

INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

(A COURSEBOOK FOR BS ENGLISH LINGUISTICS)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

NO.	CONTENT	PAGE NO
1	APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND ITS DIVERSITY	3
2	APPLICATION OF LINGUISTICS IN THE FIELD OF LAW	5
3	INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	8
4	DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	9
5	FORENSIC LINGUISTICS AS AN IMPORTANT BRANCH OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS	11
6	BRIEF HISTORY OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	13
7	THE ROLE OF LINGUISTICS IN LAW, IN TEXT ANALYSIS, AND IN PROCESS ANALYSIS	18
8	APPLICATION OF LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE IN DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF FORENSIC ANALYSIS	23
9	APPLICATION OF PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS	23
10	APPLICATION OF MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS	24
11	APPLICATION OF SEMANTICS AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS	26
12	BENCHMARK STUDIES IN FORENSIC LINGUISTICS AROUND THE WORLD	29
13	WILLIAM LABOV'S STUDY OF LANGUAGE VARIATION	33
14	ROGER SHUY'S CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC SOCIOLINGUISTICS	37
15	THE STUDY OF DAVID R. OLSON LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND THE INTERPRETATION OF TEXT	41
16	GERALD R. MCMENAMIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	44
17	PETER TIERSMA'S BENCHMARK CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	47
18	ROBERT A. LEONARD CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS	50
19	WORK OF CAROLE E. CHASKI	53
20	THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING FORENSIC LINGUISTICS IN PAKISTAN (WITH CASE EVIDENCE)	62

CHAPTER 1

APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND ITS DIVERSITY

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Applied linguistics is a branch of linguistics that concerns with the practical application of language in real life cases. It is interested in the way language operates within various social, professional, and institutional contexts and how linguistic knowledge may be used to assist in resolving linguistic related issues. Previously, the field of applied linguistics was largely identified with language teaching, however, now its application is much broader. It encompasses language acquisition (second language acquisition, bilingualism and multilingualism), language policy and planning, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, translation studies, language assessment, computer mediated communication and ecolinguistics. These spheres demonstrate that applied linguistics is not one discipline but a series of domains, linked with each other, and that study language in application (Simpson, 2011).

One of the main areas of applied linguistics is the second language acquisition. It examines the way individuals acquire a foreign language and what determines this. Some concepts that are significant in this area include; input, interaction, interlanguage, fossilization, communicative competence, task based language teaching and learner autonomy. Individual researchers also dwell on motivation, identity and culture in the language learning process. The concepts assist teachers to come up with effective teaching methods and materials (Ellis, 1997).

Sociolinguistics is another significant area of applied linguistics that looks into the interaction of the society and language. It addresses the concepts of language variation, code switching, language ideology, linguistic landscape, speech community and identity construction. The problem of language policy, the medium of instruction, and language rights is extremely significant in multilingual nations since the specified issues are directly connected with power, education, and the opportunities. Another area of research that is now of great

importance is the World languages of English, as well as English as lingua franca that has defied the traditional concept of one standard English and have acknowledged the validity of the local languages like Pakistani English (Kachru, 1992).

Pragmatics and discourse analysis research language, not at the sentence level. They are concerned with the construction of meaning. The speech acts, politeness strategies, presupposition, implicature, cohesion, coherence, genre and register concepts are applied to the analysis of both the spoken and written texts. Critical discourse analysis also explores the use of language to create power-relations, social inequality and ideology in political discourses, media discourses, classroom talk, and institutional discourses (Fairclough, 1995).

Corpus linguistics has brought in a new dimension of methodology in applied linguistics. It is the examination of extensive amounts of actual language information with the assistance of computer software. Linguists study frequency, collocation, concordance, key words, and lexical bundles through corpus based research studies. This has had effects on lexicography, syllabus construction, teaching material in language classes and also in translation courses. Another concept that is significant is data driven learning where learners investigate the patterns of language by themselves using corpus tools (Biber, Conrad, and Reppen, 1998).

Assessment and testing of language is also one of its significant areas. Applied linguists come up with the reliable and valid tests of measuring the language proficiency both academically and professionally. Validity, reliability, authenticity, washback effect and performance based assessment are some of the concepts that are central in this field. Equally, equivalence, domestication, foreignization, multimodality and audiovisual translation are all issues that are commonly discussed in translation and interpreting studies.

Competing with these in the past few years, there is a growing range of fields of application in linguistics, like digital discourse analysis, computer assisted language learning, artificial intelligence in language teaching, and ecolinguistics.

Ecolinguistics is the study of the connection between language and the environment and how ecological discourses can lead to sustainability. The other emerging areas include health communication, workplace discourse and migration discourse. All these changes are the manifestations of the diversity and social topicality of the applied linguistics.

APPLICATION OF LINGUISTICS IN THE FIELD OF LAW

Forensic linguistics is the use of linguistic knowledge in law. It revolves around the study of the language applied in legal proceedings and the application of linguistic evidence in the delivery of justice. The basis of legal systems is very dependent on language since laws, police statements, interactions in a courtroom, and legal documents are all built through language. Forensic linguistics uses the theories of discourse analysis, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics and corpus linguistics to courts of law (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

One area of forensic linguistics most commonly known is authorship attribution. It entails identification of the author of a text of anonymity or contested text. To ascertain the authorship, linguists look at idiolect, stylistic variation, lexical variation, grammatical variations, punctuations as well as discourse structures. Of special concern is in situations where there is a ransom note, threatening letters, suicide notes, plagiarism and online communication. The techniques that are usually employed in this field are forensic stylistics and stylometry.

The other area that is also important is the police interview and confessions analysis. Question forms, turn taking, adjacency pairs, power relations, and speech acts are studied with the help of pragmatic and discourse analytical tools in the case of interrogation. Very important are such concepts as linguistic coercion, conversational control, and understanding of legal rights. Prejudiced suspects, particularly the non-native speakers or those with low educational background might not be in a position to grasp complete legal terminology used in the interrogation. Linguistic analysis is useful in determining such inequalities as well as in averting miscarriages of justice (Gibbons, 2003).

The courtroom talk is also examined in order to comprehend the way language creates authority and credibility. Attorneys have certain questioning techniques they can apply to examination and cross examination to manipulate the story. Leading questions, tag questions, modality, hedging and repetition can be used to affect the answers of witnesses. Narrative form and evaluative language are also investigated to observe how various variants of events are testified in a court. This is a field which is closely connected with the phenomenon of power and ideology in language.

Another significant input of linguistics is the interpretation of legal text. The use of legal language is usually complex, nominalized, passivized and archaic. Such characteristics make the legal documents incomprehensible to ordinary people. The forensic linguists examine ambiguity, deixis, reference, and syntactic structure to explain. Plain legal language movement is rooted on the notion that the laws and other legal documents be accessible to every citizen.

Another field where speech analysis is applied in identifying a speaker is forensic phonetics. Accent, intonation, voice quality, and speech rhythm are phonetic aspects, which are also discussed in taped conversations. This is especially applicable in situations that touch on telephone threats, emergency calls and covert recording.

Along with the development of digital communication, now forensic linguistics is also concerned with cybercrime, hate speech over the internet, defamation, and social media evidence. The large volumes of digital text are analysed using corpus based methods. The issues of linguistic threats, deception, and trolling are getting more significant in the contemporary juristically environment. The field is also dominated by issues of language and human rights such as the right to an interpreter, and the right to understand legal proceedings.

CONCLUSION

The field of applied linguistics is a very diverse area in which the world of language is connected to the real world issues. It is interdisciplinary in nature as it enables it to deal with the concerns of education, society, technology, environment and law. How linguistics can be used in the legal field to bring fairness, clarity, and justice can be seen in the application of linguistics in the field by the various ways it is used in forensic linguistics. Through the analysis of authorship, courtroom talk, police communication, and legal interpretation, as well as digital communication, applied linguistics is an essential part of contemporary legal systems. The increased research fields and theoretical ideas indicate that the applied linguistics will further grow and address emerging social issues.

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CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

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Forensic linguistics is a fairly young yet fast emerging field of linguistic investigation that concerns the association between language and law. The term generally defines an application of linguistic knowledge and techniques in crime investigation, legal texts interpretation and analysis of language employed in legal and judicial procedure. Given that the legal system exists and functions through language, linguistic decisions are made in all aspects of the law process, such as the creation of legislation, police interrogation, interaction in court, and the presentation of evidence. Forensic linguistics studies such linguistic aspects of language so as to bring the legal procedures more cognizant, equitable and efficient.

Modern forensic linguistics is typically said to have developed in the 1960s with the contributions of Jan Svartvik. His Evans Statement analysis in the United Kingdom revealed that various sections of the police confession made by Timothy Evans were linguistically incompatible and this implied that they had not been made by the same person. This research proved that the linguistic analysis could be regarded as valid evidence in law cases. It has since been further developed to a large extent and has evolved its own theoretical basis, research procedures as well as areas of specialism (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

Forensic linguistics is a field that borders multiple other subfields of linguistics such as discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, stylistics, phonetics, and corpus linguistics. It

is not only interested in written legal texts, but also in oral communication in institutions. The linguistic tools can be used to investigate police interrogation, cross examination, and witness testimony in court, emergency telephone conversations and interrogations, and confessions, as well as even threatening messages. In this respect, forensic linguistics is practical and analytical as it is directly applied in real legal cases.

