



Exploring Types of Slang Words in the Movie *Neighbors* (2014): A Sociolinguistic Analysis

I Gede Dio Praja Ananta¹, I Made Perdana Skolastika²

^{1,2}English Literature, Faculty of Foreign Language, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar

Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-07-27 Revised: 2026-08-09 Accepted: 2026-09-02 Keywords: Allan and Burridge; movie dialogue; <i>Neighbors</i> (2014); slang words; sociolinguistics DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.12024 Corresponding Author: I Gede Dio Praja Ananta diopraja@gmail.com Sastra Inggris, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar	<i>This study analyzes the types and meanings of slang words used in <i>Neighbors</i> (2014) from a sociolinguistic perspective. The study aims to identify the types of slang based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification and analyze their meanings based on Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. The data were collected from the movie dialogues and its script, then classified and analyzed based on the selected theories. A total of 43 distinct slang expressions were identified and classified into five types: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping. Fresh and Creative was the most dominant type, accounting for 32 expressions (74.42%). The findings also show that slang expressions serve various social functions, including solidarity, social identity, interpersonal relationships, cultural tradition, emotional attachment, and conflict resolution. The study demonstrates that slang in <i>Neighbors</i> is not only used as informal vocabulary but also functions as a resource for expressing social relationships and identities within different interactional contexts.</i>

1. Introduction

Language plays an essential role in human communication because it enables people to express ideas, emotions, and information in various social contexts. As society evolves, language also changes in response to social, cultural, and technological developments. These changes contribute to the emergence of language variation, which reflects differences in the way people communicate according to factors such as age, occupation, social background, and community

membership. Holmes (2013) explains that language variation is closely related to social interaction because speakers adjust their linguistic choices according to the context and their interlocutors. Similarly, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021) argue that language variation is shaped by social factors and therefore constitutes one of the major concerns of sociolinguistic studies.

One form of language variation that frequently appears in everyday communication is slang. As a sociolinguistic phenomenon, slang is commonly associated with informal situations and is widely used by particular social groups, especially young people, to express identity, solidarity, and group membership. Allan and Burridge (2006) define slang as informal vocabulary characterized by lexical creativity and social distinctiveness, emphasizing that slang operates not merely as a set of unconventional words but as a linguistic practice embedded in social interaction. Likewise, Eble (1996) explains that slang functions as an in-group linguistic resource that strengthens interpersonal relationships while distinguishing members of a community from outsiders. Mattiello (2008) further states that English slang is characterized by lexical innovation, semantic creativity, and contextual flexibility, whereas Adams (2009) argues that slang reflects cultural values, humor, and social identity in addition to serving as informal vocabulary.

These characteristics make slang an important topic in sociolinguistic research because it illustrates how language adapts to social interaction and community practices. Importantly, slang as a sociolinguistic phenomenon involves not only the classification of non-standard vocabulary but also the analysis of how speakers use such expressions to negotiate social relationships, construct identities, and signal group membership in specific communicative contexts.

The use of slang can be observed in various forms of communication, including movies, television series, songs, and social media. Among these media, movies provide constructed representations of everyday conversations in which characters frequently employ informal language that imitates natural communication patterns. Although movie dialogue is deliberately scripted rather than spontaneously produced, it offers valuable insights into how slang is used in different communicative contexts because screenwriters craft dialogues to reflect authentic social interactions and group dynamics (Bednarek, 2018). Consequently, movies have become valuable sources for investigating the use of slang in relation to social identity, interpersonal relationships, and group solidarity. One movie that prominently features slang is *Neighbors* (2014). The interactions among the characters are dominated by informal expressions that reflect friendship, humor, intimacy, conflict, and group identity.

Beyond its frequent use of slang, *Neighbors* is sociolinguistically interesting because it portrays multiple social contexts—workplace interactions, family relationships, friendships, and fraternity-group dynamics—which allow for an examination of how slang functions differently across various social domains. These characteristics make *Neighbors* (2014) an appropriate source for examining slang from a sociolinguistic perspective, particularly through Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification of slang types.

Several previous studies have examined slang in movies and digital communication using Allan and Burridge's (2006) framework. Wina and Marantika (2024) found that Fresh and Creative was the dominant slang category in *Die Hart*, demonstrating that movie characters frequently employ creative lexical expressions in informal interaction. Christian et al. (2023) similarly

reported that Fresh and Creative slang in *8 Mile* reinforces solidarity and group identity among speakers. Oktaviani and Agung (2023) observed that slang expressions in *Lady Bird* primarily contribute to interpersonal closeness through casual interaction. Outside movie discourse, Rahma and Moetia (2024) found that slang on the social media platform X functions as a marker of identity and informal communication, while Jaya et al. (2025) concluded that TikTok has become an important platform for the development and dissemination of contemporary slang among Generation Z.

