CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the introductory part of the research, covering the background of the research, research questions, purposes of the research, scope of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

The study of representation examines the complex ways in which we mentally process and perceive information about the world around us. Furthermore, representation is the process of using language to convey something meaningful to other people about the world (Hall, 1997). With the development of multimodality, the combination of different semiotic modes (for example, verbal and visual) within a particular discourse (van Leeuwen, 2015), representation is not only using verbal language but also other modes. It is in line with another Hall's statement that it includes the use of words, symbols, and pictures that stand for or represent various ideas (1997). Verbal, non-verbal, and other languages are now media for representing meaning. Those languages are often used in one medium called posters.

A poster is a massive piece of paper, either shown in public to promote something or placed on a wall for decoration. The ultimate goal of a poster is to facilitate the exchange of beneficial information between the creator and the viewers (Espino, 2004). Considering the variety of modern communication tools today—especially in the age of social media—it is crucial to maintain posters as a useful tool for advertising (Sifaki & Papadopoulou, 2015). However, printed posters have evolved into online posters that no longer require paper. Several organizations, including educational and government institutions, have recently filled their social media platforms with posters to inform the audience rapidly. Political parties are one of the organizations that take advantage of this digital innovation.

Online political posters give political parties a way to reach more voters, especially voters who typically are not involved in politics. Branding benefits

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these voters as they indirectly receive political messages (Cacioppo et al., 1986, as cited in Campbell & Lee, 2016). They have emerged as a prominent force in modern political campaigns. Moreover, online political poster is also a great alternative to traditional ones; they are more interactive, replacing traditional advertising and short-term political campaign communication strategies (Campbell & Lee, 2016).

Online political posters have drawn the attention of many researchers (Lirola, 2016; Roh et al., 2019; Kores, 2020; Al-Azzawi & Saleh, 2021; Lirola, 2023). For example, Lirola (2023) analyzed how Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael's leaders are portrayed as social actors in campaign posters for the 2016 and 2020 general elections. The present research found that online political posters play a crucial role in election campaigns, serving as a persuasive tool for political parties to communicate with the public. Not only in terms of public interaction, online political posters are also crucial in shaping political messages conveyed (Roh et al., 2019) and public opinion (Lirola, 2016).

Previous research has similarities because they all used multimodality as an analysis tool. The research objective reveals significant differences. For instance, Al-Azzawi and Saleh (2021) aimed to conduct a multimodal analysis of the political posters to identify the linguistic and non-linguistic strategies used by the candidates to persuade the audience to vote for them. Another research, undertaken by Kores (2020), aimed to critically examine some of the rhetorical strategies employed by Slovenian political parties in the lead-up to the 2018 legislative elections, paying particular attention to their intended or unintended ideological role and effects.

There is still a lack of research exploring political and presidential election posters using multimodal analysis, especially in Indonesia. Thus, completing this research is essential because it aims to fill the gap by providing the representation of Indonesia's future leaders in the 2024 presidential election utilize a Systemic Functional-Multimodal Discourse Analysis (SF-MDA) from O'Halloran (2008). The present research provides insights into how verbal and visual modes in online posters influence public perception and candidate image. It contributes to the

election by analyzing how these multimodal messages shape voter opinions, potentially affecting voter behavior and the overall election outcome in Indonesia. Furthermore, the posters for this research were obtained only from verified Instagram accounts of candidates, their political parties, and/or their media centers. Using the theoretical framework of visual grammar from Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) and Halliday's (1994) transitivity, this research aims to study how verbal and visual modes in presidential election posters work together to represent Indonesia's future leaders, and discovering the representation means for candidates' personal branding.

1.2   Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How do the verbal and the visual in the presidential election posters work together to represent the candidates?
2. What does the representation signify to candidates' personal branding?

1.3   Purposes of the Research

This research has two purposes, based on the background and the research questions. The research focused on discovering how the combination of verbal and visual elements in presidential election posters work together to represent the candidates, as well as what the representation means for candidates' personal branding.

1.4   Scope of the Research

This research involves a detailed examination of the verbal and visual portrayal of presidential candidates through online posters during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. The posters were collected only from verified Instagram accounts of candidates, their political parties, and/or their media centers. They must have been posted between November 28, 2023, and February 10, 2024, during the election campaign period (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia, 2022). For the verbal analysis, the research focuses only on

the ideational metafunction, which includes transitivity (participants, processes, and circumstances) to discover the experiential interpretation and logico-semantic to discover the logical interpretation. As well as the verbal, the visual analysis for the research also focuses only on the ideational (or representational) metafunction, which deals with represented participants (RPs), narrative processes (action, reaction, speech, mental), conceptual processes (symbolic, analytical, classificational), and circumstances.

1.5   Clarification of Terms

This research has four main terms, which are representation, presidential election, online poster, and multimodal.

1.5.1   Representation

Representation is the process of using languages (verbal and visual) to convey something meaningfully to other people about the world (Hall, 1997).

1.5.2   Presidential Election

A presidential election is a democratic process in which citizens choose their country's leader, commonly referred to as the president, by participating in a series of voting processes.

1.5.3   Presidential Candidate

A presidential candidate is an individual who seeks to be elected as the leader of a country. These candidates typically belong to a political party and campaign to gain the support of the electorate in order to win the presidential election.

1.5.4   Political Parties

Political parties are organized groups of individuals who share similar beliefs, values, and ideologies about how government should operate and what policies it should pursue.

1.5.5 Online Poster

Unlike a printed poster, an online poster can be found on social media. It functions similarly to its physical counterpart, combining text, imagery, and potentially multimedia elements to convey a message.

1.5.6 Multimodality

Multimodality is the combination of different semiotic modes (for example, verbal and visual) within a particular discourse (van Leeuwen, 2015).

1.5.7 Systemic Funtional Linguistics

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) believes that language is a way of making meaning out of things (Halliday, 1994, as cited in Webster, 2015).

1.5.8 Visual Grammar

Visual grammar refers to how the things, places, and people shown work together to make "visual statements" that are slightly or significantly complicated and sustained (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

1.6 Organization of the Research

The organization of this research is divided into five chapters as follows.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter includes related theories, concepts, and topics that are the foundation for the research's fundamentals and justifications. It covers representation of meaning-making, online posters, presidential election, personal branding, and multimodality.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presented the methodological aspects of the research. It covers research design, data sources, data collection procedures, data analysis, and sample of data analysis.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter present the findings and discussion of the research. The findings began with the general findings of the ideational meaning of visual-verbal relations and the implications for the candidates' personal branding.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter provides conclusions drawn from the findings and suggestions for further research.