



# Degree Thesis

Teacher Education (Upper Secondary School),  
300 credits

A Case Study: The Difference of Slang Usage Between Girls  
and Boys During Grade 9 English as a Second Language  
Lessons, and How it is Viewed and Used by English Teachers  
in Their Teaching

English for Students in Teacher Education, 15 credits

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Emma Ahlbin



HÖGSKOLAN  
I HALMSTAD

Author: Emma Ahlbin

Supervisor: Vi Thanh Son

Examiner: Elin-Maria Evangelista

## **Abstract**

The present study aims to investigate if grade 9 English students, being 15-16 years old, attending a Swedish secondary school, use English slang during their English as a second language lessons, and if so, why they do it, and if there are any differences between the two genders in their slang usage. In order to incorporate a didactic perspective, it is also examined how English teachers deal with their students' slang usage. Three English lessons has been observed, alongside with interviews with three English teachers, in order to conduct the investigation. The results indicate that slang words are common during grade 9 English lessons, and the male students' usage of slang exceeds their female counterparts' usage to a great extent. Reasons for these results can be found in the field of gender language which argues that slang usage, and language usage in general, is strongly connected to identity, and to how the two genders are expected to behave. Moreover, the English teachers display a varied opinion about their students' slang usage, yet accounts for utilizing it when teaching register and linguistic adaptation. This approach is approved by a great amount of research, which states that by incorporating youth-language, in this case slang, students are able to gain a linguistic awareness where they can identify with what is taught, as well as adapt their language depending on situation and context.

### **Key words:**

Slang, secondary school, gender language, self-categorization, humor, ESL, youth

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HÖGSKOLAN  
I HALMSTAD

## 1. Introduction

Slang, it is often suggested, represents the users' innate inarticulacy. Their inability to use standard language. Not so. The reality is that slang remains in a state of constant reinvention. Even if that reinvention is not coming from elite sources (Green, 2015, p. 7).

Slang is considered to be a colloquial version of a language, where the speakers either invent words, or adapt existing words to suite them better in their communicative strategies (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Munro (2007) argues for the idea that slang should not be considered a 'bad' version of a language due to its informality and natural distance to standard educated speech, which is considered 'good' language. Nevertheless, since slang sometimes consists of taboo words and vulgar words, which according to Dumas and Lighter (referred to in Charkova, 2007) are unusual language phenomena in high status contexts, the label 'bad' is easily given to slang. Examples of 'bad' language can be seen in the result section in the present essay, where 'fuck' is a reoccurring taboo word. When studying this, I began thinking back on my time as a teenager learning English, where a huge amount of time was dedicated towards teaching us students how to speak 'proper' English. I vividly remember being taught that certain words were labelled as good or bad, and slang would probably not occur in any of the classrooms where my English education took part as a teenager. Today, as I am pursuing my degree as an English teacher, my experience in labelling language as good or bad has grown into an interest in how this phenomenon is dealt with by teachers today.

Meanwhile, I have always had a deep interest in how girls and boys differ in their speech. When in upper secondary school, whenever we were given an assignment where we could choose our own topic, I focused on the differences, and similarities, between the two genders. This interest has remained within me and when choosing a topic for this thesis, I decided to explore this area further. De Beauvoir (referred to in Butler, 1986), who is considered one of the most influential social theorists within gender theory, made a distinction between genders and sexes: the human sexes are determined and constant, while genders are cultural constructs.

As mentioned above, this study will focus on genders. Consequently, the aim of this essay is to examine which of the two genders is more prone to use English slang within the grade 9 English as a second language (ESL) classroom, and how grade 9 English teachers experience this usage, answer to it, and incorporate it into their pedagogy.

Three questions constitute the basis of the study:

- Do students in grade 9 use English slang during English lessons, and if this is the case, why do they use slang?
- If so, how do male students and female students in grade 9 differ in their usage of English slang during English lessons?
- What are the attitudes of English teachers in grade 9 regarding the usage of English slang as part of their teaching?

The outline of the essay is as follows: an initial section of definitions of important key terms is provided, followed by a section of previous research. Next, certain aspects from the National Curriculum will be highlighted, which is followed by a method section. Subsequently, the results of the study are presented, followed by a discussion. Last, some concluding thoughts, limitations of the study and further research possibilities are presented.

## 2. Definitions and theoretical background

In the following, key terms used in the essay will be defined. First, slang as a phenomenon will be explained, as well as given a theoretical explanation of why it often is used by youths. Second, gender language and the differences between male and female language will be highlighted. Last, extracts from the National Curriculum will be discussed.

### 2.1. Slang definition

Although slang as a concept is difficult to define, several experts in the subject have made attempts to do so (Green, 2015). Eble (1996) writes that “Slang is an everchanging set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large” (p. 11). According to this quote, slang is used as an identity marker for its users. Green (2015) suggests that slang can be seen as a counter-language, since it becomes a contrast towards the generally accepted language. He describes slang as a language independent of rules and where the user of slang

can be creative, as well as invent and re-invent words in different ways. Green also means that slang occurs when already existing words are shortened, used in a newly manner, or altered in another way. When searching for the word ‘slang’ in the Cambridge Dictionary, “very informal language that is usually spoken rather than written, used especially by particular groups of people” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) is the definition that appears. Green (2015) agrees with the fact that slang is informal, yet he wants to stress the fact that slang is part of the English language as a whole and wants to diminish the view of slang as a worsened version of English. Munro (2007) also describes slang as a version of a language that belongs in an informal context, and that is not a suitable choice of language when in a formal context. He claims that slang should only be used in situations where all the participants are aware of what is being said and understands the definition of it. Furthermore, within the concept of slang, Dumas and Lighter (referred to in Charkova, 2007) argue that words that signal vulgarity or taboo are often included.

Even though slang can be seen as an elusive language phenomenon, both Green (2015) and Munro (2007) agree upon the fact that slang is seen as an informal version of the English language. Furthermore, Oxford English Dictionary refers to slang as “Language of a highly colloquial type, considered as below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words or of current words employed in some special sense” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Consequently, words that correspond to this definition by the Oxford English Dictionary, which is also agreed upon by other authors mentioned in section 2.1., will be analyzed as slang in the present study. This means that new words, or already existing words which are used differently than suggested by standard educated speech, will be analyzed as slang. Furthermore, words that indicate vulgarity or taboo will also be counted as slang, due to their natural informality.

## 2.2. Theoretical framework to why slang might be used

Turner (1987) identified a phenomenon and created the self-categorization theory, which he states “is about how individuals are able to act as a group at all” (p. 42). It is suggested that within the theory, three levels of categories for individuals to categorize themselves within have been constructed. At the first level, the intrapersonal level, the sole person is contrasted to other people, as one individual different from others. At the intergroup level, which is the second, the individual defines himself or herself as part of a group constellation, and contrasts this group to



other groups, called outgroups. At the least personal level, superordinate level, the individual defines himself or herself as human, and in this case the group *humans* is contrasted to other living beings, which are not human (Turner, 1987, p. 45). As a result, if the differences between a certain amount of people are less salient than the differences between these people and another group of people, then these people are considered a group, due to their similarities. Turner finds that this is also true regarding individuals, due to the fact that if the differences between one person and a particular group are less salient than what differentiates that individual from other people, the individual is seen as part of that group.

