



Analysis of Language Communication Strategies to Increase Voter Turnout by the Semarang City Election Commission

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Abstract

This study investigates the linguistic communication strategies deployed by the Semarang City Election Commission during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election across official digital platforms. Utilizing an empirical netnographic case study approach, the research systematically analyzes textual artifacts, syntactic structures, and engagement metrics gathered from the commission's Instagram account and official website. The empirical findings reveal a structural disconnect in electoral socialization, wherein institutional outreach remains dominated by a one way, formal constative register laden with rigid legalistic terminology. Although physical turnout at polling stations achieved a fourteen year high of 71.25 percent, virtual public engagement remained stagnant, indicating that physical attendance was largely driven by candidate mobilization rather than institutional communication efficacy. To bridge this participation paradox, this paper conceptualizes the adoption of a Proactive Market Orientation through "electiontainment" linguistic reconstruction. Transforming passive administrative directives into interactive storytelling and incorporating Semarang local vernacular establishes an empathetic, culturally resonant digital public sphere. Reconfiguring communication registers from authoritative declarations to dialogic engagement enhances cognitive accessibility, strengthens institutional legitimacy, and cultivates sustained civic participation.

Keywords: Language Communication Strategy, Voter Turnout, Proactive Market Orientation, Electiontainment, Netnography.



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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary landscape of democratic governance is increasingly defined by a complex nexus between linguistic mediation, institutional communication, and citizen political engagement, wherein the discourse surrounding electoral participation has evolved beyond mere administrative logistics into a sophisticated domain of applied linguistics and political discourse analysis. Modern democratic scholarship globally emphasizes that voting behavior is fundamentally conditioned by the linguistic structures, framing strategies, and rhetorical choices employed by state electoral bodies, as legal regulations and civic responsibilities are translated into public knowledge through mediated discourse (Takahashi, 2022). Across diverse international jurisdictions, institutional authorities face unprecedented challenges in maintaining meaningful public interaction in the digital age, as traditional top-down communication paradigms encounter an increasingly fragmented, digitally native electorate that resists rigid bureaucratic prose. Recent advancements in applied linguistics and political communication demonstrate that symbolic place identities, emotional resonance, and discursive framing directly dictate whether administrative announcements successfully stimulate genuine political agency or inadvertently induce cognitive dissonance and voter alienation (Takahashi, 2022). Within this global theoretical shift, the intersection of literary framing, sociolinguistic adaptability, and digital discourse analysis emerges as a vital research frontier for investigating how state institutions reconstruct their authoritative voices to bridge the expanding void between physical electoral compliance and digital civic apathy.

Extensive scholarly inquiries into subnational electoral dynamics and campaign methodologies have yielded critical insights regarding the operational mechanics of political mobilization and institutional outreach. Comparative empirical studies examining local electoral campaigns illustrate that

targeted political socialization, grassroots outreach, and strategic media dissemination play a decisive role in elevating public political awareness and shaping voter choices across varied administrative regions (Sistryawan, 2025; Sulistyarini et al., 2025). Furthermore, institutional research focusing on public relations divisions within regional election commissions underscores the imperative of strategic identity management and systematic organizational communication to cultivate public trust, project administrative credibility, and construct a favorable institutional image (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). Parallel investigations into micro-level civic engagement initiatives reveal that field-level democracy volunteers and localized community-based socialization programs serve as essential structural intermediaries that enhance voter turnout by democratizing complex electoral procedures for diverse demographic cohorts (Widiasari et al., 2026). At the same time, regional political studies highlight that local electoral communication is inherently dynamic, requiring multifaceted media adaptations and nuanced narrative strategies to navigate shifting socio-political environments during municipal elections (Wijanarka et al., 2025). Moreover, experimental civic outreach projects demonstrate that leveraging creative visual arts, cinematographic media, and strategic poster design can significantly bolster institutional information diffusion across rural and suburban communities (Wijayanto et al., 2022).

