



A COMPARATIVE FORENSIC DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MURDER CONFESSION STATEMENTS IN PAKISTAN AND USA

Hijab Zahra
hijabhaider05@gmail.com

MPhil Applied Linguistics, Department of Applied Linguistics,
Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Dr. Badriah Khaleel
badriah.khaleel@kinnaird.edu.pk

Head of the Applied Linguistics Department, Kinnaird College for
Women University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Abstract

This study examines how confessional discourse is constructed in murder cases across two distinct legal jurisdictions, Pakistan and the United States of America. Rather than treating confessions as straightforward admissions of guilt, this research approaches them as institutionally produced, linguistically mediated narratives that are shaped by power dynamics, cultural contexts, and interrogation practices. Drawing on Forensic Discourse Analysis (FDA) and Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory, the study investigates how language functions to assign, suppress, or redistribute agency and accountability in confessional texts. A qualitative comparative approach was adopted, with purposive sampling used to select two high-profile murder cases — one from each jurisdiction — that offered linguistic richness for analysis. Data were drawn from secondary sources including reconstructed confessional statements, legal summaries, court records, and media reports. Analysis focused on key linguistic features such as pronoun use, modality, lexical choice, hedging, narrative structure, and social actor representation. Findings reveal that confessions from the Pakistani context tend towards passivation, impersonalization, and suppression of agency, whereby actions are described with diminished personal accountability and responsibility is often externalized to situational forces. In contrast, American confessions demonstrate clear activation of the accused as a social actor; however, this activation is consistently accompanied by emotional rationalization, psychological justification, and narrative mitigation. In both cases, institutional power structures play a decisive role in shaping the language and content of confessional discourse. The study contributes to the growing field of forensic linguistics by providing a cross-jurisdictional analysis that highlights the non-neutral, socially constructed nature of confessional language. It further underscores the practical need for forensic linguistic awareness in legal proceedings, particularly in murder cases where the evidentiary weight of a confession is especially significant.

Keywords: *Agency Construction, Comparative Approach, Confessional Discourse, Critical Discourse Analysis, Forensic Linguistics, Murder Cases, Pakistan, Purposive Sampling, Social Actor Theory, United States.*

Corresponding Author: Hijab Zahra (MPhil Applied Linguistics, Department of Applied Linguistics, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan)

Email: hijabhaider05@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Language operates as a fundamental instrument within legal proceedings- not merely as a channel through which meaning is transmitted, but as a constitutive force through which reality, accountability, and truth are actively constructed. In the domain of criminal justice, confessional statements occupy a uniquely privileged position among evidentiary sources, particularly in cases involving murder. Courts have historically treated a confession as among the most compelling forms of evidence available to the prosecution, offering what appears to be direct access to the perpetrator's intentions, motivations, and actions. Yet contemporary scholarship within forensic linguistics consistently challenges this assumption, demonstrating that confessional texts are far from being transparent windows into criminal truth. Rather, they are discursively produced, institutionally shaped, and linguistically mediated constructs (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010).

From the analytical perspective of discourse analysis, a confession is not simply a recounting of events; it is the product of a complex communicative encounter in which social actors, including the accused, the victim, the interrogator, and the institution itself, are linguistically positioned, included, excluded, activated, or rendered passive. Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory (2008) provides a particularly powerful lens through which to examine these processes, as it draws attention to the ways in which discourse shapes perceptions of reality through the selective representation of participants. When applied to confessional texts, this framework reveals how confessors are constructed as either responsible, agentive beings or as passive subjects overwhelmed by forces beyond their control.

Within the context of Pakistan, confessional discourse tends to exhibit features of passivation and agency suppression. Suspects frequently employ constructions that render actions as occurring independently of a deliberate agent, using indirect phrasing and impersonal structures to create discursive distance from the criminal act. This pattern reflects, in part, the socio-legal environment in which confessions are produced — one characterized by significant power asymmetries between interrogators and suspects,

limited access to legal counsel, and concerns regarding custodial coercion (Majeed et al., 2025).

In the United States, by contrast, the confessional landscape is shaped by formal procedural protections most notably the Miranda rights that ostensibly safeguard suspects from involuntary self-incrimination. Nevertheless, American confessions demonstrate a different form of discursive construction: one in which the accused is clearly activated as the agent of the criminal act, yet where this agency is consistently mediated through layers of emotional rationalization, psychological justification, and narrative mitigation. The suspect confesses, but does so within a framework that simultaneously accounts for , and partially excuses — the actions described (Leo, 2021; Garrett, 2022).

These contrasting patterns suggest that confessions are not merely reflections of facts but are representations of socially constructed actors, shaped by the legal context, interrogation methodology, cultural scripts, and institutional power. The present study seeks to apply Van Leeuwen's Social Actor framework alongside Forensic Discourse Analysis to examine how agency and accountability are differentially constructed in confessional discourse across these two distinct jurisdictions.

1.1. Background of the Study

Language is among the most consequential elements of any legal system — serving not only to convey information but to construct reality, establish accountability, and define truth within institutional settings. In criminal proceedings, particularly those involving serious offences such as murder, confessional testimony has historically been accorded the status of paramount evidence. Legal tradition has long regarded a confession as an unmediated expression of the suspect's consciousness — a direct articulation of guilt that requires little further interrogation once obtained (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010).

However, findings emerging from forensic linguistics over the past two decades have increasingly called this traditional understanding into question. A confession is not merely a narration of events; it is, rather, the construction of a story within a particular institutional setting — one in which the power asymmetry between questioner and questioned is pronounced, and in which the latter operates under varying degrees of explicit and implicit pressure to produce an account that satisfies the institutional requirements of the investigation (Fairclough, 1992).

In Pakistan, the process of generating confessional statements unfolds within a legal environment marked by documented concerns regarding custodial coercion, inconsistency in procedural protections, and restricted access to legal representation. These structural conditions shape the linguistic character of confessional texts in significant ways, producing features such as reduced agency, deliberate vagueness, and fragmented narrative organisation. Suspects frequently resort to passive constructions rather than first-

person assertions, effectively distancing themselves linguistically from the actions described.

The American legal system, in contrast, incorporates formal mechanisms — including the Miranda warning — that are designed to safeguard suspects from involuntary self-incrimination by ensuring awareness of the right to silence and legal counsel. While these protections alter the conditions under which confessions are obtained, they do not eliminate the psychological pressures brought to bear during interrogation. Minimization, whereby the interrogator downplays the moral gravity of the offence, and maximization, in which the interrogator amplifies the consequences of non-confession, continue to shape the confessional process in important ways (Leo, 2008).

A comparative analysis of these two distinct legal and cultural settings therefore offers valuable insights into how the law, interrogation methodology, and cultural norms collectively contribute to the construction of confessional discourse.