To exemplify, if a participant in a conversation occupies a significant amount of speaking time, makes an effort in trying to depict himself or herself as strong, independent and serious as well as tries to bring other participants of the conversation down in regard to what they say, this person could be perceived as a male due to the fact that he represents more traits commonly observed in male language, than female language. He displays less differences towards other males than towards the outgroup, females. On the contrary, if an individual participating in a conversation appears to be collaborative, tries to sustain a pleasant atmosphere in the conversation as well as acknowledges the other participants, this person might be identified as a female, since typical female speaking traits are utilized by the person. The person also demonstrates less differences compared to females, than the person does compared to males.

Turner (1987) also presents the idea that when a person identifies to a certain group, he or she adapts to the norms and behaviors of that group. During this process, the individual internalizes the traits common for the particular group, in order to become a credible member of the group. Furthermore, Forsskåhl (2010) claims that when youths are using slang, they are simultaneously enhancing the bonds within their group. Meanwhile, the group also creates a clearer distinction between their own group and outgroups. Forsskåhl claims that individuals using slang, do, at the same time, demonstrate that they belong to a particular gender group as well as geographical identity, as pointed out in section 2. What becomes obvious when reading both Turner (1987) and Forsskåhl's (2010) works is that the use of slang is a clear marker of group identity, one that might be central when studied through the self-categorization theory. By using slang, youths are marking their belonging to a certain group, as well as creating a distinction between themselves and people not belonging to the 'youth-group'. Munro (2007) agrees with this statement, claiming that the reason behind youths using slang is their strive to belong to a group, and to be able to fit into that group.

### 2.3. Gender language

A substantial amount of research has been made in the field of gender language, and in the following section, gender language and its norms will be presented. First, male language will be analyzed. Second, female language will be given attention.

#### 2.3.1. Male language

When males are involved in conversations where all the participants are males, they tend to try to depict themselves as clever, courageous, and strong, which is either accomplished by trying to excel, or by tearing the other males down. Generally, they aim to appear as accomplished as possible (Locke, 2011). This is achieved by common strategies used by male speakers, one being that males, more likely than females, interrupt each other. They are also more prone to give commands and might threaten other male participants of the conversation. Simultaneously, males are likely to resist the other participants' demands, and even heckle the other males. Moreover, telling jokes are common traits in male conversations, alongside with them trying to top each other, which becomes a method to appear as the most accomplished one (Locke, 2011). This can also be identified in what topics often arise in conversations containing only male participants. The stories being told often deal with action and conflict, with the purpose of appearing as an independent individual who others should avoid getting into conflict with. In addition, Coates (referred to in Locke, 2011) means that when males participate in conversations where the participants are both males and females, they tend to occupy a substantial amount of time within the conversation, which partially is due to the fact that the female participants often encourage them to. Last, men are expected, and said throughout history, to use more taboo words and swear words than their female counterparts (Coates, 2004). Consequently, if a speaker does adhere to the above brought up speaker norms, he or she will generally be perceived as dynamic (Palomares, 2004). In other words, male speech, and consequently also males, are often associated with being dynamic.

#### 2.3.2. Female language

In conversations where the participants are female, Locke (2011) points out that it is highly valued to strive to sustain group harmony. In accordance with this, females tend to use certain

strategies in order to do so; they generally agree with the other participants within the conversation, and when differing in opinion, they yield for the benefit of the other. Collaboration is employed alongside with a constant aim to be polite. Also, females tend to be acknowledging towards the other participants. Furthermore, while males tend to depict themselves as strong and independent individuals by focusing on action and conflict as topics within their conversations, females are more likely to discuss topics such as family and other people (Locke, 2011). According to Coates (referred to in Locke, 2011) they are also more prone to involve intimate details. Alongside with this, females tend to incorporate their emotions in conversations, where they account for how they feel (Palomares, 2004). Furthermore, Coates (2004) states that a very common trait in female language is to use hedges, a method to use when stating the level of certainty, or uncertainty, about what is being spoken about (for example 'I know', 'I think', 'perhaps'). The use of hedges leads to female language sometimes being perceived as tentative. Last, as mentioned earlier, females are less expected to utter taboo words (Coates, 2004). Palomares (2004) claims that individuals who adhere to female speaking norms generally is described as socio-intellectual, compared to the dynamic characteristics often attributed to men.

## 2.4. The Swedish National Curriculum

In the Swedish National Curriculum for compulsory school, the core content in English for grades 7-9 states that "Language phenomena such as pronunciation, intonation, grammatical structures, sentence structure, words with different registers, and fixed language expressions students encounter in language" should be covered within their English education (Skolverket, [lgr 11], 2019, p. 36, my translation). Furthermore, it is also mentioned that within the English subject, language variation and how language can be adapted depending on the context and purpose, should be given attention (Skolverket, [lgr 11], 2019). Since slang is, according to previously discussed research, an informal, yet highly used language form of English (see section 3.2.1.), this ought to be included when working with registers and how language can be adapted depending on the context.

Moreover, the National Curriculum states that within the content of communication, topics which are familiar to the students should be talked about, alongside with their interests and everyday situations (Skolverket, [lgr11], 2019). Given the fact that slang often is an identity

marker for youths and an area of the English language that they relate to, it is one topic that could be worked within the classroom.

In addition, one of the aims of English learning in the National Curriculum is:

(...) to be able to formulate oneself and interact with others both in spoken and written language, and to be able to adapt one's usage of language to different situations, purposes and recipients. The communicative ability also covers the confidence in using the language and the ability to use different strategies to support communication and solve problems when language skills are not sufficient (Skolverket, [lgr 11], 2019, p. 33, my translation).

According to this quote, preparing the students with the knowledge and competence to vary and adapt their language based on context, is one of the objectives the teachers should aim towards in their teaching. Also, the implementation of speaking strategies to facilitate communication, is likewise an important factor in language teaching.

### 3. Literature review

There is a substantial amount of research in the field of slang usage, however, the usage of English slang during ESL lessons in Swedish schools has been less covered. In fact, Charkova (2007) reports that even though some studies on slang in a second language (L2) acquisition context have been conducted in North America, the field does not contain much research in the area besides that. In the following, studies which have investigated slang usage among youths in different contexts will be presented. Also, gender language-studies will be accounted for.

Namvar (2014) has conducted a study which aimed to investigate if Malaysian youth use American slang, and in that case, what type of slang is used. The participants were all undergraduate students at a public university in Malaysia. The 60 respondents participating in the investigation were each given a list of 20 slang words, where they were asked to explain the meaning of the words, in order to gain an understanding of whether or not the participants were aware of what these typical American slang words refer to. The results of the investigation displayed a pattern in the slang usage of the Malaysian youth; slang deriving from the internet,

as well as abbreviations were found to be used on a regular basis by the participants. Moreover, it was found that the respondents used slang expressions often expressed in American films. Namvar explains that slang is culture bound, but through the facilitation of communicating electronically, it spreads and becomes less isolated parts of the world's languages. Since Namvar has focused on general slang usage of students in Malaysia, his results are highly relatable to the present study's results.