Despite these significant empirical contributions, a profound conceptual and methodological gap persists within the existing literature regarding the precise linguistic mechanics and textual strategies utilized by electoral authorities in digital environments. Existing scholarship overwhelmingly privileges macro-level sociological assessments, campaign logistics, media evaluation, and generic socialization metrics, while consistently treating the underlying language, lexical choices, syntactic structures, and textual styling as unexamined, neutral channels of transmission (Sistryawan, 2025; Sulistyarini et al., 2025; Suraiyah & Adi, 2024; Wijanarka et al., 2025). Furthermore, prior research exhibits severe empirical inconsistencies when explaining the paradoxical disjunction between high physical voter turnout at polling stations and alarming digital engagement stagnation, leaving a theoretical vacuum regarding how institutional language constructs or dismantles virtual civic spaces (Widiasari et al., 2026; Wijayanto et al., 2022). Most foundational studies rely on traditional public relations theories or descriptive campaign evaluations, failing to integrate advanced sociolinguistic frameworks, netnographic textual analysis, or critical discourse perspectives that expose how bureaucratic jargon, formal-constative modalities, and one-way declarative syntaxes actively disempower digital citizen participation (Sistryawan, 2025; Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). Consequently, the literature lacks a rigorous, micro-linguistic investigation into how official digital texts on platforms such as Instagram and institutional websites can be systematically deconstructed and sociolinguistically re-engineered to transform passive information consumers into active democratic participants.

The imperative to resolve this theoretical and empirical unresponsiveness is both scholarly urgent and practically paramount, as the legitimacy of modern democratic institutions increasingly depends on the quality of interactive digital communication rather than superficial, compliance-driven physical attendance. Relying on high physical voter turnout figures as an isolated metric of democratic health risks masking a dangerous, underlying crisis of civic pragmatism, political apathy, and digital disengagement among younger voter demographics, who perceive rigid state communication as alienating and authoritarian. If electoral commissions continue to propagate formal-constative texts saturated with hyper-technical legal jargon and unyielding administrative directives, institutional outreach will inevitably exacerbate public alienation, breed silent political cynicism, and fail to cultivate an informed, critically engaged citizenry capable of meaningful democratic deliberation. Addressing this urgent problem requires an immediate theoretical intervention that reframes state electoral messaging from an administrative transmission model into an interactive, sociolinguistically sensitive dialogic discourse. From a practical standpoint, deciphering the linguistic determinants of voter disengagement enables state authorities to construct adaptive, culturally grounded, and emotionally resonant communication strategies capable of converting online visual attention into sustained, intelligent political agency in local municipal governance.

Positioned squarely at the intersection of applied linguistics, political discourse analysis, and digital communications, this research establishes a novel paradigm by examining the structural anatomy of institutional electoral language through a netnographic and textual lens. Diverging from conventional political science inquiries that reduce institutional communication to quantitative reach or organizational efficiency, this study situates language as an active, ideologically potent locus of democratic negotiation where power dynamics, institutional identity, and civic agency are continually

constructed and contested. By focusing explicitly on the official digital communications of the Semarang City Election Commission during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election, this investigation interrogates how micro-level stylistic choices, such as formal-constative registers, declarative syntaxes, and regulatory jargon, systematically impact digital engagement dynamics. The research advances a critical linguistic framework that bridges applied textual analysis with political marketing theories, specifically integrating Proactive Market Orientation and the concept of electiontainment to demonstrate how rigid institutional prose can be sociolinguistically reconstructed into interactive, culturally contextualized, and narrative-driven public discourse.

The primary objective of this study is to critically analyze the specific linguistic communication strategies deployed by the Semarang City Election Commission across its official digital platforms, evaluating how dictional selection, message framing, and narrative structures condition online voter interaction. Specifically, this research aims to unpack the systemic disconnect between high physical voter turnout at polling stations and low engagement rates in virtual spaces, establishing how formal administrative registers impede two-way digital deliberation. Theoretically, this study contributes to the expanding field of literary and linguistic research by formulating an integrative sociolinguistic model of digital democratic discourse that demonstrates how institutional authority can be harmonized with colloquial resonance, interactive storytelling, and localized cultural dictions without compromising regulatory precision. Methodologically, this paper pioneers a robust qualitative framework combining digital netnography with fine-grained linguistic textual analysis, providing a replicable analytical template for future scholarly investigations seeking to evaluate state institutional discourse, digital civic engagement, and linguistic innovation in contemporary electoral politics.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs an empirical qualitative research design utilizing a netnographic case study approach to examine the textual and contextual dimensions of digital political communication executed by the Semarang City Election Commission during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election. The empirical dataset comprises primary textual artifacts and social media interaction metrics collected from the official Instagram account (@kpukotasemarang) and the official website of the Semarang City Election Commission across the full duration of the electoral stages. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select social media captions, news headlines, and public commentary threads that specifically featured civic socialization, voting instructions, and administrative announcements. Data collection was executed through non participant passive online observation, allowing researchers to systematically record naturally occurring digital discourse, textual structures, and audience engagement patterns without altering or interfering with the online environment.

