>горы/ослиный)</i> | ‘an idiot or a clumsy man’        |
| <i><b>hui</b> stoptannyj<br/>(хуй стоптанный)</i>   | ‘a middle-aged man’ or ‘an idiot’ |
| <i><b>hui</b> domashnij<br/>(хуй домашний)</i>  | ‘a married man’                   |
| <i><b>hui</b> zheleznyj<br/>(хуй железный)</i>  | ‘a reliable man’                  |
| <i><b>hui</b> marinovannyj<br/>(хуй маринованный)</i>   | ‘an unreliable or passive man’    |
| <i><b>hui</b> vazhnyj<br/>(хуй важный)</i>  | ‘a boss or an arrogant man’       |

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <i>hui polomannuj</i><br>(хуй поломанный)   | ‘a weak man’               |
| <i>hui dubljonuj</i><br>(хуй дублёный)  | ‘a man with experience’    |
| <i>hui zvonkovuj</i><br>(хуй звонковый)   | ‘an informer or betrayer’  |
| <i>hui na bljude</i><br>(хуй на блюде)<br><br><i>hui sobachij</i><br>(хуй собачий)  | ‘an unpleasant man’        |
| <i>hui v shljape</i><br>(хуй в шляпе)<br><br><i>hui na palochke</i><br>(хуй на палочке)<br><br><i>hui na postnom masle</i><br>(хуй на постном масле)<br><br><i>hui s bugra</i><br>(хуй с бугра)<br><br><i>pizda vonjuchaja</i><br>(пизда вонючая) | ‘a worthless man or woman’ |
| <i>pizda s ushami</i><br>(пизда с ушами)  | ‘a ridiculous person’      |
| <i>hui vintom</i><br>(хуй винтом)   | ‘a smart or sly man’       |
| <i>pizda delo/rulju/ruljem</i>  | ‘the end’                  |

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <i>(пизда дело/рулю/рулем)</i>                               |                               |
| <i>staryj/aja hui/pizda</i><br><i>(старый/-ая хуй/пизда)</i> | ‘an old man/woman’            |
| <i>gora huiov</i><br><i>(гора хуёв)</i>                      | ‘a bunch of valuable objects’ |
| <i>jasnyj hui</i><br><i>(ясный хуй)</i>                      | ‘obviously’                   |

In the Table 1 and Table 2 the collected corpus of PUs that can be classified as phraseological nominations functioning as nouns was presented and explained. A total of 33 PUs was found in both languages – 5 PUs in English and the remaining 28 PUs in Russian. As it can be seen from the Table 1, English phraseological nominations functioning as nouns have broader meanings; that is to say, they refer to a mass of something, quality of a person or some general concepts. It should be mentioned that the PUs found and presented in the Table 1 involve only the use of swear words *shit* and *ass*; however, not one example with the swear word *fuck* was found. From the Table 2 it can be concluded that the majority of Russian phraseological nominations functioning as nouns refer to a particular type of person, usually an unpleasant one. As for structure, it can be seen that a swear word is mostly used in a combination with an adjective in order to denote a particular person. Interestingly enough, it is worth mentioning that the phraseological nominations with the word *hui* refer specifically to a man, while the ones with the swear word *pizda* refer to a woman.

Adjectives:

**Table 3**

*English PUs classified as phraseological nominations (adjective)*

| ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL<br>NOMINATIONS (ADJECTIVE) WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD | MEANING      |
|--|--------------|
| <i>(as) fucked up as a football bat</i>                                | ‘screwed up’ |

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <i>as thick as pig <b>shit</b></i><br><i><b>fucked</b> in the head</i>                     | ‘stupid or insane’         |
| <i>as cold as a gold digger’s <b>ass</b></i>   | ‘very cold’                |
| <i>happy as a pig in <b>shit</b></i>   | ‘very happy’               |
| <i>(as) rare as rocking horse <b>shit</b></i>  | ‘very rare’                |
| <i><b>fucked</b> up like a soup sandwich</i><br><i>not to worth a pinch of <b>shit</b></i> | ‘worthless’                |
| <i><b>fucked</b> by the fickle finger of fate</i>  | ‘lonely’                   |
| <i>full of <b>shit</b></i>   | ‘unreliable or ridiculous’ |
| <i><b>shit</b> hot</i>   | ‘extremely good’           |
| <i><b>shit</b> out of luck</i>   | ‘unlucky’                  |

**Table 4**

*Russian PUs classified as phraseological nominations (adjective)*

| <b>RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGICAL<br/>NOMINATIONS (ADJECTIVE) WITH A<br/>SWEAR WORD</b>                       | <b>MEANING</b>            |
|---|---------------------------|
| <i>ne prishej k <b>pizde</b> rukav</i><br><i>(не пришей к <b>пизде</b> рукав)</i>                     | ‘unnecessary or unwanted’ |
| <i>(u kogo-to) ruki pod <b>hui</b> zatocheny</i><br><i>((у кого-то) руки под <b>хуй</b> заточены)</i> | ‘clumsy or lazy’          |
| <i><b>hui</b> celyh, nol’ desjatyh</i><br><i>(<b>хуй</b> целых, ноль десятых)</i>                     | ‘little’                  |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <i>s gul'kin <b>hui</b></i><br>(с гулькии <b>хуй</b> )                       |                |
| <i>ne godit'sja ni k <b>huia</b></i><br>(не годиться ни к <b>хуям</b> )      | ‘useless’      |
| <i>dva druga – <b>hui</b> da uksus</i><br>(два друга – <b>хуй</b> да уксус)  | ‘incompatible’ |
| <i>bityj <b>huiem</b> po srake</i><br>(битый <b>хуем</b> по сраке)           | ‘experienced’  |
| <i><b>hui</b> cena v bazarnyj den'</i><br>( <b>хуй</b> цена в базарный день) | ‘unimportant’  |
| <i>sheluha na <b>huii</b></i><br>(шелуха на <b>хую</b> )                     | ‘worthless’    |