The nature of the legal language is one of the key issues of forensic linguistics. Legal terms are said to be complex, formal, technical, and highly organized. These characteristics result in accuracy and on the other side complicate legal texts, which are not easily understood by ordinary people. The science of legal language thus poses some crucial questions of accessibility, interpretation and rights of the citizens in knowing the laws governing them. The trend of plain language in lot of countries is closely linked with the study in the field of forensic linguistics (Tiersma, 1999).

The analysis of institutional discourse is one more significant point in the field. Law environments are extremely unequal regarding the relationships of powers. The interaction is dominated by the police officers, lawyers and judges and the suspects and witnesses are usually given little chances to voice their concerns. Question form, turn taking and narrative structure are all the examples of linguistic analysis, which demonstrate the way in which power is entangled with language. These have significant consequences on the assessment of evidence, as well as safeguarding of vulnerable persons, especially children, second language speakers, and individuals in non-dominant social groups (Gibbons, 2003).

As electronic communication has grown, forensic linguistics has spread into the analysis of electronic texts. The use of emails, text messages, social media postings, and even online commentaries are common evidence in courtrooms. The linguistic characteristics of these types of communication are non-standard spelling, use of abbreviations and emojis, and multimodal components. The interpretation of these texts demands new methods of analysis and demonstrates that the studies are still developing in respect to the alteration in the communication practices.

Forensic linguistics does not just stop at solving crimes in modern studies. It is also involved in more general problems like the right to language, the intervention of the interpreter in the

court, the authorship in the academic and professional sphere and the linguistic construction of credibility and lies. In multilingual countries, the issue of whether an individual can perfectly comprehend the language of court proceedings is highly critical. Studies in linguistics have revealed that misinterpretations in the legal communication may result in severe wrongful convictions. This is why forensic linguistics is becoming a mandatory element of the just courts.

DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

Different scholars have defined forensic linguistics in various ways but all the definitions focus on the transfer of knowledge in linguistics in legal situations. Coulthard and Johnson (2010) suggest one of the most commonly cited definitions, according to them forensic linguistics is the study on the relationship between language and the law and the application of linguistic analysis as evidence in court proceedings. On the same note, McMnamin (2002) refers to it as scientific study of language as applied to forensic purposes and legal matters.

This name itself is divided into two. Forensic is a term that is developed out of the Latin word *forensis*, which translates to belong to the forum, the place of open debate and legal decision-making in ancient Rome. The study of language is scientifically known as linguistics. In combination, it is known as the scientific study of language with regard to legal and investigative practice.

The field of forensic linguistics can be described as having three dimensions. The first is the language of the law, and it is the study of such legal texts as statutes, contracts and legal documents. The second is the language in the law that denotes verbal communication that occurs in a legal context, such as police interrogations and in-court conversation. The third one is language as evidence that comprises authorship attribution, speaker identification, and challenging text analysis (Coulthard, Johnson, and Wright, 2017).

A well-known use of forensic linguistics is in authorship analysis. It is built on the premise that each person possesses his or her unique linguistic style, which is commonly known as idiolect. Through the analysis of lexical options, the grammatical patterns, discourse patterns, and even punctuations, linguists can compare the texts and conclude whether the texts were

written by the same person or not. The approach has been applied to the case of anonymous letters, threatening messages and plagiarism.

Another field is forensic phonetics, a field of study that is concerned with speech. It entails the analysis of accents, intonation, and voice quality and speech rhythm to know speakers or to check whether a recording has been manipulated. Recent developments in the art of acoustic analysis have provided the opportunity to employ the detailed phonetic evidence in the legal investigation.

Forensic linguistics is also characterized by the analysis of police interviews and confessions. Studies have revealed that questioning can manipulate the suspect and witnesses response by the wording of questions. Questions leading to confusion and complex syntax; use of complex vocabulary may cause inaccurate/misleading statements. The linguistic analysis can assist in revealing such problems and creating more effective and ethical methods of interviewing.

The other pertinent field is that of courtroom discourse. A courtroom is a very formal communicative space where every member of the courtroom has a role to play. Lawyers create stories, interrogate witnesses and counter arguments using a language. Certain discourse patterns are in place to ensure judges are in control of the proceedings. These interactions can be linguistically analyzed to understand the process of the negotiation of meaning and the construction of credibility.

FORENSIC LINGUISTICS AS AN IMPORTANT BRANCH OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Forensic linguistics is well known as one of the most significant branches of applied linguistics since it is a vivid example of how the linguistic theory may be applied to a real problem of the world. The area of applied linguistics deals with practical application of the study of language, and forensic linguistics is one of the most straightforward and socially important applications of the field. It unites the knowledge of pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, stylistics, and phonetics and puts it in the context of law.

Its role in contributing to justice is one of the factors that made it important. The linguistic evidence can demonstrate inconsistencies in confessions, clarification of the meaning of the

conflicting texts, and also the authors of anonymous communications. By doing so, it can assist the courts to make decisions more informed. Forensic linguists have been utilized in criminal and civil cases, such as defamation, trademark matters, consumer protection, and asylum matters.

The other reason why it is important is that it helps in safeguarding linguistic and human rights. In most laws and regulations, one has to be involved in a legal process that he/she does not fully comprehend. The field of applied linguistics research has raised the issue of qualified interpreters, clear and comprehensible language in the law and simplification of documents in the law. This is more so in multilingual societies where language barrier may deny people access to justice.

Forensic linguistics is also used in developing professional practices. Indicatively, studies on police interview have seen the development of new less coercive and more information-seeking models of interviewing. In the same way, the analysis of legal draft has contributed to the trend of plain language in legal texts.

Forensic linguistics has contributed to applied linguistics in an academic context in that it has added new research questions and methodologies. Large bodies of legal texts are now analysed using corpus based methods such as corpus based approaches. The situation of critical discourse analysis is to analyze the functioning of power and ideology in a legal context. Through this, forensic linguistics does not only utilize the available linguistic theories but also helps in their advancement.

The increased significance of forensic linguistics may also be regarded in the organized academic courses, research centres and professional associations. It has now emerged as a key research topic on the undergraduate and postgraduate level and its applicability is set to grow as the digital communication and worldwide mobility trends expand.

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CHAPTER 3

BRIEF HISTORY OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

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Language and law are as old as law institutions, yet the systematic and scientific analysis of the relationship between language and law is a rather recent phenomenon. The interpretation of legal texts, the maintenance of formulaic expressions and the stylistic characteristics of the legal language were the issues of concern of legal scholars over centuries. This was not however, a well-established linguistic field. The origin of forensic linguistics as a discipline occurred in the latter half of the twentieth century, when linguistic approaches started to be used to interpret legal information in a completely differentiated and theoretically aware manner. Since, the discipline has expanded to become a significant area of application linguistics that has a global focus and a variety of research interests.

1.1 Early Foundations: The Study of Legal Language

The study of language of the law had not become a distinct field of scholarly study, but even before the emergence of the discipline of forensic linguistics, the language of the law had already received a scholarly interest. The history of legal English, such as, the evolution of legal discourse reveals the manner in which law discourse was made to be very formal, technical and conservative in its form. Archaisms, doublets and triplets, complicated nominal groups, and passive constructions continued to be used and this style was guaranteed to create precision but frequently made accessibility more difficult to ordinary citizens. Those characteristics have been formed throughout centuries due to the impact of Latin, French, and English languages on the British legal system. The history of law regarding the application of linguistic terms subsequently became a valuable source of forensic linguists due to its ability to reveal the form of the law, the vocabulary and the interpretation issues of legal texts (Tiersma, 1999).

During the early twentieth century, philologists and stylistics scholars sometimes undertook the study of disputed texts, and sometimes doubted their authorship, though this work was generally literary, and rarely forensic in character. The concept of linguistic profiling as an evidence in a criminal case was not yet being recognized. Only through the emergence of modern linguistics, particularly since the emergence of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis, did language come to be analyzed as a sort of social action. This change enabled the real life institutional interaction to be analysed including the legal process.

1.2 The Emergence of Modern Forensic Linguistics

Modern forensic linguistics is usually said to have begun with the publication of an analysis of The Evans Statements in 1968 by Jan Svartvik. Svartvik analyzed the police testimonies of Timothy Evans who had been convicted of a murder in the United Kingdom. By thoroughly examining the grammar and style of the statements, he proved that they were not grammatically and stylistically consistent, and thus, could not have been said by the same speaker. This examination cast grave questions on the truthfulness of the confession and demonstrated, first ever, that linguistic testimony might be the determining factor in legal analysis. The work by Svartvik is widely considered to be the first example of a clear forensic linguistic analysis in a legal case of modern times (Svartvik, 1968).

Since the 1970s, the discipline started growing slowly, especially in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. By this time sociolinguistic studies had already demonstrated that language is a socially variable phenomenon and that different speakers possess varying degrees of communicative competence. These observations were used to analyze the interviews conducted with the police and courtroom interaction. Scholars asserted that the arrangement of questioning, regulation of turn taking and use of special legal terminologies may pose severe communication issues to the suspects and witnesses. This study was particularly critical in identifying the weakness of children, second language users, and persons with poor social backgrounds in the law courts (Gibbons, 2003).

