


Signs of Verbal Resistance in the Brave Pink and Hero Green Campaign Posters

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ABSTRACT

Language in political campaign posters is increasingly significant as a medium for expressing public resistance and shaping socio-political meaning. This research explores verbal signs in the Brave Pink and Hero Green campaign posters that emerge from the large-scale Indonesian demonstrations in August 2025. During this period, public support for the movement widely appears on social media, not only through the replacement of profile pictures with Brave Pink and Hero Green template, but also through the creation of digital resistance posters. These posters function as a medium for expressing opposition and solidarity through textual elements. Focusing on captions, slogans, and short verbal expressions, this research applies a qualitative descriptive approach. The analysis begins with a descriptive examination of textual elements and proceeds with their classification into Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic categories of icon, index, and symbol. The findings indicate that verbal signs play a central role in constructing meanings of resistance within digital campaign media.

Keywords: *Language, Political Campaign, Brave Pink and Hero Green, Verbal Sign, Semiotics*

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INTRODUCTION

In late August 2025, Indonesia was shaken by a major wave of demonstrations known as the "17+8 Tuntutan Rakyat." The protests, which took place in various regions, including in front of the Indonesian Parliament Building (*Gedung DPR RI*) in Jakarta on August 28, 2025, highlighted public discontent with several government policies. From this moment, two visual symbols emerged that later went viral in public spaces and social media: *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green*. These symbols are rooted in real events that touched the collective emotions of society and became a new representation of public resistance. *The Brave Pink* symbol originated from the figure of an old woman in a pink hijab who stood courageously at the front line of the protest, holding the Red and White Indonesian flag, even while facing armed officers, tear gas, and water cannons. This simple yet brave action was immediately seen as a real-life example of civil courage. The color pink, often associated with softness or femininity, was reinterpreted as a symbol of determination and resistance. Conversely, *Hero Green* emerged from the tragic story of an online motorcycle driver named Affan Kurniawan. He was wearing his profession's characteristic green jacket when he became a victim, fatally struck by an armored vehicle belonging to the police's mobile brigade (BRIMOB - POLRI) during the riot. The green jacket then became a symbol of solidarity for the common people, as well as a mark of mourning that strengthened the demand for justice. Pink was no longer just a soft color but became a metaphor for the bravery of women who resist, while green became an icon of hope, hard work, and the voice of the often-marginalized ordinary people. Society's interpretation then produces new meanings, such as solidarity, courage, and opposition.

Brave Pink and *Hero Green* also acted as a bridge between street protests and public discourse on social media. Trends like changing profile pictures to pink or green tones showed

digital solidarity, amplifying the people's demands into the online realm and making a visual statement of who stood "with the people" in demanding change. Many digital artists also supported the campaign by creating various posters with Green & Pink themes to promote the mass actions online. This function not only fostered emotional solidarity but also put moral pressure on the state to be accountable for the tragedies that occurred. This research will explore *The Brave Pink and Hero Green Campaign Posters* using the Charles Sanders Peirce's model of semiotics. Based on that mass demonstration specifically in digital way protest from many posters made by digital illustrator, graphic designer, online artist, etc. Unlike many other campaigns that are designed and planned by institutions or organizations, these symbols were born spontaneously from real incidents and personal stories. This makes them unique and historically meaningful, as they represent how ordinary people can become the center of national attention and inspire a collective movement.

Recent semiotic researches on campaign and public service posters have predominantly emphasized visual elements, such as imagery, color, and layout, as the primary sources of meaning construction in visual communication (Batubara, Rukiyah, & Utami, 2024). Researches examining posters related to social regulations, such as smoking prohibition campaigns, also tend to prioritize visual interpretation, while verbal expressions are mainly discussed as complementary explanations rather than independent semiotic resources (Ramadhani & Dewi, 2023). Similarly, research on harassment awareness posters acknowledges the presence of verbal signs but continues to frame visual signs as the dominant carriers of ideological and persuasive meaning (Andriani & Marantika, 2024). Even in researches that explicitly analyze both verbal and visual signs in cyber safety posters, visual semiotic analysis often receives greater analytical depth, leaving the specific functions of verbal language underexplored (Pratama & Nugraha, 2024). This tendency indicates that although verbal components are frequently included in visual semiotic research, they are rarely positioned as central mechanisms in constructing political stance, resistance, and socio-ideological meaning within campaign posters.

