Wulan Tri Astuti
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. (email: wulanastuti@ugm.ac.id)

Ari Mulyadi
Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia.

Astuti, Wulan Tri is a lecturer at the Department of French Language and Literature, Universitas Gadjah Mada and Humanities Doctoral Studies Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada. She obtained her doctoral degree in 2021 and Master of Arts in 2011 from the Department of Media and Cultural Studies, Graduate School, Universitas Gadjah Mada. She completed her undergraduate study at French Department, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and became the best graduate in 1999. Wulan Tri Astuti's research interests include media and cultural studies, multimodal studies, cinema studies, French literature, and gender studies. She is currently the Head of the Indonesian Language and Culture Learning Service (INCULS) UGM.

Mulyadi, Ari is a doctoral student in the Department of Humanities Studies Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, specializing in Linguistics with a particular focus on multimodal studies. His research investigates the interconnections between language, visual communication, and other media forms in theoretical and applied contexts. He earned a Master's degree in Linguistics from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) in 2021, through research entitled "Multimodal Pragmatic Analysis of Campaign Posters for the Prevention and Control of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in Indonesia". He is currently an awardee of the Beasiswa Pendidikan Indonesia (BPI) scholarship, managed by Lembaga Dana Pendidikan Indonesia (LPDP).

Selected Political Hoax Cases on Social Media: Multimodal in Forensic Linguistics

Abstract

This study explores the complexities of political hoaxes on social media through the lens of multimodal forensic linguistics, focusing on integrating verbal and visual elements in the construction and dissemination of misinformation. By analyzing five prominent political hoaxes in the Indonesian context, the research applies a multimodal pragmatic framework, incorporating semantic representations of an individual mode, semantic representation of multimodal mode, and inferential meanings elaborated using post-truth escapism to examine the mechanisms of hoax narrative construction. The findings reveal how hoaxes use multimodal meanings across modes to manipulate public opinion and foster post-truth realities. The study highlights the critical role of multimodal elements, such as visual mode combined with emotive language in verbal mode, to reinforce hoaxes and shape ideologically biased narratives. It further discusses the implications of these findings for forensic linguistic analysis, emphasizing the need for refined methodologies that incorporate both verbal and visual modes in legal discourse. The study contributes to the growing field of multimodal forensic linguistics by offering a comprehensive approach to analyzing political hoaxes and their strategy for eroding trust in factual information.

Keywords:

hoax; multimodal pragmatics; forensic linguistics; post-truth

Introduction

Previous research has extensively explored the intersection of language and legal studies, popularizing terms like legal linguistics (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007), forensic linguistics (Gibbons, 2003; Heydon, 2019), and language crime (Shuy, 1993; Tiersma & Solan, 2005). Forensic linguistics, traditionally focused on the textual analysis of verbal evidence, often overlooks the broader semiotic resources that contribute to meaning-making in legal contexts. However, legal discourse transcends textual forms and incorporates co-expressive semiotic resources to construct meaning (Matoesian, 2010). This

lack of understanding of the multimodal nature of legal evidence is particularly relevant in the digital age, where social media platforms integrate text, images, videos, emojis, and other semiotic tools, complicating the analysis of intent and meaning. For example, a defamatory tweet may combine text with an attached image or meme to amplify its message, or a hoax on platforms like X or Facebook may include misleading captions and edited visuals to create false narratives. However, researchers have largely overlooked the visual mode's role in language evidence, underscoring the need to reexamine language as a multimodal phenomenon. For instance, several studies have primarily relied on the verbal mode, such as those on the *firehose of falsehood* propaganda in Indonesia (Haqqi, 2020), hoax news during the 2019 presidential election (Febriyanti & Wagiran, 2021), and hoax news texts on social media (Kholid et al., 2021).

The shift to multimodal communication on social media platforms adds complexity to 'traditional' forensic linguistics. These platforms enable users to combine text, images, videos, emojis, and other semiotic tools, making analyzing intent and meaning in legal contexts increasingly challenging. For example, tactics such as "social engineering" leverage multimodal resources to manipulate behavior, create deception, and build complex social networks (Matassi et al., 2022). These challenges are further exacerbated by the rapid dissemination of information on social media, where algorithms often create echo chambers that limit users' exposure to diverse viewpoints (Vicario et al., 2019). Moreover, social media has become a primary information source, replacing traditional news outlets for many users (Schmidt et al., 2017). This shift amplifies the spread of unverifiable information, which circulates faster than validated content due to user-driven participation and engagement (Balmas, 2014; Zhou et al., 2021).

Additionally, the participatory nature of social media allows users to act as news producers,

thereby increasing the spread of misinformation (Lazer et al., 2018). Consequently, forensic linguistics must adapt to address the growing prevalence of multimodal evidence in digital spaces. The interplay between multimodality, social media, and forensic linguistics underscores the urgent need for robust analytical frameworks to interpret complex meaning-making processes.

Hoaxes, particularly in political contexts, are a prominent example of the challenges posed by multimodal communication. Deliberately designed to mislead and manipulate public opinion, hoaxes often exploit societal anxieties and moral panic (Cohen, 2002). For instance, during Indonesia's 2014–2019 electoral period, identity politics and SARA (Ethnicity, Religion, Race, and Intergroup) issues were manipulated to influence public opinion (Afrimadona, 2021; Warburton, 2020; Widian et al., 2023). The legal implications of hoaxes are significant. In Indonesia, laws like the Criminal Code (KUHP) and the Information and Electronic Transactions Law (ITE Law) are designed to address crimes involving false information. For example, Article 28 paragraph (2) of the ITE Law prescribes up to six years of imprisonment or fines of up to one billion rupiahs for spreading false news. Cases like the conviction of RS (The Jakarta Post, 2019) or a campaign team member accused of distributing false news during Indonesia's 2019 elections illustrate the integration of verbal and visual modes in hoax propagation. In addition, previous studies related to political hoaxes and polarization issues have been conducted in a monomodal approach, such as the discourse of political hoaxes related to COVID-19 (Pérez-Curiel & Molpeceres, 2020), identification of rumors and misinformation (Shelke & Attar, 2019), and identity political analysis (Agustina et al., 2023). These examples demonstrate the importance of adopting a multimodal perspective in forensic linguistics to analyze evidence in such cases effectively.

