A Study of Slang in the Television Series
Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1

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Abstract. This study explores the use of slang in the first episode of Season 1 of the television series *Ginny & Georgia*, focusing on identifying the types of slang employed by the characters and interpreting their meanings within conversational contexts. The research applies a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing Allan and Burridge's (2006) theory to categorize slang types and Leech's (1981) theory of meaning to analyze their meanings. The analysis reveals five categories of slang: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronyms, and Clipping, with Flippant slang emerging as the most frequently used. Each slang term is examined for its contextual meaning, uncovering various types of meanings such as Conceptual, Connotative, Social, Affective, and Reflective Meanings. Based on the findings, Affective Meaning appears most prominently, reflecting the characters' emotional tones and interpersonal dynamics. While some types of meanings like Collocative and Thematic Meaning were absent, the findings underscore how slang in the series operates beyond casual speech, serving as a linguistic tool to express identity, emotion, and cultural nuance.

Keywords: Slang, Types, Meanings, Ginny & Georgia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is never separated from the social context in which it is used. The way a person speaks is influenced not only by the structure of the language itself, but also by who they are speaking to, the situation in which the conversation takes place, as well as the purpose of the communication. Sociolinguistic studies emphasize that language variation is influenced by factors such as age, cultural background, and communication environment (Holmes, 2013). In everyday life, individuals can use formal or informal language styles according to the social situation. One of the most common forms of informal language variation is slang, which serves to create familiarity, show solidarity, and distinguish certain social groups.

Slang is characterized by its creative, non-standard, and often temporary nature (Eble, 1996). It continues to evolve with cultural and social changes in society, and offers a more expressive and relaxed way of communicating (Crystal, 2019). Teenagers and certain communities often use slang as a means of linguistic expression that reflects their subculture (Tagliamonte, 2016). More than just a casual expression, slang also functions as a social marker that reflects affiliation, togetherness, or even a form of resistance to the norm. Mass media, including movies, music, and especially television series, plays an important role in spreading and normalizing the use of slang to a wider audience.

Television series in particular are a reflection of emerging language trends and cultural expressions. Programs aimed at teenagers, such as *Euphoria* and *Stranger Things*, are widely known for their use of slang to portray authentic teenage conversations (Tagliamonte, 2016). The media not only reflects how people speak, but can also influence the language habits of its audience (Androutsopoulos, 2009). Through its characters' dialogue, television becomes a means of spreading language as well as a medium of linguistic change, introducing new terms and reinforcing social communication patterns.

The series *Ginny & Georgia* (2021) is an interesting object of study because it shows the lives of teenagers and adults from various social backgrounds. The main character, Ginny Miller, a multiracial teen in search of identity, often uses various forms of slang in her conversations with peers, reflecting the language styles of today's teenagers (Anderson et al., 2023). Her mother, Georgia, on the other hand, has a more diverse language style, reflecting differences in age and life experiences (Williams, 2022). This difference is a clear portrait of the variation in language use across generations and social groups.

Despite the increasing interest in studying slang in the context of popular media, studies that specifically analyze the use of slang in the series *Ginny & Georgia* are still limited, even though the series contains many slang expressions that represent the linguistic identity of its characters. To address this gap, this study aims to identify the types of slang used by the main and supporting characters in the first episode of *Ginny & Georgia Season 1*, based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification, and analyze their meanings using Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. By examining the types and meanings of slang in this context, this research is expected to contribute to the study of sociolinguistics, especially in understanding language variation in popular media. This research is designed to answer two main questions: (1) What types of slang are used in the series *Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1*? (2) What are the meanings of the slang used in the series *Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1*?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of Slang by Allan and Burridge (2006)

Allan and Burridge (2006) describe slang as a type of informal language commonly used by particular social groups to build a sense of identity and distinguish themselves from others. Typically found in casual communication, slang is marked by its inventive word formations, shifts in meaning, and restricted use within certain communities. It is also dynamic in nature, constantly evolving in line with changing

social trends. Therefore, their framework is utilized in this study to classify slang according to its specific categories.

1. **Fresh and Creative**

    This category of slang includes newly invented words or expressions that demonstrate originality and ingenuity. These terms often arise through wordplay, imaginative alterations, or novel combinations that haven't been previously established in the language (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 72). Due to their uniqueness and appeal, they are quickly embraced by speakers. A good example is the expression *"use your loaf,"* which translates to "use your head," "think," or "be smart."