However, while these studies consistently identify Fresh and Creative as the most prominent category of slang, they generally concentrate on identifying slang categories or describing their use without providing detailed explanations of the contextual characteristics that justify why particular expressions are classified as Fresh and Creative. In other words, previous research has tended to treat classification as an end in itself rather than as a basis for understanding how slang functions in social interaction.

Despite these valuable contributions, limited research has specifically examined how the contextual characteristics of slang expressions support their classification as Fresh and Creative based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) framework. Furthermore, no previous study has investigated this phenomenon in *Neighbors* (2014), leaving unexplored the potential of this movie to reveal how slang operates across different social contexts. This study addresses this gap by examining not only the types of slang but also the social functions they perform, including solidarity building, identity construction, conflict resolution, and the expression of emotional attachment. By analyzing representative Fresh and Creative expressions, this study aims to demonstrate that the classification of slang is meaningfully connected to its contextual usage, thereby offering a more integrated understanding of slang as both a linguistic category and a sociolinguistic practice.

To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following research question: What types of slang occur in *Neighbors* (2014), and what contextual characteristics justify the classification of representative Fresh and Creative slang expressions? Thus, this study aims to identify the types of slang words used in *Neighbors* (2014) according to Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification. Since Fresh and Creative was identified as the most dominant category, this study provides an in-depth discussion of representative Fresh and Creative slang expressions by explaining the contextual and linguistic characteristics that justify their classification within this category rather than interpreting their lexical meanings. Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to sociolinguistic research by providing a deeper understanding of how Fresh and Creative slang is realized in contemporary movie dialogues and how classification relates to social function in authentic communicative contexts.

2. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to identify and analyze the types of slang words used in the movie *Neighbors* (2014). A qualitative approach was selected because it aims to describe and interpret language phenomena in their natural context (Creswell, 2014). The analysis was based on the classification proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006), which was chosen because it provides a comprehensive framework for categorizing slang according to its linguistic characteristics.

Data Source

The data source of this study was the movie *Neighbors* (2014), directed by Nicholas Stoller. The data consisted of dialogues containing slang words spoken by the movie characters. The movie was selected because it prominently features informal language that reflects various social contexts, including workplace interactions, family relationships, friendships, and fraternity-group dynamics. These diverse social contexts make the movie an appropriate source for examining slang from a sociolinguistic perspective.

Data Collection

The data were collected using observation and note-taking techniques. The primary data source was the official script of the movie *Neighbors* (2014), which was downloaded from a reliable online source. To ensure accuracy, the researcher compared the script with the movie screening repeatedly. Additionally, English subtitles were used as secondary verification. In cases where discrepancies were found between the script and the movie screening, the screening was used as the primary reference because it represents the actual dialogues spoken by the characters. This verification process was conducted to ensure that every dialogue quotation analyzed was accurate and corresponded to its context of use.

The data collection procedure consisted of several stages. First, the researcher watched the movie several times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dialogues and their communicative contexts. Second, dialogues containing expressions that had the potential to be slang were identified and recorded. Third, each identified expression was rechecked by comparing its use throughout the movie to ensure accuracy and consistency. Fourth, the identified expressions were evaluated based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria to determine whether they qualified as slang.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Before being classified, every expression identified was evaluated based on inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that the expression was genuinely slang. The inclusion criteria were determined by referring to the characteristics of slang proposed by Allan and Burrige (2006), namely: (1) the expression is informal and unconventional, (2) it demonstrates lexical creativity or semantic innovation, (3) it is used in a limited manner within specific social groups, and (4) it has contextual meaning that cannot be fully understood from its literal meaning.

To distinguish slang from other forms of language, the researcher applied the following exclusion criteria:

- a. Slang vs. Colloquial Language: Colloquial expressions are generally more accepted in everyday conversation and are not tied to specific social groups, whereas slang has elements of creativity and is used in a limited manner within particular groups (Allan & Burrige, 2006). Therefore, expressions such as *gonna* and *wanna*, which are colloquial, were not included as data.
- b. Slang vs. Taboo Expressions: Although some slang expressions contain taboo elements, not all taboo expressions are categorized as slang. Taboo expressions used conventionally as swear words without lexical creativity were not included as data. The researcher distinguished between the two based on the context of use and the degree of linguistic innovation.
- c. Slang vs. Ordinary Informal Vocabulary: Informal expressions that are general in nature and do not demonstrate lexical innovation or attachment to specific social groups were excluded from the data. Only expressions that met the characteristics of slang as defined by Allan and Burrige (2006) were included.