1.3 Development in the 1980s and 1990s

The 1990s and 1980s were the most important ten years in the development of forensic linguistics as an academic field. In the United States, Roger Shuy was the first one to utilize discourse analysis with covert tapes, confessions, and disputed conversations. The meaning of law was demonstrated in his work in that it is impossible to comprehend meaning without the analysis of the entire conversational framework and the pragmatic strength of statements. He also proved that selective transcription might distort the meaning of spoken evidence. These are some of the studies that led to recognition of linguists as expert witnesses even in the courts (Shuy, 1993).

In the United Kingdom, the field methodologically foundations were based on a study by Malcolm Coulthard on police statement and authorship attribution. He demonstrated that the close examination of textual patterns could help to distinguish between the written statement that was actually created by a suspect and the one that was recreated by the police officers. Coulthard has also been known to have led to the institutionalization of forensic linguistics as a university course and a career field (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

Authorship analysis was one of the significant fields of study in this era. The linguists started to explore the anonymous letters, threatening messages, and disputable documents through applying lexical choice, grammatical patterns, spelling, punctuations, and discourse structure. Due to the growing accessibility of computers, quantitative methods could be applied, and high volumes of texts could be compared. This changed and eventually gave rise to corpus based techniques in the field of forensic analysis.

Concurrently, studies of legal language were closely related to plain language movement. The scholars said that legal documents must be drafted in a manner that is comprehensible to non-specialists. Not only was this movement linguistic, but also social and political since it was associated with the notion of access to justice and the right of citizens to the linguistic.

1.4 Expansion into New Areas

Since the late 1990s, forensic linguistics entered a number of new fields. The development of forensic phonetics was one of the most significant ones. The development of acoustic technology resulted in the possibility of analysing voice records with a lot of detail. The phonetic characteristics, which included the accent, intonation, the rhythm of speech, and the voice quality, came to be utilized to identify the speakers as well as analyzing the controversial records.

The second significant move was the use of corpus linguistics on legal and forensic text. With large electronic sets of texts, it became feasible to determine the repetitive patterns of the language in law, to match disputed texts to genuine samples and to statistically support linguistic evidence. Corpus approaches also played a role in the research of courtroom discourse and the determining of the legal meaning.

The onset of the twenty first century brought a new turn of events in the history of forensic linguistics as there has been a rapid increase in digital communication. Emails, mobile phone messaging, online forums, and social media posts have started to be used as a piece of evidence during the legal proceedings. These novel channels of communication came with language characteristics that were not similar to written texts and these features are non-standard spelling, abbreviation, emojis, and multimodals. In response to these data, forensic linguists formulated novel methods of analysis to handle these data as well as answer questions of authorship, identity and intent in a digital setting (Olsson, 2008).

1.5 Forensic Linguistics in the Contemporary Period

Over the last few years, forensic linguistics has been a globally recognized research field and area of practice. It is now being taught at undergraduate and postgraduate levels within most universities and specialized research centres and professional associations are established. It

is common to have linguists called to give expert testimony in criminal as well as civil trials. The subject, too, is no longer limited to the English language but has been applied to a broad variety of languages and legal systems.

Among the most important modern processes, one may consider the growing concern of language rights and access to justice. Interpreters in any court of law have become one of the most significant subjects of research in the context of the multilingual society. The linguists also check whether suspects and witnesses are completely aware of their rights in a court and whether the translation in a court is correct and unbiased. This is a piece that is relatable to human rights and the concept of a fair trial.

The other trend that is considered crucial is the research of forensic linguistics on the digital and cyber front. Threats in the online environment, hate speech, the identification of the author in the social media, and the linguistic study of the extremist discourse have taken center stage as important research topics. Computational tools and machine learning are increasingly used in the analysis of forensic texts, although it is done with close qualitative interpretation.

Forensic linguistics has also played a role in asylum and refugee cases; in which linguistic analysis is applied to determine that someone is of a particular origin based on their language usage. This application demonstrates the relationship of the field with global mobility, migration, and international law.

Conclusion

History of forensic linguistics The history of forensic linguistics is the history of the slow realization that language is a key factor in the legal process and that linguistic examination can give useful and dependable evidence. Since the inception of legal language analysis to the groundbreaking work of Svartvik, and from discourse analysis of police communication to its present day analysis of digital communication, the area has become a well-established and internationally important area of applied linguistics. Forensic linguistics is today developing in line with emerging communication, new legal and new technological opportunities. Its historical progression shows the development of the field of linguistic

theory, as well as the growing need of impartiality, clear understanding, and precision of the law.

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CHAPTER 4

THE ROLE OF LINGUISTICS IN LAW, IN TEXT ANALYSIS, AND IN PROCESS ANALYSIS

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The legal systems mainly exist through language. Laws are composed in verbal form, rights are proclaimed in verbal form, police-investigations are made in verbal form, and judicial

opinions are pronounced in well-organized discourse. Due to this centrality of language, linguistics is important in determining the way legal meaning is generated, construed and occasionally disputed. The linguistic contribution to the legal field can be examined in the context of three interdependent aspects, namely the role of linguistics in law, the role of linguistic analysis in analysis of legal and evidential texts, and the role of linguistics in analysis of legal processes. The combination of these dimensions demonstrates that the legal outcomes are not determined by the facts and statutes only but rather by the utilization and interpretation of language in the institutional context.

1.1 Linguistics and the Law

The connections between linguistics and the law have commonly been termed as the language of law, the language of law and language as evidence. The language of the law refers to the language form of a legal document like statutes, contracts, wills, and formal regulations. Such texts are supposed to be accurate, definite and constant. Nonetheless, studies by legal linguistics have revealed that total accuracy is hard to realize since language is not absolute but relative to context. Words can be used with different meanings, a syntactic structure can be given more than one meaning, and the meaning of a provision can vary when applied to a new situation. Linguistic analysis is therefore used to assist the courts in interpreting the legal texts and in cases where there is a dispute as a result of ambiguity or vagueness (Tiersma, 1999).

The language of the law means the verbal contact which occurs in the courtroom. Communicative events include police interviewing, consultation of lawyers with their clients, witness examination and cross examination, judicial instructions to the juries, etc. and all of them have particular discourse patterns. These communications are not disinterested sharing of information. They are influenced by institutional roles, power relations and by procedural rules. The linguistic studies have demonstrated that the framework of questioning, the management of turn taking, and the employment of professional legal terms may determine the reactions of the participants. As an example, leading questions can limit the extent of potential responses, whereas complicated syntactic structures can cause misunderstanding among witnesses. By so doing, linguistics is useful in assessing the fairness and reliability of the legal procedures (Gibbons, 2003).

The most popular contribution in the field of linguistics to the purpose of the law is probably language as evidence. The key evidence in most instances is a writing or a recording. Intimidating letters, suicide notes, ransom demands, mobile phone messages, emails and posts on social media can all prove invaluable in a criminal case. In linguistic studies, analytical methods may be used to find out the author behind a text or the related intended meaning of a message or the presence of duressment in a confession. This demonstrates that language is not just a tool of lawful communication, but it is also a forensic evidence by itself (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

1.2 Linguistics of Law and Evidential Texts.

One of the most advanced fields of forensic linguistics is text analysis. Cases that are related to legal matters often their interpretation of written documents, and the minor aspects of language can greatly impact the court. Legal texts are analyzed within the scope of vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, reference, modality and discourse structure. One of them assists in defining how meaning is built and how responsibility, obligation and intention are articulated.

The analysis of ambiguity is one of the significant issues of textual analysis. Legal wrangles are mostly triggered by the fact that certain word or phrase might be construed in a way other than one. Linguists discuss the nature of ambiguity and whether it is lexical, syntactic, or pragmatic and whether it can be solved by means of the context. In the same vein, modality analysis plays an important role in interpreting the law since the modal verbs and other similar expressions determine the levels of obligation, permission, and possibility. The distinction of the words shall, must and may can play significant legal consequences.

Textual examination also includes authorship analysis as another key element. It is founded on the fact that people possess unique speaking patterns, which is commonly known as idiolect. Studying a vocabulary usage pattern, spelling, punctuation, collocation and grammatical frameworks, linguists can contrast a contested text with the familiar samples of writing and estimate the potential of a common writer. This has been applied in instances of anonymous letter, confessions and plagiarism as well as in online communication (McMenamin, 2002).

Textual analysis has been enhanced through the creation of corpus linguistics which has given empirical and quantitative evidence to linguistic observations. Huge electronic databases enable linguists to study the usage of certain words and structures under natural situations. Corpus evidence in legal interpretation has been applied in finding the ordinary meaning of words and comparing rival interpretations of statutory language. This method has gained more and more prominence in a number of legal systems since it provides systematic and repeatable findings.

The digital communication is also a part of the textual analysis in modern environments. Non standard spelling, abbreviation, emojis and multimodal elements are frequently used in emails, text messages, and social media posts. These characteristics need to be understood with regard to the conventions of the digital discourse. It is in the linguistic analysis that such messages are understood in terms of their pragmatic force, whether they are threats, agreements or statements of intent.