2. **Flippant**

    Flippant slang is formed by merging two or more words to create a new term whose meaning differs from its literal interpretation (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 39). This kind of slang is frequently used to add humor, irony, or a relaxed tone to conversations. For instance, the word *"doodle"* is humorously used to refer to "penis."

3. **Imitative**

    This form of slang is based on existing vocabulary but altered through changes in pronunciation, spelling, or structure to make it sounds more informal or distinctive (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 71). It usually mimics the original word while incorporating slight modifications. A typical example is *"hellava,"* derived from "hell of a," which conveys the meaning "very."

4. **Acronym**

    Acronym slang develops from the initial letters of words in a phrase, forming a shorthand version that is especially common in casual speech and digital communication or social media (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 217). These terms are designed for brevity and quick understanding. One example is *"GAY"* (Got AIDS Yet?), a controversial slang acronym intended as a dark joke.

5. **Clipping**

    Clipping involves shortening a longer word while preserving its core meaning (Allan & Burridge, 2006, p. 71). This type of slang is used to simplify speech and make conversation more efficient. Examples include *"sec"* (from second), *"bro"* (from brother), *"prob"* (from probably), *"awes"* (from

awesome), *"dizz"* (from dizzy), *"cuz"* (from cousin), and *"biz"* (from business).

Theory of Meaning by Leech (1981)

According to Leech (1981), meaning should not be constrained by definitions borrowed from other disciplines such as psychology or chemistry. Instead, it must be approached as a distinct subject within the field of linguistics. He likens the study of meaning to understanding how sentences relate to one another and being able to identify what counts as meaningful. A key aspect of his theory is the differentiation between *'knowledge of language'* and *'knowledge of the real world'*. This distinction highlights that meaning is not solely derived from dictionary definitions or grammatical structures, but also from how language is applied in real-life contexts. Leech's separation of sentence meaning and utterance meaning underscores that interpreting language involves not just words, but also insight into the speaker's intent, the listener's perception, and the surrounding circumstances of communication (Leech, 1981, p. 8).

1. **Conceptual Meaning**

   Conceptual Meaning also referred to as denotative or cognitive meaning, conceptual meaning forms the core of linguistic meaning. It is highly structured and can be systematically analyzed, much like the rules of syntax and phonology. For instance, the word *"woman"* can be broken down into features such as [+HUMAN], [+ADULT], and [-MALE], distinguishing it from a word like *"boy"*, which carries the features [+HUMAN], [+MALE], and [-ADULT] (Leech, 1981, p. 9).

2. **Connotative Meaning**

   According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning involves the additional values and associations a word carries beyond its literal sense. This meaning captures the cultural, social, and emotional layers attached to a term. For example, the word *"woman"* may evoke connotations such as tenderness, vulnerability, or nurturing instincts (Leech, 1981, p. 12).

3. **Social Meaning**

   Social meaning emerges from how language reflects the speaker's background, social standing, or the nature of the relationship between speakers. Words and their pronunciation can hint at a speaker's regional origin or level of formality. As an illustration, *"chuck"* has a more relaxed and informal tone,

whereas *"cast"* appears more refined, even though both imply the action of throwing (Leech, 1981, p. 14).

4. **Affective Meaning**

   Affective meaning expresses the emotional attitude or tone of the speaker, revealing how they feel about the listener or subject being discussed. This emotional layer is often communicated through vocal tone, choice of words, or phrasing. For example, compare the polite, considerate expression *"I'm terribly sorry to interrupt, but I wonder if you would be so kind as to lower your voices a little"* with the blunt *"Will you belt up"*, both convey the same request, but in strikingly different emotional tones (Leech, 1981, p. 15).

5. **Reflective Meaning**

   Reflective meaning comes into play when a word has more than one conceptual interpretation, and one of those meanings influences or overshadows the other. For instance, the word *"cock"*, which originally referred to a rooster, has developed a strong secondary and taboo association due to cultural and contextual usage (Leech, 1981, pp. 16–17).