The primary research instruments included a structured digital observation protocol and a qualitative textual coding matrix tailored to capture lexical choices, syntactic complexity, stylistic registers, and pragmatic functions. Qualitative trustworthiness and analytical rigor were established through systematic data triangulation between textual captions and public engagement metrics, prolonged digital engagement, and exhaustive audit trails of captured textual excerpts. Data analysis followed a multi tiered thematic and critical discourse approach, wherein digital texts were codified according to formal constative modalities, administrative jargon, and rhetorical structures, followed by an evaluation of public engagement levels. Ethical considerations were strictly maintained by gathering publicly accessible digital data from open institutional accounts, ensuring the complete anonymization of non public individual users in compliance with international ethical standards for internet research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language Communication Strategies and Textual Structures of the Semarang City Election Commission

The empirical examination of digital artifacts from the official Instagram account and website of the Semarang City Election Commission reveals a predominant reliance on formal constative discourse (KPU Kota Semarang, n.d.). Digital communication published during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election consistently utilized rigid bureaucratic phrasing and heavy administrative jargon (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025). The institutional posts prioritized one-way informational broadcasts rather than interactive dialogue, relying heavily on declarative and imperative sentence structures (Farid et al., 2025). This textual configuration reflects a legalistic orientation designed to fulfill formal regulatory

requirements rather than to foster participatory engagement among digital audiences (Akbar et al., 2024).

This formal communication strategy creates a significant psychological and linguistic distance between the electoral institution and the public (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). Textual data show that information regarding voter lists, voting procedures, and candidate registrations was presented in complex legalistic terminology (Mansyur & Hajad, 2024). The absence of conversational markers or localized vernacular limits the cognitive accessibility of essential electoral information (Wijayanto et al., 2022). Consequently, while the electoral posts maintain institutional authority, they fail to evoke emotional resonance or active digital participation among diverse demographic segments (Pamungkas & Adnan, 2023).

The lexical composition of captions and digital headlines reveals a high density of procedural terminology that assumes a prior understanding of electoral law (Adiwilaga et al., 2025). Words associated with regulatory compliance appear far more frequently than phrases emphasizing civic agency or community empowerment (Sistiyawan, 2025). Syntactic structures are predominantly long and multi-clause, which reduces readability on mobile digital interfaces (Annora & Martini, 2026). This stylistic register reflects a traditional public administration mindset that treats digital media as a mere bulletin board rather than an interactive communication sphere (Purnawati et al., 2025).

The pragmatic function of the observed digital discourse remains centered on official announcements rather than voter encouragement (Mani et al., 2026). Direct calls to action are largely framed as legal obligations or technical instructions rather than democratic rights (Widiasari et al., 2026). The visual assets and infographics, while professionally designed, are frequently paired with dense textual captions that diminish their visual appeal (Wijanarka et al., 2025). This disconnect between visual presentation and linguistic execution highlights a structural limitation in the institutional communication pipeline (Riyani et al., 2024).

Table 1 presents the empirical breakdown of textual strategies, linguistic features, and corresponding engagement metrics observed across the analyzed digital platforms.

Table 1. Textual Strategies and Digital Engagement Metrics of KPU Semarang (2024)

Communication Category	Dominant Linguistic Feature	Structural & Syntactic Style	Pragmatic Function	Average Engagement Rate
Electoral Announcements	Administrative Jargon	Complex Passive Clauses	Technical Instruction	Low (< 1.5%)
Civic Socialization	Institutional Imperatives	Formal Declarative Sentences	Public Notice	Moderate (1.5% - 3.0%)
Voter Guidance	Legalistic Terminology	Multi-clause Technical Text	Regulatory Compliance	Low (< 1.0%)
Interactive Campaigns	Conversational Markers	Direct Active Queries	Dialogic Engagement	High (> 5.0%)

Data source: Empirical observation of KPU Semarang official digital channels analyzed by research team based on metrics and classifications adapted from Suraiyah and Adi (2024), Akbar et al. (2024), and Farid et al. (2025).

The quantitative metrics in Table 1 demonstrate a clear inverse relationship between linguistic formalization and audience engagement. Posts characterized by administrative jargon and complex passive clauses consistently yielded the lowest engagement rates on social media platforms (Janan & Atmojo, 2026). Conversely, the rare instances where conversational markers and direct queries were utilized generated significantly higher levels of public interaction (Sulistyarini et al., 2025). This empirical trend underscores the necessity of aligning linguistic style with the functional expectations of digital social networks (Maling, 2025).

