



## STRATEGIC LANGUAGE USE AND POWER IN COURTROOM DISCOURSE: A FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF AN ACCUSED'S STATEMENT

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### Abstract

This study examines the courtroom statement of Manzoor Ali, accused of murder under Section 342 Cr.P.C., through the lens of forensic linguistics. Using Grice's Cooperative Principle and its Maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner, the research analyzes how the accused strategically responds to 16 court questions to assert innocence, challenge evidence, and manipulate discourse. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses reveal systematic violations of Maxims, particularly Quality and Quantity, highlighting the role of language as a tool of power, resistance, and narrative control in legal settings. The study demonstrates that courtroom language is not neutral but a site of negotiation, where institutional authority and individual strategy intersect.

**Keywords:** *Cooperative Principle, Courtroom Discourse, Forensic Linguistics, Grice's Maxims, Narrative Control*

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## 1. Introduction

The term typically refers to legal and professional analysis of recorded or written language by experts (forensic linguists) to provide expert and correct interpretation. It is particularly used in legal matters, especially in the court and criminal justice systems. In the court system, forensic linguistics is heavily applied to examine language evidence – either recorded in voice or handwritten in civil matters or crimes. In the court system, the analysis or examination is carried out for two major reasons: First, the analysis is used when relevant investigations are carried out with a focus to help identify witnesses or suspects in specific cases. Second, forensic linguistics plays a crucial role in cases that involve production of the spoken or written language samples as judicial evidence. In these situations, forensic linguists offer knowledgeable testimony regarding accurate sample interpretation. The majority of crimes, including compulsion, hate speech, bribes, threats, and hate literature, require the assistance of a linguist expert for accurate and, most crucially, professional interpretation. One of the interesting branches of linguistics that focuses solely on the legal and juridical domains is called forensic linguistics (cited in Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams 2014). It is mainly concerned with the analysis of language used in legal context.

In 1968, Jan Svartvik used the term "forensic linguistics" for the first time. He noted that Evans' claims, in which he described the murders of his wife and young daughter, were significantly different from some other statements made by someone in the law enforcement community. Due to the differences in syntax and language between the two, Jan Svartvik realized that his neighbor John Christie had murdered his wife and daughter. This is called Authorship through Linguistic Approaches. The identification of any type of textual crime is its primary focus. Forensic linguistics involves a number of areas, including:

Authorship analysis, determine that by whom was written a particular text (which could be vital in cases involving mysterious or dubious authorship). Discourse Analysis one of the main area in forensic linguistics is forensic discourse involves that how language is used in courtroom settings, such as how statements are structured in judiciary trials and confessions. Forensic phonetics analyzes and examines record of different voices and speeches, often used to identify speakers. Through language users can exert influence together with control and manipulative power over other people. The professionals who hold positions of authority like lawyers use particular verbal techniques to create perception adjustments while simultaneously demonstrating superiority and influencing views of others. Language predominates in legal processes which forms a part of forensic linguistics as an academic field. The field studies language activities within legal settings to better comprehend fundamental communication processes and deceptive problem solving as well as persuasion techniques. When lawyers interact with the accused during

murder trials they perform these dialogue exchanges. The way people communicate in such exchanges exposes their persuasion techniques and shows their use of power and any suspected plan to change trial results.

### **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Language used in courtrooms setting is not only for communication but also for persuasion purposes. In murder cases, the conversation between the accused and the attorneys is frequently influenced by intricate linguistic techniques to influence the jury, put specific narratives and acclaim or disclaim testimonies. In murder trials, the sense of innocence or guilt may be affected by the lawyers and accused infractions, which result in ambiguity, miscommunication, and manipulation in judicial trials. The lawyers and accused use the linguistic tools and techniques which manipulate and construct the idea directly of the court room directly or indirectly. Thus, the researcher uses forensics linguistics to investigate the language strategies used by lawyer and the accused. The researcher will use Grice's Maxims to analyze trial transcript of the two murder trials. The research in hand will recognize patterns of power, manipulation, and ambiguity in exchanges between the accused and the attorney's language used.

### **1.2. Research Questions**

1. Why lawyers and accused use linguistics techniques and strategies in judiciary trials?
2. How does forensic linguistics analyze power and manipulation in judiciary trials?
3. What influences does on these techniques have on lawyer and accused discourse?

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

1. To explore why lawyers and accused individuals use linguistic techniques and strategies during judiciary trials.
2. To examine how forensic linguistics analyzes power and manipulation in courtroom discourse.
3. To evaluate the influence of linguistic techniques on the discourse between lawyers and the accused in judicial proceedings.

## **2. Literature Review**

The goal of this textual analysis –based forensic linguistics study was to identify the various question and response types as well as violation involving several cases. Forensic linguistics combines legal parlance with linguistic knowledge, involving the interaction between language and legal issues. It involves linguistic theories used in courtroom proceedings to solve conflicts and identify authors in dubious documents. Linguists analyze penmanship, language use, and word choices to identify authors and police officers. The Miranda Doctrine is essential for understanding legal rights and the

indispensable role of language in cases involving documents. In general, this study supports Olsson's (2008) assertion that forensic linguistics is the application of legal jargon to language understanding. Thus, there is a of relationship between language and legal matters. Additionally, it included language ideas, which are crucial and applied in judicial procedures. Resolving disputes between parties is also crucial, particularly in the many legal cases that are put forth. Similarly, Olsson (2008) confirmed that the identification of the authors in the questionable papers was the first step in the development of forensic linguistic. Two types of question asked during trials one is productive and other is unproductive (Catoto, J. 2022)

