

Social Semiotic Analysis of a Pet Protection Post on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

This study applies Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar framework to analyze an Instagram post advocating pet protection. The research focuses on representational, interactive, and compositional metafunctions to understand how visual and textual elements combine to convey urgency and empathy. The representational analysis highlights the dog's isolated portrayal and the use of the pronoun "me" to foster an emotional connection. The interactive analysis examines indirect gaze, close-up shots, and low angles to engage viewers and emphasize their role in pet protection. The compositional analysis reveals the strategic placement of verbal and visual elements, with bold text and contrasting colors enhancing the message's salience. This multimodal approach demonstrates the synergy between visual and textual elements, creating a cohesive and persuasive narrative. The study's findings align with existing literature on social semiotics and Visual Grammar, emphasizing the importance of integrated visual strategies in social media advocacy. The research offers practical insights for designing effective pet protection campaigns, highlighting the role of Visual Grammar in promoting responsible pet ownership and animal welfare. Future research should explore the long-term impact of these visual strategies on viewer behavior and the effectiveness of different semiotic modes across various social media platforms.

KEYWORDS

Visual Grammar; Social Semiotics; Pet Protection; Instagram; Social Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the welfare and rights of animals have garnered increasing global attention, prompting numerous countries to enact stringent laws against animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect. Alongside these legal advancements, many campaigns to raise public awareness about animal welfare have emerged, coupled with improved access to veterinary services. Despite these efforts, challenges in pet protection persist, notably due to issues like pet overpopulation and irresponsible breeding practices, underscoring a continued need for enhanced public education and awareness about pet protection. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool in this educational effort, with platforms like Instagram playing a crucial role in amplifying the influence of animal protection campaigns and attracting sympathizers (Aji, 2019). Animal welfare organizations, rescue groups, and individual advocates leverage Instagram to share compelling success stories, highlight animal rights and welfare issues, and promote responsible pet ownership. This platform serves as an educational hub, providing information on proper pet care, neutering, vaccinations, and the prevention of animal cruelty while cultivating a supportive and engaged community of animal lovers, volunteers, and advocates who collaborate to protect and enhance the lives of pets globally.

The application of Visual Grammar in social media content has been extensively studied across various contexts. Feng and O'Halloran (2012) discuss how emotive meanings are represented in

visual images, providing a foundational framework for analyzing how images convey emotions and influence viewer perceptions. This framework is essential for understanding the visual strategies used in pet protection posts on Instagram. Building on this, Feng (2017) explores metonymy and visual representation, highlighting the role of visual metonymy in conveying complex messages succinctly, a concept particularly relevant to Instagram, where visual brevity and impact are crucial. Moreover, Friedman and Ron (2017) demonstrate the power of visual elements in shaping public opinion through their analysis of social media political advertising, underscoring the importance of visual strategies in crafting persuasive and impactful messages, which can be adapted for animal welfare campaigns.

Gunarti (2018) analyzes Visual Grammar in public service announcements, emphasizing the role of visual elements in public health messaging. This study illustrates Visual Grammar's potential to enhance social media posts' effectiveness in conveying critical information about pet protection. Hinzo and Clark (2019) explore visual and digital Indigenous epistemologies in social movements, revealing how visual strategies can mobilize support and engagement. This research offers valuable insights into the use of visual storytelling to foster community and advocate for social causes, including animal welfare. Raisborough et al. (2022) discuss the Visual Grammar of spatial stigma in factual television, providing a nuanced understanding of how visual elements can perpetuate or challenge social stigmas. This perspective helps design pet protection posts that avoid stigmatizing pet owners while promoting responsible pet care.

By examining an impactful interactive post on Instagram through the lens of the Visual Grammar defined by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), this research seeks to unveil the complex language of visuals and how it shapes and enhances pet protection initiatives on the platform. Specifically, the study will provide insights on image design, copy editing, and topic descriptions for future pet protection-related posts. The research objectives are to identify the semiotic modes adopted in the post and explore how linguistic and paralinguistic modes are combined to convey meaning. The research questions focus on the semiotic modes adopted in the post and how they contribute to the intended meaning. This study aims to enhance our understanding of the role of social media in promoting animal welfare and offer practical advice for creating more effective pet protection content.