1.2. Significance of the Study

The present research makes a substantive contribution to the existing literature on forensic linguistics by conducting a systematic comparative analysis of confessional discourse across two legally and culturally distinct jurisdictions. While prior scholarship has investigated the language of confessions within single legal systems, relatively few studies have undertaken cross-jurisdictional linguistic comparisons that account for the varying socio-legal conditions shaping confessional production.

From a practical standpoint, the research offers meaningful insights for legal practitioners, criminal investigators, and policy makers. By identifying the linguistic features associated with coercion, narrative construction, and agency manipulation within the confessional process, the study contributes to more sophisticated frameworks for evaluating the reliability and voluntariness of confessional evidence. It also highlights the fundamental role of language as a constitutive instrument in legal decision-making, underscoring the importance of developing forensic linguistic literacy among those engaged in evidence assessment.

1.3. Rationale of the Study

The growing reliance placed upon confessional statements in criminal proceedings particularly in murder cases makes rigorous linguistic examination of their production and interpretation not merely desirable but necessary. Confessions are frequently treated as categorical proof of guilt, yet this treatment fails to account for the multifarious social, linguistic, and institutional processes that underlie their generation. A confession does not simply mirror what actually occurred; it is, rather, the product of a situated communicative encounter shaped by power relations, institutional expectations, and discursive conventions.

A central motivation for the present research lies in the relative neglect of linguistic dimensions in the academic and legal examination of confessions, particularly within jurisdictions in which confessional evidence carries decisive weight. Attention continues to be directed primarily toward the substantive content of confessions, what is admitted, while insufficient consideration is afforded to the manner and medium through which that content is expressed. Language itself can function as a powerful mechanism for both revealing and concealing truth.

An additional rationale for the study concerns the absence of systematic comparative research on confessional discourse across different legal contexts. The confessional process is never practised in isolation from its institutional environment; it is profoundly shaped by legal procedures, interrogation methodologies, and cultural values. By examining confessions obtained within both the Pakistani and American contexts, this study illuminates the extent to which the legal and cultural environment determines how individual subjectivity is represented through language.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

Confessions continue to be regarded as among the most authoritative forms of evidence within criminal justice systems, yet this status does not take adequate account of the extraneous forces — linguistic, institutional, psychological — that may shape their production. The dominant assumption that a confession represents a truthful and voluntary account of events fails to engage with the complex processes of discourse formation that underlie it.

In Pakistan, issues related to custodial coercion, procedural irregularities, and linguistic mediation raise significant questions regarding the voluntariness and reliability of confessional statements. Linguistic phenomena including hedging, agency suppression, and narrative incoherence suggest that many confessions may not represent authentic or uncoerced accounts. In the United States, while formal procedural safeguards exist, the deployment of sophisticated psychological interrogation techniques gives rise to a distinct form of discursive pressure. Confessions obtained through such methods may be linguistically coherent but nonetheless reflect the influence of strategic questioning and emotional manipulation. Despite the salience of these concerns, no systematic comparative forensic linguistic analysis of murder confessions across these two systems has previously been conducted.

1.5. Research Objectives

- To analyse the linguistic characteristics of murder confession statements in Pakistan and the United States.
- To examine how language is employed within confessional discourse to construct and deny agency in both legal contexts.

- To investigate the impact of institutional conditions on the construction of confessional discourse in murder cases within Pakistan and the USA.

1.6. Research Questions

- What are the distinguishing linguistic characteristics of murder confession statements in Pakistan and the United States?
- How is language employed to construct and deny agency within confessional discourse across the legal contexts of Pakistan and the USA?
- In what ways do institutional conditions shape confessional discourse in murder cases within Pakistan and the USA?

2. Literature Review

Recent scholarship on forensic discourse and confessional analysis has yielded increasingly nuanced accounts of how confessions are produced, interpreted, and institutionally mediated across different legal and cultural settings. The emerging consensus within the field holds that confessions are not transparent admissions of guilt but are, rather, discursively constructed texts whose linguistic properties reflect the conditions of their production as much as the intentions of their producers.

A foundational concern within forensic linguistics involves the recognition that confession cannot be understood as mere narration. As Coulthard and Johnson (2010) establish, the language of legal settings is characterised by its performativity — it does not simply describe reality but actively constitutes it. Discourse within legal contexts is shaped by formality, institutional convention, and the asymmetrical distribution of power between participants. For suspects, who typically lack expertise in the language conventions of legal institutions, participation in the confessional process often involves the adoption of discursive strategies that are more responsive to institutional pressure than to authentic recollection.

2.1. Confessions as Institutionally Constructed Discourse

The theoretical reorientation of confessions from transparent admissions to institutionally constructed texts has been elaborated by a range of scholars working at the intersection of linguistics, law, and social theory. From this perspective, a confession is produced through a communicative process that involves interaction, negotiation, and the exercise of institutional power. The resulting text reflects not only what the suspect says, but what the institution requires, expects, and extracts from the confessional encounter (Tannen, 1989).

Confessional discourse is produced in institutional contexts defined by strong disparities of power. In custodial interrogations, investigators exercise considerable authority over the terms and direction of the interaction, controlling the timing of questioning, the framing of issues, and the evaluation of responses. Suspects, by contrast, occupy a structurally disadvantaged position that is further complicated by the

psychological pressure of arrest, the uncertainty of legal consequences, and the potential absence of legal representation (Fairclough, 1992).

These dynamics are especially pronounced in murder cases, where the gravity of the offence intensifies both the institutional imperative to secure a confession and the psychological vulnerability of the suspect. Under such conditions, the language used by suspects is likely to be shaped by their perception of what the interrogating authority wishes to hear, resulting in linguistic patterns that reflect compliance, accommodation, and strategic self-presentation rather than unmediated recall.

A study by Waqas Ahmed, Mubashar Nadeem, and Adeel Sajjad (2023) conducted a forensic analysis of bilingual confession speeches made prior to police interrogations in a prominent Pakistani assassination case. Transcribed and translated from Urdu and Punjabi, the confessions were analysed through the framework of Grice's conversational maxims to identify ideological and communicative manipulations. The findings provide compelling evidence for the significance of linguistic factors in mediating confessional meaning, supporting the argument that Pakistani confessional discourse is deeply shaped by the institutional conditions of its production.

2.2. Forensic Linguistics in Pakistan

Within the Pakistani context, a body of scholarly literature has emerged that examines the structural and institutional influences on the production of murder confessional statements. Empirical evidence consistently points to the significant role of custodial influence in shaping confessions, as a consequence of the pronounced power imbalance between law enforcement and those accused of serious offences. Suspects in such environments are subject to various forms of psychological pressure that range from direct intimidation to more subtle forms of coercion including isolation, sustained questioning, and procedural uncertainty (Majeed et al., 2025).