Given the previous challenges, a multimodal approach to forensic linguistics is essential. The lack of tools to analyze multimodal hoaxes has theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it leaves a gap in understanding how meaning is constructed across semiotic modes, particularly in legal evidence. Practically, it risks misinterpretation of intent or meaning in legal cases, potentially leading to unjust outcomes. Existing analytical frameworks, such as systemic functional linguistics (Moya Guijarro & Pinar Sanz, 2008; O'Halloran, 2008), corpus-based methods (Huang, 2021a; Lin, 2017), and critical discourse analysis (Chen & Machin, 2014; Ledin & Machin, 2019) have advanced the study of multimodal communication. However, some frameworks have limitations in capturing the expressive meaning dimensions of multimodal texts. Pragmatic studies address these gaps and have been effectively applied to audiovisual translation (Mubenga, 2009), speech and gesture analysis (Lin, 2017), and multimodal speech acts (Huang, 2021b).

This study addresses these gaps by investigating multimodal hoaxes through the lens of multimodal pragmatics and forensic linguistics, offering a nuanced framework for interpreting complex evidence in the digital age. While existing forensic linguistic frameworks have provided valuable tools for textual analysis, they cannot analyze the interplay between verbal and visual modes, particularly in legal contexts. This limitation leaves critical gaps in understanding how intent and meaning are constructed across modes and the implications for legal outcomes. To address these gaps, this study explores the following research questions: (1) What do individual modes within multimodal hoaxes convey discrete meanings? (2) How do verbal and visual modes interact to construct meaning in legal discourse? (3) How can multimodal pragmatic meanings be contextualized and inferred within legal discourse in the post-truth era?

Dicerto (2018) introduced a three-dimensional framework encompassing; the semantic representation of individual mode, the semantic representation of multimodal mode that adapts cross-media relations from Pastra (2008) and logico-semantic from Martinec and Salway (2005), and inferential meanings frameworks from Sperber and Wilson (1995). This framework provides a robust foundation for exploring meaning-making processes across diverse communicative forms, especially in political hoaxes. Furthermore, Coulthard and Johnson's (2007) forensic linguistic perspective and Kalpoka's (2019) post-truth escapism framework offer critical insights, particularly in understanding how political hoaxes are constructed and perpetuated in today's post-truth era. These theoretical underpinnings enrich the study by bridging the intersections of multimodal communication and forensic linguistics. Building on these foundational frameworks, this study employs a qualitative approach synthesizing multimodal pragmatics with forensic linguistic perspectives. The integration of these methodologies allows for a nuanced examination of the meaning-making processes underpinning hoax narratives, particularly within multimodal and legal contexts. The study uncovers the underlying strategies and rhetorical devices employed in hoax production by analyzing the intricate ways in which verbal and visual semiotic resources converge to construct deceptive narratives.

Method
Research Design

This study adopts descriptive quantitative methodologies to examine multimodal political hoaxes disseminated on social media. It utilizes content analysis metrics to elucidate the patterns and conduct a frequency analysis of multimodal elements, thereby assessing the prevalence and interplay of verbal and visual components

within the hoaxes. To ensure the reliability and consistency of the analysis, coding guidelines were developed outlining definitions, examples, and criteria for each category of verbal and visual elements. These methods ensure a thorough understanding of how verbal (VER) and visual (VIS) elements interact to construct the political hoax. The study also integrates semantic representations of individual and multimodal elements and inferential meanings to examine how hoax narratives are constructed. In addition, the study uses the concept of post-truth escapism to explore these mechanisms. Challenges arose because the hoax data were related to criminal evidence, often destroyed by court orders to prevent misuse.
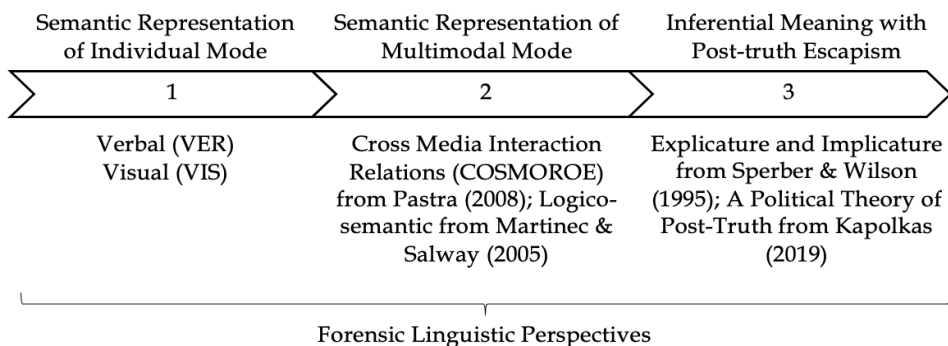
Additionally, specific data were excluded due to legal concerns, such as unauthorized legal interventions or facts not yet revealed. Secondary data from reputable media verified by the Indonesian Press Council and with permanent legal status were used to address these limitations. This study introduces a multimodal forensic linguistic perspective, combining multimodality and forensic linguistics. The theoretical framework integrates Dicerto's (2018) multimodal pragmatics, Coulthard and Johnson's (2007) forensic linguistics, and Kalpokas's (2019) post-truth escapism. This approach also incorporates legal discourse perspectives, mainly related to UU ITE law (Article 28 Jo. Article 45A Law Number 1 of 2024), offering a nuanced understanding of the intersection between multimodality and legal discourse. Figure 1 provides the visual representation of the framework, i.e., theoretical concepts and their interrelations, clarifying how the components integrate to analyze multimodal political hoaxes.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study involves identifying and selecting five politically significant hoaxes that circulated on social media during the 2019 Indonesian elections. The primary aim was to select hoaxes that were representative of broader phenomena, including their capacity to shape public opinion and influence legal outcomes. To achieve this, purposive sampling was utilized based on the following criteria:

1. Hoaxes were selected based on their visibility and accessibility in news articles and fact-checking platforms. They were prioritized for their ability to influence perceptions and legal discourse, as they attracted significant public attention, were shared widely, or sparked public debates. Their extensive circulation and discussion increased their capacity to do so.

2. Hoaxes tied to the political discourse during the 2019 elections were selected. These include hoaxes that targeted specific political candidates, political parties, or key national

Semantic Representation of Individual Mode	Semantic Representation of Multimodal Mode	Inferential Meaning with Post-truth Escapism
1	2	3
Verbal (VER) Visual (VIS)	Cross Media Interaction Relations (COSMOROE) from Pastra (2008); Logico-semantic from Martinec & Salway (2005)	Explicature and Implicature from Sperber & Wilson (1995); A Political Theory of Post-Truth from Kapolkas (2019)

Forensic Linguistic Perspectives

Figure 1. Model Analysis of Multimodal Pragmatics on Political Hoax Cases
Source: Processed by author

issues such as religion and ethnicity due to their ability to amplify divisions and sway public opinion.