- d. Slang vs. Metaphor/Idiom: Metaphors and idioms are more established and their meanings have been codified in the language, whereas slang is dynamic and tied to time/group. Expressions that are common idioms or conventional metaphors were not included as data.

From the initial identification process, 57 expressions were found to have the potential to be slang. However, after undergoing a verification process based on the established inclusion and exclusion criteria, 43 expressions were declared to meet the criteria as slang and were used as research data. Expressions that appeared more than once in the movie were not counted as separate data but were counted as one entry to avoid frequency distortion. This approach was chosen because the aim of the research was to identify the types of slang used, not to measure the frequency of each word quantitatively.

Data Classification and Reliability

The identified slang expressions were classified into five categories proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006): Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping. The classification was conducted by the main researcher. To enhance reliability and avoid subjectivity in classification, the researcher applied a peer checking procedure by discussing the classification results with the thesis supervisor who has expertise in sociolinguistics. This discussion aimed to verify the accuracy of the categorization of each slang expression and ensure consistency in the application of the theoretical framework. Any differences in classification were discussed until agreement was reached (intercoder agreement).

Operational Definition of Fresh and Creative Slang

Because the Fresh and Creative category dominated the research findings (74.42%), this category was operationally defined in greater detail as follows: Fresh and Creative slang is an expression that demonstrates lexical innovation or contextual adaptation of existing words, used creatively and unconventionally in informal communication among members of a particular social group. The main characteristics of this category include: (a) the use of existing words with new meanings that are only understood within the context of a particular group, (b) creativity in word or phrase formation, and (c) dependence on shared knowledge among speakers. Thus, an expression is categorized as Fresh and Creative if it fulfills at least one of these characteristics, not merely because it is informal or non-standard.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in four stages. First, all slang expressions found in the movie dialogues were identified based on the inclusion criteria. Second, each slang expression was classified into its appropriate category based on Allan and Burridge's (2006) classification. Third, the classification results were reviewed through peer checking to ensure that every slang expression had been categorized consistently according to its linguistic characteristics. Fourth, the frequency and percentage of each slang category were calculated to describe the distribution of slang types found in the movie.

Analysis of Sociolinguistic Functions

In addition to identifying and classifying the types of slang, this study also analyzed the social functions of slang expressions included in the Fresh and Creative category. The analysis of social functions was conducted using an interpretative approach based on the

situational context of the conversation, which included: (1) who is speaking to whom (the relationship between characters), (2) the conversational situation (formal vs. informal, conflict vs. harmonious), and (3) the communicative purpose the speaker intends to achieve (e.g., building solidarity, resolving conflict, or strengthening interpersonal relationships). This approach refers to the sociolinguistic framework proposed by Holmes (2013) and Eble (1996), which emphasizes that slang not only functions as a linguistic variation but also as a tool for negotiating social relationships and group identity. Thus, the analysis of social functions was conducted in an integrated manner with contextual analysis to explain how particular slang expressions realize social functions in character interactions.

Coding Table

To facilitate data tracking and verification, every identified slang expression was recorded in a coding table containing: (1) data number, (2) slang expression, (3) dialogue context (conversation quotation), (4) slang category based on Allan and Burridge (2006), and (5) classification justification (reasons why the expression is included in a particular category). The coding table is presented as an appendix to provide transparency in the analysis process.

3. Results

This section presents the findings of the study, which aimed to identify the types of slang words used in the movie *Neighbors* (2014) based on the classification proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006). A total of 43 slang expressions were identified from the movie dialogues and classified into five categories: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping.

Distribution of Slang Types

The distribution of slang types found in the movie is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Types of Slang Words Found in *Neighbors* (2014)

No	Types of Slang	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fresh and Creative	32	74.42%
2	Flippant	3	6.98%
3	Imitative	4	9.30%
4	Acronym	2	4.65%
5	Clipping	2	4.65%
	Total	43	100%

As shown in Table 1, Fresh and Creative was the most dominant type with 32 occurrences (74.42%), followed by Imitative with 4 occurrences (9.30%), Flippant with 3 occurrences (6.98%), while Acronym and Clipping each occurred 2 times (4.65%). The 43 data represent distinct slang expressions identified in the movie. Each slang expression was counted only once, even when the same expression appeared repeatedly in different dialogues. Therefore, the frequency presented in Table 1 represents the number of distinct slang expressions classified into each category rather than the total number of occurrences or tokens.

Representative Examples of All Slang Categories

To provide readers with a clearer understanding of how each category was identified, Table 2 presents representative examples from all five slang types with their dialogue contexts.