1.3 Process Analysis and Linguistics.

Process analysis is concerned with the study of legal interaction. Legal procedures are communicative events that are organized legally with unequal roles where the participants have varying levels of control over the discourse. On linguistic analysis of such processes, one can see how the information is received, how the narratives are built, and how credibility is considered.

One of the most significant spheres of process analysis is police interviews. Studies have revealed that the type of questions that are posed by law enforcement officers may affect the suspects and witnesses. Closed questions do not allow one to elaborate more whereas complex or multi layered questions can result into misunderstanding. Technical use of legal terms can also pose a challenge to persons who are not conversant with the legal system. The linguistic analysis of police interviews has led to the emergence of new interview models, which focus on the clarity of the interview, its neutrality and free of coercion.

Another point of great concern to process analysis is courtroom interaction. The matching between the witnesses and the cross examination is highly structured in such a way that the attorneys dictate the subject matter, order of the questions and the nature of the answer given

by the witness. Lawyers can use repetition, reformulation, and strategic application of presuppositions to influence the testimony of witnesses and portray events in a specific way. These strategies can be analyzed linguistically to comprehend the process of creating legal accounts and the impact of these accounts on the jurors and judges.

The interaction of lawyers and clients is also a part of process analysis. Any miscommunication at this point may have grave consequences on the preparation of a case. Law advice may not be well comprehended by the clients, and lawyers may fail to understand the intents or experiences of the clients. The significance of clarity, active listening and avoiding the use of unnecessary technicalities in such interactions is pointed out in linguistic research.

The process analysis in multilingual legal systems is related closely with the work of interpreters. The interpreter makes the interaction different as each utterance has to be translated. The linguistic analyses include the question on whether the translation is correct, whether the translator does not take sides, and whether the original meaning and tone of the speaker are preserved. These are the problems directly connected to the right of a fair trial and the larger notion of linguistic human rights.

1.4 Contemporary Developments

The application of linguistics in law has increased in the recent years as a result of the advancement of digital technology. The study of online communication, author identifications in anonymous online communication, and study of extremist and hate speech has gained significance as a research. Now the large datasets are analyzed using computational tools, though the qualitative linguistic interpretation is necessary to interpret the context and meaning.

The other major trend is that there has been an augmented application of linguistic knowledge in civil litigation, such as trademark actions, consumer agreements, and libel. The meaning of one word or phrase in such situations can make the difference between legal responsibility or not. Linguistic analysis can give us regular ways of investigating such questions and of presenting evidence in an understandable and scientifically based way.

Conclusion

Linguistics in the law is practical and theoretical. It assists in the interpretation of legal writings, the analysis of evidence papers and understanding the communicative mechanisms involved in making legal decisions. Textual and process analysis respectively demonstrates the manner in which the meaning is produced in written evidence and how spoken interaction contributes to the production and assessment of written evidence, respectively. These and similar practices prove that language is not a neutral tool, but a key aspect of administering justice. The role of linguistics in the legal system is thus not only in the resolving of cases but also in encouraging transparency, justice and non-preferential treatment to the legal institutions.

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APPLICATION OF LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE IN DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF FORENSIC ANALYSIS

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Forensic linguistics is not a single method but an applied use of the whole linguistic system in legal contexts. Every level of language contributes to the production and interpretation of evidence. When a linguist examines a disputed confession, a threatening message, a courtroom exchange, or a recorded telephone call, the analysis involves sound patterns, word structure, sentence organisation, meaning, and discourse structure at the same time. For this reason, it is widely accepted that forensic linguistic investigation draws directly on phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and discourse analysis (Coulthard, Johnson, & Wright, 2017; Gibbons, 2003). Each branch provides a different type of evidence and a different analytical perspective, and together they make linguistic evidence systematic, transparent, and scientifically grounded.

1.1 APPLICATION OF PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

Forensic linguistics has probably received the most assistance in the form of phonetics and phonology, especially in matters related to oral testimony and identification of a speaker. The voice analysis is important every time the identity of a speaker is put in the area of law. The most common examples of cases in which phonetic expertise is needed would be recorded ransom demands, emergency calls, threatening telephone conversations, and covert surveillance recordings. Forensic phonetics offers both acoustic and auditory techniques of matching voice samples and assessing the reliability of their creation by the same speaker (Rose, 2002; Nolan, 1995).

In the auditory level, trained phoneticians look into the aspects of the vowel quality, realisation of consonants, rhythm, speech rate, intonation and voice quality. These are influenced by regional background, social status, age and speaking habits. They are also hard to control consistently because they are mostly unconscious and thus can hardly be manipulated by the speakers. Acoustic phonetics brings a further dimension of analysis as it

determines formant frequencies, pitch contours, duration and intensity using instrumental methods. The modern forensic practice is embracing more and more auditory judgement with acoustic measurement and statistical modeling as likelihood ratios such that the linguistic evidence can be offered in a way that is consistent with legal standards of proof (Foulkes and French, 2012; Morrison, 2009).

Phonology is also a significant part of interpretation of written texts. This is because non standard spellings in many cases are based on the pronunciation patterns. The use of spellings like gonna, wanna, or vowel representations that are influenced by the region may give some information regarding the linguistic background of the author in threatening letters or anonymous messages. The phonological transfer of the first language to the second language may be especially important in multilingual situations. The effect of local phonology can be manifested in the writing of vowel contrasts or consonant clusters, which can be used to construct sociolinguistic profiling in Pakistani English writing.

Along with speaker comparison, the phonetic knowledge also plays a role in the interpretation of police interviews and confession. Studies have revealed that prosodic features affect the interpretation of utterances. Rising intonation can also be used to seek confirmation, and also, a falling intonation can be used to make a proposal as a fact. These variations may lead to the understanding that a suspect will interpret an utterance as a question or an accusation or as a statement of common ground (Heydon, 2005). The distortion of intonation patterns is of great importance especially when dealing with the second language speaker as the suspect.

More recently, forensic phonetics has been considered relevant in Pakistan with reference to audio evidence in acts of terrorism and to cybercrime cases where voice recordings are often utilised without necessarily being placed under more systematic linguistic analysis. Research on forensic linguistics as applied to legal matters in Pakistan has a long history of indicating the necessity to train phoneticians and standardised voice comparison procedures (Irfan & Rashid, 2022).

1.2 APPLICATION OF MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

The key elements of the analysis of authorship and interpretation of legal texts are morphology and syntax. The basic assumptions of forensic stylistics is that each person has fairly constant word formation and sentence structure patterns. These are the patterns that are generally below the conscious perception, and thus they are hard to repeat or refrain in all times (McMenamin, 2002).

The morphological analysis is concerned with the word structure and with the habitual decisions in word structure. These are the usage of specific prefixes and suffixes, the development of compounds, the use of contractions and full forms, and spelling variations. Morphological creativity in digital communication as a clipping, blending, and non standard abbreviations also may serve as individual style indicators. These attributes are significant in case a contested writing is compared to established samples of a writer of a suspect.

Syntactic analysis looks at the structure of the sentences and grammatical organisation. It encompasses combinations of clauses, coordination and subordination, the active and passive constructions distribution and the complexity of nouns phrases. Quantitative stylistic analyses have indicated that the length of sentences, the density of clauses and the frequency with which certain grammatical structures are used are some of the best tests of authorship since they cannot be easily controlled by an author (Grant, 2007).

Syntax may be contentious in the interpretation of law. Other interpretations of a statute or a contract may be as a result of the attaching of a prepositional phrase or the extent of negation or even the coordination of the clauses. Linguistic analysis gives systematic ways of assessing these competing interpretations. The analysis of statutory law using the corpus data as the means to investigate the functionality of certain syntactic structures in normal speech has gained more and more importance in statutory interpretation in a number of jurisdictions (Solan & Tiersma, 2005).

New forensic linguistic studies of judicial talk have indicated in the Pakistani experience that syntax plays a role in the building of legal authority. When delivering the prosecution narrative, the use of complex nominalisations and embedded clauses is common, and as such provides it an appearance of objectivity and distance, whilst the defence narrative is often delivered with less complex structures. These and other discoveries do show that grammar is

not a neutral mean of meaning but a resource of creating an institutional power (Akhtar, Din, and Naqvi, 2025).

The morphosyntactic analysis is also important in the analysis of confessions. In a number of well-known cases, linguists have been able to demonstrate that grammatical form of a written confession did not correspond with familiar speech patterns of the accused. This cast grave questions on the credibility of the statement and implied that police officers had to rephrase it (Coulthard, 1994).

1.3 APPLICATION OF SEMANTICS AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

The fundamental areas of forensic linguistics are semantics and discourse analysis since legal arguments are in many instances just arguments that concern meaning. Courts are required to determine the meaning of a certain word, sentence or a text in a given situation. Linguistic semantics offers the means of the lexical meaning analysis, lexical ambiguity, reference, presupposition analysis and semantic roles.

Interpretation of controversial legal terms is one of the most essential uses. The common sense of a word, the collocational patterns, and the semantic prosody can be used to get the legal decision. In other instances, semantic analysis of corpus has been applied to establish how a particular word is generally employed in real-life situations and thus offer empirical evidence that support one of the meanings over another (Stubbs, 2001).