3. Hoaxes featuring verbal (e.g., captions, statements) and visual (e.g., images and infographics) elements were included to analyze the multimodal strategies used to resonate emotionally and create hoax narratives. Specific hoaxes sparked legal actions, such as arrests and judicial proceedings, demonstrating their tangible impact on political and legal landscapes. This focus ensures that the study captures the multifaceted role of multimodal hoaxes in shaping public opinion and influencing judicial processes.

Data Sources

The data sources for this study are a combination of news articles and fact-checking organizations that provide reliable and accurate information on the hoaxes. These sources allow for data triangulation and ensure the authenticity and representativeness of the selected hoaxes. Five selected hoax datasets related to political issues are observed, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Data Sources

Data	Sources
1	https://www.detik.com/jatim/berita/d-6130237/klarifikasi-roy-suryo-usai-unggah-meme-stupa-borobudur-mirip-jokowi
2	https://metro.tempo.co/read/1132903/cuitan-fadli-zon-rachel-jadi-bukti-berita-hoax-ratna-sarumpaet
3	https://era.id/news/33986/benarkah-foto-ini-ialah-wijiatno-ayah-presiden-jokowi-cek-faktanya
4	https://gfd.turnbackhoax.id/focus/337
5	https://turnbackhoax.id/2018/09/04/salah-foto-formasi-2019gantipresiden-di-jasmerahmob-umm/

Source: Processed by author

Data Triangulation and Validation

Data triangulation is a key aspect of ensuring the credibility and validity of the findings in this study. A systematic process of data triangulation is implemented to ensure authenticity, validity, and reliability while minimizing potential bias. The steps include:

1. Data are grouped based on their legal context, including cases with documented court outcomes and those under investigation.
2. Reports from multiple media outlets are compared to identify consistent narratives and issue coverage.
3. Data authenticity is verified by cross-referencing with other credible sources, such as government reports and Mafindo (independent fact-checking organizations).
4. The framing, language use, and visual representation in hoaxes are critically examined for consistency with other reports.
5. Justification result.

Results and Discussion
Results

The results of this study illuminate the mechanisms underpinning the construction and dissemination of political hoaxes on social media, analyzed through a multimodal pragmatic framework. By examining the interplay between verbal and visual modes, this study unpacks the strategic use of multimodality to craft persuasive narratives that resonate emotionally and cognitively with audiences. Furthermore, this section examines the results through four key perspectives: (1) the strategic use of verbal and visual modes in crafting narratives, (2) the interrelation between verbal and visual elements, (3) the role of inferential meaning, and (4) the broader implications of these multimodal strategies within the framework of post-truth escapism. Each perspective underscores the complexity of multimodal hoaxes within forensic linguistic perspectives and their potential to manipulate perceptions and challenge factual discourse.

The Dominance of Verbal Modes Over Visual Modes

The analysis revealed a significant disparity in the use of verbal and visual modes, with verbal content dominating hoax narratives. As seen in Table 2, verbal modes accounted for a higher frequency across all analyzed hoaxes, comprising detailed sentences, phrases, and rhetorical questions that served as the primary medium for spreading misinformation. Despite their lower frequency, visual modes played a vital role in enhancing the impact of verbal narratives. Moreover, the study found that visual modes often complimented the verbal content, creating a cohesive and persuasive multimodal message.

Interrelation Between Verbal and Visual Modes

Complex relationships, including equivalence, independence, and complementarity, characterized the interplay between verbal and visual modes. Complementarity was evident when verbal descriptions provided context for visual elements, enabling a more comprehensive interpretation of the hoax. This interrelation underscores the symbiotic nature of multimodal hoaxes, where each mode contributes to a unified narrative. Moreover, the data distribution is predominantly characterized by independent relations with subtypes of meta-information, as illustrated in Table 3.

Building on Pastra's insights into cross-media relations across visual and verbal modes, the integration of logic-semantic relations and the COSMOROE taxonomy provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how messages are formed and interpreted in multimodal communication. The data distribution of logico-

Table 2.
Semantic Representation of Individual Mode Results

Data	Verbal Mode (f)	Visual Mode (f)	Frequency	Percentage of Verbal Mode (%)	Percentage of Visual Mode (%)	Percentage Total (%)
1	6	2	8	75%	25%	100%
2	5	1	6	83.3%	16.7%	100%
3	9	2	11	82%	18%	100%
4	6	4	10	60%	40%	100%
5	4	2	6	66.7%	33.3%	100%

Source: Processed by author

Table 3.
Cross Media Interaction Relations Results

Data	Equivalence			Independence				Complementarity						
	Tk	T-T	Met	Meth	Cont	Sym	Meta	E-ex	E-ag	Def	N-ex	N-ag	Ad	N- def
1	-	1	-	-	1	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
2	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	3	-	-	-	1
4	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Total	5	2	0	0	1	1	11	0	4	5	0	0	0	1

Source: Processed by author

Notes: Tk: Token-token   Cont: Contradiction   E-ex: Essential exophora
        T-T: Type-token   Sym: Symbiosis   E-ag: Essential agent-object
        Met: Metonym   Meta: Meta information   Def: Defining apposition
        Meth: Metaphor
        N-ag: Non-essential agent-object
        Ad: Adjunct
        N-Def: Non-defining apposition

semantic, as illustrated in Table 4, is predominantly characterized by locution in projection, expansion distributed across each category, and dominantly concentrated in elaboration with exemplification that image more general.

Inferential Meaning With Post-Truth Escapism

The rise of misinformation in the digital age has brought inferential meaning and post-truth escapism into sharp focus. Political hoaxes rely heavily on linguistic and visual strategies to manipulate perceptions and propagate false narratives. The inferential analysis revealed that hoaxes relied heavily on implicature and explicature to convey layered meanings. This interplay between explicit and implicit meanings highlights the sophisticated manipulation techniques employed in crafting hoaxes. Social media platforms, acting as echo chambers, further amplified these hoaxes, enabling them to reach larger audiences with minimal resistance. The inferential meaning results are illustrated in Table 5 below.

The findings align with Kalpokas's post-truth escapism framework, which identifies three key elements in crafting and propagating misinformation: co-created fiction, affective relations, and affiliative truths. Table 6 shows that these elements were evident in the analyzed hoaxes and offer insight into the mechanisms

driving their spread. This case illustrates how political hoaxes leverage multimodal strategies to foster post-truth escapism. By creating co-constructed narratives rooted in emotional and affiliative truths, these hoaxes polarize public opinion and erode trust in factual discourse.