A total of 21 phraseological nominations functioning as adjectives were explained and presented in the tables above. In the Table 3, 12 examples of English PUs were presented, whereas 9 examples of Russian ones were presented in the Table 4. As far as their meaning is concerned, it can be observed that the majority of phraseological nominations functioning as adjectives have negative meaning. That is to say, the examples found in both languages mostly refer to something that is worthless, useless or unnecessary. In addition, there were only several examples found that indicate something good or, at least, positive. When it comes to English phraseological nominations functioning as adjectives, it can be seen that some of them have the same pattern as the ones used in stereotyped comparisons. That is to say, 5 examples were used with a pattern *as + adjective + as + noun phrase*. In 4 of these examples, swear words have been used in noun phrases, whereas in only one example a swear word has been used as an adjective. As far as Russian examples are concerned, there is no particular pattern followed.

Adverbs:

**Table 5**

*English PUs classified as phraseological nominations (adverb)*

| ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL<br>NOMINATIONS (ADVERB) WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD                                     | MEANING                  |
|---|--------------------------|
| <i>when the <b>shit</b> hits the fan</i>  | ‘when a disaster occurs’ |
| <i>like <b>shit</b> through a goose</i>   | ‘very quickly’           |
| <i>like <b>shit</b></i>   | ‘badly’                  |
| <i>in the/deep <b>shit</b></i><br><br><i>fucked in the <b>ass</b></i><br><br><i><b>ass</b> in grass</i> | ‘in trouble’             |

**Table 6**

*Russian PUs classified as phraseological nominations (adverb)*

| RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGICAL<br>NOMINATIONS (ADVERB) WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD                  | MEANING                 |
|--|-------------------------|
| <i>bez <b>pizdy</b></i><br><i>(без <b>пизды</b>)</i>                                 | ‘correctly, truthfully’ |
| <i>v <b>pizdu</b> na peredelku</i><br><i>(в <b>пизду</b> на переделку)</i>           | ‘nowhere’               |
| <i>kogda <b>hui</b> na lbu vyrastet</i><br><i>(когда <b>хуй</b> на лбу вырастет)</i> | ‘never’                 |

The smallest number of phraseological nominations found in both languages belongs to those functioning as adverbs. That is to say, a total of 9 PUs was found – 6 examples in

English and only 3 examples in Russian language. The meanings of the collected phraseological nominations are quite neutral.

Verbs:

**Table 7**

*English PUs classified as phraseological nominations (verb)*

| ENGLISH PHRASEOLOGICAL<br>NOMINATIONS (VERB) WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD   | MEANING                                       |
|---|---|
| <i>not to give a (flying) <b>fuck</b>/ not to give a <b>shit</b>/</i><br><i>not to give rat's <b>ass</b> about</i><br><i>someone/something</i>  | 'not to care'                                 |
| <i>to <b>shit</b> (a) brick/ bricks</i><br><br><i>to <b>shit</b> one's pants</i><br><br><i>to <b>shit</b> oneself</i>   | 'to be scared, worried or to freak out'       |
| <i>to <b>fuck</b> one's mind up</i><br><br><i>to <b>fuck</b> one's way out</i><br><br><i>to blow smoke up somebody's <b>ass</b></i><br><br><i>to <b>fuck</b> (someone) over</i><br><br><i>to <b>fuck</b> someone around/about</i> | 'to deceive, confuse, trick or cheat someone' |
| <i>to give someone the <b>shits</b></i><br><br><i>to <b>shit</b> all over</i><br><br><i>to <b>shit</b> on (someone)</i>   | 'to criticize or annoy someone'               |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>to gripe one's <b>ass</b></i><br><br><i>to be on one's <b>ass</b></i>   |   |
| <i>to have <b>shit</b> for brains</i><br><br><i>not to know one's <b>ass</b> from one's elbow</i><br><br><i>not to know one's <b>ass</b> from a whole in the ground</i><br><br><i>to have one's head up one's <b>ass</b></i> | 'to be stupid or act stupidly'  |
| <i>to get your <b>ass</b> in gear</i><br><br><i>to move your <b>ass</b></i><br><br><i>to bag <b>ass</b> out of somewhere</i>   | 'to hurry or to move quickly'   |
| <i>to <b>fuck</b> up</i>   | 'to make a mistake or damage something'                                       |
| <i>to <b>fuck</b> with (someone or something)</i>  | 'to meddle with something in a casual way'<br>or 'to tease or threat someone' |
| <i>to <b>fuck</b> around/about</i>   | 'to fool around or joke about something'                                      |
| <i>to <b>shit</b> the bed</i>  | 'to screw something up'   |
| <i>to <b>fuck</b> a dog</i>  | 'to waste time'   |
| <i>to drag one's <b>ass</b></i><br><br><i>to have one's thumb up one's <b>ass</b></i>  | 'to work/act slowly or not at all'  |
| <i>to bust your <b>ass</b> (doing something)</i>   | 'to make an effort'   |
| <i>to make an <b>ass</b> of oneself</i>  | 'to embarrass oneself'  |
| <i>to <b>shit</b> money</i>  | 'to have a lot of money'  |