Majeed and colleagues (2025) investigated the use of confessions in judicial reasoning in murder cases across Pakistani appellate courts, finding that confessions that were inadmissible, conflicting, or unverified were nonetheless employed by courts to establish guilt. This research situates confessional language within the broader context of institutional legal discourse, demonstrating how institutional practices can perpetuate attributions of criminal responsibility despite procedural inadequacies.

The multilingual character of Pakistani society introduces a further layer of complexity into the confessional process. With more than seventy languages in active use across the country, suspects frequently speak regional languages such as Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, or Saraiki, while official confessional documentation is typically recorded in Urdu or English. The translation process that mediates between spoken testimony and written documentation is far from neutral; it involves the exercise of interpretive authority

by untrained personnel whose decisions can significantly alter the semantic and pragmatic character of the original utterance (Hamid, 2022).

Linguistic markers of hesitancy, ambiguity, and mitigation including modal verbs of doubt, hedging constructions, and conditional phrasings may be transformed into more assertive and definitive forms during the translation process, effectively erasing evidence of uncertainty or reluctance from the official record. In murder cases, where legal interpretation is heavily dependent on evidence of intent, causation, and voluntariness, such translational shifts can fundamentally alter the evidentiary character of a confession.

Institutional analyses of Pakistani confessional texts reveal characteristic linguistic patterns that serve to foreground guilt and consistency while suppressing evidence of doubt, coercion, or resistance. The prevalence of declarative constructions presents events as established facts rather than interpretations; evaluative clauses embed moral judgment within the descriptive fabric of the narrative; and active voice constructions consistently attribute agency to the accused, constructing an image of deliberate, voluntary action. Meanwhile, the role of the interrogator in shaping the narrative is rendered linguistically invisible (Buksh, Ramzan & Javed, 2022).

2.3. Forensic Linguistics in the United States

Academic exploration of murder confessions in the United States has established a rich body of research documenting the complex psychological, linguistic, and institutional dimensions of the American confessional process. The constitutional framework provides formal procedural protections — most notably the Miranda rights established under *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966) — that prohibit the use of physical coercion and require that suspects be informed of their right to silence and legal representation. Nevertheless, research consistently demonstrates that the absence of physical compulsion does not preclude the operation of powerful psychological pressures that shape the production of confessions.

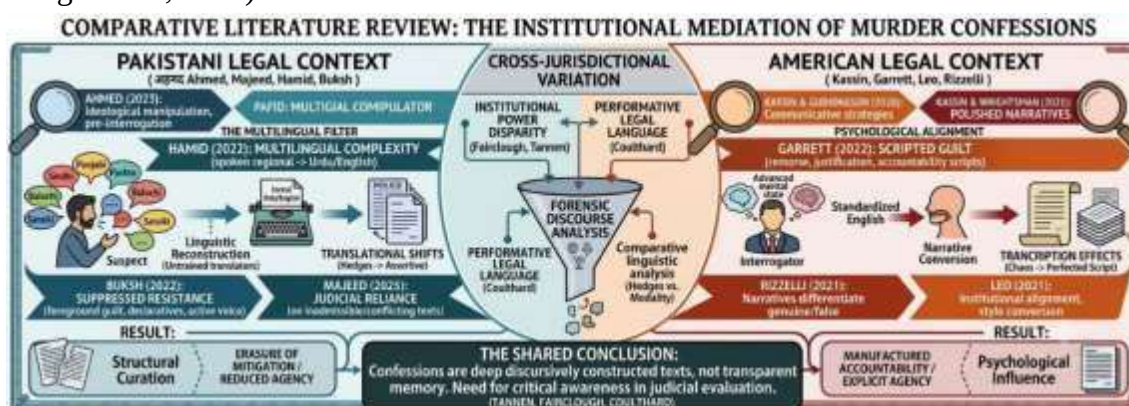
American interrogators employ a range of carefully developed communicative strategies designed to elicit confessions through the manipulation of the suspect's psychological state rather than through physical force. Minimization and maximization — identified by Kassin and Gudjonsson (2020) as among the most widely used interrogation techniques — operate by alternately reducing the perceived moral gravity of the offence and amplifying the suspect's fear of the consequences of continued denial. These techniques systematically manipulate the confessional process in ways that produce linguistically coherent narratives that may not accurately represent the suspect's subjective experience of events.

A foundational study by Rizzelli, Kassin, and Gales (2021) examined authentic and fabricated English confessions, identifying specific linguistic features that differentiate genuine from false confessional texts, including patterns of pronoun usage and conjunctive

structure. This research supports the analytical emphasis of the present study on narrative form and agency attribution as sites of meaningful linguistic distinction within confessional discourse.

Garrett (2022) demonstrated how confessional texts in prominent American murder cases conform to a narrative structure characterised by remorse, justification, and moral accountability — a structure whose coherence reflects successful alignment with institutionally sanctioned scripts of guilt rather than spontaneous recollection. The discursive alignment that characterises such confessions is further enabled by the sequential design of the interrogation process, in which repetition, reformulation, and guided prompting gradually transform initial denials into linguistically organised admissions.

Documentation practices in the United States further mediate the character of confessional evidence. Even in jurisdictions that require audio-visual recording of interrogations, written statements remain the primary reference documents used by courts and investigators. The transcription process necessarily involves selection, summarisation, and institutional reinterpretation, editing out features of oral performance hesitations, false starts, emotional disruptions, incomplete utterances — that might convey uncertainty or coercion, and replacing them with a polished, logically sequential narrative (Kassin & Wrightsman, 2021).



2.4. Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory

Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory (2008) provides the principal theoretical framework for the discourse analysis conducted in this study. The theory proposes a systematic account of the ways in which social actors are represented within discourse, attending particularly to the strategies through which participants are included or excluded, activated or passivated, personalised or impersonalised, nominated or categorised, and functionalised or identified.

These categories carry significant analytical implications for the study of confessional discourse, as they illuminate how the distribution of agency and responsibility

between participants the accused, the victim, the interrogator, and the institutional apparatus is shaped through language. When an accused person is represented as the active, named agent of a violent act, the discursive construction implies deliberate, volitional action. When the same person is grammatically backgrounded, replaced by abstract forces, or excluded entirely from the sentence, the construction implies diminished culpability.

The theory has been applied productively within forensic linguistic research to examine how power relations are reproduced through institutional language, including legal texts, police reports, and media accounts. In the context of confessional discourse, it offers a framework for analysing how guilt and responsibility are not simply stated but are constructed through the systematic selection and arrangement of linguistic resources.

2.5. Critical Discourse Analysis and Forensic Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as developed by Fairclough (1992) and elaborated by Van Dijk (1993) and Wodak (2009), provides a complementary macro-analytical lens through which to examine the relationship between language, power, and ideology within confessional texts. CDA proceeds from the premise that discourse is not merely a medium of communication but a site in which social structures are reproduced, contested, and transformed. Applied to confessional discourse, CDA draws attention to the ways in which institutional power shapes linguistic choices, determining what can be said, how it must be said, and whose version of events acquires legitimacy.