The intersection of inferential meaning and post-truth escapism reveals the mechanisms underpinning political hoaxes. By combining explicit and implicit messages with emotional and cultural appeals, hoaxes create alternative realities that polarize public opinion and erode trust in factual discourse. Addressing these challenges requires a multidimensional approach integrating linguistic, visual, and cultural analyses to dismantle misinformation and foster informed public engagement. In an era where misinformation thrives, understanding and addressing the interplay of inferential meaning and post-truth escapism is critical to preserving the integrity of public discourse.

Discussion

This study examines multimodal pragmatics through the lens of forensic linguistics, with a particular focus on the Indonesian context. It analyzes language evidence and its legal implications, exploring the intricate relationship between language and legal discourse. The primary

Table 4.
Logico-semantic Results

Data	Projection		Expansion						
	Idea	Locution	Enhancement			Extension	Elaboration		
			Temp	Spat	Caus		Image more general	Text more general
1	-	6	1	1	1	-	2	-
2	-	5	1	-	1	-	1	-
3	4	5	1	-	1	-	2	-
4	4	2	-	1	1	-	4	-
5	-	4	1	1	-	-	2	-
Total	8	22	4	3	4	0	11	0

Source: Processed by author

Notes:
Temp   : Temporal
Spat   : Spatial
Caus   : Causal

Table 5.
Inferential Meaning Results

Data	Inferential Meanings	
	Explicature	**Implicature**
1	**VER1**: (since it's the weekend, let's keep the tweets light and easy). **VER2**: (In line with the protests against the planned ticket price hike for Borobudur Temple (from IDR 50,000 to IDR 750,000), which (thankfully) has been postponed). **VER3**: (There's been a lot of creativity from netizens in reimagining one of the iconic open stupas at Borobudur). **VER4**: (funny) **VER5**: *he-3x* (laughing) **VER6**: *AMBYAR* (slang term and it is often used to express feelings of emotional devastation or situations that have gone entirely awry)	**VER1**: The speaker relies on context and cognitive effort to understand why "light and easy" tweets are appropriate for the situation. **VER2**: Though not directly stated, the price hike seems unreasonable, subtly urging the listener to agree. **VER3**: The creativity reflects protests over ticket hikes, with netizens using humor or art to comment. **VER4:** The speaker trusts shared context and the listener's ability to grasp the nuance of "funny" without explanation. **VER4, 5, 6**: The expression economizes effort while maximizing effect, relying on the listener's ability to infer humor from context.
2	**VER1**: (*Innalillahi*, Madam @RatnaSpaet was assaulted by a group of people last night). **VER2**: (Currently, she is in a battered condition). **VER3**: (Hey, you dare to mess with mothers!) **VER4**: (Don't you have a mother) **VER5**: *(What were you born from to behave this way)*.	**VER1:** The religious phrase paired with the statement heightens emotions, evoking sympathy and outrage. **VER2**: "Battered" condemns the perpetrators by stressing the harm caused. **VER3**: The phrase shows anger, saying mistreating mothers is wrong. **VER4, 5**: The phrase is emotional, using questions to show moral outrage.
3	**VER1**: (Finally, it leaked). **VER2**: *A.1* (refer to credible information). **VER3**: (The real father of Jokowi). **VER4**: (Looks exactly the same!!!). **VER5**: (If the 'Cebong' argues, I'll slap their ugly faces one by one!!!). **VER6**: *Widjiatno* (the name of Joko Widodo's father). **VER7**: (State document). **VER8**: (Confidential). **VER9**: *Komandan UNDERBOW PKI 1965* (Commander of an underground faction within the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) during the 1965 period).	**VER1**: The verb "leaked" typically suggests an accidental or unauthorized disclosure. **VER2**: The phrase acts as an authoritative marker, adding trust to the information described. **VER3**: The term "real father" provocatively questions the authenticity of Jokowi's parentage narrative. **VER4**: Emphasis on similarity from the previous statement. **VER5**: The speaker's anger is heightened by a literal suggestion of committing violence. **VER6, 9**: Widjiatno is allegedly linked to the PKI **VER7, 8**: Labeling a document confidential implies trust in those handling it.
4	**VER1**: (Just mention that the "straight-line Banser" supports Mr. Prabowo) **VER2**: (the shares have surpassed 7 million) **VER3**: (Officially supports Prabowo-Sandi) **VER4**: PKB (acronym from Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa) **VER5**: Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (One of the political parties in Indonesia). **VER6**: NU (acronym from Nahdlatul Ulama)	**VER1:** The phrase suggests the "straight-line Banser" supports Prabowo Subianto's political views or candidacy. **VER2; 1**: This means that the total number of shares of content. **VER3**: The phrase implies that the group or entity endorsing Prabowo and Sandi. **VER4; 5**: The entity that endorsing Prabowo and Sandi. **VER4; 5; 6**: Refers to two entities in Indonesian politics, both closely tied to Islamic organizations.
5	**VER1**: (Cool, these UMM students…) **VER2**: (Approximately 7,500 new students of the University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM) performed a choreography that formed several images, including the Map of Indonesia and other #2019GantiPresiden symbols). **VER3**: (Cool….) **VER4**: (Let's keep spreading the *#2019GantiPresiden* hashtag).	**VER1**: The phrase responds to a recent action by UMM students **VER2**: A narrative of UMM students flash mob the political themes. **VER3**: The speaker finds the event impressive for its visual appeal or symbolic meaning. **VER4:** The speaker supports #2019GantiPresiden and leadership change.

Source: Processed by author

objective is to investigate political hoaxes using a proposed framework highlighting the dynamics of misinformation spread, specifically the shift from monomodal to multimodal strategies. This evolution necessitates new approaches to identify and address hoaxes' dissemination effectively. This study offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing political hoaxes in legal contexts