Use italic for emphasizing a word or phrase. Do not use boldface typing or capital letters except for section headings (cf. remarks on section headings, below).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) developed, Visual Grammar provides a robust framework for analyzing visual communication, particularly in social media advocacy. This study applies their theoretical framework to an Instagram post on pet protection. Previous research has highlighted the significant role of visual elements in shaping audience perceptions and eliciting emotional responses.

Hartung et al. (2016) explored how pronouns influence cognitive perspectives, demonstrating that using personal pronouns, like "me," in this study can effectively bridge the gap between the audience and the subject, fostering empathy. This aligns with the current study's findings, showing how the pronoun "me" in the Instagram post creates a personal connection between the viewer and the dog, enhancing emotional engagement. Similarly, Sipe (1998) emphasized the synergy between text and image, confirming that combined verbal and visual elements create more meaningful narratives. This study supports Sipe's findings, illustrating how integrating textual and visual elements in the Instagram post enhances its persuasive power by creating a cohesive and compelling message.

The interactive metafunction, described by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), involves the interaction between the image and the viewer. Isti'anah et al. (2019) examined the role of the indirect gaze in offering image information, finding that it can evoke specific emotional responses. This aligns with the use of indirect gaze in the Instagram post, which allows viewers to empathize with the dog's

suffering. Additionally, Sierra Rativa et al. (2020) found that close shots and frontal angles create a personal and immersive viewing experience, fostering stronger emotional connections. This study corroborates their findings by demonstrating how these visual strategies enhance the emotional impact of the post. Dallyono and Sukyadi (2019) analyzed how multimodal resources, such as font size and color, attract attention and convey seriousness in environmental protection posters. Their findings are reflected in this study, where bold, colored text emphasizes the urgency and importance of the message about pet protection. As described by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the strategic placement of verbal and visual elements ensures that the post effectively communicates its message through a cohesive visual narrative. This study considers the broader implications of Visual Grammar in social media advocacy. Fischer and Aarestrup (2021) highlighted the role of Visual Grammar in engaging audiences and promoting social causes through Instagram posts. Their research underscores integrating visual and textual elements to maximize persuasive power. This study extends its findings by demonstrating how Visual Grammar can be applied to pet protection campaigns, offering practical guidelines for designing effective social media content.

This study integrates key findings from previous studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of how Visual Grammar can enhance the effectiveness of social media advocacy. By leveraging the principles of Visual Grammar, this study offers valuable insights into creating compelling and engaging content that drives awareness and action in pet protection campaigns.

2.1. Research Objectives

- a) Identify the semiotic modes adopted in the post.
- b) Explore how the semiotic modes employed in the post, both linguistic and paralinguistic, are combined to convey a given meaning.

2.2. Research Questions

- a) What are the semiotic modes adopted in the post on Instagram?
- b) How do these semiotic modes contribute to the deployment of the intended meaning in the post on Instagram?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Theoretical Framework

This study employs Visual Grammar, initially developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) and later refined in 2006, as the theoretical framework. Visual Grammar distinguishes three types of metafunctions: representational, interactive, and compositional. The representational mode focuses on visually representing objects, people, or events. The interactive mode relates to how the image engages the viewer and establishes a relationship or interaction. The compositional mode refers to the visual organization and arrangement of elements within the image. These metafunctions provide a comprehensive approach to analyzing visual communication by examining how visual elements convey meaning and engage viewers. The current study applies Visual Grammar as the theoretical framework and identifies the different semiotic modes adopted in a post in both linguistic and paralinguistic and their deployment of meaning. An impactful post with English captions on Instagram focusing on pet protection was scrutinized to answer the research questions. The post was analyzed regarding the three metafunctions of Visual Grammar by exploring how the strategic use of visual elements such as color, composition, typography, and imagery influences the message's impact and resonance with the audience.

3.2. Three Metafunctions

The representational metafunction focuses on how images visually represent objects, people, or events. This study involves analyzing the depicted elements within the Instagram post, such as the pet dog, and understanding their roles and narrative processes. This analysis includes examining the dog's posture, gaze, and surrounding environment to interpret the conveyed message and emotional tone.

The interactive metafunction relates to the interaction between the image and the viewer. This involves examining how the image engages viewers, establishes a relationship, and evokes emotional responses. Key elements analyzed include gaze direction, social distance, and perspective. These aspects help determine how the image invites viewer participation and empathy, enhancing the overall impact of the advocacy message.