|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>to shoot the <b>shit</b></i>  | ‘to chat casually or to gossip’  |
| <i>to think one’s <b>shit</b> doesn’t stink</i>  | ‘to think that one is better than the others’                                |
| <i>to kick someone’s <b>ass</b></i>  | ‘to punish someone’  |
| <i>to kiss someone’s <b>ass</b></i>  | ‘to be nice to someone’  |
| <i>to be on someone’s <b>ass</b></i>   | ‘to pressure someone constantly’   |
| <i>to get off one’s <b>ass</b></i>   | ‘to stop criticizing someone or telling someone what to do’                  |
| <i>to cover your <b>ass</b></i>  | ‘to protect yourself’  |
| <i>to pull something out of one’s <b>ass</b></i>   | ‘to invent something’  |
| <i>to get one’s <b>shit</b> together</i>   | ‘to organize yourself’   |
| <i>to lose one’s <b>shit</b></i><br><i>to have a <b>shit</b> fit</i>                             | ‘to become very upset or angry’ or ‘to display extreme anger or frustration’ |
| <i>to be up <b>shit</b> creek (without a paddle)</i><br><i>to have/get <b>ass</b> in a sling</i> | ‘to be in a difficult situation’   |
| <i>to cut the <b>shit</b></i>  | ‘to stop saying meaningless things or to mention the final result’           |
| <i>to scare the <b>shit</b> out of somebody</i>  | ‘to frighten somebody very much’   |
| <i>to take <b>shit</b> from someone</i>  | ‘to let someone treat you badly’   |
| <i>to pull <b>shit</b></i>   | ‘to do something nasty or annoying’  |

Table 8

*Russian PUs classified as phraseological nominations (verb)*

| RUSSIAN PHRASEOLOGICAL<br>NOMINATIONS (VERB) WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD  | MEANING  |
|--|--|
| <i>na hui poslat' / posylat'</i><br>(на хуй послать / посылать)  | 'to refuse, kick someone out or end a<br>relationship' |
| <i>pokazat' hui</i><br>(показать хуй)<br><br><i>na huiiu videt' / uvidet'</i><br>(на хую видеть / увидеть)   | 'to refuse'  |
| <i>sosat' hui</i><br>(сосать хуй)<br><br><i>valjat' hui</i><br>(валять хуй)<br><br><i>chesat' hui</i><br>(чесать хуй)                                      | 'to do nothing'  |
| <i>zabit' / polozhit' hui</i><br>(забить / положить хуй)<br><br><i>v hui ne duet</i><br>(в хуй не дует)<br><br><i>na huiiu vertet'</i><br>(на хую вертеть) | 'to ignore'  |
| <i>hui pinat'</i><br>(хуй пинать)  | 'to waste time'  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i><b>huiem</b> grushi okolachivat'</i><br/>(хуем груши околачивать)</p>  |   |
| <p><i>kinut' cherez <b>hui</b></i><br/>(кинуть через хуй)</p> <p><i>na <b>hui</b> nitki motat'</i><br/>(на хуй нитки мотать)</p> <p><i>na <b>hui</b> soli nasypat'</i><br/>(на хуй соли насыпать)</p> <p><i>veshat' lapshu na <b>hui</b></i><br/>(вешать лапшу на хуй)</p> | <p>‘to trick or fool someone’</p>           |
| <p><i>naveshivat' /naveshat' <b>hui</b></i><br/>(навешивать/навешать хуй)</p> <p><i>razdavat' /razdat' <b>hui</b></i><br/>(раздавать/раздать хуй)</p> <p><i>obveshivat' /obveshat' <b>huiami</b></i><br/>(обвешивать/обвешать хуями)</p>                                   | <p>‘to abuse or swear at’</p>               |
| <p><i>sest' na <b>hui</b></i><br/>(сесть на хуй)</p>   | <p>‘to fail or to be in a bad position’</p> |
| <p><i>sraavnivat' <b>hui</b> s pal'set</i><br/>(сравнивать хуй с пальцем)</p>  | <p>‘to compare incommensurable things’</p>  |
| <p><i><b>hui</b> s priborom na kogo polozhit'</i><br/>(хуй с прибором на кого положить)</p>  | <p>‘not to care’</p>                        |
| <p><i>tjanut' za <b>hui</b></i><br/>(тянуть за хуй)</p>  | <p>‘to do something slowly’</p>             |
| <p><i>na <b>huuiu</b> videt'</i></p>   | <p>‘to decline or neglect something’</p>    |

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>(на хую видеть)</i>  |                                  |
| <i>proglotit' hui</i><br><i>(проглотить хуй)</i>  | ‘to be silent, not to talk much’ |
| <i>gryzt' hui</i><br><i>(грызть хуй)</i>  | ‘to have a guilty conscience’    |
| <i>povesit' hui</i><br><i>(повесить хуй)</i>  | ‘to get discouraged or upset’    |
| <i>zarubit' na huiu</i><br><i>(зарубить на хую)</i>   | ‘to remember’                    |
| <i>vzjat' hui pod myshku</i><br><i>(взять хуй под мышку)</i>  | ‘to get nothing’                 |
| <i>vzjat' hui za shheku</i><br><i>(взять хуй за щеку)</i>   | ‘to stop talking’                |
| <i>davat'/dat' pizdu</i><br><i>(давать/дать пизду)</i><br><br><i>davat'/dat' po pizde meshalkoj</i><br><i>(давать/дать по пизде мешалкой)</i> | ‘to punish’                      |
| <i>s huia/pizdy sorvat'sja</i><br><i>(с хуя/пизды сорваться)</i>  | ‘to appear suddenly’             |
| <i>pizdoj nakryt'sja</i><br><i>(пиздой накрыться)</i>   | ‘to be unsuccessful’             |
| <i>dat'/vlomit' pizdy</i><br><i>(дать/вломить пизды)</i>  | ‘to beat’                        |
| <i>poluchit' pizdy</i><br><i>(получить пизды)</i>   | ‘to get beaten’                  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>hui k nosu prikinut'</i><br>(хуй к носу прикинуть) | ‘to think something thoroughly’                               |
| <i>brat' za hui</i><br>(братъ за хуй)                 | ‘to influence’  |
| <i>celovat' v hui</i><br>(целовать в хуй)             | ‘to be nice to someone’                                       |
| <i>vsrat'sja vo hui</i><br>(всрать во хуй)            | ‘to be useless’   |
| <i>klast' hui</i><br>(класть хуй)                     | ‘to despise’  |
| <i>hui ne stoit</i><br>(хуй не стоит)                 | ‘not to be in a mood for something or not to have any desire’ |
| <i>pizdoj mel'knut'</i><br>(пиздой мелькнуть)         | ‘to pass quickly or disappear’                                |
| <i>smeshit' pizdu</i><br>(смешишь пизду)              | ‘to joke around, talk nonsense’                               |