Table 6.
Post-truth Escapism Matrix Results

Elements	Aspects	Data				
		1	2	3	4	5
Co-Created Fiction	Narrative Keywords	**VER1**: Lighthearted tone. **VER2**: Against ticket hike **VER3**: Netizens' responses **VER 4; 5; 6**: Humorous tone	**VER1**: Empathy **VER2**: Assaulted **VER3**: Battered condition **VER4**: Confrontational tone **VER5**: Focus on respect **VER6**: Question to provoke **VER7**: Rhetorical question	**VER1; 2; 3; 4**: The specific information **VER5**: Threatening statement **VER6**: **VER7; 8**: official and classified	**VER1, 3**: *Banser* supports Prabowo-Sandi **VER2**: Breaking 7 million shares **VER4; 5; 6**: Organization	**VER1**: UMM Students **VER2**: flashmob activity, Indonesian Map, and *#2019GantiPresiden* **VER3**: Speaker expression **VER4**: Spreading message
	Audience Engagement (if any)	Trending topic no. 1 on 15 June 2018 in twitter with *#tangkaproysuryo*	Trending topic no. 1 on 4 October 2018 on Twitter with *#KoalisiPrabohong*	Minimal audience engagement on Facebook	Got a thousand reactions (likes and emojis) and 4.642 shares on Facebook.	Minimal audience engagement on Facebook.
Mediatization and Affective Relations	Emotional Appeals	**VER2**: Rational appeals **VER4; 5; 6**: Happiness and humor **ALL VIS**: Intensely contempt and provocation	**VER1; 2**: Sadness and sympathy **VER3; 4; 5**: Communal and moral values **ALL VIS**: Sense of outrage, sympathy, and moral condemnation	**VER1**: Curiosity **VER2**: Credibility **VER3**: controversy **VER4**: Confirmation bias **VER5**: Hostility **VER6**: Specificity **VER7; 8**: Exclusivity **VER 9**: Fear and distrust **ALL VIS**: Provocation	**VER1**: Solidarity **VER2**: Pride **VER3**: Certainty and authority **VER4; 5; 6**: Religious and cultural identity **ALL VIS**: Provocation	**VER1**: Pride **VER2**: Political enthusiasm **VER3**: Excitement **VER4**: Call to action
	Media Framing	Thematic framing	Morality framing	Episodic framing	Interest group framing	Episodic framing
Affiliative Truths	Polarization	Political, religious, and media social echo chambers	Political and social media echo chambers	Identity politics	Identity politics	Pop culture and political symbols
	Community Signals	**VER3**: Netizen **ALL VIS**: Buddhist temples	**VER1**: A group of people **VER3; 5**: *Kalian* (You) and refers to a group of people in VER1.	**VER5**: *Cebong* **VER9**: PKI **VER6**: Widjiatno (as shared identities) **ALL VIS**: PKI symbols	**VER1**: *banser* **VER3**: Prabowo-Sandi (supporters) **VER4**: PKB **VER5**: Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa **VER6**: NU **ALL VIS**: Symbols of Islamic organizations and parties.	**VER1; 2**: UMM Students **VER4**: Groups supporting #2019GantiPresiden. **VIS1**: Indonesian maps. **VIS2**: Movement symbols related to VER4. **ALL VIS**: UMM Students

Source: Processed by author

by integrating multimodal pragmatics, forensic linguistics, and post-truth escapism strategies.

The analysis revealed significant patterns and variations in multimodal relations across five hoax cases, highlighting common strategies and case-specific differences. Verbal content consistently dominated the narratives in all cases, serving as the primary medium for spreading misinformation through detailed statements, rhetorical questions, and emotionally charged language. Although less frequent, visual modes played a pivotal role in enhancing the hoaxes' overall impact, either supporting verbal claims or acting as primary tools for emotional manipulation. In the first case, visual elements functioned as complementary evidence, reinforcing the verbal narrative and adding credibility to the hoax. The second case demonstrated the strategic use of visuals to amplify outrage, with dramatic imagery paired with emotionally charged text that evoked strong emotional responses. The third case balanced verbal and visual modes, crafting an ideologically resonant narrative in which both elements were seamlessly intertwined. The fourth case showed how visuals were manipulated to create symbolic associations with political ideologies, while the verbal content guided the interpretation of these symbols. Finally, the fifth case illustrated how visuals were choreographed to evoke national pride and solidarity, positioning images as the centerpiece of a multimodal narrative that resonated with cultural identity.

Despite the differences across these cases, common patterns emerged. Each hoax leveraged the interplay between verbal and visual modes to craft persuasive narratives. Verbal content provided explicit context and directed the audience's interpretation of visuals, while visual elements heightened emotional engagement, whether through outrage, empathy, or pride. Additionally, these cases consistently use cultural and ideological cues to resonate with specific audiences, revealing how hoaxes are strategically tailored to exploit societal anxieties and biases. These cases deepen our understanding of the dynamics of multimodal hoaxes in Indonesia. They reveal the adaptability of hoax producers in manipulating public perception by customizing multimodal strategies to sociopolitical contexts. The findings underscore the importance of integrating both verbal and visual analyses to uncover the mechanisms behind misinformation.

The findings from this study reveal significant patterns in the use of multimodal strategies in political hoaxes. Verbal and visual elements were both employed strategically to manipulate public perception. Given the increasing prevalence of such hoaxes, both text and visuals must be considered in legal analysis. Law enforcement and legal professionals must examine both text and visuals in hoaxes to address this. While investigations have traditionally focused on written content, visuals now play a key role in making hoaxes more convincing. Law enforcement can use tools to analyze text and images together, improving their understanding of how hoaxes spread and enabling more effective action. Policymakers should update laws, like Indonesia's UU ITE Law, to cover both text and visuals, ensuring misleading images and videos are regulated. Media literacy programs can help the public recognize manipulative visuals and text, raising awareness about hoaxes. Educators also play a crucial role in teaching students to critically assess text and images, preparing them to identify misinformation. In light of these findings, the discussion will now be divided into three sections: the semantic representation of individual modes, the semantic representation of multimodal modes, and inferential meaning in the post-truth era.

Semantic Representation of Individual Mode

Previous research on multimodal analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; 2006; O'Halloran, 2008) supports the findings that verbal and visual modes often function symbiotically to

amplify meaning. For example, the examined hoaxes used edited visuals as persuasive tools, creating simultaneously explicit and implicit narratives. This echoes findings from Pérez-Curiel and Molpeceres (2020), who highlighted how multimodal misinformation capitalizes on affective visuals to deepen emotional resonance. The analysis of the semantic representation of individual mode revealed that verbal modes consistently dominated hoax narratives, as demonstrated by their higher frequency across all datasets (Table 2). For instance, in datum 2, as in Figure 2, verbal content accounted for 83.3% of the total message composition. Despite their lower frequency or 16.7% of the total composition, visual elements were crucial in amplifying the emotional impact of verbal messages.

Figure 2. Datum 2: The Selected Political Hoax
Source: Processed by author

The hoax surrounding RS exemplifies the calculated manipulation of linguistic and visual elements to construct a compelling yet false narrative. This case highlights the strategic interplay between verbal and visual modes, emphasizing key strategies central to forensic linguistic and semiotic inquiry. According to Coulthard and Johnson (2007), this case intersects two critical domains: language as evidence and language in judicial processes. Language as evidence becomes particularly complex due to the interplay of verbal elements constructing the hoax's narrative. In contrast, visual elements

reinforce false claims, creating cohesive yet deceptive narratives. In the judicial process, which included witness testimonies and linguistic analysis, RS was charged under Article 14, Paragraph 1 of Law Number 1 of 1946 concerning Criminal Law Regulations and Article 28, Paragraph 2 of the ITE Law, resulting in a two-year prison sentence. However, examining court records and media reports reveals no detailed methodology or insights into the linguist's approach to analyzing the RS hoax in court. This gap underscores the need for more precise documentation of forensic methodologies in legal proceedings, particularly for cases involving multimodal evidence. Sousa-Silva (2022) observed that traditional forensic linguistic approaches primarily focus on textual analysis, examining linguistic features such as syntax, semantics, and pragmatics to identify inconsistencies or markers of deception. While these methods are effective for text-based hoaxes, they often fall short when addressing the complexities introduced by multimodal content.