Forensic Discourse Analysis (FDA) extends this macro-level concern with power to a more granular examination of the linguistic forms through which meaning is produced in specific legal contexts. FDA attends to features such as syntactic structure, lexical choice, modal expression, pronoun usage, and narrative organisation, analysing how these micro-level properties collectively construct representations of agency, intentionality, and accountability. The integration of CDA and FDA enables the present study to operate simultaneously at the level of broader social and institutional power dynamics and at the level of specific linguistic instantiations of those dynamics within individual confessional texts.

2.6. Media Representation of Confessions

Beyond the immediate institutional context of the interrogation room, the media plays a significant role in framing public understanding of confessional discourse in both Pakistan and the United States. In Pakistan, television news channels, newspapers, and online platforms regularly present confessional material within dramatically inflated frames, emphasising expressions of guilt and remorse while contextualising the confession within broader narratives of moral failure and social deviance. This process of media framing tends to decontextualise confessions from the conditions of their production, making it difficult for audiences to appreciate the role of custodial pressure, leading questioning, or linguistic mediation in generating the text (Raza, 2023).

In the United States, high-profile murder cases generate extensive media coverage that situates confessional material within culturally resonant scripts concerning violence, morality, and personal accountability. Selective quotation, narrative framing, and the repeated circulation of confessional excerpts across news and social media platforms collectively contribute to the construction of a public understanding of guilt that operates independently of and may actively influence formal legal processes (Leo, 2021).

From a forensic linguistic perspective, media representations of confessions constitute a secondary layer of discursive mediation that transforms original confessional texts already mediated by institutional production processes into culturally meaningful narratives. Analysis of this secondary mediation reveals how linguistic elements are further selected, recontextualised, and reframed in the service of cultural scripts concerning crime, responsibility, and justice.

2.7. Comparative Perspectives and Research Gap

Despite the volume of scholarship produced in the areas of confessional reliability, interrogation psychology, and media influence, comparative forensic linguistic analysis of murder confessions across different jurisdictions remains a relatively underdeveloped area of inquiry. Existing research tends to focus on confessions within single legal systems, or to approach them through disciplinary lenses — legal theory, cognitive psychology, media studies — that prioritise substance over linguistic form.

The micro-linguistic dimensions of confessional discourse including agency attribution, modality, evaluative stance, narrative structure, and intertextual framing have received insufficient comparative attention, despite their crucial importance in the construction of perceptions of guilt, voluntariness, and accountability. The same linguistic patterns may carry different implications in different sociolinguistic contexts, and assessments of confessional credibility that fail to account for these contextual differences risk serious misinterpretation. This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a systematic cross-jurisdictional forensic discourse analysis of murder confessions, contributing both to the theoretical development of the field and to its practical application in legal settings.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretivist comparative case study design to conduct a forensic discourse analysis of murder confession statements in Pakistan and the United States, utilizing secondary sources—such as reconstructed confessions, court judgments, media reports, and legal documents—due to the inaccessibility of primary interrogation records (Shuy, 1998). Grounded in forensic linguistics, where legal language is viewed as constitutive rather than merely descriptive (Coulthard & Johnson, 2010), the methodology integrates Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a macro-level framework with Forensic Discourse Analysis (FDA) as a micro-level framework to examine

institutional power relations. Purposive sampling was employed to select one linguistically rich murder case from each jurisdiction based on text complexity and the availability of detailed confessional material (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The macro-analysis relies on CDA (Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 2009) to investigate how power relations and ideologies are reproduced through legal and media structures. On a micro-level, FDA is applied to examine specific linguistic categories: agency and pronoun usage (self-attribution versus responsibility avoidance), modality and hedging (degrees of certainty and obligation), narrative structure (temporal organization and causal logic), and lexical choice (attitudinal orientation). Additionally, Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory (2008) is integrated to analyze how the accused, victim, interrogator, and institution are linguistically constructed through five analytical polarities: inclusion versus exclusion, activation versus passivation, personalisation versus impersonalisation, nomination versus categorisation, and functionalisation versus identification. Finally, reliability is ensured through the systematic application of these analytical criteria to permit replication, while validity is enhanced via data triangulation across the multiple secondary sources and the contextual interpretation of language within its socio-cultural setting.

4. Case Study Analysis

4.1. Case Study Analysis: Pakistan

The forensic discourse analysis of confessional statements from the Pakistani legal context reveals a consistent pattern of linguistic strategies through which agency is suppressed, responsibility is distributed away from the accused, and institutional power over the narrative is exercised with significant discursive effect. These patterns are examined here through the analytical lens of Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory, which provides the conceptual vocabulary for identifying and interpreting the representation of social actors within the confessional text.

4.2. Socio-Legal Setting and Discursive Conditions

Confession statements in Pakistan are frequently produced within interrogative settings characterised by a pronounced asymmetry of power between the investigating authority and the suspect. This asymmetry is not merely procedural but is discursively consequential, shaping not only the content of what is said but the linguistic form in which it is expressed. According to Van Leeuwen (2008), discourse may either include or exclude social actors, activate or passivate them, and assign roles in accordance with institutional values. These possibilities are especially visible in Pakistani confessional discourse, where the conditions of production leave their imprint on the linguistic character of the resulting text.

The confessional rhetoric of this context is accordingly characterised by the suppression of agency, the passivisation of action, and the impersonalisation of responsibility suggesting that the narrative is shaped not by the free exercise of authorial

will but by the pressures and conventions of the institutional setting within which it is produced.

4.2.1. Suppression and Exclusion of the Accused

A prominent feature of confessional rhetoric in the Pakistani context is the systematic suppression of the accused as an agent. This pattern manifests in phrases where the criminal action is referred to without specifying its author exemplified in constructions such as "The incident occurred suddenly" or "A mistake happened." In these sentences, the accused is entirely absent from the grammatical structure of the utterance. Following Van Leeuwen's taxonomy, this constitutes exclusion by suppression a strategy that renders the incident impersonal and apparently inevitable, rather than intentional and voluntarily executed. Forensically, the effect is to attenuate the link between perpetrator and deed, thereby minimising the impression of conscious agency and personal accountability.

4.2.2. Passivation and Backgrounding of Agency

Even when the accused is present within the confessional narrative, their representation is frequently characterised by passivation a process in which the actor is grammatically marginalised or removed from the position of agent. Constructions such as "She was injured during the incident" or "The harm was caused unintentionally" foreground the action or its consequences rather than the actor responsible for them. In Van Leeuwen's framework, passivation places the agent in a semantically peripheral position while the event itself occupies the discursive centre. This strategy enables the accused to remain within the narrative while avoiding full grammatical attribution of responsibility — maintaining a form of discursive presence without the full weight of agentive accountability.