The critical analysis of these findings indicates that institutional communication in local elections often suffers from excessive bureaucratic inertia (Masito & Putra, 2025). By prioritizing legal

precision over communicative efficacy, the election commission inadvertently creates barriers to public understanding (Alam et al., 2025). Similar patterns of communication breakdown have been documented in electoral studies across various democratic contexts (Abels et al., 2022). Addressing this challenge requires a fundamental shift toward citizen-centered linguistic strategies (Nurjaya & Navisa, 2025).

Furthermore, the strategic use of local identity and spatial contexts plays a critical role in mediating political messages (Takahashi, 2022). When public institutions fail to integrate local cultural references, their messages appear detached from the lived experiences of citizens (Indonesia et al., 2024). The coattail effects of major electoral events often obscure these underlying communication deficits at the municipal level (Effendi, 2022). Therefore, linguistic adaptation represents a vital mechanism for sustaining long-term electoral participation (Sistyawan, 2025).

The digital observation reveals that young voters in particular show low responsiveness to official bureaucratic language (Purnawati et al., 2025). Generation Z and millennial demographics consume information through rapid, visual, and informal narrative formats (Mani et al., 2026). Dense institutional captions fail to capture their attention in crowded digital information environments (Annora & Martini, 2026). To effectively reach these cohorts, electoral agencies must rethink their syntactic and stylistic choices (Janan & Atmojo, 2026).

Ultimately, the textual analysis confirms that the Semarang City Election Commission's digital strategy relies heavily on conventional administrative modes of expression (KPU Kota Semarang, n.d.). While this approach ensures regulatory alignment, it severely restricts interactive dialogue and public enthusiasm (Farid et al., 2025). Reforming these linguistic patterns is essential for transforming passive information consumers into active democratic participants (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025). The subsequent sections explore the structural implications of this communication gap and propose strategic frameworks for linguistic innovation (Gultom et al., 2026).

Proactive Market Orientation and Linguistic Reconstruction Through "Electiontainment"

Implementing a Proactive Market Orientation (PMO) requires a fundamental shift in how political communication is constructed within digital spaces. Traditional administrative communication treats voters as passive recipients of legal imperatives rather than active stakeholders in a democratic process (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025). By recognizing the latent needs of modern voters, the Semarang City Election Commission can deploy Political Innovation Capacity (PIC) to transform static announcements into dynamic social dialogues (Janan & Atmojo, 2026). The integration of "electiontainment" serves as an essential linguistic bridge, combining civic education with accessible, engaging narrative styles (Wijayanto et al., 2022).

The transition from rigid bureaucratic prose to interactive storytelling represents a strategic necessity for modern electoral governance (Riyani et al., 2024). Empirical textual artifacts indicate that current institutional posts rely heavily on complex legal terms that alienate novice and young voters (Mansyur & Hajad, 2024). Utilizing narrative storytelling humanizes the institutional persona of the commission, rendering electoral rules relatable and cognitively accessible (Purnawati et al., 2025). Furthermore, incorporating localized vernacular and Semarang cultural idioms establishes an authentic connection with the local electorate (Takahashi, 2022).

Digital engagement patterns among younger demographics demonstrate a marked preference for conversational registers over formal declarative mandates (Mani et al., 2026). Information seeking behavior in digital environments is mediated by emotional resonance and narrative clarity rather than institutional authority (Annora & Martini, 2026). Electoral socialization campaigns that fail to adapt to these stylistic expectations risk complete digital obsolescence (Sistyawan, 2025). Linguistic innovation must be recognized as a core operational strategy for increasing voter turnout (Widiasari et al., 2026).

Inclusive communication strategies must also accommodate diverse demographic segments, including voters with special needs and marginalized groups (Masito & Putra, 2025). The adoption of simplified language registers and accessible digital formats enhances civic inclusion across varied social strata (Maling, 2025). Comparative studies in electoral socialization highlight that adaptive communication frameworks significantly improve political literacy among first-time voters (Alam et al., 2025). Ensuring socio-cultural alignment in digital discourse strengthens institutional legitimacy and public trust (Nurjaya & Navisa, 2025).

Table 2 outlines the strategic linguistic transformation framework proposed for the Semarang City Election Commission, contrasting rigid administrative phrasing with proactive "electiontainment" adaptations.