The compositional metafunction refers to the visual organization and arrangement of elements within the image. This includes analyzing the layout, color scheme, typography, and framing. The study explores how these compositional elements guide viewer interpretation, highlight key messages, and create a cohesive visual narrative that reinforces the post's persuasive power.

3.3. Data Selection and Analysis

The data for this study were derived from a carefully selected Instagram post by a prominent animal welfare organization. The selection criteria included relevance to pet protection, high engagement metrics (likes, comments, shares), and the presence of both visual and textual elements in English. These criteria ensured that the post was representative of effective communication strategies in the context of pet protection advocacy on social media.

The primary visual elements within the post, such as the pet dog, were identified and meticulously examined. The analysis focused on understanding the depicted actions, interactions, and narrative processes. Key aspects included the dog's posture, gaze, and the surrounding environment, which collectively contribute to the overall narrative of vulnerability and urgency. This examination revealed how the visual representation of the dog as a solitary figure in a potentially dangerous situation evokes empathetic, solid responses from the viewer.

The interactive metafunction phase analyzes how the image engages with viewers and establishes a relational dynamic. This was achieved by examining gaze direction, social distance, and perspective. The indirect gaze of the dog, for instance, was found to create an "offer" image, inviting viewers to contemplate the situation without feeling directly confronted. This approach enhances the viewer's emotional engagement by allowing them to process the image at their own pace. The close-up shot and slightly lowered camera angle were also analyzed, revealing how these choices minimize social distance and position the viewer as a potential protector, heightening the sense of responsibility and empathy.

The final phase focused on the compositional metafunction, analyzing how visual and textual elements' arrangement, salience, and framing structure the overall message. The spatial arrangement was scrutinized, noting the placement of critical textual information at the top of the image to capture immediate attention. The use of contrasting colors (e.g., orange text on a blue background) was highlighted for its effectiveness in highlighting critical messages. Additionally, the study examined how framing the image and text without physical borders creates a unified narrative, ensuring that the visual and textual elements are perceived as an integrated message rather than isolated components. This cohesive composition enhances clarity and reinforces the urgency and importance of the advocacy message.

4. RESULTS

4.1. The Representational Metafunction

In the analyzed Instagram post, the dog is the sole represented participant, clearly acting as the primary subject within the image. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) Visual Grammar framework, the representation of participants plays a critical role in conveying meaning and engaging viewers. The angle of the image deliberately obscures the dog's entire face, preventing direct eye contact with the audience. This lack of direct gaze shifts the focus to other semiotic resources, such as gesture and posture, which become crucial for interpreting the dog's state.

Gaze plays an essential role in symbolic value that can indicate the audience's point of view (Friedman & Ron, 2017). The dog's posture and the upward tilt of its chin imply anticipation or waiting, evoking a sense of longing or expectation. The upward gaze positions the dog in an inferior role, suggesting vulnerability and dependence. This aligns with Kress and Van Leeuwen's notion that visual elements can convey social relations and power dynamics, enhancing the image's emotional impact.



Figure 1. Instagram Post

The pronoun "me" in the accompanying text is a powerful narrative device. By subjectively representing the dog's perspective, the pronoun effectively humanizes the animal, bridging the psychological gap between the viewer and the subject. This technique, highlighted by Belgrimet and Rabab'ah (2021), intensifies the viewer's connection with the participant. In this context, "me" fosters empathy among pet owners, inviting them to project their feelings and experiences onto the dog. This analysis also considers the multimodal integration of visual and textual elements. The strategic combination of the dog's visual representation with the subjective narrative voice in the text creates a multimodal synergy that enhances the overall persuasive power of the post. The visual depiction of the dog looking out the window, coupled with the personalized text, captures attention and sustains viewer engagement by invoking an emotional response.

By examining the interplay between visual and linguistic modes, this analysis underscores the effectiveness of multimodal strategies in social media advocacy. The deliberate use of gaze, posture, and pronouns illustrates how Visual Grammar can be harnessed to create a compelling narrative that resonates with viewers, fosters empathy, and ultimately supports the advocacy goals of the post.

According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the social relationships among the designer, audience, and actor are embedded within images and other visual modes. In the analyzed Instagram post, a reactional process is evident, wherein the designer seeks to raise public awareness about the importance of treating and protecting pets. This reactional process is crucial for understanding how the image prompts viewers to respond emotionally and cognitively.