As it can be observed from the Table 7 and Table 8 presented above, the majority of PUs found in both languages belongs to phraseological nominations functioning as verbs. To be precise, a total of 94 phraseological nominations functioning as verbs were found in both languages – 50 examples in English and 44 examples in Russian. As for their meanings, the majority of them have some negative connotations, for example: not to care, to be scared, to trick, to criticize, to screw up, to fool around, to refuse, to ignore etc. When it comes to English, swear words *fuck* and *shit* can be both used as verbs or as objects in the collected phraseological nominations. For example, in a PU *to shit a brick*, which means “to be scared”, a swear word *shit* is used as a verb. However, in a PU *to shoot the shit*, which means “to chat casually or to gossip”, a swear word *shit* is used as a noun which has negative connotations. As it can be observed, Russian swear words are mostly used together with verbs in order to form a phraseological nomination functioning as verb.

### 6.1.2 Stereotyped comparisons

As far as English language is concerned, the two types of stereotyped comparisons with the use of swear words are *(as) \_ as **fuck*** and *(as) \_ as **shit**/like **shit***. These types are mostly used to express the intensity of something. Nevertheless, other stereotyped comparisons with the words *fuck*, *shit* and *ass* can also be found as it can be seen in the table below. When it comes to Russian language, only two quite similar examples were found with the swear word *pizda*.

**Table 9**

*English PUs classified as stereotyped comparisons*

| ENGLISH STEREOTYPED COMPARISONS WITH A SWEAR WORD | MEANING      |
|---|--------------|
| <i>(as) close as stink on <b>shit</b></i>         | ‘very close’ |
| <i>(as) <b>fucked</b> up as a football bat</i>    | ‘screwed up’ |
| <i>(as) cold as a gold digger’s <b>ass</b></i>    | ‘very cold’  |
| <i>(as) rare as rocking horse <b>shit</b></i>     | ‘very rare’  |
| <i>happy as a pig in <b>shit</b></i>              | ‘very happy’ |

**Table 10**

*Russian PUs classified as stereotyped comparisons*

| RUSSIAN STEREOTYPED COMPARISONS WITH A SWEAR WORD | MEANING |
|---|---------|
|   |         |

|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <p>(<i>nuzhno</i>) <i>kak pizde dvertsy</i><br/>         ((<i>нужно</i>) <i>как пизде дверцы</i>)</p> <p>(<i>nuzhno</i>) <i>kak pizde budil'nik</i><br/>         ((<i>нужно</i>) <i>как пизде будильник</i>)</p> | <p>‘unwanted, unnecessary’</p> |
|--|--------------------------------|

As it can be seen from the tables presented above, a total of 7 examples of stereotyped comparisons was found in the collected corpus. In the theoretical part of the paper it was already explained that there are two types of stereotyped comparisons in English language. As it is stated in the Table 9, all 5 collected examples of stereotyped comparisons belong to the first type which is (*as*) + *adjective* + *as* + *noun phrase*. Additionally, in four examples swear words have been used as a part of a noun phrase. That is to say, there is only one example in which swear word has been used as an adjective and the meaning of that PU has some negative connotations. As for the meaning of others, it is mostly neutral. When it comes to Russian, 2 quite similar examples of stereotyped comparisons found are actually used ironically. To be more precise, these PUs compare the necessity of door or alarm clock to a swear word *pizda*.

### 6.1.3 Proverbs

As it has already been mentioned in the theoretical part of this diploma thesis, proverbs are catchy and easily recognized due to a number of stylistic features such as alliteration, rhyme, assonance as well as syntactic devices such as repetition and parallelism. Even though many proverbs were found in Russian language, there was only one example of it found in English. The examples found are presented in the tables below.

**Table 11**

*English PU classified as proverb*

| ENGLISH PROVERB WITH A SWEAR WORD | MEANING  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Shit or get off the pot!</i>   | ‘make up your mind; either do it or get out of the way and let someone else try’ |

Table 12

*Russian PUs classified as proverbs*

| RUSSIAN PROVERBS WITH A SWEAR WORD  | MEANING  |
|---|--|
| <i>Vot i ves' <b>hui</b> do kopejki.</i><br>(Вот и весь <b>хуй</b> до копейки.)   | ‘used when talking about the completion or end of something’           |
| <i>Koroche – slovo po slovu, <b>huiem</b> po stolu.</i><br>(Короче – слово по слову, <b>хуем</b> по столу.)                 | ‘used when referring to the development of a conflict’                 |
| <i>Lenivomu <b>huiiu</b> i possat' rabota.</i><br>(Ленивому <b>хую</b> и поссать работа.)                                   | ‘used when someone is too lazy to do anything’                         |
| <i>Glaz ne <b>pizda</b>, promorgaet.</i><br>(Глаз не <b>пузда</b> , проморгает.)  | ‘the damage is not permanent, it will pass’                            |
| <i><b>Hui</b> na <b>hui</b> menjat', tol'ko vremja terjat'.</i><br>( <b>Хуй</b> на <b>хуй</b> менять, только время терять.) | ‘used when something is pointless and just wasting time’               |
| <i>Za takie rechi <b>hui</b> tebe na plechi.</i><br>(За такие речи <b>хуй</b> тебе на плечи.)                               | ‘used when someone is talking nonsense’                                |
| <i><b>Hui</b> i <b>pizda</b> iz odnogo gnezda.</i><br>( <b>Хуй</b> и <b>пузда</b> из одного гнезда.)                        | ‘used when something does not make a difference’                       |
| <i>Shto <b>hui</b> v lob, shto <b>huiem</b> po lbu.</i><br>(Что <b>хуй</b> в лоб, что <b>хуем</b> по лбу.)                  | ‘used when someone does not care’                                      |
| <i>Kto mnogo <b>pizdit'</b>, malo zhivjot<sup>1</sup>.</i><br>(Кто много <b>пуздит</b> , мало живет.)                       | ‘used as a warning that talkativeness sometimes leads to a sad ending’ |
| <i>Hotet'/Zahotet' i rybku s'est', i na <b>hui</b> sest'.</i>   | ‘to seek to have two things which are                                  |