In Forsskåhl's study (2001), it was examined how boys and girls differ in their slang usage. She studied the slang words written down and used in everyday situations by 188 teenagers, between 15 and 19 years old, living in two Finnish towns, attending Swedish schools. The respondents were divided into four subgroups: girls from Ekenäs and girls from Helsinki, and boys from Ekenäs and boys from Helsinki. She detected slang words from both Swedish, Finnish and English, as well as words that were hybrids, either English-Swedish or Finnish-Swedish. Forsskåhl noticed that in her investigation, girls from Ekenäs tended to use milder slang words, than boys from Ekenäs. She describes mild slang words as words that are neither vulgar nor taboo words, and not chocking to use in everyday situations. Moreover, the Helsinki material demonstrated considerable differences in what slang words were being used by the two genders. The words used by the boys and girls covered the same semantic domains, nevertheless, some words occurred more often with the boys and vice versa. In Ekenäs, the two genders displayed less differences regarding what slang words were being used. In both towns, both genders accounted for using slang words that were not found to be used by the other gender. She concludes the study stating that her research found that the use of slang does function as an identity marker both in terms of gender and geography. Since Forsskåhl has done a similar investigation as the present study, focusing on the difference of slang usage between the genders, her results will be used as a comparison to the results in the present study.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language, Lutviana and Mafulah (2021) have conducted a study where their aim was to examine the use of slang words during online translation classes, and they did so by analyzing the students' messages that had been sent through the application WhatsApp. However, precisely what level the students investigated were in, school or university, was not acknowledged. The students received a questionnaire where they were asked to account for their attitudes regarding using slang words. In the result

section, it is revealed that the use of slang words was a recurring habit in the students' messages, and both English, Indonesian, and Javanese slang words were detected. Three contexts appeared to make the students use more slang words than others; when discussing informal situations and topics, when expressing a certain feeling, as well as when trying to address another peer. The students explained their use of slang as a tool to enhance their linguistic knowledge, and "for practicing speaking like a native" (Lutviana & Mafulah, 2021, p. 60). Another discovery was the fact that 71% of the students tried not to use any slang when conversing with their teacher, since they considered that action to be impolite. The authors explain how the students of the survey demonstrated positive attitudes towards slang use during English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons, since it improved the learning atmosphere, had a relaxing effect as well as increased the students' understanding of the lesson. These results are highly relevant to the present study, where teachers' attitudes towards implementing slang in their pedagogy is focused, alongside with the perks of incorporating it.

In another study, Mazer and Hunt (2008) have focused on students' views on situations when their teachers use slang. In their study, 126 participants, consisting of both males and females enrolled in university, were asked to view a short video of a teacher presenting a lecture, while incorporating positive slang words such as 'cool', 'awesome', 'rocks', 'sweet' and 'let's get fired up'. Afterwards, the students answered three questions; what they liked about the slang usage of their teacher, what they did not appreciate as much about the phenomenon, as well as what suggestions they had for the teacher regarding his presentational style. The results demonstrated that the students did appreciate their teacher using slang words while lecturing, since they experienced the lecture as more adapted to the students. Also, the results demonstrated that the students experienced the teacher's chosen language style to be a humorous adaptation of the lecture. Moreover, the students expressed that they understood the instructions given to them, that they became more advertent during the lecture as well as kept their interest alive. This will be compared to how the teachers in the present study respond during the interviews, regarding how they position themselves in the use of slang during English lessons.

Jonsson (2018), has examined how linguistics is taught during Swedish lessons. Jonsson has completed an ethnographic study where he has audio recorded conversations which has occurred naturally, conducted participant observations as well as 13 interviews with students within ages 16-17. His focus of the study was linguistic styles and different speaking manners

that can be referred to as non-normative. Since he completed his research in the skirts of Stockholm, Rinkeby Swedish has been the linguistic style in focus. A building and construction class was observed, which only consisted of male students. They were given a hand-out consisting of questions about swear-words and asked to reflect upon the questions as well as to discuss them in groups, in order to answer them. Jonsson identified one issue with this classroom assignment; while three male students were discussing the hand-out, they were constantly identifying themselves as ‘non-Swedish’, since they derive from other countries. On the other hand, what was also identified by the author was the amount of humor the students demonstrated while working with the linguistic questions. Jonsson argues for the use of similar assignments where students are able to reflect upon language, and not just formal, regular language. Jonsson suggests that by enabling these students to play with language, to study language containing swear words and that is closely connected to their identity, they are allowed to address the topic of different registers of a language and perhaps also identify with the language portrayed during their lesson. Jonsson’s (2018) study is relevant to the present study since Jonsson has, by observing and doing audio recordings, studied language used by youths in Sweden, which is the method used in the present study as well. In addition, in the present study, Jonsson’s views and findings can be compared to the teachers’ answers in the interviews of the present study.

To summarize this section of previous research, it is obvious that both girls and boys do use slang. Also, there are clear differences regarding the two genders’ usage, which results in slang being an identity marker for the genders. Reasons for why the students use slang are found in their urge to practice using English as a native speaker, however, it is also considered an effective tool to use when working with register in the classroom. It is also found that by incorporating language close to the register used by youths in the classroom, the students might easier identify to what is studied. Moreover, by incorporating slang into the vocabulary as a teacher, the students respond positively and experience the lecture to be adapted to them.

## 4. Method

In the present study, observations and interviews have been implemented through a qualitative approach to answer the research questions. Hjerm and Lindgren (2010) describe the qualitative

approach as where the data collected consists of words rather than numbers. Although the interviews and observations will be analyzed qualitatively, the observations will also be analyzed quantitatively, where word counts will be presented in numbers and percentages. The reason for this is to enable the reader to gain an overall awareness of the frequency of slang usage divided between the two genders. In the following, the proceedings of the observations as well as interviews will be described. Then, the ethical principles taken into consideration prior to, and during, the investigation will be accounted for.

#### 4.1. Observations

In the present study, 26 grade 9 students have been observed during three English lessons. The lessons took place at a Swedish secondary school and were 40 minutes long. The class consisted of 17 male students and 9 female students. The group of students were chosen since they fit into the two criteria needed; they attend 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and they all attend English lessons in school. The observations were conducted through the non-participating method, although the group was aware of the intentions of the observer and that the observations were being made. This should be taken into consideration when taking part of the results, since it is possible that the students' behavior or speaking patterns were affected when they knew they were being observed, and for what cause the observations were conducted (Patel & Davidson, 2019).

The lessons were audio recorded, alongside with notes being taken. The reason behind choosing observations as method for conducting the research, was to come as close as possible to the students' natural behavior and speaking patterns during English lessons (Patel & Davidson, 2019). Moreover, it decreases the risk of retaining misleading information, which could be the case if the method chosen was interviews, which would depend upon the students' memory and opinions about their slang usage. The chosen method for the observations was structured observations, where a scheme had been prepared, in which it was noted every time it was detected that a student used slang (see Appendix 1) to ensure that the desired phenomenon was being observed, as suggested by Johannessen et.al. (2020). This scheme method was inspired by the generic coding schemes (Chaudron, referred to in McKay, 2006). Both the word, or phrase, as well as the gender of the student was noted within the scheme and it was also noted within which context the word, or phrase, was uttered. The contexts ranged between group discussions, discussions conducted with the whole class or in between activities. The recordings



were then partially transcribed, where the words spoken by both students and teacher were noted and analyzed in order to detect slang that was not noted during the observations.