4.2.3. Impersonalisation and Externalisation of Responsibility

A further significant pattern in Pakistani confessional discourse involves the impersonalisation of action — the attribution of causation not to identifiable human agents but to abstract forces or situational conditions. Characteristic instances include "Anger took control of me" and "The situation forced me to act." In these constructions, responsibility is transferred from the accused person to an external or internal force that is presented as having operated independently of conscious will. Van Leeuwen identifies this as impersonalisation — the substitution of social agents by abstract entities such as emotions or circumstances. Discursively, this strategy serves two related functions: it diminishes personal responsibility by presenting the behaviour as coerced or involuntary, and it introduces an element of narrative inevitability that removes the impression of deliberate choice from the confessional account.

4.2.4. Functionalisation through Emotional States

Alongside impersonalisation, Pakistani confessional discourse also employs functionalization, a strategy in which the accused is defined in terms of their emotional or

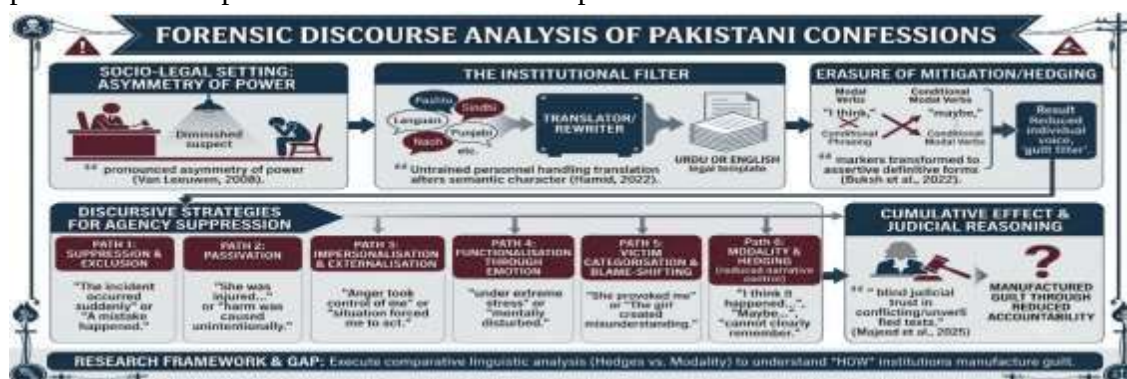
psychological condition rather than their actions. Statements such as "I was under extreme stress" or "I was mentally disturbed" present the confessor's inner state as the defining context for the criminal act, thereby constructing an account in which the behaviour resulted from a particular emotional condition rather than from deliberate intentionality. This is consistent with Van Leeuwen's concept of functionalisation, in which individuals are described in terms of their role or condition. The accused retains a degree of subjectivity within the narrative while the attribution of full, considered agency is linguistically mitigated.

4.2.5. Victim Representation and Categorisation

The linguistic representation of the victim within Pakistani confessional discourse frequently involves a subtle redistribution of causal responsibility. Victims are positioned as participants in a chain of cause-and-effect that culminates in the criminal act, through constructions such as "She provoked me" or "The girl created misunderstanding." In Van Leeuwen's terms, this constitutes categorisation the classification of social actors according to their attributed role or characteristics rather than their individual identity. By incorporating the victim's actions into the causal logic of the narrative, such constructions perform a function of discursive blame-shifting, redistributing responsibility across multiple participants and reducing the exclusive culpability of the accused.

4.2.6. Modality, Hedging, and Narrative Uncertainty

Modality and hedging are additional characteristic features of Pakistani confessional discourse, functioning as linguistic markers of uncertainty and reduced narrative control. Constructions such as "I think it happened like this," "Maybe it was an accident," and "I cannot clearly remember" attenuate the assertive force of the confessional account, creating impressions of epistemic distance and indeterminacy. From a Social Actor perspective, this extensive use of modality can be interpreted as a form of agency backgrounding responsibility is neither denied nor explicitly admitted, but is linguistically suspended or qualified. The high frequency of hedging markers further suggests that the confessional narrative is not entirely self-generated but is shaped, at least in part, by the pressures and expectations of the context of production.



4.3. Case Study Analysis: United States

The forensic discourse analysis of confessional statements from the American legal context reveals a markedly different pattern of social actor representation. Where Pakistani confessions are characterised by suppression, passivation, and impersonalisation, American confessions typically feature the clear activation of the accused as an agentive participant in the confessional narrative. However, this activation is consistently accompanied by discursive strategies of emotional rationalisation, psychological justification, and narrative mitigation — processes through which agency is acknowledged but simultaneously negotiated and partially excused.

4.3.1. Legal Safeguards and Discourse Implications

Confessions in the American context are produced within a legal framework defined by procedural protections, most notably the Miranda rights, which require that suspects be informed of their right to remain silent and to seek legal counsel prior to interrogation. In terms of social actor representation, this institutional context produces confessional texts in which the accused is typically constructed as an informed, rights-bearing individual — a social actor who participates in the confessional process with at least nominal awareness of their legal standing. In contrast to the Pakistani context, where agency is commonly suppressed at the grammatical level, American confessions frequently display activation, in which the accused is positioned as the explicit agent of the criminal act. Nevertheless, Van Leeuwen's framework makes clear that representation is not simply a matter of presence or absence; it also concerns the manner in which the actor is constructed and the discursive strategies through which their culpability is framed.

4.3.2. Activation of the Accused as Social Actor

A defining feature of American confessional discourse is the explicit activation of the accused as the primary grammatical and discursive agent. This is evidenced in constructions such as "I shot her," "I hit him during the argument," and "I lost control and attacked her," in which the first-person pronoun consistently occupies the subject position and the accused is unambiguously identified as the performer of the violent act. According to Van Leeuwen (2008), this constitutes activation — the grammatical positioning of a social actor as the agent of the predicate. The prevalence of this construction in American confessional discourse establishes a clear line of discursive accountability between the accused and the criminal act, differentiating these texts from their Pakistani counterparts in which agency is frequently absent or obscured. However, activation does not in itself constitute acceptance of full moral responsibility; it provides, rather, a discursive foundation upon which subsequent strategies of rationalisation and mitigation are constructed.

4.3.3. Functionalisation through Emotional Rationalisation

Once the accused has been established as the active agent of the criminal act, American confessional discourse consistently deploys functionalisation to contextualise and partially excuse the behaviour through reference to emotional or psychological states. Expressions such as "I was overwhelmed with anger," "I couldn't handle the rejection," and "I was emotionally broken" serve to define the accused not merely in terms of their actions but in terms of the internal conditions under which those actions were performed. This strategy allows the confessor to acknowledge wrongdoing while simultaneously constructing a framework of mitigation in which the criminal act appears as a response to extreme emotional provocation or psychological distress rather than as an expression of cold, calculated intent.