Forensics semantics also plays a major role in cases of threats, defamation, bribery and conspiracy. In this situation, it is not merely in what the words literally say but what they are doing in whatever context. The theory of speech acts has been extensively applied in establishing whether an utterance can be characterized as a threat, a promise, or an agreement. Indirect speech acts are essential especially since a statement can be treated as a threat without necessarily having a threatening verb in it (Shuy, 1993).

Discourse analysis goes beyond the meaning analysis and studies it at larger marks of language such as narratives and institutional interaction. The narrative structure, evaluation and framing are the means through which lawyers in courtroom discourse create competing versions of events. The arrangement of information given, the application of reported speech

as well as the repetition of important expressions are all in construction of credibility (Cotterill, 2003).

The study of police interventions has revealed that confessions are most of the times the outcome of a progressive discursive process whereby initial denials of the suspect are recast and embedded into a new account created collaboratively by the interviewer and the suspect. This entails summarising, rephrasing and strategic application of presuppositions which could result in the suspect accepting propositions that were not initially stated in their own words (Heydon, 2005).

Semantic and discourse analytical studies have been applied to suicide notes and internet defamation cases in Pakistan. These works show how the lexical decisions, metaphorical patterns and narrative patterns are reflections of the social pressures, emotional and cultural norms. They also demonstrate that digital discourse presents novel issues to legal interpretation since the meaning is frequently expressed via intertextual allusions, emojis, and multimodality (Rashid and Mahmood, 2021).

Discourse analysis also plays a pivotal role when dealing with asylum cases where the plausibility of the narrative by an applicant might be the key to the case. Linguists discuss consistency, the amount of detail and discourse structure instead of falling on culturally biased assumptions of how a true narrative should be constructed (Eades, 2010).

CONCLUSION

The use of phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, and semantics and discourse analysis also prove that forensic linguistics is a complete application of linguistic knowledge in the interest of the law. All levels of analysis present various pieces of evidence. Phonetic analysis helps in identification of the speaker, and in the interpretation of spoken interaction. The morphosyntactic analysis is used to generate the instruments of the authorship attribution and the structural analysis of the legal texts. Semantic analysis and discourse analysis allow studying the meaning, intention, construction of the narrative and power relations. Combined these strategies reveal that language is not a neutral medium when used in legal situations but rather a key element of evidence, interpretation and institutional power.

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CHAPTER 6

BENCHMARK STUDIES IN FORENSIC LINGUISTICS AROUND THE WORLD

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The emergence of forensic linguistics as an academic and professional discipline has been strongly associated with several landmark research studies that proved, in various aspects, that linguistic analysis can be used as credible evidence in a legal setting. These works have been referred to as benchmark contributions since they defined the procedures, boundaries and the validity of the field. They demonstrated that language is not the means of legal processes, but is also a means of evidence, which can be analyzed in a systematic and scientific manner. The history of these works also portrays the shift of forensic linguistics as an individual case study to an international field of complete development in terms of theoretical, methodological, and technological advancement.

1.1 The Evans Statements and the Birth of Modern Forensic Linguistics

The most commonly known study that was found to be the beginning of modern forensic linguistics is the one done by Jan Svartvik in *The Evans Statements* (Svartvik, 1968). This case was of Timothy Evans who had been found guilty and hanged in the United Kingdom due to the murder of his wife and his child. This conviction was done to a great extent on a written confession which was written during the police interrogation. Svartvik conducted research on grammatical and stylistic aspects of the statements made by Evans and showed that they could not be considered linguistically consistent. There were structures in some

parts of the text that Evans could not have created, and other parts also had a different linguistic style.

This discussion revealed how the confession was not a singular, unified text so it was a composite document which had been influenced by the more than one voice. What is important about the current research is not only that it helps to reexamine a specific case but also that it shows how language evidence may be used to dispute seemingly obvious legal facts. It provided the foundation that grammar and style can be identified as the way to determine the author and the text as authentic. It is against this reason that it is highly perceived as the first unambiguous demonstration of forensic linguistic expertise being systematically used to tackle a legal issue (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

1.2 The Work of Roger Shuy and Discourse Analysis of Legal Interaction

In the United States, a breakthrough in the development of forensic linguistics was made by Roger W. Shuy in the 1970s and 1980s. In bribery, conspiracy and entrapment cases, Shuy searched covertly recorded conversations. His main point was that a conversation cannot be analyzed using single sentences to ascertain the meaning of the conversation. Rather, it has to be read within the context of the whole discourse framework, such as turn taking, topic management, presupposition and pragmatic strength of utterances (Shuy, 1993, 1998).

Shuy in a number of cases proved that the defendants had been found guilty because of interpretations that did not consider the linguistic context of the conversation. E.g., a statement which on the face of it seemed to represent an agreement to commit a crime might, on examination in the entire context of conversation, prove to be a refusal or a hypothetical conversation. These works played a key role in making discourse analysis a key method of forensic linguistics as well as demonstrating that meaning in the law is interactionally constructed and not encoded in individual sentences.

1.3 Malcolm Coulthard and the Development of Forensic Authorship Analysis

Malcolm Coulthard contributed to forensic linguistics becoming an academic discipline decisively in his work in the United Kingdom. His work on the controversial confessions and on the authorship of written works showed that the close linguistic analysis can help

determine whether a certain text was written by a specific person. His most notorious case was the one dealing with the examination of a suspect dictated police statement. Coulthard demonstrated that the grammatical and lexical patterns of the statement were not comparable with the speech of the accused which was known, but they were comparable with the style of the police officer who took the statement (Coulthard, 1994).

Coulthard is another scholar who made methodological principles of forensic text comparison. He stressed upon the need to determine the patterns which are not only common in the contested text but also unique in the familiar texts of a suspect. It was a method that shifted the study of authorship to a less impressionistic stylistics and more of a systematic and repeatable approach. His subsequent collaboration with Alison Johnson and David Wright gave a general framework in the analysis of language as evidence and assisted in the foundation of forensic linguistics as an academic field of teaching and professionalism (Coulthard, Johnson, and Wright, 2017).

1.4 Forensic Phonetics and Speaker Identification

Forensic phonetics is another large field of benchmark research. This was shown in the studies of scholars like J. P. French and Philip Rose who revealed that speaker identification could be realized with the help of applying the combination of listening analysis, acoustic measurement, and statistical analysis (Rose, 2002; French and Harrison, 2007). These works set the methodological standards in voice comparison and presented the likelihood ratios as the means of presenting the phonetic evidence in court.

The significance of the work is in the fact that it has turned speaker identification into a highly subjective process into a scientifically based one. It also pointed out the importance of close control of recording conditions, the fact that within speaker variation needs to be taken into account, and the fact that categorical assertions regarding identity are to be avoided. Present-day forensic phonetics still develops on such grounds, adding to them the innovations of digital signal processing and statistical modelling (Foulkes and French, 2012).

1.5 The Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four: Linguistics and Miscarriages of Justice

Criminal cases involving wrongful conviction have been linked to some of the most powerful benchmark studies in forensic linguistics. The examination of police confession in the cases of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four in the United Kingdom revealed that the language of the confessions had some structures which the accused had no likelihood of generating. The linguistic evidence was also significant in proving that such confessions were influenced by the police officers and thus they could not be trusted.

The cases had a significant influence on the way of law practice as they highlighted the frailty of the suspects during the process of police interrogation and the necessity to record the interview in its full contents. They also demonstrated that linguistic analysis may play a direct role in rectifying the miscarriages of justice (Gibbons, 2003).

1.6 Legal Meaning and Corpus Linguistics

The use of corpus linguistics in interpreting the law in legal practice is one of the most notable changes in forensic linguistics in the recent decades. Analyses of large sets of authentic language data have shown that the meaning of controversial terms in the law can be studied (Lawrence Solan and Peter Tiersma, 2005). The methodology enables the courts to find out the usual use of a word by ordinary language and also consider rival interpretations on the basis of factual evidence.

Corpus evidence has been used in statutory interpretation with a particularly significant influence in the United States, where it has been referred to in judicial decisions. The movement is a significant change in the correlation between linguistics and the law since it can add quantitative linguistic evidence in courtroom thought.

1.7 Sociolinguistics, Language Rights, and the Work of Diana Eades

The use of sociolinguistics to the legal sphere (particularly with respect to indigenous and minority speakers) is another critical research area that has been developed as a result of benchmark research. The work done by Diana Eades on the language of the Aboriginal English speakers in the Australian legal system proved that even the slight mismatch of the style of the discourse and the communicative norms can cause severe misinterpretations during the police interrogations and communication in a courtroom (Eades, 2010).

Her works demonstrated that silence, limited responses, and refusal of making direct answers can be viewed by people involved in the legal circles as indicators of guilt or unwilling to cooperate, but it has a different meanings in the cultural context of the speaker. This work broadened the horizons of forensic linguistics to cover the issues of linguistic inequality and human rights in addition to the analysis of the texts and recordings.

1.8 Benchmark Studies in the Digital Age.

The development of online communication has resulted in a new crop of benchmark research on authorship recognition in online contexts, threat email analysis, and linguistic features of social media dialogues. Studies in this field are integrating more traditional stylistic text processing and algorithms and have been applied in a case of cybercrime and internet bullying (Grant and MacLeod, 2018).

Such studies indicate that the communication medium has changed, but the basic principle is the same: language patterns can reveal evidence of identity, intent, and social situation.