<sup>1</sup> In this proverb, the verb *pizdit'* was used which is derived from a Russian swear word *pizda*.



|   |  |
|---|--|
| ( <i>Хотеть/Захотеть и рыбку съесть, и на хуй сесть.</i> )                                  | mutually incompatible; to have the impossible'   |
| <i>Vyshe huia ne prygnesh'.</i><br>( <i>Выше хуя не прыгнешь.</i> )                         | 'meaningless attempts to do something that is impossible' or it can also be translated by using English proverb 'A man can do no more than he can' |
| <i>Heresu butylku ili huim po zatytku.</i><br>( <i>Хересу бутылку или хуем по затылку</i> ) | 'all or nothing'   |

A total of 13 phraseological units functioning as proverbs was found in both languages. As stated by Mieder (2014), scatological terms can also be used in proverbs; however, they do not retain their literal meaning but are rather used to refer to something unpleasant (Mieder, 2014). From the Table 11 it can be observed that only one example of a PU with a swear word functioning as proverb was found in English. According to Manser (2007) and Mieder (2014), a PU *shit or get off the pot* is regarded as a proverb that expresses the meaning "either do something or get out of the way and let someone else try". As far as Russian is concerned, 12 PUs functioning as proverbs were found. As stated by Ahmetova (2000), the PUs presented in the Table 12 are regarded as Russian folk proverbs and sayings (Ahmetova, 2000). In the majority of the presented examples, swear words have been used as nouns. However, in one example a verb *pizdit'*, which is derived from a swear word *pizda*, has been used. From the Table 12 presented above it can be concluded that Russian language and phraseology have greater tendency to create various proverbs with the use of the most common Russian swear words.

#### 6.1.4 Routine formulae

It has already been mentioned that Roos divides routine formulae into social formulae, gambits and expressive formulae (Fiedler, 2007). Out of these three, the most important one for this diploma thesis is the last one – expressive. Several examples of expressive formulae with the word *fuck* can be found in English. For example, *what the fuck* is used to show that you are angry or that you cannot believe something (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Furthermore, *fuck me* is used as an exclamation which expresses surprise. In addition, *fuck you/them/it* are all used as exclamations which express anger or contempt that is directed at

someone. Moreover, ***fuck a duck*** is an expression of anger or frustration, whereas ***fuck off*** and ***go fuck yourself*** are used to show that you are very angry with someone (The Free Dictionary, n.d.). As far as Russian language is concerned, several expressive routine formulae with swear words *hui* and *pizda* can also be found. The most common one is *idti na hui* (идти на хуй) which can be translated in English as ‘fuck you’ or ‘go fuck yourself’. Another frequently used one is *hui s kem/chem* (хуй с кем/чем) which can be used in a similar context. Moreover, *v pizdu* (в пизду) is used with the meaning ‘go to hell’.

### 6.1.5 Rhyming slang

As it has already been explained, rhyming slang is a highly distinctive feature of Cockney language in which two quite unrelated words are being used in order to paraphrase the intended word. Taking into consideration that rhyming slang is a special feature of English language, several examples that can replace English swear words have been found and presented in the Table 13 below.

**Table 13**

*Rhyming slang used instead of English swear words*

| <b>RHYMING SLANG</b>    | <b>ENGLISH SWEAR WORDS</b>          |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Cattle Truck</i>     | <i><b>fuck</b></i>                  |
| <i>Goose and Duck</i>   |                                     |
| <i>Eartha Kitt</i>      | <i><b>shit</b></i>                  |
| <i>Brad Pitt</i>        |                                     |
| <i>Brace and Bit</i>    |                                     |
| <i>Top ten hit</i>      |                                     |
| <i>Bottle and Glass</i> | <i><b>ass</b> (BrE <i>arse</i>)</i> |

From the Table 13 it can be seen that a total of 7 examples of rhyming slang has been found in the collected corpus. In addition, the table presents versions of Cockney rhyming

slang that can be used instead of English swear words *fuck*, *shit* and *ass*. That is to say, these examples paraphrase and rhyme with the aforesaid swear words.

### 6.1.6 PUs containing proper names

It has already been stated in the theoretical part of the thesis that a PU can also contain proper names. Even though it is not that common, a PU containing proper name can also be found with the use of swear words. However, only one example was found in English language with the swear word *shit*, whereas there was no example found in Russian.

**Table 14**

*English PU containing proper name*

| PU CONTAINING PROPER NAME<br>WITH A SWEAR WORD | MEANING  |
|--|--|
| <i>No <b>shit</b>, Sherlock!</i>               | ‘used as a response to someone who is stating something that is obvious’ |

## 6.2 Modifications of PUs

Different types of modification were already explained in the theoretical part of this diploma thesis. Nevertheless, the majority of examples found in both languages belong to substitution. In English, there are even two examples of expansion in which the swear word *shit* has been primarily used as an emphasize.