Datum 2 as in figure 2 consist of VER1: "*Innaliliahi bunda @RatnaSpaet semalam dipukuli sekelompok orang*" (indeed, we belong to God) Madam @RatnaSpaet was beaten by a group of people last night; VER2: "*Saat ini keadaan babak belur*" (She is currently in a battered condition); VER3: *Hei kalian beraninya sama ibu2!* (Hey, you dare to mistreat ladies!); VER4: *Apa kalian gak punya ibu?* (Don't you have a mother?); VER5: "*Lahir dari apa kalian?*" (What were you born of?); and VIS: The photo shows RS's bruised face. The hoax included textual claims, such as the statement in VER2, alongside visual evidence depicting a bruised face, ostensibly supporting the assault claims in visual mode. This interplay between modes aligns with findings by Zhu et al. (2024), who argue that deceptive information leverages multimodal content to enhance its perceived credibility, emotional resonance, and dissemination potential. In addition, Alam et al. (2021) found that combining verbal and visual

modes often amplifies emotional engagement, a key factor in the virality of fake news. Rhetorical questions like *"apa kalian gak punya ibu?"* (don't you have a mother?) (VER4) exemplifies how hoax producers use language to provoke moral indignation, aligning audience emotions with the false narrative. Meanwhile, the image of RS's bruised face intensified this reaction, leveraging visual semiotics to evoke empathy and outrage.

Beyond the previous case, similar instances highlight the semantic representation of individual mode in shaping hoaxes. Datum 5, as in Figure 3, provides critical insights into the strategic use of verbal and visual modes in political hoaxes. Verbal content dominated the narrative, accounting for 66.7% of the total composition, while visual modes comprised 33.3%. This disparity reflects the broader trend observed across datasets, where verbal elements serve as the primary vehicle for misinformation, with visual components acting as emotional amplifiers and contextual enhancers. All verbal statements emphasize the event's visual and political significance, reinforcing a sense of solidarity and pride among supporters of the *#2019GantiPresiden* movement. These

Figure 3. Datum 5: The Selected Political Hoax
Source: Processed by author

verbal narratives elaborate with visual elements, creating a cohesive and persuasive message. The hoax reinforces its ideological appeal by visually representing the hashtag and connecting it to national identity through the Map of Indonesia, making it emotionally resonant and shareable.

In the context of datum 2, the verbal mode was strategically constructed to create the illusion of a criminal act, specifically an assault. In contrast, the visual mode functioned as supporting evidence to reinforce the verbal narrative. The interplay between these two modalities significantly amplified the credibility of the hoax, leading the audience to interpret the visual imagery as validation of the verbal claims. By contrast, in datum 5, the verbal and visual modes were developed concurrently, with the visual mode deliberately manipulated to align with and enhance the verbal narrative. Unlike datum 2, where static visuals retrospectively supported the claims, the visuals in datum 5 assumed a dynamic and proactive role in shaping the narrative. The choreographed depiction of the Map of Indonesia and the *#2019GantiPresiden* symbol was meticulously designed to evoke nationalistic pride and political solidarity, seamlessly integrating with verbal statements to construct an emotionally engaging and persuasive narrative. This evolution in the use of multimodal strategies reflects the adaptive techniques employed by hoax producers. While datum 2 relied on static visuals to retrospectively corroborate verbal claims, datum 5 exemplifies a more sophisticated application of multimodal cohesion, wherein verbal and visual elements were intricately interwoven to produce a unified and premeditated narrative. This deliberate integration highlights the growing sophistication of multimodal hoaxes, making them more emotionally resonant and complex to deconstruct. Such distinctions underscore a broader trend in misinformation practices, where hoaxes have transitioned from static, reactive strategies to dynamic, premeditated narratives. This evolution necessitates the development of forensic

methodologies capable of addressing static and interactive multimodal contexts.

Smith and MacLeod's (2020) insights into visual semiotics provide a valuable framework for understanding these dynamics, identifying three principal techniques often employed in hoaxes: symbolism, contextual displacement, and visual anchoring. In datum 5, symbolism is prominently employed through the *#2019GantiPresiden* hashtag (VER2), which evokes strong ideological and emotional responses while aligning the narrative with political messaging. Contextual displacement is evident in the deliberate manipulation of visuals (VIS2), which reframes the event to suggest alignment with the *#2019GantiPresiden* campaign. Finally, visual anchoring solidifies this narrative by integrating manipulated imagery with emotionally charged verbal claims, thereby creating a cohesive yet deceptive message. The strategic use of these techniques demonstrates the power of visual semiotics in crafting persuasive multimodal narratives. An examination of the original video reveals the intended context of the event, which featured formations of KH Ahmad Dahlan, a map of Indonesia, the UMM logo, and the phrases "students today", "leaders tomorrow", and "pray for Lombok". These elements originally intended to convey educational and humanitarian messages were deliberately recontextualized to distort their meaning. As Smith and MacLeod (2020) argue, such manipulations strip visual elements of their original significance, imbuing them with new, ideologically charged interpretations. This process exemplifies the concept of contextual displacement, wherein visuals are repurposed to align with false narratives.

Semantic Representation of Multimodal Mode

The interplay between verbal and visual modes in hoaxes is crucial for understanding misinformation and its forensic linguistic perspectives. Multimodal hoaxes rely on relationships like equivalence, complementarity, and independence. Equivalence occurs when verbal and visual elements refer to the same concept, creating a unified narrative. For instance, an image of a bruised face paired with claims of violence reinforces credibility through repetition. Complementarity arises when text provides context for ambiguous visuals, amplifying emotional and rhetorical impact. Independence relations dominate political hoaxes, with standalone narratives designed for coherence and easy dissemination across platforms, minimizing scrutiny. Other patterns, like contradiction and symbiosis, further enhance hoaxes. Contradiction uses irony, where visuals oppose textual claims, engaging audiences emotionally. Symbiosis combines modes through token-token or token-type relations, linking specific or generalized elements (e.g., referencing "Borobudur temple" in VER2 and visuals). These strategies maintain consistency and resonance, ensuring the hoax's effectiveness. Syntactic techniques also play a crucial role. Agent-object relations connect a political figure (agent) to an action (object), such as using edited visuals to show public critique. Then, apposition shapes meaning and narrows focus by providing essential information, while non-defining apposition adds rhetorical details, simplifying or complicating the narrative. Theoretical frameworks like Martinec and Salway's logico-semantic theory and Pastra's interrelation theory provide tools for analyzing these dynamics. Moreover, semantic strategies like elaboration clarify verbal content, while enhancement adds temporal, spatial, and causal dimensions, enriching the hoax's impact.