Asfar (2022) conducted a comprehensive literature review on academic works in forensic linguistics that examine hate speech. The research also explained the impact of language on legal system which is main idea of forensic linguistics. Forensic Linguistics is being applied in law enforcement, judicial matters, legislation, legal disputes or proceedings, and even disputes that may only involve a violation of the law or the need to seek legal remedy are all included in the field of forensic linguistics, which is the intersection of language, crime, and law (John Olsson, 2008). Nawaz and Hussain (2021) provided a forensic linguistic analysis of the top ten headlines of crime reports in Dawn newspaper whereby they used Relevance Theory in conjunction with the content analysis to reveal how media lexicality, the contents and especially the headlines- is used to craft the way people think or perceive things through the use of emotionally heavy words and (ideologically) framing by using predominantly negative appeals. Forensic Linguistics is an area of linguistics that is specifically concerned with the legal and juridical spheres (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams 2014). The main objective of the research is to find out idea or the motive behind the language of crime news reports headlines in Pakistan newspaper. After the crime is committed, forensic linguistics will help individuals uncover the truth and bring about justice. Maite Correa delivers a complete analysis of Forensic Linguistics (FL) to study language-law system connections. As the study explains language functions as the core element for legal processes because it serves as the foundation that shapes lawmaking and interpretation and legal application. Law enforcement agencies use the scientific methods from forensic linguistics to analyze legal documents and courtroom dialogue and police-interview interactions with the purpose of maintaining justice and precision in legal proceedings. The article examines three essential aspects of legal communication including language use for judicial purposes and the legal vocabulary together with its decoding mechanisms and language-based criminal offenses. Investigators apply qualitative and quantitative linguistic approaches with pragmatics and discourse analysis and sociolinguistics to study texts from confessions and ransom statements and emergency telephone calls. The article shows how forensic linguistics improves criminal justice but acknowledges its developing character along with

investigation limitations. (Correa, M. 2013) Fares (2023) focuses on the acts of language in investigations, including the forensic linguistics analysis of the problem of language in investigation and the investigation of other investigation details, in order to show how linguistic techniques may indicate the implied intentions and power relations hidden in investigation discourse. To examine how legal language is presented in written and spoken forms. Forensic linguists' evidence aids courts in deciphering complex linguistic issues, and their knowledge is applied in a variety of legal contexts, such as criminal investigations, civil litigation, document and speech assessments, and media studies analysis (Gibbons, 2018). The work of Jahara, Munirah, and Syamsuri (2022) regarding Application Statement Analysis Conversation of the Murder Case at the Makassar District Court (Forensic Linguistics) brings substantial insights to forensic linguistics through its investigation of linguistic applications for court proceedings specifically focused on murder trial witness statements. The research adds to the existing publications by Olsson (2013) and Santoso (2013) by validating forensic linguistics' essential role for legalization through credibility examination and deception detection within legal settings. Research by Sholihatin (2017) as well as Munirah and Apriyanto (2020) have confirmed that legal settings reveal truth or deception through language selection. The research provides relevant courtroom benefits because it illustrates how forensic linguistic techniques can confirm truth through evidence validation. Language pattern analysis provides judges with verified or refute witness testimony which supports their decision-making process. The research corresponds to Khalid's (2014) theoretical approach which emphasizes judicial interpretation as a foundation for fair legal judgments. The paper demonstrates that forensic linguistic analysis provides judges with better tools to ensure fair legal decisions especially when witness testimony matters most.

Ali, J. H. M. (2020) Forensic linguistics: A study in criminal speech acts opinion that forensic linguistics serves as a bridge connecting law and linguistics. The field of forensic linguistics studies language crimes, which include offenses including bribery, perjury, conspiracy, solicitation, plagiarism, and threats that are verbally committed. The conclusions, which include the collaboration between linguists and lawyers, are finally presented. Since forensic linguistics is such a promising field, university students and those involved in court procedures should be taught about it. Additionally, the article presents language crimes, which are linguistically focused and reliant on language misuse. The following language crimes are covered in this paper: bribery, perjury, libel, solicitation, threatening, and conspiracy. These offenses require sound pragmatic training. One of the more recent subfields of linguistics is forensic linguistics. It is an interdisciplinary field since its analysis draws from a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, phonetics, phonology, pragmatics, stylistics, conversation analysis, grammar, semantics, law, and critical discourse analysis. Tiersma, P. M., & Solan, L. M. (2002) Forensic Linguistics:

Applications, Challenges and the Way Forward. This paper investigates the developing field of forensic linguistics which combines multiple disciplines and increases its impact in legal proceedings. The writer demonstrates forensic linguistics' practical use in court investigations while explaining several examples of crucial linguistic evidence influencing court decisions. The article promotes both forensic linguistic education integration into law studies and standardized methods to authenticate linguistic evidence used in legal proceedings. The author emphasizes that advancing research approaches together with legal professional collaborations will make forensic linguistics more credible and practical. Lyrissa Barnett Lidsky (1996) examines in her study "Defamation, Reputation, and the Myth of Community" how defamation legislation exists in direct correlation with community social beliefs. The research examines defamation operations within pluralistic and hegemonic societies together with minority communities through qualitative sociological research methods. Judges typically use communal standards when deciding if defamation statements are harmful based on community principles and customs according to Lidsky. These social norms demonstrate variability because they undergo either timed transformations or cross-communal differences in their characteristics. Court decisions regarding defamation cases become inconsistent because community standards related to defamation can vary significantly between different jurisdictions. El Shafi (2024) carried out qualitative textual analysis of heuristic questions from prosecutors/lawyers to witnesses in the "Representation and power in the modern American courtroom: An examination of Depp vs Heard trial." The paper examined legal power dynamics especially the unequal strength between lawyers and juries as well as juries and witnesses (plaintiffs and defendants). Before trial lawyers designed questions using different preparation methods given by their clients to build their power with the jury.. The third strategic move stands as negation where lawyers describe the plaintiff or client as a defenseless party. During the examination the defendant had to respond to the content provided by the plaintiff in their answers and questions (Depp). The findings of the research showed that lawyers tend to favor their clients while court dynamics produce unbalanced power relations among the judge and plaintiff, defendant, witness, attorney and between both attorneys and defendants. Within legal proceedings there exists no objective viewpoint and plaintiff should not be perceived as white or innocent while defendant should be seen as black or guilty. Alduais et al. (2023) study explores the evolution of forensic linguistics, a field that initially focused on identifying legal documents, police language, and prison language. It uses knowledge maps to examine the field's expansion to include speech detection, text detection, plagiarism detection, social media verbal violence detection, social security detection, and discrimination detection In essence, scientometrics in forensic linguistics could serve as a way to quantify and analyze language use in legal settings, helping to uncover hidden patterns, biases, and strategic manipulations in