Table 2. Representative Examples of Each Slang Category

No	Category	Expression	Dialogue Context	Justification
1	Fresh and Creative	dank	"It's dank." (04:04)	Creative adaptation of existing lexical item in a disguised conversation
2	Fresh and Creative	blaze	"We should blaze through it." (04:05)	Semantic innovation; non-literal interpretation based on shared context
3	Fresh and Creative	bro	"This is not your bro, this is your boss talking." (03:31)	Creative social adaptation; contrasts informal with formal relationship
4	Fresh and Creative	hip	"We're hip." (10:07)	Creative use of established word to build rapport with unfamiliar group
5	Fresh and Creative	gam	"Hold that gam steady, Pete." (13:18)	A context-specific slang expression used in the fraternity's historical narrative, whose non-standard form reflects the group's distinctive informal language.
6	Fresh and Creative	dope	"Dope. Cool." (16:51)	Creative evaluative expression in spontaneous informal interaction
7	Fresh and Creative	homie	"Shit, homie, we've been beefing for too long." (37:21)	Strategic use to re-establish solidarity after conflict
8	Fresh and Creative	dawg	"I love you, dawg." (1:24:33)	Creative lexical form symbolizing group identity and emotional attachment
9	Flippant	suck it	"Suck it!" (28:45)	Playful, dismissive expression used in a competitive context
10	Imitative	booyah	"Booyah!" (45:30)	Exclamation imitating a sound of excitement or triumph
11	Acronym	OMG	"OMG, really?" (01:10:22)	Acronym formed from initial letters of a phrase
12	Clipping	shrooms	"Okay, you guys can come in. No 'shrooms for you, mister." (01:01:22)	Shortened form of "mushrooms" used in informal speech.

Examples of Non-Dominant Categories

Although Fresh and Creative was the most dominant category, the other four categories also appeared in the movie dialogues. The following subsections provide representative examples for each non-dominant category.

Flippant (3 Occurrences)

Flippant slang is characterized by playful, irreverent, or dismissive expressions that are used in informal and often humorous contexts. In *Neighbors*, examples of this category include expressions such as *suck it*, which was used in a competitive and teasing context among fraternity members. These expressions typically convey a lighthearted or mocking attitude rather than serious meaning.

Imitative (4 Occurrences)

Imitative slang consists of expressions that imitate sounds or mimic particular speech patterns. In the movie, examples include exclamations such as *booyah*, which imitates a sound of excitement or triumph. These expressions are typically used in moments of celebration or achievement and rely on sound symbolism to convey meaning.

Acronym (2 Occurrences)

Acronym slang refers to expressions formed from the initial letters of a phrase, often used for efficiency in informal communication. In *Neighbors*, examples include *OMG* (Oh My God), which was used by characters in moments of surprise or disbelief. These expressions reflect the tendency in informal speech to abbreviate common phrases for quick and efficient communication.

Clipping (2 Occurrences)

Clipping slang involves shortening a longer word to create a more informal and efficient expression. In the movie, examples include *bro*, which is a clipped form of *brother*. This expression was used as a term of address among friends and fraternity members, reflecting the informal and intimate nature of their relationships.

Frequency of Social Functions in Fresh and Creative Slang

Since *Fresh and Creative* was identified as the most dominant category, the social functions of the 32 expressions were further analyzed to understand their sociolinguistic roles. Table 3 presents the distribution of social functions observed in the *Fresh and Creative* expressions.

Table 3. Social Functions of Fresh and Creative Slang in *Neighbors* (2014)

No	Social Function	Frequency	Percentage
1	Solidarity	10	31.25%
2	Social Identity	7	21.88%
3	Interpersonal Relationship	6	18.75%
4	Cultural Tradition	4	12.50%
5	Emotional Attachment	3	9.37%
6	Conflict Resolution	2	6.25%
	Total	32	100%

Table 3 shows that *Solidarity* was the most frequently observed social function (10 occurrences; 31.25%), followed by *Social Identity* (7 occurrences; 21.88%), *Interpersonal Relationship* (6 occurrences; 18.75%), *Cultural Tradition* (4 occurrences; 12.50%), *Emotional Attachment* (3 occurrences; 9.37%), and *Conflict Resolution* (2 occurrences; 6.25%). These findings indicate that *Fresh and Creative* slang in *Neighbors* primarily functions to strengthen social bonds and express group membership, although it also serves other important sociolinguistic purposes.