4.3.4. Personalization and Narrative Ownership

Personalization is a further prominent feature of confessional discourse in the American context, whereby the accused is constructed as a fully individualised social actor possessed of thoughts, feelings, and a subjective inner life. Expressions such as "I felt betrayed," "I thought she was leaving me," and "I didn't mean to kill her" foreground the psychological subjectivity of the accused, presenting them as a human being whose actions emerged from a complex emotional experience rather than from dehumanised violence. Van Leeuwen's framework identifies personalisation as the attribution of individual identity to social actors, as distinct from their representation through abstract roles or institutional categories. In confessional discourse, personalisation invites a degree of empathetic identification on the part of the audience, potentially moderating the severity of moral judgment while maintaining the accused's narrative ownership of the events described.

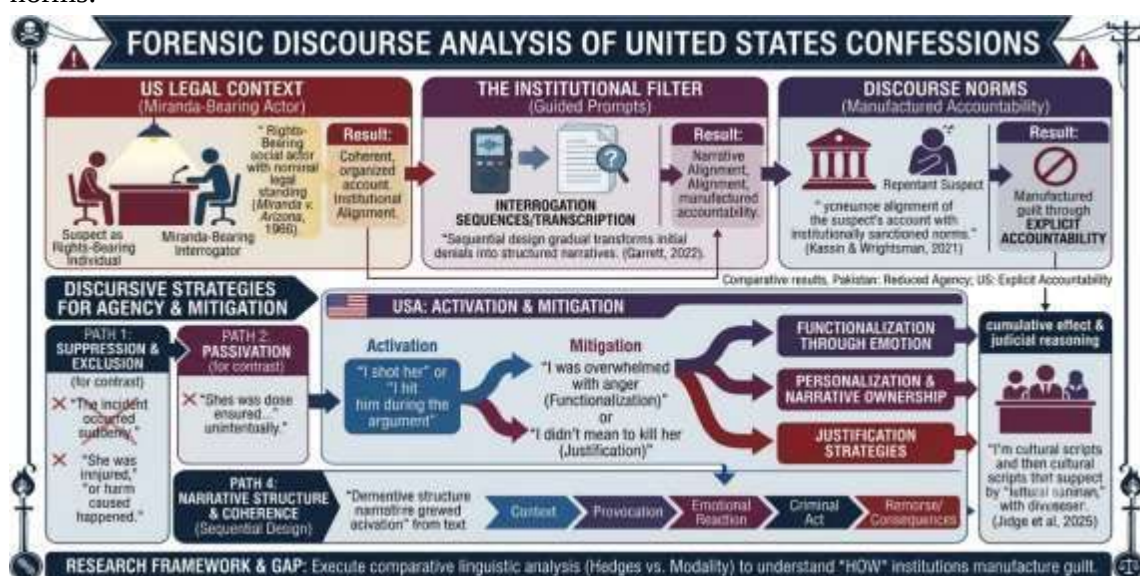
4.3.5. Justification and Mitigation Strategies

American confessional discourse also regularly incorporates explicit justificatory strategies through which the accused both acknowledges participation in the criminal act and immediately seeks to contextualise or minimise its moral gravity. Constructions such as "I didn't plan it," "It just happened in the heat of the moment," and "I wasn't thinking clearly" represent a discursive pattern in which activation and mitigation operate simultaneously. The accused is established as the agent of the action (activation) while the culpability associated with that action is reduced through narrative explanation (justification). From a Social Actor perspective, this pattern constitutes a renegotiation of agency — the accused accepts discursive responsibility for the act while contesting the implications of that responsibility for moral accountability.

4.3.6. Narrative Structure and Coherence

Confessional narratives from the American context are typically organised according to a clear and consistent structural logic: an initial contextual or background

statement establishes the circumstances; a catalytic event or provocation is identified; the accused's emotional reaction is described; the criminal act is recounted; and consequences or expressions of remorse follow. This structured narrative progression reflects both the procedural framework within which American confessions are produced which, through carefully designed interrogation sequences, guides suspects toward coherent and chronologically organised accounts and the cultural scripts concerning guilt, accountability, and repentance that are institutionally recognised within the American legal context. The coherence of the resulting narrative, however, cannot be straightforwardly interpreted as evidence of truthfulness; it may equally reflect the successful alignment of the suspect's account with institutionally sanctioned discursive norms.



5. Discussion Analysis

The comparative forensic discourse analysis conducted in this study reveals a series of systematic and structurally significant differences in the ways that agency, responsibility, and identity are constructed within confessional discourse in Pakistan and the United States. These differences are not incidental; they reflect the distinct legal frameworks, institutional cultures, interrogation methodologies, and socio-linguistic conditions that characterise the confessional process in each jurisdiction. The following discussion synthesises the principal findings of the analysis through the integrated framework of FDA and Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory.

5.1. Agency Representation: Suppression Versus Activation

The most fundamental distinction between confessional practices in Pakistan and the United States concerns the representation of agency. In the Pakistani context, agency is consistently suppressed or grammatically backgrounded, producing confessional

accounts in which actions appear to occur independently of a deliberate human agent. Constructions such as "It happened suddenly" and "The situation got out of control" exemplify what Van Leeuwen identifies as exclusion and passivation — the absent or grammatically peripheral social actor leaves a narrative in which responsibility is diffused and the link between the accused and the criminal act is linguistically attenuated.

In the American context, the pattern is reversed: confessions characteristically employ activation, in which the accused is established as the explicit and primary agent — "I shot her," "I attacked him." This activation produces a direct discursive link between person and act. However, as the analysis demonstrates, such activation does not necessarily imply the unqualified acceptance of moral responsibility; rather, it establishes a discursive starting point from which strategies of emotional rationalisation and narrative justification are elaborated. The comparative perspective reveals that while Pakistani confessions suppress responsibility through the absence of agency, American confessions manage responsibility through the negotiation of agency.

5.2. Passivation Versus Personalisation

A related but distinct contrast concerns the difference between passivation as the dominant mode of actor representation in Pakistan and personalisation as the dominant mode in the United States. Pakistani confessional discourse frequently employs passive constructions that deflect attention from the accused and focus instead on the event or its consequences: "She was injured" or "The harm was caused." Passivation places the emphasis on the action rather than the actor, minimising the impression of individual agency and personal culpability.

American confessions, by contrast, are characterised by a high degree of personalisation, in which the accused is constructed as a fully individualised subject with a rich psychological interior: "I felt angry," "I couldn't control my emotions." Personalisation humanises the accused and invites empathetic engagement, reinterpreting the criminal act as the product of an understandable — if not forgivable — emotional experience. The former strategy minimises responsibility through grammatical means; the latter reinterprets responsibility through psychological framing.