### 6.2.1 Substitution

**Table 15**

*Substitution of English PUs*

| ENGLISH PU WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD | ORIGINAL ENGLISH PU          | MEANING                       |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>for <b>fuck</b>’s sake</i>   | for God’s/Christ’s/goodness’ | ‘used to emphasize that it is |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | sake   | important to do something or<br>when you are annoyed about<br>something' |
| <i><b>fuck</b> knows</i>   | God/goodness/Heaven knows                    | 'used to emphasize that you<br>do not know something'                    |
| <i>(for) <b>shits</b> and giggles</i>                            | for kicks and giggles                        | 'for fun'  |
| <i>to get one's <b>shit</b> together</i>                         | to get one's act together                    | 'to organize yourself'   |
| <i>to give someone the <b>shits</b></i>                          | to give someone a hard time                  | 'to criticize or annoy<br>someone'                                       |
| <i>to lose one's <b>shit</b></i>                                 | to lose one's head                           | 'to become very angry or<br>upset'                                       |
| <i>to shoot the <b>shit</b></i>                                  | to shoot the breeze/bull                     | 'to chat casually or to gossip'  |
| <i>to cut the <b>shit</b></i>                                    | to cut a long story short/the<br>cackle      | 'to stop saying meaningless<br>things or to mention the final<br>result' |
| <i>to be up <b>shit</b> creek (without a<br/>paddle)</i>         | to be up the creek (without a<br>paddle)     | 'to be in a difficult situation'   |
| <i>to cover your <b>ass</b></i>                                  | to cover your back                           | 'to protect yourself'  |
| <i>a pain in the <b>ass</b></i>                                  | a pain in the neck                           | 'someone or something that<br>is very annoying'                          |
| <i>don't let the door hit your <b>ass</b><br/>on the way out</i> | don't let the door hit you on<br>the way out | 'used when saying to<br>someone to leave quickly and<br>directly'        |

Table 16

*Substitution of Russian PUs*

| RUSSIAN PU WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD   | ORIGINAL RUSSIAN PU  | MEANING   |
|---|--|---|
| <i>hui</i> znaet<br>(хуй знает)   | Bog znaet<br>(Бог знает)   | ‘used to emphasize that you do not know something’          |
| povesit’ <i>hui</i><br>(повесить хуй)                                       | povesit’ nos<br>(повесить нос)   | ‘to get discouraged or upset’                               |
| veshat’ lapshu na <i>hui</i><br>(вешать лапшу на хуй)                       | veshat’ lapshu na ushi<br>(вешать лапшу на уши)                          | ‘to try to fool someone’                                    |
| davat’/dat’ <i>hui</i> na otsechenie<br>(давать/дать хуй на отсечение)      | davat’/dat’ golovu na<br>otsechenie<br>(давать/дать голову на отсечение) | ‘to be convinced of something’                              |
| zarubit’ na <i>huiiu</i><br>(зарубить на хую)                               | zarubit’ na nosu<br>(зарубить на носу)                                   | ‘to remember’   |
| <i>hui</i> proglotit’<br>(хуй проглотить)                                   | jazyk proglotit’<br>(язык проглотить)                                    | ‘to be silent, not to talk much’                            |
| vyshe <i>huiia</i> ne prygnesh’<br>(выше хуя не прыгнешь)                   | vyshe golovy ne prygnesh’<br>(выше головы не прыгнешь)                   | ‘meaningless attempts to make something that is impossible’ |
| <i>hui</i> cena v bazarnyj den’<br>(хуй цена в базарный день)               | grosh cena v bazarnyj den’<br>(грош цена в базарный день)                | ‘something that is unimportant’                             |
| na chuzhom <i>huiiu</i> v raj<br>vyehat’<br>(на чужом хую в рай<br>выехать) | na chuzhom gorbu v raj<br>vyehat’<br>(на чужом горбу в рай<br>выехать)   | ‘to achieve something at someone else’s expense’            |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <i>popast' kak <b>hui</b> vo rukotojnik</i><br>(попасть как <b>хуй</b> во рукомойник)   | popast' kak kur vo shhi<br>(попасть как кур во щи)                       | 'to find yourself in an unpleasant situation'   |
| <i>s gul'kin <b>hui</b></i><br>(с гулькина <b>хуй</b> )                                 | s gul'kin nos<br>(с гулькина нос)  | 'small amount, lack of something'   |
| <i>i rybku s''est', i na <b>hui</b> sest'</i><br>(и рыбку съест, и на <b>хуй</b> сесть) | i rybku s''est', i v vodu ne lezt'<br>(и рыбку съест, и в воду не лезть) | 'used when talking of one's desire to get everything at once (without taking the risk)' |
| <i><b>hui</b> na postnom masle</i><br>( <b>хуй</b> на постном масле)                    | chepuha na postnom masle<br>(чепуха на постном масле)                    | 'an unpleasant person or someone who does not deserve any attention'                    |
| <i>v <b>hui</b> ne duet</i><br>(в <b>хуй</b> не дует)                                   | v us ne duet<br>(в ус не дует)   | 'to ignore or not to care about something'  |

When it comes to modifications of PUs, or more precisely substitution, it can be observed that a total of 26 examples in both languages was collected – 12 in English and 14 in Russian. As it can be observed from the Table 15, all three English swear words can be used in PUs in order to replace their elements. However, when it comes to Russian PUs, it can be seen from the Table 16 that only swear word *hui* has been used in substitution. That is to say, no example with the swear word *pizda* as a substitute was found. As for the meaning of the collected PUs in both languages, it remains the same, due to the fact that substitution does not affect it.

### 6.2.2 Expansion

**Table 17**

*Expansion of English PUs*

| ENGLISH PU WITH A<br>SWEAR WORD                  | ORIGINAL ENGLISH PU | MEANING   |
|--|---------------------|---|
| <i>to bug the <b>shit</b> out of<br/>someone</i> | to bug out          | ‘to annoy someone very<br>much’                                 |
| <i>to be <b>shit</b> out of luck</i>             | to be out of luck   | ‘not having the success or<br>good opportunities you<br>wanted’ |

Finally, from the Table 17 presented above it can be observed that only 2 examples of expansion were found in English language, whereas no example was found in Russian. In both examples, the swear word *shit* has been used in order to put an emphasis on what has been said. As it is the case with substitution, the meaning of both PUs remains the same.