Summary of Findings

In summary, the analysis of slang expressions in *Neighbors* (2014) revealed the following key findings:

- a. Five types of slang were identified based on Allan and Burrridge's (2006) classification: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping.
- b. Fresh and Creative was the most dominant category (74.42%), indicating that the characters in the movie predominantly employ creative and innovative lexical expressions in their informal interactions.
- c. Other categories appeared less frequently, but each served distinct communicative purposes: Flippant conveyed playful attitudes, Imitative used sound symbolism, Acronym provided efficiency, and Clipping created informality through abbreviation.
- d. Social functions of Fresh and Creative slang included solidarity, social identity, interpersonal relationships, cultural traditions, emotional attachment, and conflict resolution, with solidarity being the most prevalent function.
- e. Contextual characteristics such as disguised conversations, conflict situations, emotional moments, and cultural traditions supported the classification of expressions as Fresh and Creative, demonstrating that contextual analysis is essential for understanding how slang functions in movie discourse.

These findings provide the foundation for the in-depth discussion of Fresh and Creative slang presented in the following section, where representative examples are analyzed in greater detail to explain the contextual and linguistic characteristics that justify their classification according to Allan and Burrridge's (2006) framework.

4. Discussion

Based on the findings, Fresh and Creative emerged as the most dominant type of slang in *Neighbors* (2014), accounting for 32 out of 43 slang expressions (74.42%). Rather than examining each expression individually, this section organizes the discussion into broader thematic patterns that reflect the sociolinguistic functions of Fresh and Creative slang in the movie. The discussion focuses on six thematic areas: solidarity and group identity, social intimacy and rapport, workplace versus informal contrast, reconciliation and conflict resolution, emotional attachment, and group tradition and cultural continuity. For each theme, representative expressions are analyzed to explain the contextual and linguistic characteristics that justify their classification as Fresh and Creative according to Allan and Burrridge's (2006) framework. The findings are then compared with previous studies to highlight both similarities and the contribution of the present study to sociolinguistic research.

Before proceeding with the thematic analysis, it is important to clarify how Allan and Burrridge (2006) define Fresh and Creative slang. According to their framework, Fresh and Creative slang encompasses expressions that demonstrate lexical innovation or contextual adaptation of existing words. Importantly, this category is not limited to newly coined expressions; it also includes existing words that are used in innovative ways to achieve specific communicative purposes within particular social contexts. Thus, an expression such as *bro* or *homie*—although well-established in informal English—can still be classified as Fresh and Creative when it is creatively adapted to signal social shifts, build rapport, or resolve conflict in ways that extend beyond its conventional usage. The classification is therefore justified not solely by the novelty of the lexical item but by its creative contextual application.

Solidarity and Group Identity

Several Fresh and Creative expressions in *Neighbors* function primarily to reinforce solidarity and group identity among characters. This theme is particularly evident in the use of *homie* and *dawg*, both of which serve as markers of in-group membership and interpersonal bonding.

In Data 7, *homie* is used strategically by Mac to re-establish solidarity after a period of conflict with Teddy:

Mac: "Shit, **homie**, we've been beefing for too long."

Mac: "We just want to squash this like a bug." (*Neighbors* 2014, 37:21)

The expression *homie* demonstrates how speakers creatively employ informal lexical choices to re-establish social solidarity during interpersonal interaction. Allan and Burridge (2006) describe Fresh and Creative slang as expressions developed within particular communities to create distinctive and socially meaningful communication. In this dialogue, Mac intentionally addresses Teddy as *homie* while attempting to end the conflict between them. The choice of this slang expression reflects a communicative strategy that reduces social distance and promotes reconciliation through an informal linguistic style. Rather than simply functioning as casual vocabulary, *homie* illustrates how Fresh and Creative slang can facilitate the restoration of harmonious relationships within a social group. This interpretation is supported by Eble (1996), who emphasizes that slang strengthens interpersonal bonds and reinforces a sense of group membership.

Similarly, in Data 8, *dawg* appears at the emotional climax of the conversation between Teddy and Pete:

Pete: "I fucking love you, man."

Teddy: "I love you, **dawg**." (*Neighbors* 2014, 1:24:33)

The expression *dawg* demonstrates a creative lexical form that symbolizes strong group identity and interpersonal solidarity within a close social community. According to Allan and Burridge (2006), Fresh and Creative slang consists of innovative expressions that distinguish the language practices of particular groups from standard usage. In this dialogue, *dawg* appears after the characters acknowledge their loyalty to one another, reinforcing the fraternity's sense of brotherhood and reflecting the group's distinctive communicative style. As noted by Eble (1996), slang not only differentiates speakers from outsiders but also strengthens emotional bonds among members of the same social group.