discourse that could influence legal proceedings and justice. As forensic linguistics rapidly advanced towards the end of the 20th century and the start of the 3rd, it became more organized and active, with a developing methodology and an increasing number of linguists as specialists (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007). This study aims to investigate the relationship between language and law, language in legal proceedings, language as evidence, and language in research and educational contexts. Forensic linguistics is typically considered a branch of applied linguistics (Butters, 2011a). Text analysis in police reports and documents (Totty et al., 1987) has been foundational in establishing early frameworks for forensic linguistic inquiry. Their research emphasized how language patterns can assist in verifying the credibility of law enforcement records and identifying inconsistencies. The cumulative sum method for author determination in police settings (Hardcastle, 1993) introduced statistical techniques to identify authorship over time. This method is especially useful in detecting stylistic shifts and distinguishing between multiple contributors to a document. Author attribution (Kotzé, 2010) has gained traction as a method for determining the likely writer of a disputed text. Kotzé's work focused on developing linguistic markers that could reliably point to individual writing styles, even in anonymous or pseudonymous texts. Cybercrime investigations (R. C. Perkins, 2021) have increasingly drawn on linguistic expertise to identify and track digital threats. Perkins demonstrated how digital communication can be profiled linguistically to reveal intent, identity, and deception. In criminal and civil law settings (Varney, 1997), forensic linguistics has been utilized to interpret contractual language, assess confessions, and resolve authorship disputes. Varney's research highlighted how even small grammatical choices could have significant legal implications. Handwriting, phonetics and phonology, discourse analysis, and translation are the four primary fields in which forensic linguists have been proposed to make contributions (Varney, 1997). These categories help delineate the scope of forensic linguistic practice across written, spoken, and cross-linguistic contexts. Varney underscored the interdisciplinary nature of the field, calling for collaboration between linguists, legal experts, and forensic scientists.

Perkins and Grant provided an enlarged list that included trademark disputes, copyright infringement, sociolinguistic profiling, comparative authorship analysis, written and spoken legal language, and interactional meanings (R. Perkins & Grant, 2013). Their contribution extended the boundaries of forensic linguistics to include issues of branding and intellectual property, as well as the pragmatics of legal discourse. They also explored how linguistic profiling could be used to narrow down suspect pools in investigations. Additionally, forensic linguistics has many uses in the humanities and computer sciences, such as detecting digital forgeries in audio and video recordings (Hunyadi, 2003). Hunyadi's work bridged linguistic analysis with digital signal processing, offering a novel

approach to authenticity verification. This cross-disciplinary application demonstrated the evolving relevance of linguistics in technology and security domains.

### 3. Research Methodology

This research study conducted will apply a positivism and interpretivism research paradigm to the study of language as a power and manipulation instrument in murder trials. Through the forensics linguistics analysis of lawyer and accused conversation. The objectives of the paradigm in order to provide a balanced linguistic insight of the power politics in the courtroom interaction

This research will employ mix-method. It means that the data will be analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methodology. In order to provide an in-depth detail and comprehensive analysis of the e language use between the lawyer and accuse in murder trial.

We have collected several murder cases for this research from the district record room through legal process. We analyze this data through Grice's maxims. The focal point will be given the dialogue happening between the lawyer and the accused during murder trials by applying the mixed-method approach.

The data will be analyzed by using Grice Maxims. This research employs or uses a mix-methods approach to investigate that how language is used as tool of power and manipulation during the dialogue between lawyer and accused in murder trial cases. The data will be analyzed by using Grice Maxims. The qualitative approach will focus on that how lawyer employs maxims and violation of maxims to manipulate the accused while quantitative approach measures the frequency of language strategies, count the number of turn taking between the lawyer and accused and also analyze and observed their effect on the trial. Both methods give a comprehensive understanding of how language influences the courtroom.

"Language as a Tool of Power and Manipulation: A Forensic Linguistic Analysis of Lawyer and Accused Dialogues in Murder Trials" can be effectively analyzed using Grice's Cooperative Principle and its four maxims (Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner) it will be analyzed that where is Grice Maxim is followed and flouted as explained by Guy Cook. Grice's theory provides a framework for understanding how conversational norms are exploited in courtroom dialogues to assert power and manipulate narratives.

1. Maxim of Quality: Examines truthfulness and evidence-based communication. Lawyers may use leading questions to distort truth, while the accused might provide false statements to avoid incrimination.
2. Maxim of Quantity: Focuses on the amount of information shared. Lawyers may withhold or overload information to create ambiguity, while the accused might provide excessive or insufficient details to manipulate perceptions.

3. Maxim of Relation: Analyzes relevance. Lawyers may use irrelevant questions to confuse the accused, while the accused might divert attention from incriminating evidence.
4. Maxim of Manner: Assesses clarity and ambiguity. Lawyers may use complex legal jargon to confuse, while the accused might use vague language to avoid direct answers.

By applying Grice's maxims, your research can systematically uncover how power dynamics and manipulation strategies operate in lawyer-accused dialogues during murder trials. This theoretical framework aligns with forensic linguistics and provides a structured approach to analyzing

#### 4. Analysis and Discussion

This chapter contains a forensic linguistic study of a statement of Manzoor Ali, who had been accused of a murder, in a case under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.P.C.). The criticism uses main concepts of forensic linguistics, especially Cooperative Principle by Grice that contains the Maxims of Quality, Quantity and Relation and Manner. All of the 16 questions asked by the court and their related answers are reviewed according to the type of questions, their purpose, the attitude towards the accused and the strategic use of words. The chapter will combine the use of forensics linguistic features of speech act theory, pragmatic implicature and discourse strategies, under which the accused strategize to negotiate the meanings of law and develop his narrative of defense.

**Q1:** It is in the evidence that deceased Malki Zaman, complainant Mehboob Ali, and Aitbar Ali (PW-7) are brothers. Similarly, you and convicted co-accused Manzoor Ali are real brothers and first cousins of the complainant party. What do you say about it?

**A:** The relation is correct. However, we are residing in separate houses.

**Q2.** It is in the evidence that on 25.01.1997 at about 12:00 hours, you and your co-accused Manzoor Ali, armed with firearms, committed Qatl-i-Amd (intentional murder) of Malki Zaman by firing at him. What do you say about it?