Although the *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green* symbols emerged from a particular political moment, this research focuses on how verbal linguistic signs contribute to the process of meaning construction in campaign posters. In semiotic researches of posters, verbal elements such as words, phrases, and slogans are understood as linguistic signs that play a central role in shaping interpretation. Research on Indonesian campaign posters demonstrates that verbal signs function to clarify, emphasize, and frame visual messages, making language a key component in the overall semiotic structure of posters (Zulfa, Ruhendi, & Harras, 2025). From a linguistic perspective, verbal language in posters operates as a system of signs governed by social conventions. Researches analyzing verbal and visual signs in posters show that textual elements do not merely accompany images but actively direct how audiences understand the intended message. Verbal expressions help limit interpretive ambiguity by providing explicit cues that guide readers toward particular meanings and ideological positions (Rezeki & Sagala, 2021). Within Peircean semiotics, verbal language functions through a process of semiosis involving the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant. Research applying Peirce's theory to political and media texts in Indonesia emphasizes that meaning is not inherent in the verbal sign itself but is produced through interpretation by the audience. In this process, verbal signs act as representamens that refer to social or political realities as their objects, while meaning emerges through the interpretant formed in the reader's mind (Simandalahi, Sidabutar, & Pasaribu, 2022).

Furthermore, Peirce's classification of signs into icons, indices, and symbols is relevant for analyzing verbal elements in posters. Linguistic signs primarily function symbolically because their meanings are based on shared social agreements. However, verbal signs may also operate indexically by pointing to specific socio-political events and iconically through textual form, emphasis, or layout that visually reinforces meaning. Researches on Indonesian posters illustrate that these sign functions often overlap, creating layered meanings within static visual texts (Zulfa et al., 2025). The novelty of this research lies in the fact that its data is taken directly from a real social event that unfolded within a concentrated period of national

tension. Instead of relying on retrospective reports or secondary interpretations, the research examines immediate visual and textual demonstrations that emerged on social media, where many individuals who could not join street protests expressed their voices through creative digital posters. These online posters serve as an alternative form of public participation, allowing people to engage in resistance and solidarity through rapidly circulating visual messages.

Several previous researches have applied Peircean semiotics to various forms of visual and textual media. However, political campaign posters as instruments of visual resistance remain underexplored. This research addresses that gap by analyzing the *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green* campaign posters through Peirce's semiotic framework, positioning political posters not merely as promotional tools but as semiotic texts that actively construct resistance and ideological meaning within a specific socio-political context. First, Wicaksono and Heriyati (2023) apply Peircean semiotics to *The Little Mermaid* movie poster by categorizing signs into qualisigns, sinsigns, icons, indices, and symbols, focusing on visual elements such as color, posture, facial expression, and background to reveal narrative and thematic meanings. Their research demonstrates the systematic strength of Peircean analysis in visual media but remains limited to entertainment contexts and does not address political discourse or the ideological function of textual signs. Building on their framework, the present research applies Peircean semiotics to political campaign posters, with particular emphasis on the interaction between verbal and visual signs in constructing resistance. Second, Simandalahi, Sidabutar, and Pasaribu (2022) analyze a political cartoon featuring Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump using Peirce's semiotics to uncover ideological meanings conveyed through symbolism and visual metaphor, emphasizing the role of the interpretant in audience interpretation. While their research relies on humor, exaggeration, and narrative sequencing typical of cartoons, the present research extends these semiotic principles to static political posters, which must convey resistance and ideology through concise verbal and visual elements without narrative progression. Next, Chaniago, Suswanto, and Sakinah (2025) examine visual and textual signs in the choreography of Persib football supporters on the *Republikbobotoh* TV YouTube channel, demonstrating how coordinated movements, colors, banners, and slogans function semiotically to express collective identity and solidarity. Adapting their use of Peirce's triadic model, the present research applies a similar analytical approach to static political posters such as *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green*. Unlike performative supporter choreography, campaign posters rely on fixed signs, highlighting the flexibility of Peircean semiotics in analyzing how social and political meanings are constructed across different media forms. From all these previous researches, they gave us many perspectives of the versatility of Peircean semiotics in analyzing diverse media.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze verbal signs in the *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green* campaign posters. The study focuses specifically on identifying and interpreting verbal signs based on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic classification of icon, index, and symbol in order to explain how meanings of resistance are constructed (Moleong, 2021). The data of this research consist of five (5) digital campaign posters related to the *Brave Pink* and *Hero Green* movements. These posters were purposively selected from posts on the Instagram account @mantapfunny, which actively circulated protest-related visual content during the August 2025 demonstrations. Instagram was chosen as the data source because it functioned as a prominent platform for the dissemination of visual resistance discourse in digital public spaces. The selection criteria included: (1) the presence of explicit verbal expressions representing resistance or public demands, (2) visual association with the *Brave Pink* or *Hero Green* symbols, (3) relevance to the socio-political context of the August 2025 demonstrations, and (4) public accessibility to ensure transparency and verifiability of the data. The selection of five posters allowed for focused and in-depth qualitative analysis of verbal signs. Data collection was conducted by identifying verbal elements in each poster, such as words, phrases, and slogans. These verbal elements were then categorized into icons,