Political hoaxes on social media have become increasingly prominent, especially during critical events like elections. For instance, during Indonesia's 2019 presidential campaign, Joko Widodo was falsely accused of being linked to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). These hoaxes often rely on carefully crafted verbal and visual elements to manipulate public perception

Figure 4. Datum 3: The Selected Political Hoax
Source: Processed by author

and exploit ideological biases. As Matoesian and Gilbert (2023) highlight, analyzing verbal and non-verbal cues together is crucial to understanding how these strategies work. Multimodal texts blend verbal and visual elements to create persuasive narratives. A verbal caption might accuse a political figure of controversial affiliations, while visuals, like the hammer and sickle, evoke historical and ideological associations. This combination strengthens the hoax's credibility by aligning emotional and logical appeals. For example, VER1 and VER2 paired with visuals (ALL VIS) demonstrate how verbal context frames leaked information while the visuals enhance the message, making it more believable.

The interplay between verbal and visual modes involves several key strategies. Meta-information relations, for instance, use verbal details to provide context, while visuals integrate seamlessly to enhance the audience's understanding. Agent-object relations link figures to actions or consequences, deliberately crafting a persuasive narrative. Apposition further enriches the hoax's meaning, with defining apposition (e.g., VER4, VER7) aligning content with the audience's knowledge, while non-defining apposition (VER8) adds nuance and depth. In addition, temporal and causal relations play a crucial role in amplifying the hoax's impact. Temporal relations (VER9 + ALL VIS) situate the narrative within a timeline,

using visuals like grey tones or archival imagery to evoke historical context. This subtle manipulation influences viewers to associate the hoax with past events, reinforcing its emotional resonance. Causal relations (VER5) show how verbal claims explain reasons or consequences, while visuals reinforce implied connections. This deliberate ambiguity encourages audiences to infer false links, making the hoax more difficult to disprove.

In multimodal hoaxes, text and images serve complementary but distinct roles. Images are often general and open to interpretation, relying on context and prior knowledge, while text narrows this interpretation by adding specificity. Together, they create a cohesive and persuasive narrative. For instance, visuals broadly represent an idea, such as a candidate's alleged connection to a communist party, while text elaborates on this idea, making the narrative more compelling. The strategic integration of verbal and visual elements is central to the effectiveness of political hoaxes. These strategies manipulate perception and spread misinformation by blending emotional resonance with logical framing. This underscores the importance of comprehensively analyzing multimodal texts to understand hoax production.

Figure 5. Datum 1: The Selected Political Hoax
Source: Processed by author

The Borobudur meme presents a compelling case for applying forensic linguistics, particularly

in examining how language is used to spread misinformation. In this case, @KRMTRoySuryo2 (KRM) was not directly involved in creating the hoax surrounding the "stupa meme." However, KRM became part of the controversy when the meme was shared online. From a forensic linguistic perspective, KRM faced legal consequences for sharing a meme that depicted a controversial image of the Borobudur temple's stupa. He was later sentenced to prison for his actions, highlighting the legal consequences of sharing hoaxes or misleading content, especially when it involves sensitive cultural or religious issues. Based on mass media tracking, no specific methodological details or theoretical frameworks used by forensic linguists in the trial process were identified, although hoaxes such as the case in question have evolved from a monomodal to a multimodal form and require a multi-faceted approach for analysis.

The relationship between modes in media can be more than one, with a complex and multilayered connection. Based on the data in Figure 5, a token-type equivalence relation was identified in the VER3-VIS1 mode, characterized by the verbal and visual modes "stupa" and "Borobudur" or information provided by other modes, which is considered a paradigmatic relationship. Furthermore, an essential-complementary relationship was found in VER2-VIS1 and VIS2, as a set of textual signs or indices refer to a part of the image, and the intention communicated can only be captured when the modes are combined, either explicitly or implicitly. In this case, VER2 refers to the plan to increase ticket prices, while VIS1 and VIS2 represent the Borobudur temple. Based on the status relation, VER and VIS complement each other in spatial enhancement, depicted through geographical space in the visual mode and projected through locution or wording. In this case, KRM demonstrates the ability to manage modal resources thematically, as shown by the structure of the relationships, which are constructed to produce a coherent message.

To further illustrate this point, additional examples are examined where similar cross-interrelation media contribute to the overall meaning and message construction in political hoax cases. While the ITE Law provides a legal framework for addressing hoaxes, enforcement can be difficult. Article 28 of the ITE Law deals with spreading false information or hoaxes that cause social disruption or public panic. Hoaxes spread quickly, and identifying the perpetrators can be challenging, especially if the hoax involves multiple actors. As illustrated in Figure 6, the hoaxes among 28 people reached more than 4,000 shares. One key element of this hoax was the use of manipulated images and videos that suggested Banser leaders were publicly declaring support for Prabowo. These visuals, which appeared to be official communications, were designed to give the hoax an air of legitimacy. In addition, the verbal mode accompanying these posts often stated that Banser had joined forces with Prabowo's campaign. Moreover, the hoax created confusion about Banser's actual stance.

Figure 6. Datum 4: The Selected Political Hoax
Source: Processed by author

In Figure 6, the interrelation between verbal and visual modes predominantly manifests in equivalence relationships, specifically token-token equivalence. In this context, token-token equivalence means that the information expressed through different modal resources (verbal and visual) is semantically equivalent, providing complementary details that reinforce each other. In this case, the verbal and visual components work together to enhance the overall meaning and make it more straightforward for the audience. The paradigmatic concept plays an important role in analyzing these token-token relations. A paradigmatic relationship refers to how elements within a given context (e.g., verbal and visual modes) are interchangeable with other elements within the same system but without changing the core meaning of the message. In Figure 6, the verbal and visual elements are not identical but rather serve as representations of the same idea or entity in different forms. For example, the verbal tokens VER4 and VER5, which refer to the name of an organization and its symbol, are semantically equivalent to the visual representation of that organization and symbol. This equivalence ensures that the meaning is preserved even when expressed in different modes. The verbal references (names and titles) and the visual symbol signify the same entity, reinforcing each other and enhancing the audience's understanding. When hoaxes use token-token equivalence, they provide reinforcement by aligning verbal and visual elements that communicate the same misleading message. Forensic linguists can uncover how hoaxes manipulate public perception by analyzing how verbal and visual modes work together to form a coherent narrative. Moreover, understanding these relationships helps to identify how hoaxes are crafted.