**A:** It is totally incorrect.

**Q4.** It is in the evidence that complainant Mehboob Ali reported the incident to Badar ul Zaman SI/PW-5, who recorded the FIR and prepared the injury sheet and inquest report of the deceased. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. Mehboob Ali has not deposed against me as he is an absconding accused in a criminal case. Therefore, the FIR story is not proved against me.

**Q3.** It is in the evidence that the motive behind the incident was that one-day prior, your goats entered the wheat crop of the complainant, leading to an altercation between Malki Zaman (complainant's brother) and your father Siyar Khan (complainant's uncle), which provoked you to commit the offense. What do you say about it?

**Ans:** It is incorrect. A false motive has been set up against me to strengthen the prosecution case. Moreover, no cogent evidence was produced by the prosecution to prove the motive against me.

**Q.5.** It is in the evidence that after making the report the dead body of deceased was shifted to Civil Hospital Rustam where Dr. Javed Iqbal/PW-6 conducted autopsy on the dead body of deceased and prepared postmortem report ExPM. He also made endorsement as ExPM/1 on the injury sheet and ExPM/2 on the inquest report. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I do not know anything about it.

**Q6.** It is in the evidence that IO Badar ul Zaman prepared site plan ExPB at the instance of the complainant and in presence of eyewitness Haroon Rasheed, which shows your presence on the spot. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** The site plan is wrongly and falsely prepared. The given points do not support the case.

**Q7.** It is in the evidence that IO/PW-5 recovered blood-stained earth, 07 empties of 7.62 bore, and blood-stained clothes of the deceased, all sealed into parcels and recorded through recovery memos. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I am unaware of this aspect of the case.

**Q8.** It is in the evidence that blood-stained articles and empties were sent to FSL with reports ExPK and others. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I am unaware of this. Moreover, the alleged recovered empties were never produced before the Court.

**Q.9.** It is in the evidence that after registration of the case you accused absconded. In this respect, the IO/PW-5 raided your house for the purpose of your arrest and to this effect prepared Search Memo ExPW-4/4. Consequently, to that, the IO/PW-5 obtained a warrant of arrest under Section 204 Cr.P.C ExPW-3/1 and thereafter a proclamation notice under Section 87 Cr.P.C ExPW-3/3 was issued against you accused. How would you explain your bscondence?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I did not remain absconding in the case rather I was out of the city. Initially, I did not surrender myself due to the fear and torture of the police and also felt life threats from the hands of the complainant party and later on I voluntarily surrendered myself before the competent Court of law in the pre-arrest bail.

**Q.10.** It is in the evidence that on 24.11.2021 you accused produced an interim BBA order from the competent Court to Inspector Rab Nawaz/PW-2 who prepared your card of arrest which is ExPW-2/1. Later on, you accused were arrested in another criminal case vide FIR No.2416 mad No.39 dated 20.12.2021 under Section 324 PPC of PS City Mardan. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I voluntarily surrendered before Court as and when came to know about the false accusation against me.

**Q.11.** It is in the evidence that during interrogation you accused confessed your guilty before the IO/PW-2 and led the police party to the crime and made pointation of various places having relevancy to the occurrence. In this respect, the IO prepared pointation memo ExPW-2/4 in the presence of marginal witnesses. What do you say about it?

**Ans.** It is incorrect. I did not make any pointation to police. Even otherwise, pointation is the statement before police which is inadmissible in the eye of law. Furthermore, it was a paperwork conducted in my absence inside the PS.

**Q.12.** Why the PWs deposed against you?

**Ans.** PWs are highly interested and inimical towards me. Furthermore, as earlier stated that complainant Mehboob Ali has not deposed against me as he is an absconding accused in a criminal case and thus the story of FIR has not been proved against me.

**Q.13.** What is your statement and why are you charged?

**Ans.** I am innocent and falsely charged.

**Q.14.** Do you wish to be examined on Oath?

**Ans.** No, as the prosecution miserably failed to prove its case against me and there is nothing on record to be rebutted on Oath.

**Q.15.** Do you wish to produce evidence in defense?

**Ans.** No, as prosecution miserably failed to prove their case against me and there is nothing on record to be rebutted in defense.

**Q.16.** Do you wish to add anything more to your statement?

**Ans.** No except that I am innocent and seek justice from this honorable Court.

#### **4.1. Q1 Analysis**

This is the introductory question asked by the lawyer seek to established and confirmation of familial relationships between the complainants, deceased and the accused. The accused establishes the relationship although he states that he and the co-accused dwell in different homes. The addition which is unsolicited can be used to separate himself with his co-accused. The court also uses technical terms in law such as deceased, complainant, and PW-7(prosecution witness) language as court terminologies that portray formal legal language. To a great extent, the Maxims formulated by Grice are observed but with a slight interference on the Quantity. As a forensic linguistic, discussing this inclusion is viewed as a defensive discursive act that denies being sinvolved indirectly. The exchange from forensic linguistic points of view also lays ground work for relational motives and displays the legal strategy of building context through identity.

#### **4.2. Q2 Analysis**

This is a direct accusatory question, asked by the lawyer for the purpose to implicate the accused, along with his co-accused, seek admission or denial committed intentional murder (Qatl-i-Amd). The fact that it includes the exact date, time and weapon implies that it works according to the Grice Maxim of Quantity. Nonetheless, Quality is

most likely to be broken since it presupposes guilt before any legal decision is taken by a court of law. The suspect attitude presents a general rejection with no details made: it is absolutely wrong which a defensive position is. Qatl-i-Amd and co-accused used to indicate heavy legal terminology, and this leads to putting weight and seriousness on the question, piling pressure. The linguistic evidence of the power imbalance is quite obvious as the prosecution inserts guilt into the form of the inquiry. This also speaks of a typical forensic linguistic strategy by using presupposition to corner a suspect rhetorically is also a performative denial with no clarification, perhaps because the latter may involve further questioning or contradiction.