#### 4.1.1. Lesson descriptions

During the first lesson observed, the students were divided into groups of three to five students each. They were then given questions based on information they had gathered earlier about indigenous Australians. In order to gather information about whether or not the students used slang, every group was observed for an equal amount of time, when they discussed the questions about indigenous Australians. During lesson two, the students continued working with the questions about indigenous Australians, but this time, they did it as a whole class discussion. They were seated in the same groups as the previous lesson, when they discussed the questions in groups, and the teacher directed the questions to particular groups throughout the discussion. The third, and final lesson observed, consisted of group discussions. This time, the students were divided into groups of two to three students and asked to read three written English national tests. Their assignment was to read the assessment criteria, and then grade the essays either E, C or A. They were also asked to write a motivation for every grade they decided upon. In the end of the lesson, they were then asked to share what grade they had given the essays, followed by their motivation for that particular grade.

#### 4.2. Interviews

Teacher interviews were conducted in order to gain a didactical perspective on students' slang usage. One female and two male teachers were interviewed: Teacher 1 (the teacher of the class that was observed), Teacher 2 (the other male teacher) and Teacher 3 (the female teacher). The interviews were accomplished in Swedish, to enable the teachers to speak rather unimpededly, since their first language (L1) was Swedish. Their answers were then translated into English.

The interviews were semi-structured, where the questions (see Appendix 2) were decided before the interviews. The basis of the questions could be given in different orders depending on how the responders answered the questions, which also meant that follow-up questions were added where necessary (Bryman, 2013). Since the interviews were qualitative, the questions were designed to gain an awareness about the respondent's view upon a phenomenon (Bryman, 2013). The interviews were introduced with a general question about the subject, and then each

question became more specified, as suggested by Patel and Davidson (2019). There was an aim to maintain a similar structure within the three interviews, in order to enable a comparison when analyzing the results. Prior to conducting the interviews, a pilot interview was done on a teacher colleague, to ensure that the questions were understandable as well as relevant to the study.

### 4.3. Ethical principles

Since this investigation partially builds upon recordings made in a grade 9 English classroom, four ethical principles formulated by Vetenskapsrådet (2002) were taken into consideration; the principle of information, the principle of consent, the principle of confidentiality, and the principle of fair use. How it was ensured that these principles were followed will be presented below.

First, the students' English teacher informed the students that their English lessons were going to be observed. The students were then given information about the study in the form of a consent letter where the four ethical principles were explained to the students (see Appendix 3), prior to the first lesson being observed, and it was also explained how the recordings would be executed. Before the observations began, the students were asked to tick the box which stated 'I give my consent' if they did accept participating, which they all did. The headmaster of the school was also informed about the research taking place. Even though all the participants were 15-16 years old, the choice to inform their parents about the research project was made, and the information was posted onto the online platform of the school (see Appendix 4). The researcher has the responsibility to prevent exposing the identity of the participants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017), and accordingly, precautions were made to prevent this from occurring.

## 5. Results

In the following section, the results of the observations as well as interviews will be presented. It will be divided into three sections, which is categorized based on the research questions.

### 5.1. Do students use English slang during grade 9 English lessons?

In this section, the data found during both observations as well as interviews regarding if the students used slang during English lessons, will be provided.

#### 5.1.1. Findings during observations and interviews

As expected, based on the previous research, the students did use slang during the three lessons observed.

Figure 1

*Slang use during three lessons*

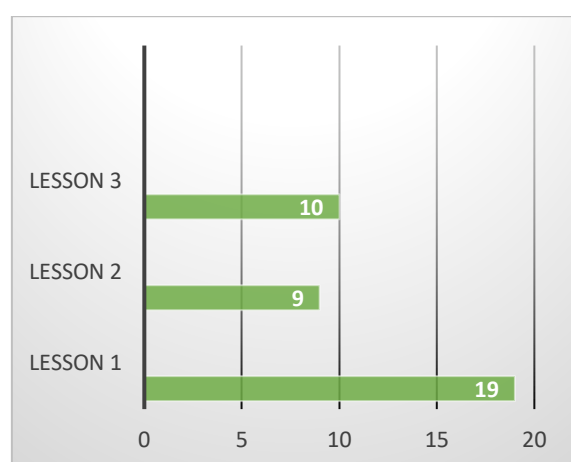
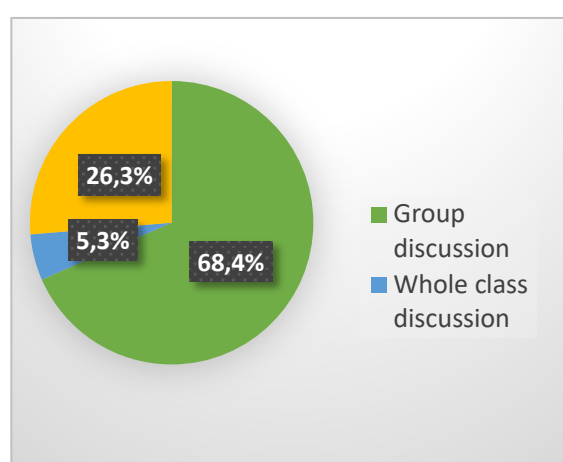


Figure 2

*Slang use based on context*



In the first figure, the amount of slang words, or slang expressions, used during the three lessons is presented. As can be seen, most slang words were detected during the first lesson. During the three lessons, a total of 38 slang words were detected. These words were then categorized into which context they were expressed (see figure 2). In figure 2, it is clear that a predominant context for when slang was mostly used, was during the students' group discussions. It is also clear that whole class discussions, which is a context where the teacher is a participant as well, consisted of the least amount of slang detected. The context in between activities stands for circa one fourth of the slang words detected in total.

During the interviews with the teachers, they were asked about their experience concerning students in grade 9 using slang during English lessons. Out of the three teachers, two of them considered slang to be used rather often. Teacher 1 expressed the view, when asked if his grade 9 English students use English slang: "Yes. A lot of it is influenced by social media, and TV and series. Like abbreviations, and also wanna, gonna, shoulda, and this affects how well they

write” (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation). This agrees with the observations in which plenty of slang was detected. However, the contractions suggested by the teacher in this case, were not detected in a substantial amount.

Table 1

*Slang words or expressions said during three lessons, accounted for in the order they were said*  
*Taboo words are yellowed*

Abow	Abow	Abow	Abow	What the fuck	You piece of shit
What the fuck	Shit	Ey ey ey	Fuck the system	Fuck the system	Shit
Shit	Speaky speaky	The rappy rappy	The sticky sticky	Gonna	Meth
Shut up	Kinda	Fucking	What the fuck	Man	Damn
No shit	No shit	So swag	Serri	Fuck you	Wow
It's fucking shit	Fucking shit	Ey	The fuck	Damn	Fucking
Fucking shit	Shut the fuck up				

These are the actual words detected when observing if the students used any slang. As can be seen, contractions exemplified by Teacher 1 were only detected in two forms, ‘kinda’ and ‘gonna’, and each form was expressed only once. Teacher 3 also declared that slang was a reoccurring phenomenon in the English classroom. This teacher, however, reported that mostly, this slang use consisted of swear words, and gave ‘fuck’ and ‘shit’ as examples. These slang words, alongside with other swear words, were detected quite often in the observations and transcriptions. On 22 occasions, out of 38, taboo words were detected. The most frequently used slang word throughout the observations was ‘fuck’, which was said 13 times in various styles, agreeing with Teacher 3’s statement. What was also detected, during four occasions, was the invention of new words, or reinvention of already existing words: ‘speaky speaky’, ‘the rappy rappy’, ‘the sticky sticky’ and ‘serri’.