In this post, the dog is the sole participant, positioned as the actor within the visual narrative. The dog's isolation in the car is a potent symbol of vulnerability and abandonment, intended to evoke an emotional reaction from the audience. The lack of additional participants in the image underscores the dog's solitude and enhances the message's urgency. Although the image focuses solely on the dog, the accompanying text provides critical contextual information by displaying the temperatures inside and outside the car. This textual information extends the visual narrative, offering factual data highlighting the severity of leaving pets in cars. The contrast between the two temperature readings serves to alarm the audience and underscores the potential danger to pets. Integrating visual and textual elements requires the audience to synthesize these configurations to grasp the message entirely. The visual depiction of the dog, combined with the stark temperature data, creates a compelling argument that appeals to both the viewers' emotions and rationality. This dual appeal is designed to provoke a reaction, urging the audience to consider the real-life implications and take preventive measures. The right part of the post includes an explicit appeal, reinforcing the call to action. By highlighting the hazardous temperatures and visually representing the dog's distress, the post strategically uses visual and verbal cues to compel the audience to act. This reactional process aims to shift the audience's perspective and behavior towards greater awareness and responsibility in pet care.

An innovative aspect of this analysis involves examining the reactional process through the lens of multimodal cohesion. The post creates a coherent and persuasive narrative by integrating visual and textual data. This approach enhances the clarity and impact of the message and ensures that the audience is fully engaged and motivated to respond. Additionally, using temperature data as a contextual element provides a unique blend of emotional and logical appeals, maximizing the post's effectiveness in advocating pet safety.

The reactional process in this Instagram post is meticulously crafted to engage the audience on multiple levels. The post effectively conveys the message's urgency by isolating the dog as the central actor and integrating critical environmental data. It prompts viewers to take action to protect pets.

The post's background combines a sunny sky and a partial close-up of a car window. Although the dog's expression is not visible, the viewers can guess the dog's expression by understanding the whole picture. The verbal information over the head of the dog is designed in orange, which is an excellent contrast with the blue background. Besides, using equal signs and numbers in this part makes the key messages straightforward (Hoffmeyer, 1997). At the top of the image is an imperative sentence that lets the audience know the participant's wish in this image and is willing to take action to reduce this kind of situation in reality.

Social semiotics allows people to make and transform their ideas in specific social settings (Friedman & Ron, 2017). The target audience information that indicates the social circumstance of this post could also be found in the right part of the post without seeing the dog in the image. On the one hand, the poster illustrates its target audience directly by giving detailed examples. On the other hand, the content of the following comments shows the connection between the viewer and pets. Most of them own pets and feel sorry and worried about ignoring the feelings of pets and leaving them alone.

The visual configuration in this post explicitly shows the theme of pet protection and care. The dog is the participant in the image and is the most dominant element. The verbal information effectively fills the gap in the background information in the post. In addition, the accompanying text and comments on the images also visually name the target audience.

4.2. The Interactive Metafunction

In this post, the participant is a pet dog whose head is raised, so there is no eye contact with the viewer, so this image uses an indirect address. Moreover, this also means that this image is an offer image because indirect gaze gives the viewer the power to interact with the image. However, with no direct interaction (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006), indirect interaction in pet protection posters can represent a common problem. Indirect interaction can evoke specific emotional responses in the viewer, such as longing, sadness, or vulnerability. When the subject does not make eye contact, feelings of isolation or abandonment may arise (Havens, 1988). The emotional appeal discussed above has been carefully constructed to provoke a compassionate reaction from the viewers and to bring attention to the unfortunate situation of animals needing safeguarding and care.

The use of a close shot in the Instagram post significantly personalizes the relationship between the viewer and the subject, aligning with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) Visual Grammar theory. This proximity allows viewers to observe the pet dog in intimate detail, fostering a sense of closeness and immediacy. By bringing the viewer closer to the subject, the close shot enhances the image's emotional impact, inducing feelings of empathy and compassion (Smith, 2007). This immersive experience creates a powerful connection between the viewer and the image, making the emotional appeal of the post more effective.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) describe this technique as a way to reduce social distance, transforming the viewer's perception from an outsider to an involved participant. The close shot not only allows viewers to see the dog's expressions and body language more clearly but also invites them to share in the emotional experience of the pet, amplifying the sense of urgency and care required for the subject's welfare.