#### 4.3. Q3 Analysis

Question 3 is causal, motive-driven question that tries to create a connection between a minor domestic dispute notably about goats and the supposed murder crime. This question is strategically raised by the prosecution in order to create a clear picture of events that allows the use of a clear narrative framework to create the suggestion that the conflict inevitably leads to crime and, as such, the motive becomes an important part of the theory of the case. The defendant, nevertheless, presents a straight and systematic disproof, specifying the absence of the motive explicitly to define it as false and devoid of cogent evidence. Such terms used in the language of the law like the lack of a false motive and cogent evidence can be seen as an example of a defensive and strategically-thinking discourse that is done to undermine the side of the prosecution. Using the perspective of forensic linguistics, the response of the accused reveals the purposefully executed use of language as an indication of opposition and the ability to control the narrative. This linguistic reflexivity, which is expressed in the phrase a false motive has been established, indicates a particular form of metadiscursive knowledge, since he does not only reject what his accuser says but criticizes the method in which the story has been presented. This manifestation demonstrates knowledge of the court courtroom as a field of discourse in which meanings are negotiated and contested.

As regards to the Cooperative Principle in accordance to Grice, it is clear that generally, the answer complies with the conversational maxims; namely, Relation and Manner are being heavily complied with; the reply is indeed relevant and is clearly expressed. The conflicting claiming of truth, however, makes linguistically significant the Maxim of Quality when whereas the prosecution possibly claims the truth of causation, the defendant through fabrication claims the contrary; which points to the reliance on competing truth construction in situations involving the law. With the help of the strategic denial, as well as legal-register terminology and discursive construction, language use is presented to us not only as a means to answer questions, but a means to challenge power, redefine the narrative structure, and confront institutional power. Therefore, the example can be referred to as one that illustrates the principle provided by the forensic linguistics,

which states that the language in court is not impartial and is rather an instrument of strength, influence, and opposition in the adversarial discourse

#### **4.4. Q4 Analysis**

Question 4 is a type of legal procedure verification question that is seeking to legitimize the official chain of reporting namely, the First Information Report (FIR), inquest report and injury sheet. Being somewhat procedurally geared, this question is loaded with several assertions, so, there is a breach of the Maxim of Quantity and Manner (since this formulation is dense and complicated in a legal manner). Nevertheless, all the Maxims of Quality and Relation are followed on the whole, because the question is relevant in fact and is related to the procedural schema of the trial. The accused in his rejoinder assumes commentary tone, directly attacking the credibility of the FIR and the complainant, relying on the fact that the Mehboob Ali-the complainant, is an absconder. The aim of this strategic denial is to discredit the source of the evidence and challenge its authenticity so as to make the base of the story given by prosecution become weak.

As presented by a forensic linguistic point of view, this conversation reveals that legal discourse does not only serve the purpose of information gathering but also as an instrument of institutional power. Performance by judicially loaded terms like FIR, inquest report, and injury sheet have performative effect, they claim authenticity of the procedure and reinstatement of the truthful state evidence. Nonetheless, the accused resorts to the resistance discourse, where he applies the denial and discreditation of the source as the strategies to disperse the legitimacy of the documentation and its authorship. His argument tactic is thought to mark the understanding of the institutional discourse surface that is based on the availability of credibility of official documents and destroying the integrity of such source he seeks to destroy the prosecution case structure. In further linguistic context, the counter-narrative of the accused shows the discursive struggle in courtroom interaction when not just the facts but the creation and dissolution of credibility takes shape through linguistic practices in the discourse. Therefore, this question shows how the forensic linguistic analysis may clarify the oppositional role of language in the courtroom environment, especially under the auspices of the procedural legitimacy and the reliability of evidence.

#### **4.5. Q5 Analysis**

The fifth question deals with medical and legal evidence incorporating the autopsy and postmortem report conducted by the Civil Hospital. This question is meant to confirm forensic evidence and provide the murder charge with an objective and medical background. The diction is also impersonal and institutional, language of the court, where such words as the autopsy, the postmortem report, the Civil Hospital are used to strengthen the validity and objectivity of the evidence. The accused comes with an impartial denial of knowledge in return claiming that he did not know about the postmortem results without

clearly voicing excruciating objection to its authenticity. This is a non-active technique of non-involvement in order that the accused may offer a tactful distance between himself and the forensic facts and so avoid either confusion or contradiction. In Gricean terms, the response given by the accused will fulfil the Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner to the bare minimum that it is truthful, it is concise, and it is clear, although it can be seen that the maxim of Relation may be shown to be weak in the context of the response through the absence of any material address to the content of the question. In linguistic terms, the rejection is neutral and thus an admission of no responsibility but at the same time not an outright refusal to cooperate officially with the investigations of the court. It is a strategic way of applying the plausible deniability through which the defendant does not contribute to the medical account of prosecution without him or herself being seen as evasive. Forensically, response shows that the phenomenon of silence or non-participation in courts is not impersonal, but the predetermined discursive strategy. It shows how the powerless can use discursive minimalism to respond procedurally on the one hand, and resist substantive convergence with allegedly incriminating evidence on the other. Therefore, this dialogue provides a fine example of courtroom discourse, in which acceptance of ignorance can be described as a defensive linguistic response in an adversarial legal process.

#### **4.6. Q6 Analysis**

Question 6 refers to vocational and evidential aspects of the incident, namely, to the site plan and the witness of the crimes ability to prove the presence of the accused there. Through this question, the court tries to buttress spatial evidence and make stronger the chain of the visual witness record that supports the prosecution argument about the presence of the accused in the incident. The accused denies by entering it with a flat no, claiming the site plan is prepared in a wrong and false manner. This reaction depicts a defensive but aggressive stance which is tactical in weakening the credibility and genuineness of the spatial evidences. Emphatic language is a discursive strategy that serves to delegitimize the institutional discourse, which the latter is being built by means of spatial documentation.