The use of both *homie* and *dawg* demonstrates that Fresh and Creative slang serves as a linguistic resource for constructing and maintaining group identity. However, the two expressions operate in different communicative contexts: *homie* is deployed strategically to repair a damaged relationship, while *dawg* emerges spontaneously in a moment of emotional affirmation. This variation illustrates the contextual flexibility of Fresh and Creative slang, which can function both as a tool for reconciliation and as an expression of enduring loyalty.

These findings align with previous research by Christian et al. (2023) in *8 Mile*, Pramana and Santika (2025) in *Fast Five*, and Raihan et al. (2024) in *Venom: Let There Be Carnage*, which found that Fresh and Creative slang frequently serves as a linguistic marker of solidarity and close interpersonal relationships. However, the present study offers a different perspective by showing that *homie* is employed strategically after conflict and *dawg* during a moment of emotional separation, demonstrating that Fresh and Creative slang can reinforce loyalty and collective identity even in emotionally significant situations beyond ordinary casual interaction.

Social Intimacy and Rapport Building

Another prominent theme is the use of Fresh and Creative slang to build social intimacy and rapport, particularly when characters interact with unfamiliar groups or seek to establish a friendly image. This theme is most evident in the use of *hip*.

In Data 4, Kelly uses *hip* as part of a strategy to construct a friendly and relatable image before meeting the fraternity members:

Mac: "Then we seem cool. They're thinking... Oh, they're like us."

Kelly: "We're hip." (*Neighbors* 2014, 10:07)

The expression *hip* reflects the creative adaptation of an existing lexical item to fit an informal social interaction, consistent with the classification proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006). In this dialogue, Kelly intentionally uses *hip* to signal that she and Mac share the same values and lifestyle as the fraternity members. Rather than introducing a new lexical form, the expression demonstrates how an established word is creatively employed to support social interaction in a casual setting. This observation supports Eble's (1996) argument that slang serves as a linguistic resource for expressing group affiliation and interpersonal closeness.

What distinguishes this example from previous studies is that *hip* in *Neighbors* is employed as part of the speakers' strategy to build rapport before interacting with an unfamiliar group. Unlike ordinary casual communication where slang emerges spontaneously among friends, here *hip* is consciously selected to facilitate social acceptance in a new communicative environment. This finding illustrates that Fresh and Creative slang can function as a deliberate social strategy rather than merely an automatic feature of in-group speech.

Workplace versus Informal Contrast

The contrast between professional and informal relationships is another significant theme in the use of Fresh and Creative slang. This is most clearly illustrated in Data 3, where *bro* is deliberately contrasted with *boss*.

Bill: "I need that Mendelson file by 4:00."

Mac: "Okay, yeah."

Bill: "And this is not your **bro**, this is your boss talking."

Mac: "I'll have it to you by 3:30. How's that?" (*Neighbors* 2014, 03:31)

The expression *bro* is classified as Fresh and Creative slang because it demonstrates the creative adaptation of an existing lexical item in everyday interaction, which is one of the defining characteristics proposed by Allan and Burridge (2006). In this dialogue, Bill deliberately contrasts *bro* with *boss*, emphasizing the shift from an informal relationship to a professional one. This contrast highlights that *bro* functions as a socially adapted lexical choice in casual communication rather than a newly created expression. Such usage is consistent with Eble (1996), who explains that slang strengthens solidarity and reflects membership within a particular social group.

What makes this example particularly interesting is the way it illustrates the contextual flexibility of Fresh and Creative slang. The same expression (*bro*) that typically signals intimacy and equality can be strategically invoked to mark its opposite—a power differential—when placed in contrast with a formal occupational role. This demonstrates that the sociolinguistic function of Fresh and Creative slang is not fixed but is shaped by the relational context in which it is used.

While previous studies by Oktaviani and Agung (2023) in *Lady Bird* and Jaya et al. (2025) on Gen Z slang found that Fresh and Creative slang frequently develops through the creative use of familiar lexical items to express social closeness, the present study shows that *bro* is intentionally contrasted with a formal occupational role, illustrating how Fresh and Creative slang can simultaneously signal social intimacy while distinguishing professional and personal relationships.

Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution

The use of Fresh and Creative slang for reconciliation and conflict resolution is another important theme, as illustrated by *homie* in Data 7 and *dope* in Data 6. While *homie* has been discussed in relation to solidarity, its function in reconciliation merits separate attention.

In Data 7, Mac's use of *homie* occurs after both parties have been in conflict for some time. By addressing Teddy as *homie*, Mac signals a desire to return to a state of friendship and mutual respect. This strategic use of slang demonstrates that Fresh and Creative expressions are not merely decorative or casual; they can be deployed intentionally to manage interpersonal relationships and restore social harmony.