indexes, and symbols based on their semiotic relations. The analysis involved interpreting each category to explain how verbal signs function as representations of resistance within the posters, following a descriptive qualitative semiotic approach (Zulfa, Ruhendi, & Harras, 2021). For the detail steps start from data collection involves identifying and documenting verbal elements found in each poster. Initially, textual elements are examined descriptively to generate detailed descriptions of language use and textual patterns, a practice commonly applied in qualitative descriptive research on texts (Hasibuan et al., 2025). These descriptive procedures prioritize close reading of verbal expressions and recording features such as wording, phrasing, and contextual reference. Following description, the analysis proceeds by classifying the identified verbal signs into Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic categories of icon, index, and symbol. Icons are identified based on resemblance between verbal form and the meaning of resistance it conveys, indexes are identified by direct association with socio-political conditions, and symbols are identified through shared linguistic conventions within the socio-political discourse context (Noor, Erfiani, & Dewi, 2025). This two-step procedure, first describing textual elements, then classifying them semiotically, ensures that interpretations of resistance meanings arise from clear textual description integrated with semiotic categorization.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

This section presents the findings of the analysis of verbal signs in the Brave Pink and Hero Green campaign posters. To facilitate a clear and systematic presentation of the data, the findings are organized into two tables. Table 1 provides an overview of the textual elements found in each poster, including captions, slogans, and other verbal expressions that function as carriers of meaning. This table serves as a descriptive overview of the verbal data analyzed in this study. Table 2 presents the classification of verbal signs based on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic categories, namely icon, index, and symbol. The table organizes the identified verbal elements according to their semiotic relations, allowing for a clearer understanding of how each verbal sign functions in constructing meanings of resistance. Rather than emphasizing numerical measurement, this classification highlights the qualitative characteristics of the signs and supports an interpretative discussion of their meanings within the socio-political context of the posters.

Table 1. Overview of Textual Elements in the Posters

No	Data Item	Verbal Components
1	Data 01	(1)"THIS IS NOT JUST A MEMORY" (2)"PEACE & JUSTICE"
2	Data 02	(1)"WE ONLY ASKED TO BE HEARD" (2)"Instead we were silenced with violence"
3	Data 03	(1)"ONE SMALL VOICE, A THOUSAND STRONG!"
4	Data 04	(1)"THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CARE" (2)"WE, THE PEOPLE MUST HELP EACH OTHER"
5	Data 05	(1)"Stay Safe" (2)"Stay Sane" (3)"Stay Loud"

Table 2. Classification of Verbal Signs into Icon, Index, Symbol

Data Item	Icon	Index	Symbol	Total
Data 01	0	1	1	2
Data 02	1	1	1	3
Data 03	0	0	1	1
Data 04	0	1	1	2
Data 05	1	2	0	3
TOTAL	2	5	4	11

Discussion

Following the table above, the discussion is presented by analyzing each poster individually. The analysis focuses solely on the verbal expressions appearing in the design, examining how these textual components form icons, indices, and symbols, and how their interpretants contribute to the overall meaning of resistance.