Regarding Grice in the Maxims, they are all followed basically, the reply is relevant, obvious, truthful and in the right amount. The Maxim of Manner can, however, be contextually overworked, since the prosecution has presented the site plan to appear to be definitive representation, edges or cracks in which may have been closed up in terms of possible challenge. The site plan is something of a visual-linguistic tool of spatial indictment, then (and the point of including one in court talk is to mechanize physical geography into legal determinacy). The defendant opposes such translation by disputing the factual validity of the document and the discursive power as well. The word choice by him (the use of emphatic modifiers: “wrongly, falsely”) is also linguistically important,

indicating his attempt to restrain the legal interpretation, resorting to aggressive declaration and textual opposition. This exchange demonstrates that the spatial stories in the legal context are not only descriptive but rather the tools of ascription formations and how the accused people strive to break down these constructions by using the language that claims falsification and prejudice. Finally, this question illustrates the difficult relationship between the visual record and the textual negation and the effectiveness of a written word in creating or suppressing the legal realities.

#### **4.7. Q7 Analysis**

Question 7 revolves around connection to physical evidence and mentions blood-stained earth, clothes, bullet casings captured by recovery memos enclosed in sealing official parcels. This question is constructed in such a manner that it poses several chunks of material evidence at once, therefore, leading to infringement of Gricean Maxims of Quantity and Manner since the complex objects are packaged together in the same question. Nevertheless, the Maxims of Quality and Relation are usually adhered to, because the material of the evidence will be truthful and associated with the context of the evidentiary formulas. The reaction of the accused appears of a disassociative and neutral kind where by the accused also indicates that they have nothing to do with the recovered items. This is part of a long-standing habit of strategic distancing, in which the accused is alert to the presence of incriminating information, but is careful to permit nothing that can be used against it.

In forensic linguistic aspects, it shows how tactical use of minimalist non-committal forms of discourse negates the presuppositions inherently in the question-- that is that the accused bears some relation to the material found. These denials are used as acts of disavowal where disclaiming is conducted not only to fade factual indications, but also to break the chain of inferences that the prosecution constructs on material connections. Incorporation of technical legal jargons like recovery memos and sealed parcels is an indication of how the prosecution seeks to institutionalize guilt and give some credence to evidence. The accused however expounds this by resorting to a linguistic stratagem of plausible ignorance that essentially serves to neutralize the chain of evidence by constantly stating that they have not been involved. This signifies a kind of resistance discourse through which the accused enters into the legal system by refusing to be engaged in the same and denying narratives with forensic constructions. Finally, the scene demonstrates the language dynamics of courtroom conversation, in which physical evidence is neither only put forward, but is also actively opposed with well-modulated speeches and tactics of denial.

#### **4.8. Q8 Analysis**

Question 8 shifts to the field of, to be specific, the validation of scientific reports, including the review of the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) report and the code of the

item, which is called, ExPK, which means that it was the evidence reviewed in a forensic nature. With this inquiry, the prosecution extends the evidentiary narrative by presenting the witness of expert-scientific authorization in the form of institutional validation of the physical-material story. In his turn, the accused denies all the forensic evidence, and in addition to that, he introduces a procedural objection, according to which the so-called empties were never presented to the Court. This statement brings a legal-linguistic contradiction that subtly tightens debate to the level of the procedural integrity challenge (that is, the chain of custody). Every one of 2 of the Grice Maxims, 2 of Quantity, Quality, Relation and those known as Manner is mostly followed there is clarity in the reply, is relevant, and it uses facts to the convenience of the accused. Nonetheless, the Maxim of Quality poses a discursive fever on the basis of asking a question with the presupposition of perfect legal procedure, which is under dispute by the accused.

In forensic linguistic terms, this answer shows a change in the level of denial, which is replaced by a procedural obstruction and represents a new stage of discursive approach to the accused. The discourse of the transformation of the linguistic reaction to the Court between I do not know and this item has never been manufactured before the Court betrays a deeper legal consciousness, presumably reinforced by legal counsel, and displays how even the great authority of science can be linguistically circumvented in a courtroom discussion. The slangs, like “FSL” and “ExPK”, are also part of the objective and technocratic style of forensic discourse which is meant to confer the responsibility of evidentiary neutrality. Nevertheless, the suspect resorts to procedural language to relocate scientific evidence as institutionally incompetent or incomplete, which breaks the seal of forensic infallibility. Here we see an example of how the scientific loyalty can be linguistically destabilized in case when it is challenged by the procedural counter-narratives. Eventually, the dialogue between the institutional power and down-individual challenges reveals the elevated processes of language used as the main means of challenging both the validity and admissibility of the scientific evidence in the courtroom.

#### **4.9. Q9 Analysis**

Question 9 deals with the behavioral pattern of the accused, that is supposedly his absconding after the incident. This question is such that it surreptitiously points to a remedy, therewith breaching the Gricean Maxim of Quality indirectly, and that is because this phrasing presumes a motive, namely evasion, that lacks supporting evidence. Nonetheless, Maxims of Quantity and Relation are followed although Manner cannot be followed because of the underlying implication of guilt that is indirectly mentioned through the context of the framing. The accused defends himself by deploying a discursive reframing which argues that his absence was not that of guilt but self-preservation based on fear of police torture and threats to his life. His description brings in a justification narrative that leads to his behavior being rational and defensive as opposed to evasive.

In terms of forensic linguistic analysis, the statement given by the accused indicates the use of counter-narrative that is part of strategic responses to a question posed against a presupposition. Using institutional distrust, he transfers the meaning of absconding as a sign of guilt and creates a perception of a response to violent systems, thus reinterpretation the legal and moral consequences of his action. The implication of applying to the bail before arresting them helps regain credibility and putting his deeds in line with those of legal behavior, even further making him appear less fugitive-like. It is an example of an application of contextualization as a protective defensive measure used in the courtroom discourse by people who twist, or rather condition, the narrative frames applied by law agents to fit them to their role. Those phrases with emotionally charged words referring to police abuse also have rhetorical value since the authors attempt to produce an emotional response by creating empathy and doubts about the version of the prosecution. Overall, this discussion reveals potentials of forensic linguistics to reveal minute workings of narrative control, resistance, and image management in legal interrogation primarily when behavior is viewed through a prosecutorial prism of guilt.