To summarize, slang words were used by grade 9 English students during the three lessons that were observed. It was also confirmed by two of the interviewed teachers that students do use slang during English lessons, however, they did not quite agree upon what kind of slang words that were common. The third teacher had not experienced any substantial amount of slang use.

## 5.2. How do male students and female students differ in their usage of English slang during grade 9 English lessons?

In this section, the data collected during observations and interviews regarding if there are any differences between male and female students concerning their use of slang, will be presented.

### 5.2.1. Findings during observations

Figure 3

*Gender division in the class observed*

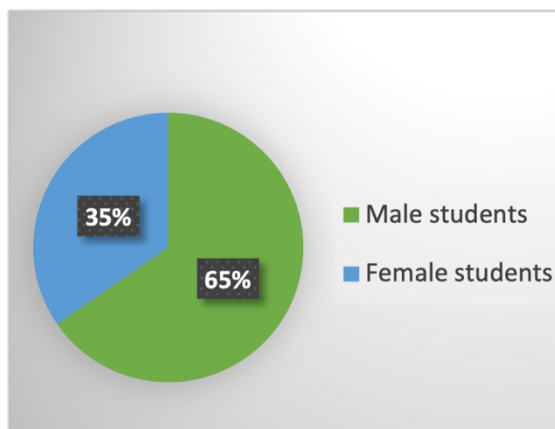
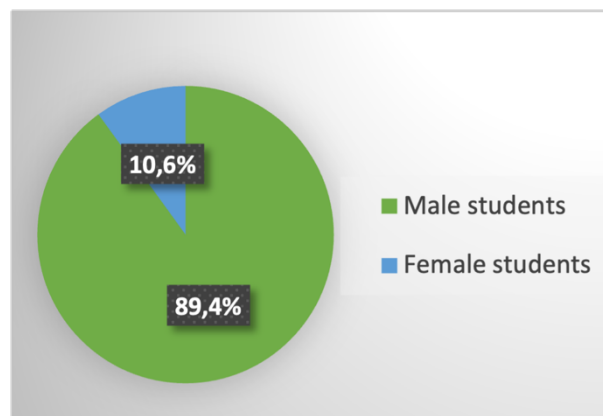


Figure 4

*Slang said in total based on gender*

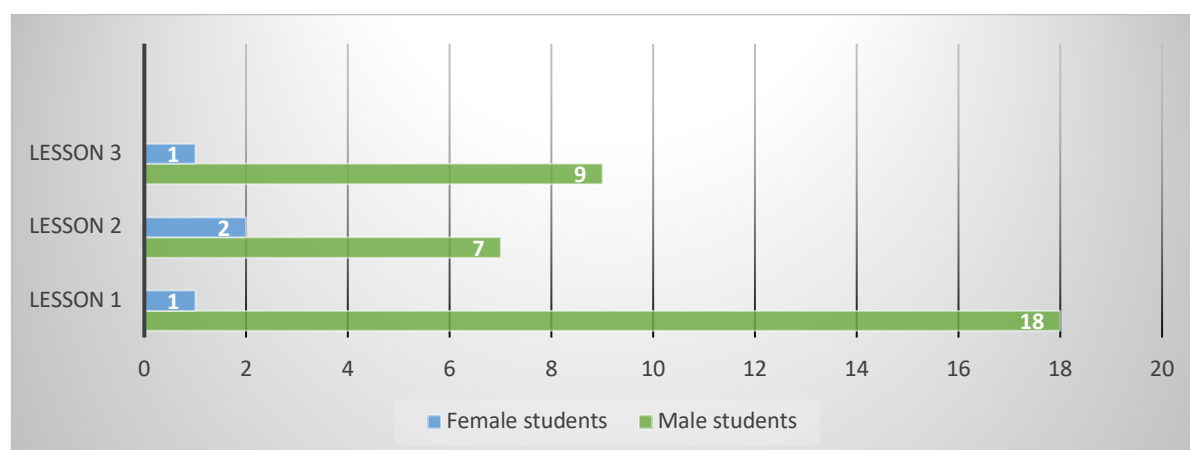


In figure 3 above, the distribution of male and female students is presented in percentage. 65% of the observed students were male, and 35% of the observed students were female. Even though the genders were not divided equally in the class observed, figure 4 displays clear differences in the amount of slang the two genders used. The male students accounted for 89,4% of the slang words or expressions, while the female students accounted for 10,6%. Even though the class being observed consisted of more male students than female students, the data points at the fact that the male students used far more slang than the female students. The male students, standing for 65% of the students in the classroom, were responsible for 89,4% of the slang words detected during the observations. Furthermore, the female students, being 35% of the students in total, used only 10,6% of the slang words detected.

Three lessons were observed in total, and there are some differences regarding the slang use during these three lessons.

Figure 5

*Slang said during three lessons based on gender*



In the figure above, the number of slang words uttered by both male and female students during the three lessons observed, are presented. During all three lessons, the male students' slang usage exceeded the female students' usage. In total, only 4 slang words or expressions said by female students were detected, while male students made up for the remaining 34 words or expressions.

Table 2

*Slang words or expressions said during three lessons, accounted for in the order they were said*

*Green: male utterances*

*Blue: female utterances*

Abow	Abow	Abow	Abow	What the fuck	You piece of shit
What the fuck	Shit	Ey ey ey	Fuck the system	Fuck the system	Shit
Shit	Speaky speaky	The rappy rappy	The sticky sticky	Gonna	Meth
Shut up	Kinda	Fucking	What the fuck	Man	Damn
No shit	No shit	So swag	Serri	Fuck you	Wow
It's fucking shit	Fucking shit	Ey	The fuck	Damn	Fucking
Fucking shit	Shut the fuck up				

In Table 2, the slang words or expressions uttered by both male students as well as female students are displayed. Even though the total amount of slang words consists of a high amount of taboo words, the female students are not active users of this kind of slang. The four detected

slang words uttered by female students only consist of one taboo word, which is 'shit'. The male students on the other hand, use a substantial amount of taboo words, where about 21 out of their 34 slang words are taboo words. Concerning the male students' use of slang words, there is a slightly apparent pattern; they tend to repeat a slang word or expression previously uttered by another male student. This can be seen on four occasions in Table 2; 'abow' is repeated four times, and 'fuck the system', 'no shit' and 'fucking shit' is repeated twice.

#### 5.2.2. Findings during teachers' interviews

Teacher 1, the English teacher of the group being observed, argued that the male students did use more slang than the female students, in his experience. This also agrees with the results found when observing and analyzing the transcriptions. When trying to explain why this was the case, he mentioned how the male students at the school actually spoke more in general, than the female students did. By occupying more speaking time, the male students are also able to use more slang. Teacher 3 agreed with Teacher 1's experience, however, Teacher 2 did not quite agree with the other teachers. He meant that he did not notice any difference between the two genders regarding their slang usage but added: "I do react when certain words come out of a girl's mouth instead of a boy's. It is possible that I react more if a girl says it than if a boy does" (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation). According to this teacher, there are no differences in terms of slang usage between the two genders, however when he hears a female student express a slang word or slang expression, he reacts more than when a male student does.

As a summary, based on the observations, the male students used more slang words and expressions than the female students did, regardless of unequal distribution of male and female students in the class being observed. Moreover, this was a trend throughout the observations. It is also apparent that the female students used fewer taboo words than their male counterparts. This was also confirmed by two of the teachers that were interviewed, while the other teacher claimed that he did not notice any differences between the genders' slang usage.