The Detail Descriptions and Meanings of Table 1

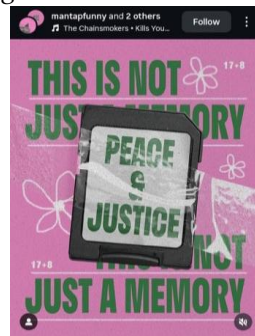
The 1st Data on @mantapfunny's Instagram Post

Figure 1. According to Data 01

The verbal elements contained in this poster reveal a layered construction of resistance when examined through Peirce's semiotic framework. The dominant textual statement, "THIS IS NOT JUST A MEMORY," carries a strong indexical force because it points directly to the social and political events that motivated the emergence of the Brave Pink movement. Rather than functioning as a retrospective narration, the statement actively rejects the idea that the events belong solely to the past. This corresponds with semiotic research on verbal texts which shows that linguistic signs often anchor meaning in lived experience and emotional context, allowing language to refer to ongoing social realities rather than closed historical moments (Putri Raya, Djuharie, Ardiansyah, 2025). Although the phrase may evoke an image of archived memory, its semiotic role remains primarily indexical, guiding the audience to recognize the persistence of injustice and its unresolved impact. The interpretant produced encourages readers to perceive the message as a call for moral awareness and sustained engagement.

The second verbal element, "PEACE & JUSTICE," functions predominantly as a symbol, as its meaning is constructed through shared social conventions and ideological agreement. Its significance does not arise from resemblance or direct causality, but from collective understanding of these values within a moral and political framework. This aligns with Saussurean-based semiotic interpretations of verbal signs, where meaning is generated through the relationship between signifier and signified rather than through physical reference (Ramdani, Sakinah, 2023). Within the context of this poster, however, the symbolic phrase also acquires an indexical nuance. Its appearance on a surface that looks worn or damaged subtly points to the fragility of these ideals under the socio-political conditions surrounding the demonstrations. The interpretant formed positions peace and justice not as abstract ideals, but as urgent ethical demands that require restoration and collective responsibility. Taken together, these verbal elements demonstrate how resistance in the poster is constructed not through explicit confrontation, but through semiotic layering that connects language to experience, memory, and moral urgency. The interaction between indexical and symbolic signs enables the text to bridge personal emotion with collective meaning, allowing viewers to interpret the message as both a reflection of lived injustice and a demand for ethical response.

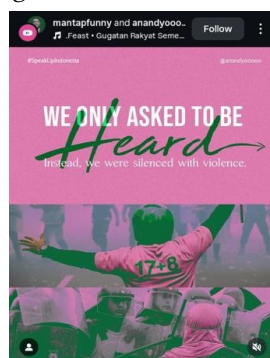
The 2nd Data on @mantapfunny's Instagram Post

Figure 2. According to Data 02

The verbal message in this poster opens with the statement “WE ONLY ASKED TO BE HEARD,” which functions as a symbolic demand for recognition because its meaning is constructed through shared cultural conventions about the legitimacy of voice and participation in public discourse. Such verbal expressions do not point to a physical event but represent underlying social and moral values that frame how audiences interpret intent and agency. Semiotic research on verbal and visual signs in advertisements shows that verbal elements can convey layered meanings, where language choices within visual texts help to shape emotional and cultural interpretation of the message (Halim, Saehu, Sakinah, 2024). In this case, the phrase positions the protesters as engaged participants seeking dialogue, not as aggressors. The bold capital letters amplify the seriousness of the demand, while the cursive style of “Heard” introduces an emotional nuance that highlights the human need for empathy, strengthening the symbolic potency of the verbal sign. The second line, “Instead, we were silenced with violence,” introduces a shift from symbolic communication to an indexical reference that points toward actual experiences during the demonstrations. Unlike the first statement, this line establishes a link between verbal expression and lived events, signifying that the act of speaking was met with force rather than acknowledgment. Such indexical verbal signs operate by referencing real social consequences and conditions, allowing language to function as evidence within a semiotic structure. By connecting the verbal expression with implied force, the poster guides the audience to interpret its message as rooted in concrete experience rather than hypothetical grievance. Together, these two verbal elements create a meaningful contrast between symbolic aspiration and indexical testimony, reinforcing the poster’s power as a form of resistance.