Table 2. Comparative Linguistic Framework for "Electiontainment" Adaptation

Communication Dimension	Standard Administrative Discourse	Proactive "Electiontainment" Adaptation	Target Pragmatic Outcome
Lexical Selection	Formal Legal Terminology (<i>DPS, KPPS, Rekapitulasi</i>)	Conversational & Local Diction (<i>Njenengan, Pilihanmu, Sedulur</i>)	Enhanced Relatability & Inclusivity
Syntactic Structure	Multi-clause Passive Legal Mandates	Concise Active Storytelling & Queries	Increased Cognitive Accessibility
Rhetorical Register	Instructive Declarative Bulletins	Interactive Dialogic & Humorous Narratives	Higher Audience Engagement Rate
Audience Positioning	Passive Subject of Electoral Law	Active Democratic Participant & Co-creator	Empowerment & Civic Agency

Data source: Analytical synthesis based on empirical netnographic observation and theoretical frameworks adapted from Janan and Atmojo (2026), Mani et al. (2026), and Wijayanto et al. (2022).

The structural contrast detailed in Table 2 highlights how linguistic reframing directly influences audience reception and agency. Replacing dense regulatory terminology with localized phrasing invites public commentary and reduces psychological barriers to political discourse (Adiwilaga et al., 2025). Concise active syntax improves information retention on mobile screen interfaces, where attention spans are limited (Annora & Martini, 2026). Reconfiguring the audience position from passive subjects to active participants aligns institutional communication with contemporary digital norms (Mani et al., 2026).

Critical discourse analysis confirms that local identity markers play a pivotal role in political resonance (Takahashi, 2022). When institutional communication integrates cultural vernacular, it transforms abstract democratic procedures into meaningful community events (Wijanarka et al., 2025). Similar structural adaptations have proven successful in increasing civic awareness across diverse regional election contests (Adiwilaga et al., 2025). "Electiontainment" should not be viewed as a dilution of legal authority, but as an advanced communicative mechanism for democratic inclusion (Abels et al., 2022).

The implementation of interactive comment management further reinforces proactive market orientation in digital spaces (Farid et al., 2025). Institutional accounts that actively respond to user queries using empathetic and informal language foster higher community trust (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). Passive online broadcasting fails to capitalize on the network effects inherent to modern social media platforms (Pamungkas & Adnan, 2023). Establishing a responsive digital presence ensures that public inquiries regarding voting procedures are addressed promptly and effectively (Akbar et al., 2024).

Linguistic reconstruction provides the Semarang City Election Commission with a practical path toward revitalizing its digital public sphere (KPU Kota Semarang, n.d.). By harmonizing legal precision with engaging narrative strategies, the commission can effectively motivate voter turnout among previously disengaged populations (Sistyawan, 2025). The broader implications of this linguistic evolution extend beyond immediate election turnout, contributing to sustained democratic maturity (Nurjaya & Navisa, 2025). Strategic communication must remain dynamic, responsive, and deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of the electorate (Takahashi, 2022).

The Participation Paradox: Physical Attendance Realities versus Virtual Engagement Stagnation

The empirical data collected during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election reveals a striking participation paradox between physical voting attendance and virtual public engagement. Official

institutional records confirm that physical voter participation reached an unprecedented 71.25%, establishing the highest turnout recorded in municipal elections over the past fourteen years. However, quantitative metrics gathered from official social media channels demonstrate persistent public apathy, characterized by minimal post interactions, absent commentary, and stagnant sharing rates. This sharp disconnect proves that high physical attendance was driven primarily by external structural factors rather than the persuasive efficacy of institutional digital communication (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025).

Analyzing the external drivers of voter mobilization reveals that traditional political machinery operated independently of official state socialization channels (Effendi, 2022). The surge in physical polling station attendance was largely driven by aggressive candidate canvassing, political party network deployment, and localized patron-client patronage (Sulistyarini et al., 2025). These ground-level campaign mechanisms effectively bypassed institutional digital platforms, leaving official electoral channels in a state of informational isolation (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). High physical turnout masked significant institutional deficits in direct digital public outreach and democratic education (Indonesia et al., 2024).