#### 5.3. What are the attitudes of English teachers in grade 9 regarding the usage of English slang as part of their teaching?

In this section, the teachers' general attitudes towards the students' usage of slang, as well as their positioning towards bringing it into their pedagogy, is displayed based on the interviews conducted with the teachers.

When asking the teachers about their general opinions about their students using slang, and how they act upon that occurrence, the three teachers agreed to some extent. Two of the teachers independently mentioned that if the incorporation of slang words and expressions in the students' vocabulary helped the students with their verbal skills, they were satisfied. Teacher 2 said:

I do not say anything about it when they do. Some students I just allow to keep on talking, as long as the others can follow. I just want them to keep talking, if that student has found a thought and wants to follow it up, I do not want to interrupt. (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation)

This was also confirmed by Teacher 1, who meant that any strategies used by the students in order to aid their speaking abilities, were accepted by him. When asked to give an example of a situation when this might occur, Teacher 1 said:

If they say something wrong. One knowledge requirement that is very important, communicative strategies, to be able to express something in another way, if they say something wrong and say 'shit' or 'fuck', which are parts of their everyday language, I can let that go if it means that they can do as that requirement says and are able to reformulate what they said. I have used an example to prepare them for the national tests. If they are going to talk about a lamp och cannot find the word 'lamp', it is better if they say 'oh shit, I don't remember what the shiny thing in the ceiling is called', rather than just saying the Swedish word for it. (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation)

Teacher 3 on the other hand, expressed a concern about these situations, when the students use slang words as a strategy to reformulate, for instance, a forgotten word:

If they have recorded themselves in an assignment and done it, I will give them a comment that they should try and adapt their language according to the purpose and situation and that sometimes it is not proper to use that kind of language. To reach a higher level, those kinds of words should



not be used since they affect the overall impression of what they are doing. (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation)

Teacher 3 also said:

They do swear quite a lot and I try to explain to them that I am listening and that they should think about that. They tend to say ‘fuck’ and ‘shit’ a lot. I do not think they understand how rough those words are in English. (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation)

As can be seen, Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 do not share opinions regarding how the students express themselves in contexts where they are graded. Teacher 1 does, however, display a similar opinion to Teacher 3 regarding certain slang words, stating that if he hears a slang word that he does not approve of, he repeats the more appropriate word to the student, meaning that he does not desire to make it more obvious than that. A comparable strategy is implemented by Teacher 3, who says that she might turn it into a class discussion where they examine possible other strategies in order to avoid using certain words.

When asked if they incorporate any slang into their own teaching in any way, the teachers’ answers are rather diverse. Teacher 1 does not believe he incorporates slang into his teaching; however, he mentions that he rather examines the differences between American and British English with the students: “Since they consume more American media, they use that kind of slang. If they use something that they think means something, but it actually means something else, I go into that” (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation). Teacher 2, on the other hand, approaches the subject as a means to teach the students to vary their ways of expressing themselves. He mentions that if slang, or any other language phenomena, occurs frequently where it should not, he uses this as a learning opportunity for the students, discussing with them how they can improve their language use depending on what context they are in. The same strategy can be found in Teacher 3’s answer, who mentions that she focuses on teaching the students, and discussing with them, how they can vary their language.

To conclude, the teachers did agree in some areas, and not in others. For instance, while Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 found students’ slang use to be of use when trying to express themselves in English, Teacher 3 found this occurrence less beneficial. Moreover, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3

had similar methods of incorporating slang into their pedagogy; they did it as a means to enhance the students' abilities to vary their language. Teacher 1, on the other hand, mostly discussed the differences between American and British English, and how the students sometimes use American slang inaccurately, which he then incorporates into his teaching in order to raise an awareness of how to use words correctly.

## 6. Discussion

In this section, the results of the present study will be related to the theoretical background as well as literature review (see section 2 and 3), in an attempt to explain the findings in the present study. First, the general slang usage of the students will be discussed, followed by a discussion based on their gender and how this can affect their slang usage. Second, a didactic view of the slang usage will be presented.

### 6.1. The students' slang usage

In the present study, both observations and interviews found that the students observed as well as the students of the teachers being interviewed, do use English slang during English lessons. When trying to define the nature of the actual slang words or expressions being uttered, it can be seen in Table 1 (see section 5.1.2.), that they were mostly taboo words. This was also confirmed by Teacher 3, who often identified swear words amongst the students' slang usage (see section 5.1.2.). Contractions were a rarity and only occurred on two occasions. Moreover, inventions of words and reinventions of already existing words did occur several times, which was the definition given by Oxford English Dictionary (1989) (see section 2.1.). Since these results were found, the present study displays similarities with several studies discussed in section 3 (Namvar, 2014; Forsskåhl, 2001; Lutviana and Mafulah, 2021). Even though the analyzed studies have investigated slightly different age levels as well as school levels, the results agree with the results of the present study. To be concluded from this is that regardless of age or school level, students tend to use slang. As in the present study, Namvar (2014) discovered that abbreviations were not a commonly used slang phenomenon, but rather did the participants in his study use slang words deriving from the internet as well as American films. This was confirmed by Teacher 1 in the present study, who meant that a lot of the slang words

and expressions used by the students were influenced by popular media as well as TV. He also found that American slang was more common than British slang in his classroom.

The results found in this study could be expected, when examined through the self-categorization theory (see section 2.2.). The theory clearly explains how individuals on the intergroup level seek group affiliation by internalizing existing groups' norms and behaviors, to appear as a more suitable member of that group, than any other possible outgroup. If then, as both Forsskåhl (2001) as well as Munro (2007) suggest (see section 3.), slang is a means used by youths to blend into their age-related group, the results found in the present study indicate that slang should in fact be used by the students, if they identify and feel an urge to belong to the 'youth-group'. As Forsskåhl (2001) states, when using slang, youths are strengthening the bonds within the group they are members of. Perhaps, then, the students observed in the present study have identified themselves as members of a 'youth-group' and are eager to enhance the bonds within their group, meanwhile strengthening the differences between them and any other outgroup. This phenomenon can be distinguished during the first observation with the class, where the teacher began by giving the students instructions of the discussions they were going to conduct:

**Teacher:** Just talking English. Just talk as usual \*male student's name\*. And talk together when discussing the questions. Go to your groups please.

**Male student 1:** Abow.

**Male student 2:** Abow.

**Male student 3:** Abow.

(Personal communication, March 30, 2022)

This could be an example of two students who are demonstrating their belonging to a certain group, by using the same word. The first student expressed a slang word he found suitable for the occasion, which was followed by the same word uttered twice, by two other students who presumably identify themselves as members of the same group as the first student. A similar pattern can be found on three other occasions, as brought up in section 5.2.1., as well as in Table 2. By expressing the same word, they are strengthening the bonds within their group.

The context in which slang words and expressions were uttered most was during group discussions, followed by the context in between activities. The context where the least amount

of slang words was detected was whole class discussions. This might explain why Teacher 2 did not experience slang to be a reoccurring phenomenon in the classroom; since the students, in the observations, used slang on a regular basis in situations where the teacher was not close enough to hear, the teacher will not gain a complete understanding of to which extent slang is used. Similar findings were made in Lutviana and Mafulah's (2021) study (see section 3.), where they found that 71% of their participants did not incorporate slang into their speech when conversing with their teacher, since it was considered impolite. This might explain why the least amount of slang was detected during whole class discussions; the students might have considered it inappropriate.