5.3. Impersonalisation Versus Internalised Functionalisation

A further significant divergence concerns the mechanisms through which causation is attributed within the two confessional traditions. In the Pakistani context, impersonalisation is employed to externalise responsibility by attributing causation to abstract forces or situational conditions rather than to the individual agent: "Anger took over," "The situation forced me." Responsibility is presented as residing outside the confessor's individual will or control, rendering the act as something that happened rather than something that was done.

In the American context, the corresponding strategy is internalised functionalisation — responsibility is contextualised through reference to the accused's emotional or psychological state: "I was overwhelmed," "I was heartbroken." Unlike Pakistani impersonalisation, this strategy does not fully externalise responsibility; rather, it internalises it within a psychological framework that simultaneously acknowledges and contextualises the act. The comparative insight is that Pakistani discourse externalises responsibility while American discourse internalises but justifies it — a distinction with significant implications for the legal evaluation of culpability.

5.4. Institutional Influence and Recontextualisation

In both jurisdictions, the analysis reveals the pervasive influence of institutional power on confessional discourse — though the mechanisms and effects of this influence differ significantly. In Pakistan, institutional influence manifests through constraints that limit narrative agency, reduce discursive coherence, and produce texts characterised by passivation and impersonalisation. This pattern suggests that confessions may be generated under institutional pressure — whether explicit or implicit — that shapes the linguistic choices available to the suspect. In the United States, institutional influence operates differently: through carefully structured interrogation sequences, emotional appeals, and guided prompting, suspects are led to produce narratives that conform to institutionally sanctioned formats. Van Leeuwen characterises this process as recontextualisation — the reconfiguration of social actor representations through the exercise of institutional discourse.

5.5. Modality and Narrative Control

The analysis identifies systematic differences in the use of modality between the two confessional traditions that reflect the broader patterns of agency construction described above. Pakistani confessional discourse is characterised by extensive hedging and modal qualification, producing fragmentary narratives in which epistemic certainty is consistently attenuated: "Maybe it happened like this," "I think it was an accident." This pattern reflects both the conditions under which such confessions are produced and the linguistic strategies employed by suspects to manage their discursive accountability.

American confessions, by contrast, tend toward modal certainty and narrative cohesion, even where justificatory elements are present: "I did it, but I didn't mean to." This cohesion reflects the structured interrogation process that guides suspects toward consistent and temporally organised accounts, and the cultural expectation that a credible confession must be linguistically well-formed and emotionally coherent. The key forensic insight here is that modally coherent narratives are not necessarily truthful ones; they may equally reflect the successful alignment of the suspect's account with institutional and cultural expectations.

6. Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents an interpretive synthesis of the principal findings obtained through the comparative forensic discourse analysis of confessional statements in both Pakistani and American legal contexts. Rather than offering a descriptive inventory of individual linguistic features, the analysis integrates findings within the combined theoretical framework of Forensic Discourse Analysis and Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory, with the objective of demonstrating that confessional discourse is a structured and institutionally shaped representation of social actors, whose linguistic character is determined by the conditions of its production as much as by the events it purports to describe.

6.1. Confessions as Discursively Constructed Narratives

The most foundational finding of this study is that confessions cannot be treated as straightforward or literal accounts of criminal events. In both jurisdictions under examination, confessional texts are shown to be discursively constructed through the selective representation of social actors, the strategic deployment of linguistic resources, and the systematic exercise of institutional power over narrative production. The analytical categories of Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory — inclusion, exclusion, activation, passivation, personalisation, impersonalisation, functionalisation — are consistently operative in both sets of confessional material, confirming that the construction and interpretation of guilt and responsibility are fundamentally linguistic activities.

This finding has direct implications for the evidentiary status of confessional statements. Legal evaluation of confessional evidence that attends only to the substance of what is admitted, without examining the linguistic form through which the admission is made and the institutional conditions under which it was produced, risks significant misinterpretation of the evidence. The discursive construction of confessions means that their meaning is not fixed but is constituted through language and context a recognition that demands linguistically informed approaches to confessional evidence assessment.

6.2. Differential Construction of Agency and Responsibility

A central finding of the research concerns the systematic differences in agency construction between the two jurisdictions. In the Pakistani context, agency is suppressed through grammatical exclusion and passivation, producing confessional accounts in which the accused is either absent from the sentence or occupies a semantically peripheral position. This pattern results in a diffusion of responsibility that is linguistically encoded in the structure of the confessional text itself. The phenomenon is entirely consistent with Van Leeuwen's theoretical account of how social actors are deleted from discursive contexts through exclusion and passivation.

In the American context, agency is constructed through activation the accused is established as the explicit grammatical agent of the criminal act. However, this activation is consistently accompanied by functionalisation and emotionalisation, through which the

moral implications of the acknowledged agency are contextualised, mitigated, and partially excused. The finding that agency construction operates differently in the two contexts — through suppression in Pakistan and through negotiated activation in the United States — points to the fundamental role of socio-legal and institutional context in shaping the linguistic production of confessional accountability.

6.3. Emotional and Psychological Framing in Confessional Discourse

A further significant finding concerns the role of emotional and psychological framing as a discursive strategy of mitigation in both confessional traditions, albeit in distinct forms. In the American context, emotional states — anger, rejection, grief, frustration are consistently invoked to contextualise the criminal act and partially excuse the accused's behaviour, in a pattern that aligns with Van Leeuwen's concept of functionalisation. In the Pakistani context, emotional framing tends to be coupled with impersonalisation, in which responsibility is attributed to situational forces rather than to the accused's emotional experience. The contrast points to two different mitigation strategies: externalised attribution in Pakistan and internalised rationalisation in the United States. Both strategies, however, serve the common function of attenuating the full moral weight of the confessional admission.

6.4. The Role of Institutional Power in Shaping Confessional Discourse

The analysis confirms that institutional power is not merely a background condition of confessional production but an active force in the construction of confessional texts. In Pakistan, institutional influence manifests through the constraint of individual narrative agency, the imposition of passive and impersonal constructions, and the reduction of narrative coherence patterns consistent with conditions of custodial pressure and limited procedural protection. In the United States, institutional influence takes a different form: through strategically designed interrogation sequences, guided narrative prompting, and emotional appeals, suspects are led to produce confessional accounts that conform to institutionally sanctioned scripts of guilt and repentance. In both cases, the resulting texts bear the marks of their institutional production in their linguistic structure.

From a forensic linguistic perspective, these findings underline the importance of analysing confessional discourse in terms of its production context as well as its textual content. The institutional conditions within which a confession is made — including the interrogation techniques employed, the power relations operative between interrogator and suspect, and the procedural protections available to the accused — fundamentally shape the linguistic character of the resulting text and must be accounted for in any rigorous forensic evaluation of confessional evidence.