6. **Collocative Meaning**

   This type of meaning arises from the habitual pairing of words in specific linguistic environments. It refers to the semantic implications brought about by words that commonly occur together. Take the adjectives *"pretty"* and *"handsome"*, although both imply attractiveness, *"pretty"* is typically associated with nouns like girl or flower, whereas *"handsome"* more often pairs with man or car, indicating differing collocational patterns (Leech, 1981, p. 17).

7. **Thematic Meaning**

   Thematic meaning is shaped by how a sentence is structured, what is placed at the beginning, what is emphasized, and how the message is organized. For example, *"Mrs. Bessie Smith donated the first prize"* focuses on the donor, while *"The first prize was donated by Mrs. Bessie Smith"* shifts the attention to the prize itself. This difference in sentence construction subtly alters the message's emphasis (Leech, 1981, p. 19).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to analyze slang in *Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1*, based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) slang categories and Leech's (1981)

theory of meaning. As Creswell (2018) notes, this method helps explore language use in its real context. The data were taken from the characters' dialogue transcripts and collected through document analysis (Bowen, 2009). Slang was identified by watching the episode, noting slang terms, and checking them against the official subtitles for accuracy. Discourse analysis (Gee, 2014) was also used to understand how slang works in social interaction. The slang terms were then classified and analyzed to see both their types and meanings. The analysis followed the steps of *data reduction, data presentation,* and *conclusion drawing* (Miles et al., 2014). Results were presented in brief explanations and tables with examples to show how slang reflects character relationships and social context.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data for this study were taken from dialogues in *Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1* that contain slang, which were then categorized using Allan and Burridge's (2006) slang classification and analyzed through Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. The analysis reveals that the characters use a range of slang types, including Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping, with Flippant slang appearing most frequently, highlighting the characters' preference for informal and humorous language. The meanings of these slang expressions were interpreted based on their context in the dialogue, guided by Leech's categories: Conceptual, Connotative, Social, Affective, and Reflective meaning. Among these, Affective Meaning appeared most often, showing how slang functions to express personal feelings and attitudes in casual conversation.

1. **Fresh and Creative**

   Slang that falls into the Fresh and Creative category is a new expression or word that is innovatively coined and has never been used before, usually arising from wordplay, cultural influences, or language trends that develop in society (Allan and Burridge, 2006).

   Data 1 (43:11 - 43:13)

   Max   : "And he's, like, super smart. He's in our AP English class,

                    where he saw Ginny's **epic takedown**."

   Georgia   : "Takedown?"

   This dialogue takes place in Ginny's room, as Georgia and Max help Ginny prepare to go on a date with Hunter. During the conversation, Georgia asks Max about Hunter, and Max uses the slang expression *"epic takedown."* This expression falls into the Fresh and Creative category because it is a unique and expressive combination of

words, making the language style in casual conversation more lively (Allan and Burridge, 2006). In terms of meaning, *"epic takedown"* reflects Conceptual Meaning, which is a logical and fixed basic meaning without emotional content (Leech, 1981). *"Takedown"* literally means to knock someone down, either physically or verbally. In this context, the expression is used to describe how Ginny managed to beat Mr. Gitten in a debate in AP English class in an impressive way. The word *"epic"* adds drama and reinforces the impression of Ginny's actions.

2. **Flippant**

Flippant slang refers to informal expressions that are often rude, humorous, or mocking, and sometimes include taboo language, typically used to tease or ridicule in a playful or non-serious way (Allan and Burridge, 2006).

Data 2 (37:18 - 37:19)

Marty   : "She says you're a cheap **skank** who married Kenny for
                   his money, and she deserves a part of the franchise. She
                   really hates you."

Georgia   : "It's my money, Marty. It's legit."

This conversation takes place between Marty and Georgia, where Marty tells Georgia that someone accused her of being a *"skank"* because she married Kenny for financial reasons. The slang term *"skank"* fits into the Flippant category as it is used informally in a rude and offensive manner, typically aimed at demeaning someone emotionally (Allan & Burridge, 2006). In this context, the term targets a woman considered to have low moral character, particularly in a sexual sense. It conveys Affective Meaning, as described by Leech (1981), reflecting strong negative emotions such as insult and anger.

3. **Imitative**

Slang classified as Imitative comes from existing words or phrases that are altered in pronunciation, spelling, or form to create a more casual or distinctive version (Allan & Burridge, 2006).

