**Abstract**

*Introduction.* There exists a belief among scholars who study bilingual speech that using profane language in one’s native language (L1) feels less comfortable than saying swear words from the languages acquired later in life (L2). Although this hypothesis has been tested on the number of language pairs previously, not much is known about the perception of swear words by L1 Russian speakers who are fluent in English. Besides, most of existing studies only consider the language of swearing as a variable that explains the observed trend, overlooking alternative explanations. In this paper, we aim to fill this research gap by exploring other possible factors, in addition to the language choice, and testing whether they would affect a comfort level of L1 Russian speakers with English as L2 when saying swear words from both languages in familiar contexts.

*Methods.* To test our hypothesis, we used an online survey with Likert Comfort scale to gather 102 responses from Nazarbayev University students who are L1 Russian and L2 English speakers. Participants were instructed to rate their level of comfort, on a scale of 1 to 5, when saying out loud 16 sentences containing Russian and English profanities. In addition, to account for alternative factors that could influence participants’ perception of their comfortability when saying swear words, we collected data on participants’ gender, year of study, level of religious inclination, and the frequency of using and hearing swear wordsю

*Results and Discussion.* Contrary to what was expected, we observed that L1 Russian and L2 English bilinguals felt more comfortable swearing in Russian than in English. Speaking about alternative factors, it was discovered that higher levels of religious inclination corresponded with lower comfort levels when swearing. Other factors determining the comfortability when swearing included the frequency of hearing and saying swear words (with the latter having a stronger influence). In contrast, the gender of the participants and their year of study were found to have an insignificant relationship with the participants' comfort level when using swear words.