Conclusion

The forensic linguistic benchmark studies have been instrumental in making the field an acceptable scientific and socially sensitive discipline. Since the analysis of Evans Statements provided by Svartvik to modern day corpus based legal interpretation and computational authorship analysis, these research efforts have shown the evidential worth of linguistic analysis in a broad variety of legal scenarios. They have not only helped to solve individual cases, but also reform legal procedures, protect language rights and come up with new ways of analyzing language as evidence. They all demonstrate that forensic linguistics is a valuable part of the contemporary juridical framework and a significant subfield of practical linguistics.

1. WILLIAM LABOV'S STUDY OF LANGUAGE VARIATION

William Labov is considered to be the father of modern sociolinguistics owing to the fact that he developed a methodology and an empirical approach to studying language in its social environment. Before his work, the linguistic study was much more abstract and idealistic in nature, ignoring the variation in common verbal language. Labov tried to refute this view by

showing that linguistic variation is organized, is a set of rules and is strongly connected with social factors like class, age, gender, occupation and identity. His variationist approach was a scientific foundation of the study of the real language and demonstrated that non-standard varieties are not any underdeveloped varieties but full-fledged language systems (Labov, 1966; Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2015).

Martha's Vineyard Study (1963)



Labov's study of Martha's Vineyard investigated how language variation reflects speakers' social identity and their attitudes toward their community. The island had experienced social and economic change due to the increasing presence of tourists from the mainland. Labov selected the pronunciation of the diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ in words such as *right* and *house* as his linguistic variables. He observed that these diphthongs were often centralized by certain groups of speakers.

The results showed that centralized pronunciation was most frequent among young male speakers, particularly fishermen, who had strong emotional attachment to the island and who resisted the cultural influence of the mainland. On the other hand, speakers who were oriented toward the mainland and those who intended to leave the island tended to use the standard pronunciation (Labov, 1963). This indicated that linguistic variation was socially motivated and functioned as a marker of group identity and local solidarity. Labov concluded that language can be used as a symbolic resource through which speakers express their social values and affiliations (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Relationship between Identity and Language Use

Local Loyalty → More Centralized Diphthongs

Orientation to Mainland → Less Centralization

This model highlights Labov's major claim that linguistic variation is directly linked with social identity and speakers' attitudes toward their social environment.

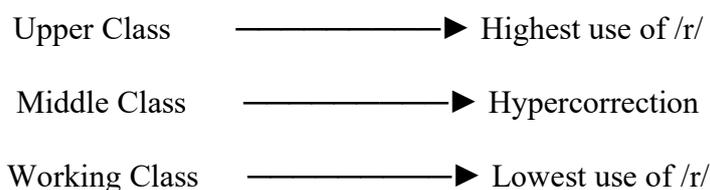
New York City Department Store Study (1966)



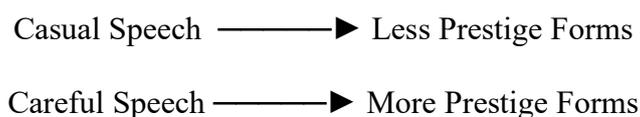
Labov's New York City study further strengthened the relationship between language and social stratification. The aim of this research was to examine the pronunciation of post-vocalic /r/ in words such as *fourth floor* in three department stores representing different social classes: Saks Fifth Avenue (upper class), Macy's (middle class), and S. Klein (working class). Labov used a rapid and anonymous survey technique in which he asked sales assistants a question that would naturally elicit the target phrase and then asked them to repeat it in order to observe the difference between casual and careful speech (Labov, 1966).

The findings revealed a clear pattern of social stratification. The use of /r/ was highest in Saks, followed by Macy's, and lowest in S. Klein. The most significant result was the phenomenon of hypercorrection among middle-class speakers, who used the prestigious /r/ form more frequently in careful speech than even the upper-class speakers. This reflected their linguistic insecurity and their desire for upward social mobility (Trudgill, 2000; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). The study also introduced the concept of style-shifting, which refers to the way speakers change their speech according to the level of formality and their degree of attention to speech (Labov, 1972).

Social Stratification of /r/ Pronunciation



Style Shifting

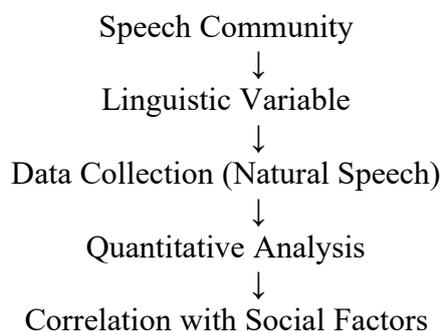


This showed that linguistic variation occurs both between social groups and within the speech of individual speakers depending on the context.

Methodological Contribution

One of Labov’s most important contributions is his quantitative and empirical methodology for sociolinguistic research. He emphasized the importance of collecting data from natural speech situations rather than relying on intuition. His research model involved selecting a linguistic variable, collecting speech data from members of a speech community, quantifying the occurrence of different variants, and correlating them with social variables such as class, age, and gender (Labov, 1972).

Labovian Research Model



This methodological framework laid the foundation for variationist sociolinguistics and continues to be widely used in contemporary research (Meyerhoff, 2011).

Significance of Labov’s Work

Labov's studies demonstrated that language variation is systematic and socially meaningful. They challenged the traditional deficit view of non-standard varieties and showed that all dialects are linguistically valid and rule-governed. His work also had important implications for education because it emphasized the need to recognize and respect students' linguistic backgrounds rather than treating them as linguistically deficient (Labov, 1972; Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

Furthermore, Labov's variationist framework is highly relevant to research in World Englishes and TESOL because it explains how different varieties of English develop in relation to social identity, prestige, and attitudes. It also provides a useful model for analyzing language variation in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, William Labov's Martha's Vineyard and New York City studies revolutionized sociolinguistics by providing empirical evidence that linguistic variation is structured and socially conditioned. His work established a direct relationship between language and social identity, class, and style. Through his quantitative methodology and theoretical insights, Labov transformed the study of language into a socially grounded discipline. His contributions continue to influence contemporary research in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, TESOL, and discourse studies.

2. ROGER SHUY'S CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC SOCIOLINGUISTICS

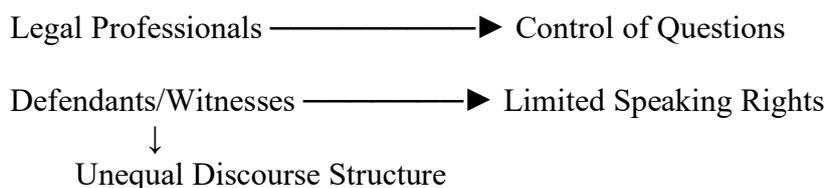
Roger W. Shuy is one of the pioneering figures in the development of forensic linguistics, particularly in the application of sociolinguistic principles to legal contexts. While William Labov established the systematic relationship between language and society, Shuy extended this relationship to the analysis of language as evidence in courtroom discourse. His work demonstrated that linguistic structures such as discourse patterns, conversational strategies, speech acts, and pragmatic meanings play a crucial role in legal interpretation. Shuy's research proved that misunderstandings in legal settings often arise from differences in linguistic background, power relations, and communicative intentions rather than from the literal meaning of words alone (Shuy, 1993, 2008).

Language in the Legal Context

Shuy examined authentic legal data including police interrogations, undercover recordings, bribery cases, confessions, and courtroom interactions. His central argument was that legal interpretation often depends on how language is structured within discourse. He emphasized that meaning is not always explicit but is shaped by context, presupposition, implication, and speaker intention. Through discourse analysis, he showed that many legal disputes are actually disputes about meaning.

One of his major concerns was the issue of linguistic inequality in the courtroom, where judges and lawyers possess institutional power and control the discourse, while defendants and witnesses are placed in a linguistically disadvantaged position. This asymmetry affects turn-taking patterns, questioning strategies, and the interpretation of responses (Shuy, 1998).

Power Relations in Courtroom Discourse



This model shows how institutional power influences linguistic interaction in legal settings.

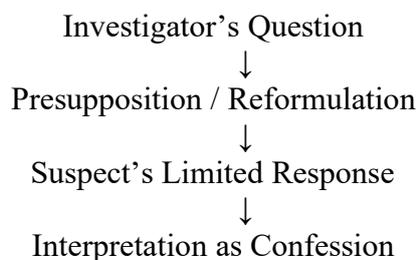
The Study of Confessions and Police Interrogations

A significant part of Shuy's work focuses on police interrogations and confessions. He demonstrated that many confessions are not simple admissions of guilt but are the result of complex interactional processes. Through detailed discourse analysis, he identified features such as:

- Leading questions
- Topic control by investigators
- Repetition and reformulation
- Presuppositions embedded in questions

These linguistic strategies often guide suspects toward particular responses and may result in statements that are later interpreted as confessions in court (Shuy, 1998; Coulthard & Johnson, 2007).

Structure of Interrogation Discourse



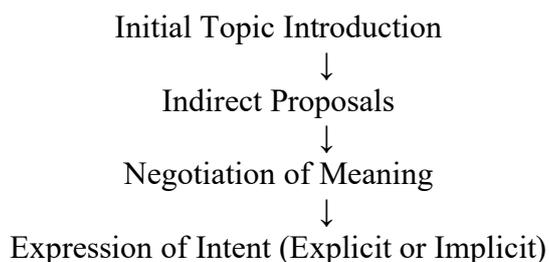
Shuy argued that without linguistic analysis, such statements can easily be misinterpreted because courts tend to treat them as direct and voluntary admissions.