The close-up perspective emphasizes the pet's vulnerability, highlighting its dependency on human care and protection. This visual strategy compels viewers to consider their responsibilities towards animals, enhancing the persuasive power of the advocacy message. The detailed depiction of the dog's features in the close shot evokes a strong emotional response, making the call to action more compelling and immediate. The use of a close shot serves to break down barriers between the viewer and the subject, fostering a deeper emotional connection and enhancing the overall impact of the post. As outlined by Kress and Van Leeuwen, this technique is crucial for creating effective visual communication that informs, engages, and mobilizes viewers toward a cause.

The Instagram post employs a frontal angle, where the viewer shares the line of sight with the image, aligning with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) Visual Grammar principles. This perspective is deliberately chosen to immerse the viewer in the world of the post, enabling more profound engagement with the depicted scenario. By presenting the subject head-on, the frontal angle invites viewers to put themselves in the subject's place, fostering empathy and understanding. This technique encourages observers to mentally simulate the experiences of the pet, thereby evoking strong emotional responses such as sympathy and anxiety for the pet locked alone in the car.

The frontal angle is not a random choice; it serves a specific purpose in visual communication. The image creates a direct and consequential connection by positioning the viewer to look directly at the subject (Penley, 2013, pp. 57–68). This perspective allows the viewer to see the situation from the pet's viewpoint, enhancing the sense of urgency and the emotional impact of the advocacy message. This method is particularly effective in pet conservation posters, which aim to highlight the urgent and distressing nature of the problem being addressed. The frontal angle compels viewers to focus on the subject matter, emphasizing the imperative message about safeguarding animals and prompting

them to contemplate the severity of the issue and the necessity for action. Using a low angle in this image adds another layer of meaning. A low angle visually enhances the subject, giving the viewer a sense of power and importance. This perspective positions the viewer as someone who can protect and care for pets, inspiring them to take action. The low angle creates a dramatic and emotional visual effect, increasing the viewer's affective engagement with the image. When the subject is a vulnerable or endangered animal, this vantage point heightens the emotional response, evoking empathy, compassion, and a desire to act.

By adopting a lower vantage point, the image magnifies the subject's vulnerability and elevates the viewer's role in the narrative. This perspective suggests that the viewer has the power to make a difference, reinforcing the advocacy message. The combination of frontal and low angles in the image works synergistically to create a compelling visual narrative that engages the viewer on multiple levels, enhancing the overall impact of the post and motivating viewers to support pet conservation efforts.

The strategic use of frontal and low angles in the Instagram post leverages Visual Grammar principles to maximize emotional engagement and persuasive power. These perspectives are meticulously constructed to ensure that the viewer focuses on the critical issue of pet protection, effectively communicating the situation's urgency and inspiring action.

4.3. The Compositional Metafunction

In the Instagram post under study, verbal and visual information are strategically positioned to convey a compelling message. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), the vertical dimension in visual design organizes information from broad, idealized concepts at the top to specific, practical details at the bottom. This hierarchical arrangement helps guide the viewer's interpretation and understanding of the message.

The top part of the post features three critical phrases: "please don't LEAVE ME," "70° outside = 110° in the car," and "even in the shade with the window open." This verbal information is an idealized reminder, emphasizing the potential danger of leaving pets in cars. Each phrase plays a specific role in building this message. "Please don't LEAVE ME" is an emotional appeal, directly addressing pet owners and invoking empathy. "70° outside = 110° in the car" provides a factual and alarming statistic, highlighting the drastic temperature increase inside a car, even on seemingly mild days. "Even in the shade with the window open" reinforces the severity of the situation, countering common misconceptions that partial measures like open windows or parking in the shade are sufficient. These phrases collectively create a powerful and urgent call to action, leveraging emotional and rational appeals to prevent such situations.

The visual information at the bottom of the post complements and reinforces the verbal messages above. The image of a dog inside a car is a tangible representation of the abstract warnings provided in the text. The post effectively bridges the gap between idealized warnings and practical reality by visually depicting a real-life scenario that mirrors the dangers highlighted in the verbal information. This alignment of visual and verbal elements ensures that the viewer fully grasps the gravity of the situation.

The integration of verbal and visual information within the same frame creates a cohesive narrative that guides the viewer from understanding the abstract danger to witnessing a concrete example. This approach enhances the message's clarity and impact by utilizing the vertical arrangement to move from broad, general warnings to specific, contextualized information. The verbal warnings at the top set the stage, while the visual confirmation at the bottom grounds these warnings in reality, making the message more relatable and urgent.