6.5. Victim Representation and Discursive Blame-Shifting

The analysis also reveals that the victim is not neutrally represented within confessional discourse in either jurisdiction but is incorporated into the confessional

narrative in ways that perform a function of responsibility distribution. In the Pakistani context, victims are categorised through language that attributes provocative or causative roles to their actions. "She provoked me," "The girl created misunderstanding" in a pattern of direct blame-shifting that redistributes moral responsibility across multiple actors. In the American context, the victim's actions serve as indirect justifications for the accused's behaviour "She rejected me," "He insulted me" positioning the victim as the catalyst for the criminal act without directly attributing blame. In both traditions, the linguistic representation of the victim constitutes a discursive practice that shapes the distribution of culpability and, consequently, the legal and moral evaluation of the confessional account.

6.6. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in its application and extension of Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory to the comparative forensic analysis of confessional discourse across two distinct legal jurisdictions. By integrating social actor analysis with forensic discourse analysis, the study provides a multi-dimensional analytical framework capable of attending simultaneously to the micro-linguistic features of individual confessional texts and to the macro-institutional and socio-cultural conditions that shape their production. This integrated framework advances the field of forensic linguistics by providing both analytical precision and contextual depth.

The practical implications of the findings are equally significant. The study demonstrates the necessity of critical evaluation of confessional evidence that takes linguistic construction not merely factual content as a central object of analysis. Forensic linguists, legal practitioners, and investigators should attend to patterns of agency construction, modality, hedging, narrative structure, and social actor representation as diagnostic indicators of the conditions under which a confession was produced, and of the degree to which it may reflect authentic volition as opposed to institutional pressure or discursive accommodation.

7. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated, through rigorous comparative forensic discourse analysis, that confessional statements in murder cases are not transparent or neutral accounts of criminal events but are discursively constructed texts whose linguistic character is shaped by institutional power, legal context, interrogation methodology, cultural scripts, and the strategic deployment of linguistic resources. The analysis of confessional discourse from Pakistan and the United States, conducted through the integrated framework of Forensic Discourse Analysis and Van Leeuwen's Social Actor Theory, has produced a series of findings that bear both theoretical and practical significance for the field of forensic linguistics.

The most fundamental conclusion to emerge from the study is that the construction of agency and responsibility within confessional discourse is not a direct reflection of the

accused's intentions or actions but is a linguistically mediated process that is profoundly shaped by the conditions of its production. In the Pakistani context, confessional texts consistently employ strategies of suppression, passivation, and impersonalisation that distribute and attenuate agency, producing accounts in which responsibility is diffused across situational forces, abstract conditions, and the actions of other participants. In the American context, confessional texts employ a contrasting strategy of acknowledged but negotiated agency: the accused is explicitly activated as the grammatical agent of the criminal act, but this activation is accompanied by emotional rationalisation, psychological justification, and narrative mitigation that contextualises and partially excuses the acknowledged responsibility.

These differences in confessional discourse are not reducible to individual differences in the personalities or intentions of the accused but reflect the structural conditions — legal, institutional, cultural, and linguistic — of confessional production in each jurisdiction. In Pakistan, custodial pressures, limited access to legal counsel, multilingual mediation, and the dominance of institutional language over personal expression combine to produce confessional texts that bear the marks of coercive production. In the United States, formal procedural protections do not eliminate the influence of psychological interrogation techniques, culturally sanctioned scripts of guilt and repentance, and the mediating effect of institutional transcription on the character of confessional evidence.

The study further demonstrates that both the content and the linguistic form of confessional statements must be examined if their evidentiary significance is to be adequately assessed. Legal evaluation that attends only to what a confession says — what events are admitted, what intentions are declared — without also examining how those admissions are linguistically constructed and under what institutional conditions they were produced, risks serious misinterpretation. The linguistic indicators identified in this study — patterns of agency construction, modal qualification, social actor representation, narrative structure, and discursive blame-shifting — provide a toolkit for more sophisticated and contextually informed forensic evaluation of confessional evidence.

Finally, the comparative dimension of the study underlines the importance of cross-jurisdictional analysis in forensic linguistics. Linguistic patterns that function as markers of credibility or voluntariness within one socio-legal context may carry entirely different implications in another; assessments of confessional reliability must therefore be grounded in a contextually sensitive understanding of the institutional and cultural conditions that shape confessional production. This study contributes to the development of such a contextually sensitive forensic linguistics, and advocates for the systematic integration of linguistic expertise into the evaluation of confessional evidence in serious criminal proceedings.

References

- Ahmed, W., Nadeem, M., & Sajjad, A. (2023). Forensic discourse analysis of televised confession speeches: Bilingual evidence from a Pakistani assassination case. *Pakistan Journal of Language and Translation Studies*, 11(2), 45–68.
- Buksh, A., Ramzan, M., & Javed, A. (2022). Confession statements and criminal trials in Pakistan: Procedural challenges and linguistic implications. *Journal of Law and Society*, 14(1), 88–107.
- Coulthard, M., & Johnson, A. (2010). *An introduction to forensic linguistics: Language in evidence*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Polity Press.
- Garrett, B. (2022). Convicting the innocent: Confession evidence and wrongful convictions in American murder cases. *Harvard Law Review*, 115(4), 1167–1209.
- Gudjonsson, G. H. (2020). *The psychology of false confessions: Forty years of science and practice*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hamid, N. (2022). Media framing of criminal confessions in Pakistan: Language, guilt, and public discourse. *Pakistan Journal of Media Studies*, 9(1), 22–41.
- Kassin, S. M., & Gudjonsson, G. H. (2020). The psychology of confessions: A review of the literature and issues. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 5(2), 33–67.
- Kassin, S. M., & Wrightsman, L. S. (2021). Confession evidence in American courts: Psychological and linguistic perspectives. *Law and Human Behavior*, 45(3), 201–218.
- Leo, R. A. (2008). *Police interrogation and American justice*. Harvard University Press.
- Leo, R. A. (2021). Interrogation and false confessions: Language, deception, and justice. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 17, 145–162.
- Majeed, A., Ali, S., & Rahman, T. (2025). Confessions and judicial reasoning in Pakistani murder cases: A legal and linguistic analysis. *Russian Law Journal*, 13(1), 78–99.
- Raza, H. (2023). Confessional discourse, media, and criminal justice in Pakistan. *Lahore Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(2), 55–74.
- Rizzelli, L., Kassin, S. M., & Gales, T. (2021). True and false confessions: A linguistic analysis of pronoun usage and narrative structure. *Journal of Language and Law*, 60(1), 12–34.
- Shuy, R. W. (1998). *The language of confession, interrogation, and deception*. SAGE Publications.
- Solan, L., & Tiersma, P. (2005). *Speaking of crime: The language of criminal justice*. University of Chicago Press.
- Tannen, D. (1989). *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue, and imagery in conversational discourse*. Cambridge University Press.

- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 249–283.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and practice: New tools for critical discourse analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.