## 7. Conclusion

The main focus of this diploma thesis was on a relatively young linguistic discipline, also known as phraseology, and the part of language that has been neglected for many years – language of swearing. Although swear words have always been considered inappropriate and taboo, they are also the most powerful words a language possesses that can express both positive and negative emotions. That is to say, they are known to the speakers of every language and are, as a consequence, used on a daily basis. As a result, the main motive of this diploma thesis was to investigate how the most common English and Russian swear words can be used in phraseology. For the purpose of the analysis, the theoretical background of both phraseology and swear words has been presented in the first part of the diploma thesis in order to provide a clearer insight into the fields of analysis. The main goal of this diploma thesis was to present English and Russian phraseological units that contain the most common swear words, explain their meanings and classify them according to the classification presented by Fiedler (2007).

The collected corpus of English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words was analyzed, explained and presented in the analysis of this diploma thesis. In this chapter the results of the analysis will be explained as well as shown in the figures presented below. The analysis was carried out on 198 phraseological units in total, out of which 93 of them belong to English language (see fig. 1), whereas the remaining 105 belong to Russian language (see fig. 2). For the purpose of the descriptive analysis, PUs were classified according to the conventional types presented by Fiedler whose work has been stated in the primary literature. As already mentioned, the conventional types that were found and classified in the analysis are: phraseological nominations, stereotyped comparisons, proverbs, routine formulae as well as two special types of PUs: rhyming slang and PUs with proper names. Furthermore, the analysis also included modifications of PUs also known as substitution and expansion. When it comes to English PUs, the results of the descriptive analysis are also presented in the Figure 1 below. That is to say, within the English corpus examples of 73 phraseological nominations were found. These examples involve 50 PUs functioning as verbs, 12 PUs functioning as adjectives, 6 PUs functioning as adverbs and 5 PUs functioning as nouns. In addition, 5 examples of stereotyped comparisons were found; nevertheless, 4 of them can also be marked as phraseological nominations functioning as adjectives. Moreover, 6 examples of routine formulae, which can also be classified as the

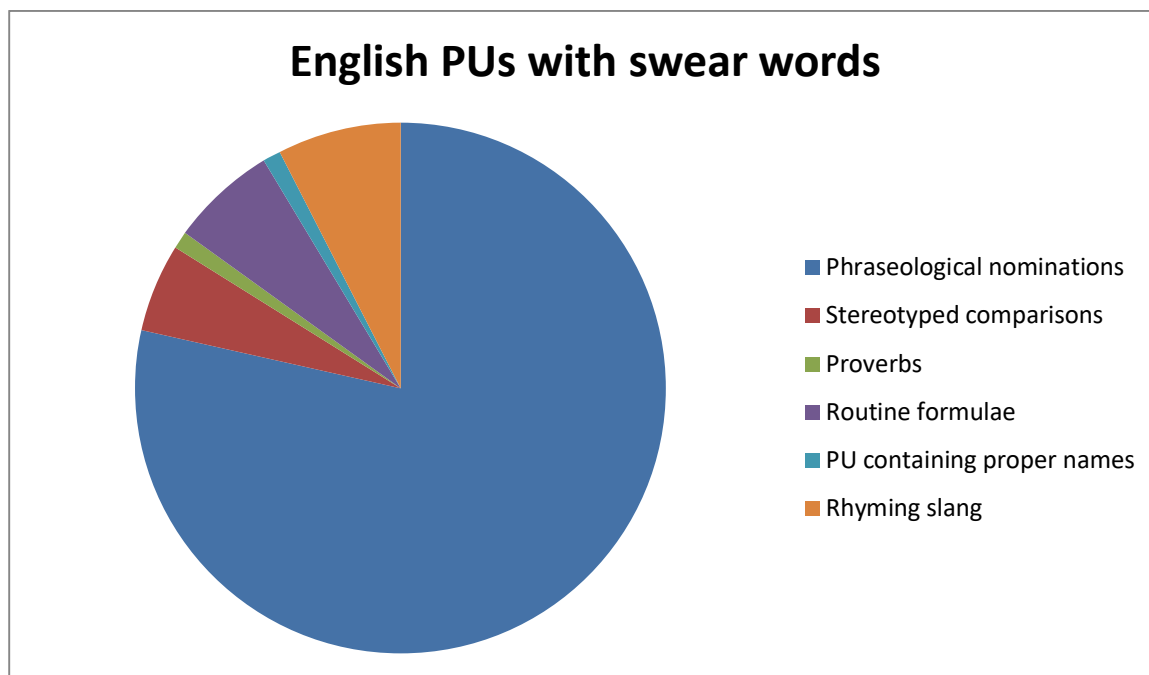
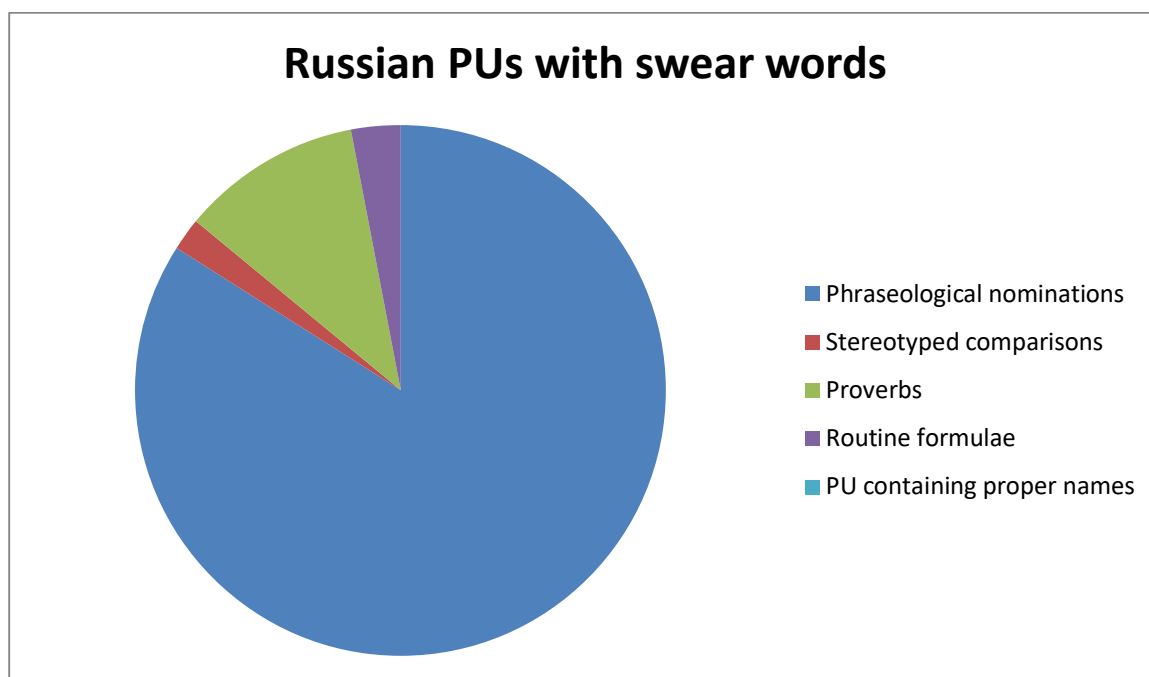