Inferential Meaning in the Post-truth Era

The present study investigates the mechanisms behind the construction and dissemination of political hoaxes on social media, utilizing a multimodal and forensic linguistic perspective. Through the analysis of language and inferential meanings embedded in political hoaxes, forensic linguistics reveals how these narratives exploit cognitive and emotional pathways that lead to belief formation. Post-truth hoaxes manipulate these cognitive processes by embedding inferential meanings that align with the audience's ideological or emotional predispositions. Therefore, the intersection of forensic linguistics and post-truth lies in understanding how hoaxes use linguistic devices (including inferential meaning) to craft truth-like narratives that resonate emotionally, thus creating a post-truth reality where emotional satisfaction, rather than objective verification, dictates what is accepted as 'truth'.

In this context, inferential meaning serves as an additional layer within the hoax's narrative, while post-truth escapism acts as a mechanism driving the spread of these hoaxes. By examining how verbal and visual semiotic resources intricately converge both verbal and visual modes, the study reveals how political hoaxes manipulate public perception and contribute to the post-truth environment. A key element in this process is the dual role of explicature and implicature in political hoaxes. Explicature, or explicit content, forms the foundation of the hoax's narrative, while implicature refers to the implied meaning that requires inference from the audience. The findings highlight the significance of implicature in political hoaxes, where verbal content is paired with visual elements to provoke emotional reactions. This is exemplified by phrases such as "battered condition" (VER2) or the rhetorical question "Don't you have a mother?" (VER4), both of which trigger moral outrage. The current study echoes these findings by showing how visual elements, such as the image of a bruised face, amplify the verbal message, making it more persuasive and challenging to question. By combining these

implied meanings with explicit content, hoaxes become more effective in generating emotional and ideological responses, which is central to political hoaxes aimed at manipulating public opinion.

Kalpokas (2019) theorizes that in the post-truth era, truth is no longer defined by objective facts but by the emotional and ideological alignment of the audience. This concept aligns with the inferential meanings found in the study, where political hoaxes rely on creating affective engagements that transcend factual verification. As Kalpokas explains, post-truth escapism hinges on creating narratives that allow individuals to escape the complexity of objective reality into a world shaped by emotional resonance and ideological predispositions. In the context of political hoaxes, post-truth escapism becomes a powerful mechanism for disseminating false information, particularly on social media, where emotional narratives spread faster than factual discourse. Understanding how hoaxes function is crucial: they often present a world that appeals to the audience's desires, fears, or prejudices rather than their rationality or critical thinking. For example, using visual imagery combined with emotional appeals in the hoaxes analyzed in this study creates a persuasive narrative that resonates viscerally. This emotional engagement aligns with Kalpokas' concept of affiliative truths, where 'truths' are constructed not through factual correctness but through shared affective investment in a narrative. Political hoaxes, such as manipulated images or symbols, trigger emotional responses, while the accompanying textual content reinforces this emotional appeal. These emotionally charged elements create a post-truth reality, where the emotional satisfaction derived from the hoax overshadows its factual inaccuracy.

The interplay between verbal and visual modes is central to constructing post-truth narratives. As Kalpokas (2019) discusses, post-truth narratives often rely on the verisimilitude

or truth-likeness of the representation. While the content may not be factually accurate, it feels real enough to the audience to foster emotional engagement and belief. This phenomenon is evident in the hoaxes analyzed, where the combination of visual cues and textual content creates a narrative that feels authentic, even when it is not. This process of presenting a "real enough" version of events enables post-truth escapism to thrive in the digital age. In this context, the strategic use of inferential meanings, combined with emotional and ideological appeals, plays a critical role in crafting hoaxes that resonate with audiences and foster a post-truth reality. By integrating verbal and visual elements, hoaxes manipulate perceptions and contribute to the erosion of trust in factual discourse. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive understanding of how multimodal narratives function in the digital age and highlights the importance of emotional and ideological engagement in the spread of political misinformation, particularly in legal discourse.

Conclusion

This study underlines the importance of integrating multimodal forensic linguistics in analyzing political hoaxes. Examining both verbal and visual modes reveals how these semiotic resources synergistically craft persuasive, emotionally resonant narratives that influence public opinion. Specifically, the study demonstrates how combining the verbal mode (text) and the visual mode (image) manipulates audience perceptions, fostering post-truth realities while bypassing rational analysis. For instance, the analysis of political hoaxes revealed how emotionally charged imagery amplifies the persuasive impact of explicit statements, creating narratives that align with ideological biases while obscuring factual inaccuracies.

Key findings emphasize the role of verbal and visual modes in shaping perceptions, with explicature, implicature, and post-truth

escapism identified as critical mechanisms that enable political hoaxes to exploit emotional and ideological predispositions. These insights underscore the necessity of adopting multimodal frameworks in forensic linguistics to address the complexities of misinformation. Future research should refine these frameworks by integrating principles from multimodality, forensic linguistics, and computational methodologies. These advancements would facilitate large-scale analyses of multimodal datasets, enabling the identification of patterns in the dissemination and evolution of misinformation.

Legal practitioners may benefit from integrating multimodal analysis into their work, especially in digital evidence cases. Training forensic linguists to examine the interaction between verbal and visual elements in digital content—such as social media posts, political advertisements, and memes—could offer courts crucial insights into issues of intent, authenticity, and the societal impact of such content. Furthermore, educators and policymakers are pivotal in addressing misinformation by promoting public media literacy. Initiatives designed to teach individuals how to analyze multimodal content critically, identify emotional manipulation, and detect biases can empower citizens to navigate the digital environment with greater discernment.

In conclusion, this study underscores forensic linguistics's need to move beyond traditional text-based analysis by integrating a broader array of semiotic tools, including visual and multimodal elements. Addressing both theoretical and practical aspects of multimodal analysis enables researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to mitigate the impact of digital misinformation collaboratively. Future research should emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration to improve the utility and applicability of multimodal frameworks in academic, legal, and other domains. The findings of this study highlight the critical urgency of such efforts, serving as a call to action to protect the integrity of public discourse and legal decision-making in the increasingly complex digital landscape.

Acknowledgment

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