Undercover Operations and Entrapment

Another important area of Shuy's research is undercover sting operations, particularly bribery and entrapment cases. He analyzed secretly recorded conversations to determine whether the suspect showed genuine criminal intent or whether the intent was introduced by the government agent. His findings revealed that meaning in such interactions develops gradually through negotiation, indirectness, and conversational implicature rather than through explicit statements (Shuy, 1993).

He emphasized that key legal questions—such as *Who initiated the crime?* and *Was there real intent?*—can only be answered through discourse analysis. This shifted the focus from isolated words and sentences to the sequential organization of conversation.

Development of Intent in Interaction



This model illustrates how Shuy showed that criminal intent is often interactionally constructed rather than directly stated.

Methodological Framework

Shuy's methodology is based on discourse analysis and sociolinguistic principles. He emphasized the importance of analyzing:

- Turn-taking patterns
- Speech acts
- Topic management
- Pragmatic meaning
- Context of interaction

He used authentic spoken data and detailed transcripts to demonstrate how linguistic evidence can be scientifically analyzed in legal cases.

Shuy's Analytical Model



This framework established forensic discourse analysis as a reliable tool for legal investigation.

Significance of Roger Shuy's Work

Roger Shuy's work is significant because it introduced sociolinguistic and discourse-analytic approaches into the legal domain. He demonstrated that:

- a) Language can function as crucial legal evidence.
- b) Misinterpretation of discourse can lead to wrongful convictions.
- c) Power and inequality shape courtroom communication.

d) Meaning is context-dependent and interactionally constructed.

His research also contributed to the protection of linguistic rights by showing that speakers from different social and educational backgrounds may be disadvantaged in legal settings due to differences in communicative style and discourse competence (Shuy, 2008).

For researchers in forensic linguistics and applied linguistics, Shuy's work provides a methodological model for analyzing legal texts, police interviews, and courtroom interaction. His approach is particularly relevant in multilingual contexts where issues of interpretation, translation, and power imbalance are more complex.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Roger Shuy extended the principles of sociolinguistics into the legal sphere and established the foundation of forensic discourse analysis. His studies demonstrated that legal meaning is not simply contained in words but is constructed through interaction, context, and power relations. By applying systematic linguistic analysis to confessions, undercover recordings, and courtroom discourse, he showed that language can serve as reliable scientific evidence. His work continues to influence contemporary research in forensic linguistics and plays a crucial role in ensuring fairness and accuracy in legal interpretation.

3. THE STUDY OF DAVID R. OLSON LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND THE INTERPRETATION OF TEXT

David R. Olson's work is central to understanding the relationship between language, literacy, and interpretation, particularly in institutional contexts such as education and the legal system. His research does not focus on language variation in the Labovian sense or on discourse evidence in the Shuyian sense; rather, it explains how writing transforms language into an object that can be analyzed, interpreted, and used as evidence. Olson argues that literacy provides a metalinguistic awareness that allows individuals to reflect on language structure, meaning, and intention. This insight is especially significant in forensic and educational linguistics because legal systems rely heavily on written texts such as confessions, statements, laws, and transcripts (Olson, 1994).

Language and the Nature of Writing

Olson's major argument is that writing is not simply speech written down; rather, it represents language in a way that highlights certain linguistic features while hiding others. In spoken interaction, meaning is supported by intonation, gesture, shared context, and immediate clarification. In written language, these contextual supports are reduced, and therefore readers must rely on linguistic form alone to interpret meaning. This creates the illusion that meaning is fully contained within the text.

According to Olson, literacy leads to the development of metalinguistic awareness—the ability to think about language as an object. This enables individuals to recognize ambiguity, distinguish between literal and intended meaning, and analyze grammatical structure (Olson, 1994; Olson & Torrance, 2001). This ability is crucial in institutional settings where texts are interpreted as fixed and authoritative.

Representation of Meaning in Speech and Writing

Spoken Language —————▶ Context + Intonation + Interaction

Written Language —▶ Linguistic Form + Reader Interpretation

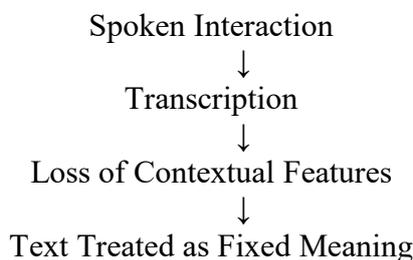
This model shows Olson's claim that writing shifts the responsibility of meaning from the speaker to the text.

Literacy and Interpretation in Legal Contexts

Olson's work has strong implications for forensic linguistics because legal systems treat written documents as stable and self-contained. Confessions, contracts, witness statements, and laws are interpreted as if their meanings are explicit and fixed. Olson argues that this is a misconception because written texts do not fully represent the speaker's intention. Instead, they represent only what is linguistically encoded.

For example, when a spoken confession is converted into a written statement, features such as hesitation, intonation, repair, and interactional context are lost. The written version appears more coherent and intentional than the original speech. As a result, courts may interpret the text as a clear and voluntary statement even when the original interaction was complex and negotiated (Olson, 1994).

Transformation from Speech to Written Evidence



This model explains why written legal texts may misrepresent the original communicative event.

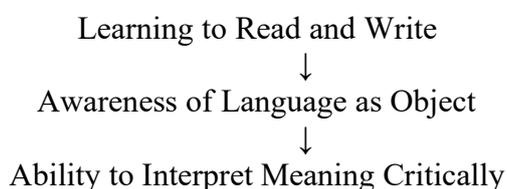
Literacy, Education, and Cognitive Development

Another major contribution of Olson is his explanation of how literacy changes cognitive processes. He argues that learning to read and write enables individuals to:

- Reflect on language structure
- Recognize ambiguity
- Understand the difference between what is said and what is meant
- Interpret authorial intention

This development of metalinguistic awareness is not natural but is acquired through formal education (Olson, 1994). Therefore, individuals with limited literacy may face serious disadvantages in contexts where success depends on the interpretation of written language, such as courts and academic institutions.

Literacy and Metalinguistic Awareness



This shows how literacy influences interpretation and access to institutional power.

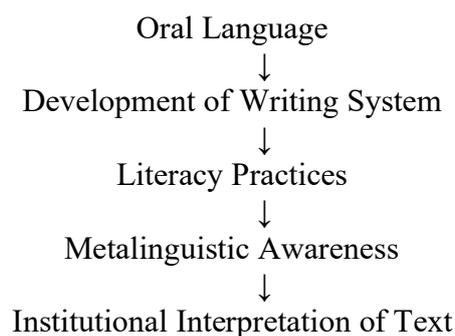
Methodological Orientation

Olson's approach is theoretical and interdisciplinary, combining insights from linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and education. Instead of collecting sociolinguistic variables, he analyzed:

- The relationship between speech and writing
- Children's understanding of texts
- The historical development of literacy
- The role of written language in institutions

His work is based on the argument that writing systems shape how language is conceptualized and how meaning is interpreted.

Olson's Conceptual Framework



Significance of Olson's Work

Olson's research is highly significant for forensic linguistics, discourse analysis, and educational linguistics because it explains why written texts are often treated as authoritative and why this treatment can be problematic. His work demonstrates that:

- Writing represents language but does not fully capture meaning.
- Interpretation depends on the reader's linguistic and cognitive abilities.
- Literacy creates unequal access to institutional power.
- Legal reliance on written texts may lead to misinterpretation of spoken discourse.

These insights are particularly relevant in multilingual and postcolonial contexts, where individuals may have varying levels of literacy and different relationships with written language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, David R. Olson's study of language and literacy provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how written texts are interpreted in institutional settings. He demonstrated that writing transforms language into an object of analysis and creates the illusion that meaning is fully contained within the text. His concept of metalinguistic awareness explains how literacy enables individuals to reflect on language structure and intention. In legal contexts, his work shows that written confessions, statements, and transcripts may not accurately represent the original spoken interaction. Therefore, Olson's contribution is essential for understanding the relationship between language, literacy, power, and interpretation.

4. GERALD R. MCMENAMIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

Gerald R. McMenamin is considered to be one of the key personalities of the evolution of the contemporary forensic linguistics, in this case, the sphere of authorship examination and linguistic evidence. His work is an important move in the sphere of an impressionistic stylistically comparable work to a systematic, empirically based linguistic methodology. The study by McMenamin was a systematic approach to recognize the personal lingual patterns as well as indicated how these patterns could be applied as effective forensic evidence in the courtroom scenes. His book *Forensic Linguistics: Advances in Forensic Stylistics* (2002) has been regarded as one of the most authoritative works in the area and is often referred to in the research that is concerned with such questions as who authored it, the variations in style, and whether or not it is admissible in a court of law (McMenamin, 2002).