Similarly, in Data 6, *dope* functions as a spontaneous evaluative response that reinforces positive interpersonal dynamics:

Mac: "Awesome, man. Well, thank you so much. That's all we wanted."

Teddy: "See you guys around."

Mac: "Okay, thanks, man. **Dope**. Cool." (Neighbors 2014, 16.51)

The expression *dope* represents a creative evaluative expression that emerges naturally in informal interaction. Allan and Burridge (2006) explain that Fresh and Creative slang is characterized by lexical expressions that distinguish casual speech from standard language while reflecting the communicative style of a particular social group. In this dialogue, *dope* is produced immediately after Teddy responds positively to Mac's request, demonstrating how Fresh and Creative slang is used to reinforce an atmosphere of mutual understanding and relaxed communication. Instead of relying on formal evaluative language, the speaker selects a creative slang expression that strengthens the informal nature of the interaction.

The significance of this example lies in its timing: *dope* occurs after a potentially tense negotiation about noise levels, and its use signals that the interaction has concluded successfully and amicably. This finding illustrates how the Fresh and Creative category can be interpreted in a specific social and historical context by highlighting the role of Fresh and Creative slang in maintaining harmonious social interaction. While previous studies by Mayuni and Ayomi (2025) and Budiasa et al. (2021) demonstrated that Fresh and Creative slang is frequently employed as an expressive resource to convey speakers' evaluations and strengthen interpersonal relationships, the present finding shows that *dope* functions as a spontaneous evaluative response following a successful social negotiation, illustrating that Fresh and Creative slang can also reinforce positive interpersonal dynamics after potential conflict.

Emotional Attachment

The expression of emotional attachment through Fresh and Creative slang is most clearly illustrated in Data 8, where *dawg* appears at the moment of emotional climax between Teddy and Pete. The use of *dawg* in this context goes beyond simple in-group marking; it conveys genuine emotional warmth and commitment.

As discussed in the solidarity theme, *dawg* reinforces the fraternity's sense of brotherhood. However, its placement at a moment of emotional intensity—when the characters acknowledge their loyalty and affection for one another—elevates its function from mere identity marking to emotional expression. This demonstrates that Fresh and Creative slang can carry significant emotional weight and is not limited to casual or lighthearted communication.

This finding offers a different perspective from previous studies by Apriliani et al. (2024) and Raihan et al. (2024), which generally discussed Fresh and Creative slang in the context of everyday informal interaction. The present study shows that *dawg* is employed during a moment of emotional separation rather than ordinary casual interaction, demonstrating that Fresh and Creative slang can reinforce loyalty and collective identity even in emotionally significant situations.

Group Tradition and Cultural Continuity

Finally, Fresh and Creative slang can function as a marker of group tradition and cultural continuity. This theme is uniquely illustrated by *gam* in Data 5, which appears in a context quite different from the other examples.

Teddy: "Delta Psi puts on a production of Julius Caesar. A girl in the audience unexpectedly hands one of our brothers a beer."

Teddy: "And after that one fateful sip, the toga party is born!"

*Toga Man: "Hold that **gam** steady, Pete." (Neighbors 2014, 13.18)*

Unlike the other examples, *gam* appears in a narrative about the fraternity's early traditions rather than in ordinary everyday conversation. Its use is therefore strongly tied to the specific historical and social context of the fraternity. In this context, *gam* functions as a non-standard expression that contributes to the distinctive informal language associated with the group. Rather than treating the expression as evidence of a newly coined word, this study considers its contextualized and non-standard use as relevant to the Fresh and Creative category.

Previous studies by Putra and Winarta (2023), Dewi and Ariyaningsih (2023), and Aini and Abdullah (2024) primarily discussed Fresh and Creative slang as an informal linguistic resource used in everyday communication. However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating that Fresh and Creative slang can also function as a linguistic marker of historical continuity within a social community. In *Neighbors*, *gam* is not merely used to facilitate casual interaction but also to reinforce the fraternity's cultural heritage, providing additional evidence that Allan and Burrridge's (2006) classification accommodates slang expressions rooted in both social interaction and collective tradition.

The Role of Social Settings in Shaping Slang Use

The diverse social settings portrayed in *Neighbors* reveal how Fresh and Creative slang functions differently across contexts. This variation is an important contribution of the study that has received limited attention in previous research.

In the workplace, the contrast between *bro* and *boss* signals a shift from informal camaraderie to professional authority. This demonstrates that slang does not simply disappear in formal settings but can be strategically invoked or suppressed to manage relational dynamics.