The 3rd Data on @mantapfunny’s Instagram Post



Figure 3. According to Data 03

The text “ONE SMALL VOICE, A THOUSAND STRONG!” functions as the central verbal element of the poster and operates primarily through symbolic meaning. The phrase conveys the idea that individual expression, regardless of how small it may seem, holds the potential to grow into a powerful collective force when it resonates with others. This symbolic meaning emerges from shared cultural understandings of solidarity, participation, and collective struggle within social movements. Verbal signs in political and social contexts often work symbolically by condensing complex values such as unity and resistance into concise expressions that are easily recognized and emotionally engaging by the public (Hasby Aulia, Sakinah, 2025). The use of capital letters reinforces this symbolism by projecting confidence and determination, suggesting that speaking up is not a passive act but an assertion of presence and agency. Through this construction, the poster positions itself as an expression of empowerment rather than victimhood.

At the same time, the phrase carries an indexical dimension because it indirectly points to the real conditions surrounding the Brave Pink demonstrations. Although it does not explicitly mention specific events or actors, the contrast between “one small voice” and “a thousand strong” gestures toward the actual expansion of participation as more individuals joined the movement. This structure reflects how personal acts of expression gradually accumulated into a broader collective response. Semiotic research highlights that verbal elements can function indexically when they evoke concrete social experiences and link textual meaning to observable realities (Hasby Aulia, Sakinah, 2025). In this sense, the phrase becomes

more than a motivational slogan, it serves as a reference to the lived process of mobilization and mutual encouragement among participants during the protests.

Taken together, the symbolic and indexical meanings of this verbal element construct a narrative of collective empowerment. The text invites readers to interpret the poster as a reminder that meaningful resistance often begins with individual courage and gains strength through shared voices. By emphasizing both vulnerability and collective power, the verbal message strengthens the poster's resistive function and shapes an interpretant that affirms the significance of public expression in moments of civic unrest.

The 4th Data on @mantapfunny's Instagram Post



Figure 4. According to Data 04

The statement "THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CARE" functions as a multilayered sign within the poster's verbal construction of resistance. On a symbolic level, the phrase conveys a widely recognised meaning of political neglect that has been shaped by collective social experience. The words themselves carry no direct resemblance to the concept of governmental indifference, yet they communicate it powerfully because the public shares an understanding of political disappointment that has been reinforced through repeated patterns of policy actions and public discourse. Semiotic research using Charles Sanders Peirce's framework demonstrates that verbal signs often function symbolically by condensing complex social and ideological values into concise expressions that communities recognise as normative critiques (Tania, Sakinah, Rusmana, 2022). The symbolic force of the phrase highlights growing distrust toward official institutions and shows how language becomes a tool through which citizens articulate dissatisfaction. At the same time, this phrase operates as an index because it points directly to real social conditions that provoke such a declaration. People do not usually claim that the government does not care unless there is a history of observable decisions or public statements that seem to ignore societal needs. The wording therefore indexes a pattern of frustration, transforming the phrase from a simple accusation into evidence of an underlying social sentiment rooted in lived experience rather than abstract imagination. The statement thus becomes a verbal trace of collective disillusionment.

The second textual element, "WE, THE PEOPLE, MUST HELP EACH OTHER," adds another layer of meaning by shifting the focus from critique to communal agency. Symbolically, it expresses a widely understood value of fellowship and mutual support that functions as a moral counterforce to governmental neglect. The phrase encourages a sense of shared responsibility that transcends individual concerns and places the community at the centre of action. Within this symbolism, the repeated use of collective terms constructs a unified voice opposing the failures suggested in the first line. This symbolic framing redefines power as emerging from the people rather than from institutions. The wording "we, the people" also carries an iconic dimension because its structure resembles the familiar diction of constitutional or civic declarations, thereby echoing formal language associated with public authority and collective identity. When combined with its symbolic and indexical connections to the larger socio-political context, the phrase deepens the poster's overall message. The two textual elements form an indexical sequence in which the first phrase points to the cause of public frustration and the second to the community's response, constructing a coherent act of verbal resistance that exposes political failure while positioning the people as the rightful source of hope and action.



Figure 5. According to Data 05

The phrase “Stay safe” works symbolically because it expresses a culturally shared meaning about protection and caution that arises in moments perceived as threatening. As research on language features shows, verbal expressions often carry socially recognised functions: they encode norms, values, and communal expectations that reflect broader social experiences rather than merely literal descriptions of situations (Nuha, Yatmikasari, Permaludin, 2023). In this sense, “Stay safe” symbolically evokes the communal understanding that safety is a collective concern; it is recognised by audiences because similar language circulates in contexts of crisis and vulnerability. At the same time, the phrase also contains a strong indexical dimension because it points directly to a specific social situation that makes safety a concern. A message telling people to “stay safe” would not exist if the surrounding environment were stable and free of threats. The text therefore indexes the presence of a crisis, whether it involves political unrest, public health risks, or unsafe civic spaces. The words act as a trace of the conditions that produced them.