#### 6.1.1. Gender differences

Major differences between the genders were discovered regarding their slang usage. If the students would have uttered an equal amount of slang words and expressions in proportion to their gender group's percentage of class members, the female students would have expressed 35% of the slang words detected; however, they did only utter 10,6% of them (see figure 3, 4 and section 5.1.1.). The remaining 89,4% of the slang words detected, were expressed by 65% of the class, the male students (see figure 3, 4 and section 5.1.1.). This could be explained when examining male language (see section 2.3.1.), which entails that males often occupy a substantial amount of time in conversations where the participants are both males and females. This is further strengthened when investigating female language (see section 2.3.2.); females often encourage their fellow conversation participants to speak and are often perceived as tentative. The students observed do adhere to these speaking norms, nevertheless, there could be other explanations to why the results became so unequal. Teacher 1, the teacher of the class being observed, mentioned how the male students at the school in general spoke more than the female students (see section 5.1.2). This seems like a pattern at this particular school and could therefore be a weakness in the present study, since a school where both genders dominated the speaking dimension on equal terms, might have given a more reliable result.

Another explanation to why the female students expressed less slang words than their male counterparts could be found in the interviewees' responses (see section 5.1.2.). Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 both agreed that the male students use more slang than the female students do, however, Teacher 2 did not express this experience. Instead, he said: "I do react when certain words come out of a girl's mouth instead of a boy's. It is possible that I react more if a girl says

it that if a boy does” (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation). In other words, this teacher does not expect his female students to use slang, and therefore he is surprised when it occurs. When contrasted to the self-categorization theory, as well as the speaking norms of girls, a reason for why less slang is detected from female students could be because they are not expected to express slang words. That is not a norm adhering to their gender group, and therefore they adapt to what is accepted; not uttering slang. On the intergroup level, the female students identify the norms and behaviors of the group they identify with, and internalize these norms and behaviors, and slang usage is not as major part of that groups’ vocabulary as in the male counterpart group. As Forsskåhl (2021) claims; slang becomes a gender identity marker (see section 3). Here, the excerpt in section 6.1., where three male students demonstrate a sequence where they adhere to the male language norms, by each uttering ‘abow’, becomes a marker for how male students, on the intergroup level, pursue a membership in a desired social group.

One major difference between the genders found in this study, is the exceeding amount of taboo words the male students used, as opposed to the female students. These results are similar to Forsskåhl’s results (2001), which points out that the girls used milder slang words than the boys (see section 3). While this agrees well with Coates’ (2004) exposition in section 2.3.1. of how males are expected to use more taboo words than females, it also aligns with the self-categorization theory. Coates (2004) states that it is expected from males to use taboo words to a greater extent than from females, which could be an explanation to why the present study’s results point in that direction; if males as a group are expected to use more taboo words when speaking, they conform to this in order to be perceived as males. On the contrary, if an individual urges to be perceived as female, using fewer taboo words is a suitable method.

## 6.2. Didactic aspects

Despite the attitudes of the teachers, the students are using slang. Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 mentioned during the interviews that if they hear their students use slang while talking English, they will not interrupt them, since they consider it more important that their students are speaking English. Teacher 1 actually expresses a satisfaction regarding the students’ use of slang, if it aids them in their searching for strategies when formulating ideas:

If they are going to talk about a lamp och cannot find the word 'lamp', it is better if they say 'oh shit, I don't remember what the shiny thing in the ceiling is called', rather than just saying the Swedish word for it. (Personal communication, March 30, 2022, my translation),

This aligns with what is previously quoted from Skolverket (see section 2.4.), which states what is also mentioned by Teacher 1: the students should be taught to find strategies to use when their language skills are not sufficient to express something. Teacher 2 also meant that interrupting the students when they speak English would mean that you stop them from doing what the entire subject of English strives towards them doing: speaking English. On the other hand, Teacher 3 expressed the view that if a student uses a word not proper for the assignment, that could affect the student's grade. This also aligns with the quote above from Skolverket, which points out that the students should be taught how to use a suitable adaptation of the language depending on context. In this case, Teacher 3 considers certain activities within the classroom, where the students are graded, to be less suitable for the use of slang. The three teachers all express how they would act if a student used slang, and even though their views are different, they are supported by the National Curriculum.

Another method detected within the interviews with the teachers, regarding reactions when their students use slang, was to exemplify a more suitable synonym of the unwanted slang word. Furthermore, using these occasions to initiate a class discussion about suitable word choices depending on context, was another method suggested. Both approaches find support in the curriculum (see section 2.4.). In addition, when the teacher presents possible word choices and initiates discussions about words and synonyms, the students are offered several opportunities to widen their vocabulary, which then enables them to possess a more varied language, another learning objective in the curriculum (Skolverket, 2019) (see section 2.4.). In general, both Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 meant that they did incorporate slang to some extent within their pedagogy, as a means to discuss register and how one can use a suitable language adaptation depending on context. Teacher 1 was the only teacher who did not touch upon this area in his pedagogy. However, he most certainly does if he uses it as a means to give the students an extended vocabulary when offering them suitable word choices on occasions when they use slang.

The previous research field within this topic (see section 3), demonstrates great advantages of incorporating slang, and register in general, in teaching. The participants in Lutviana and

Mazer's (2021) study expressed how their slang usage enabled them to practice their linguistic skills and speak more like a native speaker. They also found that when using slang, it increased their understanding of the lesson, as well as improved the learning atmosphere. Mazer and Hunt (2008) also found great advantages regarding the teacher incorporating slang into his or her vocabulary within the classroom. Jonsson (2018) found that when students work with slang, more precisely swear words (which were very common in the data in the present study), they are able to play with language and create a humorous learning atmosphere. In other words, both Jonsson (2018) and Mazer and Hunt (2008) found advantages of incorporating slang, which is considered a youth-language, into the pedagogy since it becomes a part of the lecture which the students can identify with. Also, as Jonsson (2018) expresses, they work with register simultaneously. Consequently, exercises where the students can experiment with registers and ways of expressing themselves, as can be found in Jonsson's study, might improve their abilities of using different registers. What should be highlighted is the fact that Jonsson, in his article, observes a class where the students are all males. This means that one cannot be certain that the same result would occur if the class consisted of both males and females.

Since slang is somewhat considered a youth-language, a reason for incorporating it into one's pedagogy could be to enable the students to identify with the content of the teaching. As can be seen in the curriculum (see section 2.4.), topics that the students find familiar should be integrated in their education. Moreover, it is also stated that their interests should be catered to. It then becomes somewhat inevitable to not touch upon the phenomenon slang within the classroom as it is present in the students' daily life. Students in Mazer and Hunt's (2008) study found that when the teacher himself or herself uses slang, the lesson becomes more adapted to the students (see section 3), which is yet another reason to integrate slang use in the pedagogy.