Data 3 (08:34 - 08:38)

Ellen   : "OK, get this. I'm driving home, and I see him on the
                   corner, smoking a joint. In the middle of the sidewalk!
                   No shame. Not a care in the world. Just gettin' **stoned** on
                   a Sunday. When I was a kid, we had the decency to use

eye drops and be paranoid."

Georgia : "I get it. I have a teenager."

This dialogue occurs when Ellen tells Georgia that she saw a teenager openly using marijuana, describing the person as *"stoned."* The term *"stoned"* belongs to the Imitative category because it originates from the verb "stone" but is reinterpreted metaphorically to refer to intoxication, especially from marijuana (Allan & Burridge, 2006). It is not a shortened or rearranged form, but its meaning is shaped by cultural and emotional associations. According to Leech (1981), this illustrates Connotative Meaning, as *"stoned"* here implies a subjective understanding tied to drug use and altered consciousness.

4. Acronym

Acronym slang is created by abbreviating multiple words into a single, compact expression, typically used to streamline communication in informal settings, especially online or in everyday speech (Allan & Burridge, 2006).

Data 4 (51:28 - 51:31)

Marcus : "Hey, um… can we keep this on the **DL**? I don't want this getting back to Padma and… I'm sure you don't want this getting back to Hunter."

Ginny : "I was gonna say that. I'd hate for such a dumb thing to ruin my chance with Hunter."

Marcus : "OK then."

The term *"DL,"* short for *"Down Low,"* is used by Marcus when he asks to keep his relationship with Padma and Hunter a secret. As an abbreviation of a phrase, *"DL"* falls under the Acronym category, commonly used for brief and informal expression (Allan & Burridge, 2006). The term conveys Social Meaning, as it reflects norms and expectations within social groups about secrecy and discretion. According to Leech (1981), Social Meaning reveals how language usage aligns with the speaker's social relationships and community behaviors.

5. Clipping

Clipping slang is formed by shortening longer words, typically by removing parts of the word while keeping its core meaning intact (Allan & Burridge, 2006).

Data 5 (32:30 - 32:32)

Ginny : "Nice bike."

Marcus : "Thanks. Maybe I'll give you a ride sometime."

Ginny   : "When? December?"

Marcus   : "Girls always want an **Insta** on the bike."

The word *"Insta"* is an example of Clipping, derived from the longer forms "Instagram," and is used in casual conversation to reflect an informal tone (Allan & Burridge, 2006). This clipped forms convey Reflective Meaning, which relates to indirect associations. In the dialogue Marcus's use of *"Insta"* in *"Girls always want an Insta on the bike"* refers not only to Instagram but also evokes the showy, aesthetic-driven culture popular among teenagers, demonstrating nuanced reflection of modern social behaviors (Leech, 1981).

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis of *Ginny & Georgia Season 1 Episode 1* revealed a diverse range of slang expressions that reflect the dynamic use of informal language, especially in teenage and family contexts. Based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification, the slang identified falls into five categories: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping, with Fresh and Creative being the most frequently used, demonstrating the characters' tendency toward imaginative and expressive speech. Each slang term was examined using Leech's (1981) theory of meaning, revealing that in the Fresh and Creative category, all five types: Conceptual, Connotative, Social, Affective, and Reflective Meanings were identified, with Connotative Meaning being the most dominant, showing strong cultural and emotional undertones. The Flippant category also showed Conceptual, Connotative, Social, and Affective Meanings, with Affective Meaning being the most dominant, emphasizing the emotional charge behind mockery or sarcasm. Similarly, Imitative slang reflected Conceptual, Connotative, Social, Affective, and Reflective Meanings, again with Connotative Meaning most common, highlighting the rich contextual and cultural layers in repurposed expressions. In the Acronym category, only Social Meaning was found, pointing to its role in group identity and casual interaction, while Clipping showed Social, Affective, and Reflective Meanings, with Social Meaning as the most frequent, reinforcing its role in informal tone and social connection. Overall, the study found that Conceptual, Connotative, Social, Affective, and Reflective Meanings were identified, with Affective Meaning being the most frequent, illustrating slang's key function in conveying emotion and attitude. The absence of Collocative and Thematic Meaning suggests that the slang used leans more toward expressing individual feelings and social bonds than structured or thematic significance, reinforcing slang's value as a tool for identity, intimacy, and cultural expression in everyday conversation.

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