expressive ones, were found. Furthermore, there was only one example found of a PU that can function as a proverb. When it comes to special types of PUs, 7 examples of rhyming slang, which can be used instead of the swear words *fuck*, *shit* and *ass*, were found. However, only one example of a PU with a proper name was collected. As far as Russian language is concerned, the collected and analyzed corpus of PUs is presented in the Figure 2 below. When it comes to phraseological nominations, 84 examples were found within the corpus. That is to say, these examples involve 44 PUs functioning as verbs, 28 PUs functioning as nouns, 9 PUs functioning as adjectives and 3 PUs functioning as adverbs. Interestingly enough, 12 PUs, which can function as proverbs, were found in Russian corpus. When it comes to stereotyped comparisons, only 2 examples were collected. In addition, 3 examples of Russian routine formulae were found. However, not even one example of special types of PUs was found in Russian language. As far as modifications of PUs are concerned, in each language 14 examples were found. In English, 12 of them involve substitution and 2 expansion, whereas in Russian, all 14 examples involve substitution.

When it comes to the number of occurrences, it is worth mentioning that the mostly used English swear word, out of these three, is *shit* which occurs in 42 PUs. Moreover, swear word *ass* occurs in 27 PUs, whereas *fuck* occurs in 24 of them. When it comes to Russian swear words, the word *hui* occurs in 84 PUs and *pizda* in only 22 of them. It should also be stated that in one proverb both Russian swear words occur. It can be concluded that out of these five common English and Russian swear words that were investigated and analyzed in this diploma thesis, *shit* and *hui* are the most frequently used ones; therefore they constitute many PUs.

To sum up, the corpus of 198 English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words was analyzed in order to discover whether there indeed is a specific type of a PU that occurs more often than the other ones. From the collected data it can be concluded that the majority of PUs found in both languages can be classified as phraseological nominations. Interestingly enough, the majority of the phraseological nominations found function as verbs in both English and Russian. However, the only difference that occurs is that much more examples of phraseological nominations functioning as nouns were found in Russian corpus. When it comes to phraseological nominations functioning as verbs, adjectives and adverbs, the number of examples found is quite similar in both languages. The main difference that occurs when comparing the collected English and Russian PUs is the fact that Russian

language has a greater tendency to create various proverbs by using swear words. In addition, the new ones created are catchy due to a number of stylistic features used. When it comes to English language, from the collected data it can be concluded that English includes more PUs with swear words that can be classified as stereotyped comparisons and routine formulae. In addition, the figures offered below present the abovementioned results of the descriptive analysis and provide a clear insight into which types of PUs with swear words are more common in which language.

**Figure 1***English PUs with swear words***Figure 2***Russian PUs with swear words*

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## 9. Summary

### The Use of Swear Words in English and Russian Phraseological Units

The main focus of this diploma thesis is on the use of the most common English and Russian swear words in phraseological units. That is to say, the main goal is to present English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words, explain their meanings and classify them according to different conventional types. The corpus of 198 English and Russian phraseological units that contain swear words was collected and classified according to different conventional types suggested by Fiedler (2007). The descriptive analysis used provides an insight into which conventional types of PUs are likely to occur with the use of swear words and which of them are the most common ones in both languages.

Key words: swear words, phraseology, phraseological unit, classification, descriptive analysis

## 10. Sažetak

### Upotreba psovki u engleskim i ruskim frazeološkim jedinicama

Glavni fokus ovog diplomskog rada je upotreba najčešće korištenih engleskih i ruskih psovki u frazeološkim jedinicama, odnosno glavni je cilj prikazati engleske i ruske frazeološke jedinice koje sadržavaju psovke, objasniti njihovo značenje te ih klasificirati prema različitim konvencionalnim tipovima. Prikupljen se korpus sastoji od 198 engleskih i ruskih frazeoloških jedinica koje sadržavaju psovke te je klasificiran prema različitim konvencionalnim tipovima frazeoloških jedinica koje predlaže Fiedler (2007). U radu je korištena deskriptivna analiza koja pruža bolji uvid u to koje će se vrste frazeoloških jedinica sa psovka vjerojatno pojaviti te koje se od njih najčešće koriste u oba jezika.

Ključne riječi: psovke, frazeologija, frazeološka jedinica, klasifikacija, deskriptivna analiza