The second phrase, “Stay sane,” continues this blend of symbolic and indexical meaning. Symbolically, it represents a collective understanding that mental clarity and emotional stability are valued in times of stress, as language choices often reflect socially sanctioned ideals about wellbeing and composure in complex situations. Simultaneously, the need to instruct people to stay sane serves as an index of widespread psychological pressure; such phrasing points toward an environment where external conditions are sufficiently overwhelming to provoke mental strain among the public. The text becomes an index of ongoing stress, revealing that sanity is not simply assumed but must be actively defended.

The final directive, “Stay loud,” carries a distinct tone of empowerment that operates symbolically as a call for public expression. It encourages resistance through voice and visibility, expressing values that communities share when facing suppression. Through its lively handwritten form and emphatic exclamation, the text imitates the energy and force associated with vocal resistance, giving it an iconic quality in relation to the concept it names. When read as a sequence, the three phrases form an indexical chain that reflects evolving stages of public experience. “Stay safe” indexes the presence of danger; “Stay sane” indexes the psychological strain produced by that danger; and “Stay loud” indexes a shift toward collective mobilisation, suggesting that the crisis has provoked not only fear but also public determination to speak out. Through this layered combination of symbolic meaning, indexical connection to real conditions, and iconic resonance, the textual content constructs a powerful verbal message that moves from survival to resilience and ultimately toward resistance.

The Detail Classifications of Table 2

Phrase 1: “THIS IS NOT JUST A MEMORY” → Index (1)

This phrase is categorized as an index because it directly points to the continuing impact of the August 2025 demonstrations. Its meaning depends on the existence of a concrete social event that still affects the present. The statement would lose its relevance without a real historical experience behind it, which establishes a direct referential relationship between the sign and its object. Therefore, this phrase contributes one indexical unit to the quantitative results.

Phrase 2: “PEACE & JUSTICE” → Symbol (1)

This phrase is classified as a symbol because its meaning is based on shared social and cultural conventions regarding moral and political ideals. The words do not resemble their object, nor do they point to a specific event through causal connection. Instead, they rely on collective agreement about their significance. As a result, this phrase contributes one symbolic unit to the quantitative count. Such symbolic usage is consistent with contemporary semiotic theory, which emphasizes that symbols operate through socially established norms and interpretive habits rather than direct reference to empirical reality (Bellucci, 2016).

Data 02

Phrase 3: "WE ONLY ASKED TO BE HEARD" → Symbol (2)

This phrase functions as a symbol because it expresses a normative demand for recognition that is understood through socially established democratic values. The meaning of being "heard" is not tied to a specific physical act but to a shared understanding of participation and dialogue. Consequently, this phrase is counted as one symbolic sign in the quantitative analysis. This symbolic function corresponds with recent semiotic discussions that describe political language as relying on conventional meanings to express normative claims and collective values (Santaella, 2021).

Phrase 4: "Instead we were silenced with violence" → Index (2)

This phrase is categorized as an index due to its direct reference to lived experiences of repression during the demonstrations. The terms *silenced* and *violence* imply a cause-and-effect relationship between public expression and physical force. The meaning of the phrase depends on the occurrence of real actions, making it an indexical sign. Thus, it contributes one indexical unit to the data. This aligns with contemporary semiotic theory that emphasizes indexicality as a marker of factual connection between signs and social events (Ding, 2021).

Phrase 5: Typographic emphasis on "HEARD" → Icon (1)

The visual emphasis on the word "HEARD" is treated as an iconic verbal sign because its typographic form visually imitates the intensity and urgency of vocal expression. The relationship between the emphasized form and its meaning is based on resemblance rather than convention or direct reference. For this reason, this element is counted as one iconic unit. Recent multimodal semiotic researches highlight that visual modification of text can operate iconically by reinforcing meaning through form-content similarity (Bateman, Wildfeuer, & Hiippala, 2021).