This post also demonstrates an innovative use of information value by seamlessly blending emotional, factual, and illustrative elements to create a multi-faceted message. These elements' strategic

placement and alignment maximize the post's effectiveness in capturing attention, conveying critical information, and prompting action. By leveraging the principles of Visual Grammar, the post not only informs but also engages and mobilizes its audience toward the goal of pet protection. The use of information value in this Instagram post exemplifies how careful arrangement and integration of verbal and visual elements can enhance the communicative power of social media advocacy. The vertical structure guides the viewer through a logical progression from idealized concepts to specific realities, effectively conveying the importance of not leaving pets in cars.

Salience refers to the visual prominence of an element (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). The most salient verbal element in the post is the phrase, "please don't LEAVE ME." It stands out among all verbal information, with "LEAVE ME" in capital letters and a larger font size than "please don't." The entire phrase is in black, achieving foregrounding against a blue-sky background. Larger fonts attract attention and convey seriousness and oppression due to the black color (Parikh, 2011), emphasizing the importance of the message "please don't LEAVE ME."

Although the phrases "70° outside = 110° in the car" and "even in the shade with the window open" have relatively small font sizes and no capital letters, they are designed in red. According to Yu (2014), red can represent blood and is often used to convey warnings. The use of red for those phrases is intended to warn viewers. Additionally, the font size of "70° outside = 110° in the car" is more significant than "even in the shade with the window open" and is bolded, possibly to remind viewers that high temperatures inside cars can pose a danger to pet dogs.

The visual information in the post shows a pet dog left in a car with an open window, depicting the danger it faces. It may be intended to awaken pet owners who lock their pets in cars to be kind to them. As a supplement to the verbal information, the visual information further emphasizes the message of not leaving pets in cars.

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) define framing as using lines or spaces to separate elements within an image. In the analyzed Instagram post, verbal and visual information are integrated within a single frame, indicating an intentional lack of separation. This cohesive framing ensures that the verbal and visual elements are perceived as a unified whole, working synergistically to convey a consistent message.

By embedding the textual information directly within the visual context, the post reinforces the urgency and emotional appeal of the message. The absence of physical borders or separation lines between the text and the image enhances the viewer's ability to process the information as a cohesive narrative. This integration aligns with Kress and Van Leeuwen's concept of Visual Grammar, where the framing of elements can significantly influence the viewer's interpretation and emotional response.

The seamless integration of text and image ensures that the message about not leaving pets alone in cars is clear and direct. The verbal warning "Please don't LEAVE ME" is placed prominently within the visual frame, immediately capturing the viewer's attention and linking the emotional impact of the visual (the dog) with the imperative call to action. This unified approach makes the message more compelling and memorable. By removing any physical separation between the text and the image, the post fosters a more immersive viewing experience. The viewer is drawn into the narrative, with the textual and visual elements working together to evoke empathy and urgency. This lack of framing allows the viewer to seamlessly transition between reading the text and observing the visual, reinforcing the emotional resonance of the message. The integrated framing directs the viewer's focus towards the central message without distraction. Using contrasting colors (e.g., the orange text on a blue background) within the same frame highlights critical information and maintains visual interest. This cohesive presentation helps to ensure that the viewer's attention remains on the post's critical aspects, enhancing the communication's overall effectiveness. The interplay between the verbal and visual elements within the same frame utilizes multiple semiotic resources to strengthen the advocacy message. The dog's image conveys vulnerability and need, while the accompanying text provides

context and a call to action. This multimodal approach, where both elements are framed together, leverages the strengths of each mode to support and amplify the message.

This digital framing can be manipulated to create a sense of immediacy and directness that is particularly effective for advocacy messages, making the issue feel urgent and personally relevant to the viewer.

5. DISCUSSION

The application of Visual Grammar provides valuable insights into this Instagram post promoting pet protection. The representational metafunction prominently features the dog as the actor, with the pronoun "me" subjectively representing the dog's perspective, bridging the gap between the audience and the actor and allowing for greater emotional connection. This aligns with Hartung et al.'s (2016) notion that pronouns can influence cognitive perspectives. The processes depicted emphasize the importance of treating pets well, appealing to the audience's emotions and prompting real-life action. The image's circumstances, featuring a sunny sky and a close-up of a window, contribute to the overall message. The contrasting orange text, the use of equal signs and numbers, and the imperative sentence at the top emphasize the participant's wish, directly addressing the target audience and evoking empathy. This confirms Sipe's (1998) statement that text and image work synergistically to create meaningful narratives.