Within the fraternity, expressions like *gam* and *dawg* reinforce collective identity and cultural continuity. The fraternity serves as a closed community where shared linguistic practices strengthen in-group bonds and distinguish members from outsiders.

In neighborhood interactions, expressions like *hip* and *dope* facilitate rapport-building and conflict resolution. These interactions occur in semi-public spaces where characters must negotiate relationships with people who are neither family nor close friends.

In family relationships, although less prominent, slang appears in moments of intimacy and playfulness, reflecting the informal dynamics of domestic life.

This variation demonstrates that the sociolinguistic functions of Fresh and Creative slang are context-dependent and shaped by the social dynamics of each setting. The present study therefore contributes to sociolinguistic research by illustrating how the same category of slang can serve different functions depending on the social context in which it is used.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The present findings align with the broader pattern identified in previous studies that Fresh and Creative is consistently the most dominant category of slang in movie discourse. Studies by Wina and Marantika (2024) in *Die Hart*, Christian et al. (2023) in *8 Mile*, and Oktaviani and Agung (2023) in *Lady Bird* similarly found that Fresh and Creative slang predominates in character interactions.

However, the present study offers several contributions that extend previous research. First, by analyzing the social functions of Fresh and Creative expressions thematically, this study demonstrates that classification is meaningfully connected to contextual usage. Previous studies tended to focus on identification and classification without exploring the sociolinguistic functions of the expressions.

Second, the present study reveals specific functions of Fresh and Creative slang—such as conflict resolution and cultural tradition preservation—that have received limited attention in previous research. The strategic use of *homie* for reconciliation and *gam* for historical continuity illustrates the range of functions that Fresh and Creative slang can perform beyond simple in-group marking.

Third, the analysis of diverse social settings in *Neighbors* demonstrates that the same slang category can serve different functions depending on the communicative context, a finding that has not been systematically explored in previous studies.

It should be noted, however, that most previous studies using Allan and Burrridge's (2006) framework have consistently found Fresh and Creative as the dominant category. This may reflect a pattern in movie discourse rather than a universal characteristic of slang use. Studies examining other genres or media, particularly social media where acronyms and clippings are more common, might find different distributions. This observation points to the importance of considering genre and medium in slang research.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis is based on a single movie (*Neighbors*, 2014), which limits the generalizability of the findings to other movies or communicative contexts. Second, the data consist of scripted dialogues rather than naturally occurring conversations, which may not fully capture the spontaneity and authenticity of real-world slang use. Although movie dialogues are crafted to reflect natural communication patterns, they remain deliberate constructions by screenwriters. Third, the classification of slang expressions involves a degree of subjectivity, as the determination of whether an expression qualifies as slang and which category it belongs to relies on the researcher's interpretation.

Although peer checking was conducted with the thesis supervisor to enhance reliability, intercoder validation with multiple independent researchers was not performed. Fourth, the study focused primarily on the Fresh and Creative category, which

comprised 74.42% of the data, while the other four categories were discussed only briefly in the findings. Fifth, the social function analysis, while grounded in established sociolinguistic frameworks, remains interpretative and could benefit from additional validation methods.

Future research is encouraged to address these limitations by examining multiple movies across different genres, comparing scripted and naturally occurring speech, involving multiple coders to enhance reliability, giving more balanced attention to all slang categories, and employing complementary analytical methods such as corpus linguistics or discourse analysis to validate the functional interpretations.

5. Conclusion

This study identified and classified the slang words used in *Neighbors* (2014) based on Allan and Burrige's (2006) classification. A total of 43 slang expressions were found and categorized into five types: Fresh and Creative, Flippant, Imitative, Acronym, and Clipping. Among these categories, Fresh and Creative was the most dominant type, indicating that the movie predominantly employs creative and informal lexical expressions in the characters' interactions. Therefore, this study focused on representative examples of Fresh and Creative slang by explaining the contextual and linguistic characteristics that justify their classification according to Allan and Burrige's (2006) framework rather than interpreting their lexical meanings. The analysis demonstrates that the classification of Fresh and Creative slang is supported by its creative use in different communicative contexts to express solidarity, social identity, interpersonal relationships, cultural traditions, and emotional attachment.

This study contributes to sociolinguistic research by demonstrating that Allan and Burrige's (2006) classification is useful not only for identifying slang categories but also for explaining the contextual characteristics that distinguish Fresh and Creative slang in authentic movie dialogues. The findings provide additional insight into how creative lexical choices function within informal communication while reinforcing the applicability of Allan and Burrige's framework in movie discourse. Future research is recommended to investigate other slang categories or examine the realization of Fresh and Creative slang in different movies, digital media, or other communicative contexts to broaden the understanding of contemporary language variation.

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