Data 03

Phrase 6: "ONE SMALL VOICE, A THOUSAND STRONG!" → Symbol (3)

This phrase is classified as a symbol because it conveys the idea of collective strength through metaphorical language that relies on shared cultural understanding. The phrase does not point to a specific event nor visually resemble its object. Its meaning emerges through convention and collective belief in solidarity. Therefore, this phrase contributes one symbolic unit to the quantitative findings. The symbolic meaning of this phrase is reinforced by researches showing that metaphorical language in political discourse is commonly used to construct collective strength and shared social identity through culturally agreed meanings rather than literal reference (Alfiani & Ajie, 2025).

Data 04

Phrase 7: "THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CARE" → Index (3)

This phrase functions as an index because it points to concrete socio-political conditions that have generated public dissatisfaction. The statement implies the existence of governmental actions or inactions that triggered this perception. Its meaning is grounded in real political experiences, establishing a direct referential link. As a result, this phrase contributes one indexical unit. This indexical interpretation is consistent with findings that political statements often function by directly anchoring language to real socio-political conditions and public experiences of dissatisfaction toward authority (Wagiati et al., 2025).

Phrase 8: "WE, THE PEOPLE MUST HELP EACH OTHER" → Symbol (4)

This phrase is categorized as a symbol because it expresses collective responsibility through socially shared values of solidarity and mutual support. Although its structure echoes formal civic language, its dominant function relies on convention rather than resemblance or

direct reference. Accordingly, this phrase is counted as one symbolic unit. Such expressions operate symbolically by invoking shared values of solidarity and collective responsibility that are maintained through social convention and ideological agreement within public discourse (Ibrahim, Absri, & Rahmadani, 2025).

Data 05

Phrase 9: "Stay Safe" → Index (4)

This phrase is classified as an index because it signals the presence of real physical danger within the socio-political context. The instruction only becomes meaningful under conditions that threaten safety, indicating a direct relationship with situational reality. Therefore, this phrase contributes one indexical unit. In protest-related discourse, short imperative expressions often emerge in response to concrete situational threats, allowing language to function as a direct indicator of physical risk experienced by participants (Sari & Putra, 2024).

Phrase 10: "Stay Sane" → Index (5)

This phrase also functions as an index, as it points to psychological pressure experienced by the public during the demonstrations. The need to remain mentally stable suggests the existence of stress-inducing conditions. Its meaning depends on actual emotional strain, making it an indexical sign. Thus, it contributes one indexical unit. References to mental endurance in public discourse frequently signal collective psychological pressure shaped by tense socio-political circumstances, where language indexes emotional strain rather than abstract ideals (Rahmawati, 2023).

Phrase 11: "Stay Loud" → Icon (2)

This phrase is categorized as an icon because the word "loud" directly resembles the idea of strong, audible public expression. The form of the phrase imitates the intensity of vocal resistance, especially when supported by expressive typography. For this reason, this phrase contributes one iconic unit to the quantitative data. Linguistic expressions emphasizing audibility and intensity may operate iconically when verbal form and meaning visually or conceptually mirror acts of vocal resistance in political communication (Hidayat & Lestari, 2022).

CONCLUSIONS

This research concludes that the Brave Pink and Hero Green campaign posters operate not merely as visual communication media, but as semiotic texts through which verbal resistance is articulated in contemporary political discourse. The focus on verbal signs emphasizes that resistance is expressed not only through visual imagery but also through explicit linguistic elements that convey criticism, demands, and collective concerns. The analysis concentrates on captions, slogans, and short verbal expressions as the main data for understanding how resistance is articulated through language in campaign posters. These verbal elements enable the posters to communicate resistance in a clear and accessible manner, allowing audiences to recognize shared concerns and align themselves with the messages being conveyed. In this way, verbal signs play a central role in shaping the meaning of resistance within the socio-political context surrounding the August 2025 demonstrations. The verbal signs identified in the posters are classified into Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic categories of icon, index, and symbol. Icons function through resemblance to the ideas of resistance they represent, indexes indicate resistance through direct association with social and political conditions, and symbols convey resistance through shared linguistic conventions. This classification enables a detailed explanation of how each semiotic category contributes differently to the construction of resistance meanings within the posters. Overall, this research demonstrates that textual elements in campaign posters function as structured semiotic resources rather than supporting components of visual imagery. The systematic classification of verbal signs into icon, index, and symbol highlights the central role of language in shaping resistance meanings and reinforces the relevance of qualitative descriptive semiotic analysis for examining resistance discourse in campaign posters.

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