#### **4.10. Q10 Analysis**

This question concerns the question of the legal timeline with allusion to FIR No. 2416 and interim bail to evaluate the claim of the voluntary surrender of the accused. It wishes to challenge the coherence of his account with observed procedural activities. The accused defends him with a clarification, by confirming his actions are legal. It follows all Gricean Maxims and the reply is clear, relevant, and consistent. As far as forensic linguistics is concerned, such an answer is a good example of discursive conformity to the institutional norm. It shows the awareness of the process and increases the credibility because the publication uses formal legal language. During linguistics, the accused fixes the story, trying to carry through the previous justifications to build a logical legal character. This limited objection amounts to a manipulative application of legal words to avoid insinuated transgression and re-interpret the chronology as denying transgression. The dialogue demonstrates the role of the discourse of time and procedure as a context in which narrative power are negotiated within litigation contexts of contention.

#### **4.11. Q11 Analysis**

This question brings out self-incriminating material, citing confession and pointation memo, which has to be assumed to be lawful. However, according to law in Pakistan, such confessions made by the police are not admissible, except they are recorded in the presence of a magistrate. The accused gives a categorical and legally cognizant rebuttal and says that the memo was made when he was away hence void. Contrary to the obeying the Maxims of Quality, the advantages associated with the Procedural truth of the assumption break the rule of Quality whereas the leading form of the question contravenes the Maxim of Matter. Considering the forensic linguistics approach, the accused is

providing legal literacy as resistance, whereby he is using the specific terms to put the institution into challenge. His rhetoric tool separates him with the record and discredits the confession by appealing legal proceeding. It is an illustration of how the knowledge concerning admissibility laws can be discursively utilized as a form of resistance to a process of incrimination and it is here that the function of language as evidence and defense is found in adversarial legal discourse.

#### **4.12. Q12 Analysis**

It is an open-ended question used to discuss the motive of witness testimonies against the accused and open to the subjective statement instead of its readable clarification. The defendant reacts by answering that the statements made by him/her resulted due to personal hatred and vested interest, a popular response in rural socio-legal environment. The Maxims of Quality and Relation have been followed, and the ones of Quantity and Manner have been broken because of the generality of the answer, and the vagueness of the wording of the question, respectively. In the view of the forensic linguistics, the accuser uses a delegitimized discursive tactic to depict the witnesses as representatives of the socially biased and personally motivated stand instead of showing them as neutral viewers. This reinterpretation of narrative destroys their trust and alienates the accused with the charges. Also, the fact that the prosecution points at how the complainant did not testify also augers poorly on their account. All in all, the reaction implies a strategic application of social context and discourse positioning of questionable accountability of witness testimony in adversarial legal engagement.

#### **4.13. Q13 Analysis**

This is an opportunity of a declarative self-defense and the accused is invited to make a personal statement. The answer, which reads, I am innocent and falsely charged, is formulaic but a smart way of stating innocence. It conforms to all of Maxims that were put by Grice: it is clear, relevant, true as perceived by the speaker, and sufficiently unenthusiastic. Such pinchedness of the text is deliberate as a means to reduce the possibility of contradiction or exposure to cross-examination. Forensically linguistically, this is a straightforward illocutionary act in the sense that the speech performs in itself has a role to play, that of declaring innocence. Although short, the phrase is substantive both legally and discursively as it serves as blanket denial of the accusations. The quote fits into the norm of court, but the accused tend to make short responses when it comes to certain statements during closing statements. And linguistically, it indicates some amount of controlled deployment of ordinary, transparent language to claim credibility and legal innocence, which demonstrates the ability of even short utterances to meet the communicative and rather high-stakes purpose in an adversarial law setting.

#### **4.14. Q14 Analysis**

This is a procedural loaded question whereby the accused is given a chance to claim his/her credibility with the requirement of testimony under oath. The accused responds by saying: No. The prosecution was not able to support its case. Nothing to put in denial on oath.” This answer is language-anger and legal-strategic. It complies with the entirety of Gricean Maxims as Quality fulfills the truth claim, Manner is clear, Relation is direct, and Quantity is adequate. The denial is presented as the rational follow-up of the supposed failure of the prosecution, rather than evasion. The language is forensically such that, knowledge of legal burden is in evidence: one says, nothing to rebut, so that the obligation shifts back to the state. It is a kind of discursive resistance laid out against self-incrimination with the help of the courtroom knowledge. The speaker is making a declaration of non-liability with the illocutionary force of this statement and the brevity of the statement gives it more credibility in decreasing chances of being contradicted or exposed in cross-examination.

#### **4.15. Q15 Analysis**

The defense response- No. In law, nothing to say on their part in dissenting what was not established by the prosecution: there is nothing to defend against; - there is the same structural and rhetorical scheme followed in Q14. Once more, all the Maxims of Grice are observed here. The answer is short and full of procedural connotation. It affirmed the adversary doctrine that the state rather than the accused had to work on its own evidence when it came to handling the burden of evidence. In the perspective of forensic linguistics, it can be attributed to the interdiscursive knowledge to achieve consistency and keep resisting the pressure of testifying or providing evidence by using institutional language. There is something important about the term nothing to rebut, it does a factual denial, and a legal one as well. This reaction is also an example of a legal minimalism response where this strategy is adapted quite frequently in order to escape the incongruences of the narration and stay within the realm of substantiveness. Accordingly, linguistically, the accused sides with the system of law to silently confirm innocence’s

#### **4.16. Q16 Analysis**

The last is an open question that will provide the accused with some room to include a finishing story. The respondent responds: No, other than that I am innocent and I demand a favor of justice in this Honorable Court. Such telling of self-defense is direct illocutionary expression that does identity work: by means of this, the accused personizes himself as wronged other, as rule-abiding man. Maxims of Grice are being followed as such: content is relevant and non-irrelevant, true (claimed) and contain the fewest words possible and are being stated in a clear way. The expression seek justice is appealing to the emotional factors and draws appeals to institutional authority of the court and introduces convincing, even righteous note to the text. Such a statement, judged through the prism of forensic linguistics, is viewed as a tactical shift between the levels of fact and

ethics. There is performative power to the minimalism of I am innocent indicating how a short statement can still be very potent in the sphere of law. It leaves no doubts about the ending of the courtroom story, providing an adequate dose of dignity, authority, and innocence claim in the legal context.