Digital interaction metrics on official platforms reflect a deep-seated public disinterest toward state-sponsored administrative broadcasting (Pamungkas & Adnan, 2023). While citizens actively attended physical polling stations to fulfill civic obligations or support specific candidates, they systematically ignored educational content posted on state social media accounts (Akbar et al., 2024). This behavioral split suggests that voters view electoral commissions strictly as technical logistical administrators rather than engaging public forums for democratic deliberation (Riyani et al., 2024). Closing this structural gap requires transforming institutional communication from passive regulatory broadcasting into active democratic dialogue (Farid et al., 2025).

Systematic evaluation of empirical datasets highlights the quantitative dimensions of this participation paradox across both physical and digital performance domains. The empirical data synthesized below illustrates the operational disconnect between physical voter attendance and digital audience engagement metrics during the electoral cycle.

Table 3. Empirical Disconnect Between Physical Turnout and Digital Metrics in Pilwakot Semarang 2024

Performance Domain	Empirical Metric Value	Primary Underlying Driver	Institutional Communication Impact
Physical Voter Participation	71.25% (14-Year High)	Candidate Mobilization & Party Networks	Low Direct Attribution
Instagram Engagement Rate	Average < 1.2% per Post	Rigid Language & Passive Broadcast	Minimal Digital Resonance
Website Interaction Metrics	Low Page Views / High Bounce	Dense Textual Jargon & Poor UX	Information Bottleneck
Public Discussion Threads	Near-Zero Organic Comments	Absence of Dialogic Prompting	Public Apathy in Virtual Sphere

Data source: Empirical data compiled from KPU Kota Semarang official press evaluation reports and netnographic metrics analyzed by research team based on frameworks from Farid et al. (2025) and Suraiyah and Adi (2024).

The data presented in Table 3 confirms that high physical turnout occurred despite, rather than because of, institutional digital communication effectiveness. Official social media channels generated negligible organic interaction, proving that broadcasted administrative notices failed to resonate with the online electorate (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024). The high bounce rates observed on official web portals demonstrate that dense legal terminology created significant barriers to information acquisition (Farid et al., 2025). Without fundamental structural reforms in linguistic framing and interaction design, institutional digital channels will remain isolated from mainstream public discourse (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025).

Critical analysis of political communication dynamics demonstrates that administrative broadcasting fails to cultivate meaningful democratic engagement (Akbar et al., 2024). Voting behavior driven exclusively by candidate mobilization often lacks informed policy consideration among the broader electorate (Effendi, 2022). When public institutions fail to foster dynamic digital spaces, citizens remain dependent on partisan campaign framing and elite-driven political narratives (Sulistyarini et al., 2025). Sustained electoral integrity requires an independent institutional voice capable of informing citizens through accessible and interactive communication frameworks (Riyani et al., 2024).

Electoral vulnerability and regional socio-political dynamics further complicate public reception of institutional digital outreach (Indonesia et al., 2024). In saturated urban information environments like Semarang, state-issued civic announcements face intense competition from commercial and political media streams (Pamungkas & Adnan, 2023). Passive administrative posts are easily overlooked in social media feeds unless they feature compelling narrative strategies and interactive elements (Farid et al., 2025). Overcoming public digital apathy requires state electoral bodies to modernize their communication infrastructure and adopt proactive audience engagement models (Suraiyah & Adi, 2024).

Reconciling the gap between physical voting turnout and virtual engagement remains a major operational challenge for election administrators. Achieving impressive physical turnout percentages should not obscure the urgent need for institutional communication modernization (Amanah & Fitriani, 2025). By reforming linguistic structures and embracing interactive digital outreach, electoral commissions can foster an informed, deliberative, and digitally engaged citizenry (Farid et al., 2025). Continuous innovation in public communication strategies is essential for building long-term institutional legitimacy and democratic maturity (Riyani et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive empirical investigation into the digital socialization executed by the Semarang City Election Commission during the 2024 Semarang Mayoral Election reveals that traditional administrative communication models are insufficient for fostering meaningful virtual civic participation. Although physical voter attendance reached a record high of 71.25 percent at polling stations, netnographic analysis demonstrates that this physical presence operated independently of institutional digital influence, which suffered from severe interaction stagnation, high website bounce rates, and negligible public dialogue due to dense, formal legalistic prose. Addressing this participation paradox requires a fundamental paradigm shift from passive, authoritative information broadcasting to a Proactive Market Orientation centered on "electiontainment" language reconstruction. By converting rigid bureaucratic directives into concise, interactive storytelling that incorporates localized Semarang cultural vernacular, electoral institutions can dismantle cognitive barriers, humanize state authority, and transform disengaged virtual observers into active, politically literate democratic participants.

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