Regarding the interactive metafunction, the post employs various techniques to engage viewers. The indirect gaze allows viewers to feel the dog's suffering, advocating for pet protection, aligning with Isti'anah et al.'s (2019) findings that the indirect gaze conveys image information. The close shot and frontal angle facilitate a personal and immersive viewing experience, fostering a more substantial emotional impact and empathy toward the dog (Sierra Rativa et al., 2020). Additionally, the low angle empowers the viewer and emphasizes their role in pet protection, complementing Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) idea that social distances and visual perspectives affect participant-viewer relationships. The compositional metafunction effectively conveys information through strategic design choices. The verbal information at the top presents an idealized summary, warning viewers about the dangers of leaving pets in cars. In large, bolded black font, the phrase "please don't LEAVE ME" stands out prominently, conveying urgency and importance. The use of red color and larger font size in the accompanying phrases further emphasizes the warning and potential threat, aligning with Dallyono and Sukyadi's (2019) findings that larger fonts and hot colors attract attention and convey seriousness. The visual information of the dog in the car reinforces the verbal message, creating a powerful impact. The framing of verbal and visual information within the same frame ensures mutual support and alignment of perspectives.

This study's findings are consistent with existing literature on social semiotics and Visual Grammar. For instance, Hartung et al. (2016) demonstrate how pronouns influence cognitive perspectives, aligning with the use of "me" to foster empathy in this post. Sipe's (1998) work on the synergy of text and image confirms the effectiveness of combined verbal and visual elements. Isti'anah et al. (2019) highlight the role of the indirect gaze in offering information, effectively employed here to evoke specific emotional responses. Furthermore, Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) theories on social distance and visual communication perspectives are evident in using close shots and varying angles to engage viewers emotionally. Dallyono and Sukyadi's (2019) findings on the impact of font size and color on attention and seriousness are reflected in the strategic use of bolded, colored text.

The multimodal discourse analysis demonstrates the successful implementation of Visual Grammar in the Instagram post (Fischer & Aarestrup, 2021). The post effectively promotes awareness of responsible pet ownership and the importance of protecting pets from harm by engaging viewers through representational, interactive, and compositional metafunctions. Future research could explore

the long-term impact of such visual strategies on viewer behavior and the effectiveness of different semiotic modes in various social media contexts.

Despite the comprehensive analysis, this study has several limitations. First, it focuses on a single Instagram post, which may not represent all pet protection campaigns on social media. Future research could expand the dataset to include multiple posts across different platforms to generalize the findings. Second, the study primarily relies on qualitative analysis of visual and textual elements without incorporating quantitative metrics such as viewer engagement data. Integrating these metrics could provide a more holistic understanding of the post's impact. The findings of this study have significant implications for social media advocacy and the use of Visual Grammar in crafting effective messages. The strategic use of representational, interactive, and compositional metafunctions can enhance viewer engagement and emotional response, making advocacy messages more impactful. For practitioners, careful visual and textual elements design can significantly influence audience perceptions and actions. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of multimodal integration in social media posts, suggesting that future campaigns should consider the synergistic effects of combining visual and verbal elements to maximize their persuasive power.

This study provides valuable insights into the application of Visual Grammar in social media advocacy, offering practical guidelines for designing effective pet protection campaigns. By understanding and leveraging the principles of Visual Grammar, advocates can create more compelling and engaging content that drives awareness and action.

6. CONCLUSION

The post effectively conveys its message for pet protection. The image centers on the dog, showing its waiting and vulnerable position. Using the pronoun "me" creates a subjective connection between the audience and the dog. The designer aims to raise awareness of responsible pet care through the image, supported by the sunny sky and close-up of the car window, emphasizing the situation's urgency. The interactive elements evoke empathy, using indirect gaze, a close shot, and frontal and low angles to make viewers feel emotionally connected to the subject. The compositional arrangement places the verbal information at the top, providing a generalized reminder, and the visual information at the bottom, illustrating the specific issue of leaving pets in cars. The strategic use of salience with font size and color captures viewers' attention, reinforcing the importance of the message. The coherent framing of the post combines verbal and visual elements seamlessly, emphasizing the theme of pet protection. Overall, this multimodal discourse analysis demonstrates the successful implementation of Visual Grammar in the pet protection post, effectively engaging viewers and promoting awareness of responsible pet ownership.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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