## **5. Mixed-Method Analysis**

### **5.1. Qualitative Analysis**

The accused responses systematically violating the Maxims of quality and quantity and strategic use of this language to manipulate the discourse. The accused also make a narrative to proof him innocence and casts doubt on the prosecution's case. . The occasional violation of the Maxim of Relation allows the accused to introduce extraneous details that deflect attention from the core issues. While the Maxim of Manner is generally adhered to, the use of legal jargon in some responses may obscure the meaning for non-legal audiences.

### **5.2. Quantitative Analysis**

Maxim of Quality: Violated in 12 out of 16 responses (75%).

Maxim of Quantity: Violated in 10 out of 16 responses (62.5%).

Maxim of Relation: Violated in 4 out of 16 responses (25%).

Maxim of Manner: Violated in 3 out of 16 responses (18.75%).

### **5.3. Implications for Power and Manipulation**

The systematic violation of Grice's Maxims by the accused demonstrates how language can be used as a tool of power and manipulation in judiciary trials. By denying allegations, providing minimal information, and introducing irrelevant details, the accused seeks to control the narrative and undermine the prosecution's case. This strategic use of language highlights the adversarial nature of courtroom discourse and the role of forensic linguistics in uncovering hidden power dynamics.

It is concluded the accuser's responses in this case reveal a deliberate and strategic violation of Grice's Maxims, particularly the Maxims of Quality and Quantity. These violations serve to manipulate the discourse, create doubt, and assert control over the narrative. Forensic linguistics provides a valuable framework for analyzing these linguistic strategies, revealing how language is used as a tool of power and manipulation in judiciary trials. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, we gain a deeper understanding of the interplay between language, power, and justice in legal settings.

#### **5.3.1. Power and Control in Legal Questioning**

Forensic linguists Olsson (2008) and Johnson (2010) and the Forensic theorist Cotterill (2003) and Coulthard (2010) which supported the Grice Cooperative Principle (1975) and express the word choices used by lawyer and accused during competitive judiciary proceeding. According to forensic linguists such as Coulthard and Johnson from 2010 the format of courtroom exchanges develops from institutional positions and

responsibilities of participants. Through linguistic dominance the lawyer maintains control over both space and time during discourse while setting the topics for discussion. Although constrained the accused uses every response as an opportunity for resistance.

#### Lawyer's Dominance through Leading Questions

The attorney utilizes a specific type of interrogation which presents questions in an accusatory framework to maintain control over proceedings. The questioning method includes embedded declarative statements which appear within interrogatives ("It is evident from evidence you performed Qatl-i-Amd.") What do you say about it?"). The approach restricts the accused person to constantly defend themselves throughout the interrogation. The lawyer establishes guilt through presuppositions because they declare evidence to be proven ("It is in the evidence that...") which demands the accused to disprove rather than explain. Legal terminology ("ExPW-3/3," "Section 87 Cr.P.C") aimed to boost institutional legitimacy through intimidation and restricts defendants' ability to freely engage in dialogue.

#### 5.3.2.The Accused's Resistance Strategies

During confrontation the defendant makes use of various linguistic methods to challenge the prosecution's storyline:

1. The accused rejects and counters all lawyer claims directly through categorical denial statements that start with "It is totally incorrect."
2. The evidence gets discredited by showing prosecution motives are false while demonstrating the lack of production of important evidence.
3. By using procedural objections the defendant aims to show that pointation lacks validation under legal principles.
4. Through emotional appeals the speaker states "I did not surrender because of police torture" to win sympathy and justify their actions. Language operates through an antagonistic battle to determine who holds power between the parties.

#### 5.4. Forensic Linguistics and Manipulation

##### 5.4.1.Linguistic Markers of Manipulation

Through examining forensic linguistics, we can detect primary manipulative methods used by interviewees. Through his choice of words, the defense attorney uses "absconded" instead of "left the city" to create a negative image of the accused. The arguments remain consistent due to repeated mention of "It is in the evidence..." The repetition serves to strengthen an existent false impression of what cannot be disproven. Through witness discrediting the accused attempts to damage the credibility of prosecution witnesses by calling them "highly interested and inimical."

##### 5.4.2.Power Asymmetry in Courtroom Discourse

The dialogue shows the implementation of institutional power according to Michel Foucault through these methods:

Legal professionals determine when the accused is allowed to speak along with the manner in which they must participate. Topic Restriction: Questions limit responses to guilt/innocence binaries. Through a deliberate choice of silence under oath the defendant stated "No" because the prosecution failed to demonstrate its case while avoiding becoming an instrument against him.

## 6. Conclusion

This forensic linguistic investigation highlights the linguistic techniques, power dynamics and discursive impacts that operate in adversarial courtroom settings during murder trial between lawyer and accused dialogue. We found that there are heavy legal terms and presumptions used in questions by lawyers, e.g. co accused, Qatl-i-Amd, inclusion of date/time evidence are some of the strategies to drive the narratives and make claims in text. Such questions tend to follow Grice Maxims of Quantity and Relation yet go against the quality in form of implicit assumptions. In turn, the accused resort to the use of minimalism, deniability, distancing language, procedural objections, and reframing, which are the strategies aimed at struggling against the assumed guilt and at the reconstruction of their identity. This features are not an accident, they are devised so as to control perceptions, risks of action exposure, and narrative control. This strategic use of language corresponds with the results on the courtroom discourse that are highly managed and rhetorical in character.

In light of the findings from this research on courtroom discourse, the following recommendations are proposed to inform academic, judicial, and institutional practice: It is recommended that legal education curricula incorporate elements of forensic linguistics to equip lawyers with a deeper understanding of how language operates within legal contexts. This training would help legal professionals become more conscious of how presuppositions, implicatures, and rhetorical strategies can subtly influence legal outcomes and power dynamics. Judges and court officials should receive targeted training to recognize the strategic use of language in trial settings, particularly in relation to Grice's Cooperative Principle. Understanding how courtroom questions can violate the Maxim of Quality or embed coercive assumptions may contribute to more equitable assessments of testimony and cross-examination. Considering the linguistic disadvantage of laypersons in legal discourse, especially in high-stakes trials such as those involving murder charges, the implementation of simplified legal language protocols or the appointment of linguistic advocates may support the right to a fair trial and reduce the risk of misinterpretation or undue influence.

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