In the present study, several words detected were taboo words to which teacher 3 expressed her disapproval. She meant that she was uncertain if the students knew the true meaning of some of the taboo words they use. There is probably a general awareness in society of the fact that certain taboo words, such as 'Fuck the system' and 'It's fucking shit' (Table 1) are inappropriate word choices in most contexts. Nevertheless, one must realize that they are as present in the students' vocabulary regardless of the nature of the actual word or expression. Instead of simply being frowned upon, perhaps they should be seen as learning possibilities,

where the teacher together with his or her students can use expressions like these to find more suitable ones, as suggested by the interviewed teachers. If given proper tools, in the form of alternative expressions, they are given the opportunity and recourses to elaborate with language and eventually become more linguistically aware and able to adapt their language in various contexts. As cited in the introduction, Green (2015) points out that when using slang, one is reinventing the language. When youths are using slang in the English classroom, they are demonstrating an ability to not only use English, but to experiment with it, which in itself should be seen as a learning opportunity as well as successful language acquisition.

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this study, as presented in the introduction, has been to investigate whether or not a group of Swedish grade 9 students use slang during their English as a second language lessons, and if so, why they do it and if there are any differences in this usage between male and female students. Moreover, the study aimed to investigate what opinions English teachers have regarding their students' slang usage, and how they incorporate this into their teaching. In order to investigate this, three research questions were formulated:

- Do students in grade 9 use English slang during English lessons, and if this is the case, why do they use slang?
- If so, how do male students and female students in grade 9 differ in their usage of English slang during English lessons?
- What are the attitudes of English teachers in grade 9 regarding the usage of English slang as part of their teaching?

The results of this study do indicate that students in grade 9 use slang during English lessons, and that there are major differences in this usage between male and female students. During three lessons, a substantial amount of slang words were expressed by male students, compared to their female counterparts. This could be explained by the self-categorization theory, which states that an individual will internalize the norms and behaviors adhering to the group he or she identifies with. If a female student identifies with other female students, she will, according



to this theory, adapt her behavior to adhere to the traits expected from female students. As previous research mentions, females are expected to occupy a smaller amount of speech time than their male counterparts, which has also been the case in this study. During the interviews, the teachers expressed that they considered their male students to use more slang than their female students, or that they were surprised when a female student used slang. These are, then, the behaviors expected from female grade 9 students, and consequently, the behaviors they will internalize.

From a didactic perspective, the teachers accounted for similar methods of how to handle their students' slang usage; they either offered subtle corrections where they presented more appropriate word options or utilized an uttered slang word to discuss word choices with the class. According to previous research, implementing slang into linguistic teaching enables the students to identify with the material studied, as well as develop their abilities to adapt their language based on the situation. By working with slang, the students are able to experiment with register on their conditions, by using a language form which they are familiar with.

### 7.1. Limitations

There are certain potential limitations which have been of importance when conducting this study. First, the investigation as a whole cannot be generalized due to the fact that the nature of it is rather small. The results accounts for this particular case, rather than a greater mass.

In addition, the selection of students for the observations is somewhat skewed. Since one of the research questions aims to investigate the differences in slang usage between male and female students, the sample selection should preferably contain an equal amount of male and female students. This circumstance was however handled by calculating the percentage of slang expressed by both male and female students, to find if that number was in proportion to the percentage of participants from the specific gender. Also, at the school where the observations were conducted, the English teacher pointed out that male students in general occupied more conversational space than the female students, which is also a factor to take into consideration when analyzing the results.

Also, since the observations entailed that the observer was present in the classroom when the lessons took place, it cannot be ruled out that this presence did not affect the participants'

behavior. Moreover, since the participants were all informed about what the study aimed to investigate, this might also have affected their speaking patterns and actions during the three lessons. Although, if the investigation had been conducted without the knowledge of the participants, the ethical perspective of the matter would have been questionable. Moreover, if conducting another method, depending on the students' perception of their slang usage, the results would have been less trustworthy.

## 7.2. Possibilities for further research

Since the results of this study are difficult to generalize due to its scope, a greater investigation, where additional schools are included, might enable a fairer generalization of the results. Moreover, if the schools selected were distributed in different parts of Sweden, a comparison could be conducted based on geography as well as gender, as was done in Forsskåhl's (2001) study.

As this study suggests, incorporating slang into the pedagogy is an effective method to develop the students' linguistic skills, and enable them to gain an understanding of how, and when, to adapt their language based on context. A possible further research suggestion could be to conduct a study where this is tested, and examine the students' linguistic abilities prior to, and after, incorporating it into the pedagogy.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1.

Observation scheme (inspired by Chaudron, referred to in McKay, 2006, p. 90).

Boys	Context	Girls	Context

## Appendix 2.

Interview questions (that were used as a base for the semi-structured interviews)

Do the students in grade 9 use English slang during their English lessons?

Do you notice any difference in this slang usage between male and female students?

What is your opinion about the students using English slang during English lessons?

How do you act when a student uses English slang during English lessons?

Do you incorporate slang into your teaching in any way?

## Appendix 3.

Consent letter for the students

### **Information om studie om manligt och kvinnligt språk**

Syftet med denna studie är att undersöka hur tjejer och killar i högstadieåldern använder sig av slang på engelsklektioner. Jag vill undersöka om det finns några skillnader mellan manligt och kvinnligt språk på högstadiet och du tillfrågas att delta då du ingår i målgruppen för undersökningen.

#### **Hur genomförs studien?**

Studien kommer baseras på de observationer som genomförs och de ljudupptagningar som spelas in under observationerna. Ditt deltagande kommer enbart vara under lektionerna som observeras, du kommer alltså inte förväntas göra något annorlunda/ytterligare, än att delta på lektionen som vanligt.

#### **Konfidentialitet**

Ditt deltagande är högst konfidentiellt, vilket innebär att ingen obehörig kommer få åtkomst till materialet. Vid transkriptionen kommer endast fiktiva namn förekomma, vilket innebär att ingen kommer kunna koppla denna undersökning till dig. När transkriptionerna är gjorda kommer ljudupptagningarna raderas.

Ditt deltagande i denna studie är frivilligt och du kan när som helst avbryta ditt deltagande. Kontakta gärna mig om du har några frågor gällande studien eller ditt deltagande. Som deltagare har du även rätt att ta del av studiens resultat, och om du är intresserad av det kan du kontakta mig.

Tack!

Emma Ahlbin

Emmahl18@student.hh.se

Innan undersökningen kan börja behöver du, om du vill delta i studien, underteckna att du tagit del av informationen om studien och är villig att delta.

*Jag har tagit del av ovan nämnda information om studien och ger härmed mitt samtycke till att delta:*



*Jag samtycker*



## Appendix 4.

Information letter for the students' parents

### **Information om studie om manligt och kvinnligt språk**

Syftet med denna studie är att undersöka hur tjejer och killar i högstadieåldern använder sig av slang på engelsklektioner.

#### **Hur genomförs studien?**

Studien kommer baseras på de observationer som genomförs och de ljudupptagningar som spelas in under observationerna. Elevens deltagande kommer enbart vara under lektionerna som observeras, hen kommer alltså inte förväntas göra något annorlunda/ytterligare, än att delta på lektionen som vanligt.

#### **Konfidentialitet**

Deltagandet är högst konfidentiellt, vilket innebär att ingen obehörig kommer få åtkomst till materialet. Vid transkriptionen kommer endast fiktiva namn förekomma, vilket innebär att ingen kommer kunna koppla denna undersökning till någon elev. När transkriptionerna är gjorda kommer ljudupptagningarna raderas.

Deltagande i denna studie är frivilligt och eleven kan när som helst avbryta sitt deltagande. Kontakta gärna mig om du har några frågor gällande studien.

Tack!

Emma Ahlbin

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