The central aspect of the approach of McMenamin is the notion of the linguistic fingerprint which implies the notion that all people form the habitual and rather unconscious patterns of language. These patterns are found at various levels of language and this can be observed in spelling, punctuation, syntax, lexical choice, discourse structure, and even pragmatic preferences. Contrary to the previous stylistic literature, which mostly dwelled on literary writings, McMenamin showed that the prose of ransom notes, threat letters, suicide notes, emails, and police statements, represent prose that have recognizable and analyzable stylistic traits, as well. In his argument, he held that the individual linguistic behavior is unique in that

the interaction of idiolect, sociolect, and genre restrictions in an individual makes the process of identifying the author probable, although scientifically supported (McMenamin, 2002; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

The multi-level analysis of linguistic features is one of the key contributions made by McMenamin. He pointed out that authorship attribution must not be based upon any one characteristic and instead must be based upon a convergent set of evidence on multiple levels of linguistic analysis. Capitalization, punctuation, spacing and paragraphing are some of the features that are analyzed at the graphological level. At the lexical level, there is an analysis of recurrent word choices, collocations and spelling preferences. On the syntactic level sentence length, structure of clauses and grammatical patterns are taken into account. On the discourse level, cohesion, coherence, thematic development and organization strategies are examined. This multiple level analysis model enhanced the scientific validity of forensic stylistics by illustrating how authorship is determined by the accumulative force of various linguistic signs and not by singular similarities (McMenamin, 2002).

The other prominent element of the work by McMenamin is that he insists on the difference between style markers and content words. Style markers are those features of the language that the writer is less aware of and thus more useful in identifying him/her. They are used in the form of the functional words, common syntactic structures, the use of punctuation marks and discourse. On the contrary, content words are topic-dependent and may be manipulated. McMenamin minimized the chances of false attribution by placing more emphasis on style markers and elevating the evidential quality of a linguistic analysis in a courtroom (McMenamin, 2002; Grant, 2013).

Another area where McMenamin made a lot of contribution concerns the admissibility of linguistic evidence before the courts of law. He made it clear that forensic linguistic analysis should be of the quality of scientific evidence, which requires transparency of practice, repeatability of findings and clearly recognize limitations. His work corresponded with the rising requirement in legal systems of expert testimony, which was deep-rooted and verifiable empirically. In that regard, it is possible to say that McMenamin assisted in establishing forensic linguistics as a viable forensic science as opposed to an interpreting one, in the first place (Coulthard, 2013).

Another dimension of the study that is important by McMenamin is the fact that he applied forensic stylistics to actual forensic work. He presented the full case studies through which linguistic evidence proved useful in determining an unknown author, confirming or refuting a confession, and indicating a forged text. These case studies explained the practical usefulness of linguistic analysis and demonstrated the applicability of theoretical models in an investigation and judicial setting. Another thing that his work articulated was the ethical duty of the forensic linguist, especially in the aspect of being objective and not too boastful of the results.

The model by McMenamin has not been left without a critical evaluation despite its significant contributions. Other researchers have indicated that the term linguistic fingerprint must not be taken to mean that there is absolute uniqueness in the deterministic meaning. Rather, the issue of authorship attribution is one of probabilities and similarity level (Chaski, 2001; Grant, 2010). However, even these criticisms allow us to admit that the framework of McMenamin was the pioneer of the future work of corpus-based authorship analysis and computational stylistics.

The integration of qualitative stylistic analysis with quantitative and corpus-based methods can be regarded as an influence of McMenamin in the modern forensic linguistics. The focus on systematizing data gathering, the attentiveness of feature selection, and the transparency of methodology still inform the best practices in authorship attribution studies. In addition to this, his work has been important in teaching the forensic linguists as well as in making authorship analysis one of the most solid and common sub-areas in the field of forensic linguistics.

To sum it up, the research conducted by Gerald R. McMenamin has become a milestone in the development of forensic linguistics. He has changed the nature of authorship attribution into a scientifically based and legally applicable field by creating a detailed model of forensic stylistics, introducing the idea of a linguistic fingerprint, and showing the potential level of evidence of multi-level linguistic analysis. Not only did his work give methodological means to the process of analyzing questioned texts, but also assisted in the formation of the epistemological and professional background of forensic linguistics as a branch of application linguistics investigation.



5. PETER TIERSMA'S BENCHMARK CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

The work by Peter Tiersma takes a center stage in the evolution of the field of forensic linguistics in the sense that it introduced a methodical focus to the connection of language and law and the interpretation of evidence. Although previous researchers had proven that linguistic analysis can be applied in legal practice, Tiersma gave a detailed theoretical and historical perspective that clarified how language applies to law, why it usually leads to confusion and how linguistic knowledge could be used to bring justice. His influential works, especially the major works, *Legal Language* (1999) and *Speaking of Crime* (2005) have changed forensic linguistics as a case driven practice, to a theoretically based and interdisciplinary area that links linguistics to legal theory, discourse analysis, and sociology of law (Tiersma, 1999; Tiersma, 2005).

One of the characteristics of the scholarship of Tiersma is his historical study of legal English. He showed that the obscurity of legal language is not due to chance but rather the outcome of centuries of word strata under the impact of Latin, French and early forms of the English language. Following the history of law terms and the syntactic structures, he

demonstrated that a lot of the modern legal discourse features are traced to historical efforts at preserving precision, control, and professional monopoly. This historical outlook offered a valuable orientation in the field of forensic linguistics since it was the transition to the individual analysis of the text and the institution and socio historical processes that influence legal communication (Tiersma, 1999). He thereby expressed the idea that forensic linguistic analysis has to take into account not just the linguistic form of a text but also legal and communicative traditions and practices within which a text is a part and parcel.

The other significant contribution made by Tiersma in his work is the comprehensibility and the plain language movement. His message was that legal writings miss communicating with ordinary people since they are normally written to professional communities. By performing an elaborate linguistic analysis of jury instructions, police warnings, contracts and statutes he was able to show that syntactic complexity, archaic vocabulary and dense nominal structures are a hindrance to comprehension. This revelation left a great forensic implication as it cast doubts on the soundness of confessions, suitability of the legal process, and the capacity of an average citizen to appreciate his rights under the law. One of his most impactful pieces is his writing on the linguistic complexity of the Miranda warning, which demonstrated that lots of people do not comprehend the rights which they are requested to give up, and thus made it difficult to assume that informed consent can be given in the legal sphere (Tiersma, 2005; Solan and Tiersma, 2005).

Tiersma was also vital in putting into place the study of the language of the law as a viable field of study under forensic linguistics. He stressed that legal language is a special form that has its conventions, genres and interpretation. Each of the courtroom discourse, statutes, contracts, and police interrogations are all different types of communicative practices and must be approached analytically in different ways. He has given a methodological basis to subsequent research on the legal discourse by categorizing legal texts into functional groups and analyzing the linguistic properties of the texts. This strategy prompted the shift of forensic linguists towards the issues of meaning interpretation, ambiguousness, speech acts and the pragmatics of legal interaction (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

Their collaboration with Tiersma and Lawrence Solan enhanced the theoretical base of forensic linguistics even more. Their study of legal text interpretation showed that the

meaning of the law is not predetermined but rather made through the interaction of linguistic form, institutional norms and judicial reasoning/logic. They demonstrated that even in cases where the implicit linguistic theories are not explicitly recognized by courts, they tend to be applied in the process of interpreting statutes and confessions. With these interpretive processes being brought into the limelight, Tiersma helped in bringing a less naive look at the use of linguistic evidence in making a legal decision (Solan and Tiersma, 2005).

The other significant aspect of the benchmark contribution of Tiersma is the fact that he focuses on the ethical obligation of forensic linguists. He claimed that the knowledge of languages must not serve to simply help one party to win a court case but should set about to explain the message, decrease misconception and enhance justice. This view has assisted in defining professionalism in forensic linguistics and strengthening the notion on the fact the field is not just a technical discipline but rather a socially responsible discipline.

The impact of the works of Tiersma could also be observed in the growth of the studies on courtroom interaction and police interrogation. His study of the role of power in the legal communication demonstrated how power in the institution is exercised in the act of communication by use of language and how the imbalance between the legal and lay participants influence the production and reception of discourse. The knowledge has been extensively applied in the research of witness questioning, suspect interviewing, and jury talks, in which linguistic decisions can affect judicial results (Gibbons, 2003; Coulthard, 2013).

In methodological terms, the study by Tiersma created a valuable point of reference by integrating the approaches of qualitative linguistic analysis and the information provided by the legal scholarship. He has shown that forensic linguistics is supposed to be interdisciplinary to cope with the complexity that exists between language and law. This theoretical approach has been used in modern studies incorporating corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and socio legal theory.

Tiersma has also received critical discussion, in spite of its broad impact. Other scholars have said that the trend towards plain law language should strike a balance between clarity and the necessity of a precise and technical language. It has been argued by others that more

comprehensive empirical testing should be used to support comprehension studies. However, these controversies do not make his contribution less important. Instead, they replicate the fact that his work remains relevant in determining the future of forensic linguistic studies.

The legacy of Tiersma in modern forensic linguistics can be seen through the increased interest in the linguistic rights, access to justice, and the understandability of juridical procedures. His work furnished the conceptual paradigm upon which the role of language in facilitating and limiting the engagement in law systems is observed. Through his efforts to show that legal meaning is essentially linguistic in character, he contributed to the establishment of forensic linguistics as a key part of the modern legal analysis.

To sum up, it is possible to state that the benchmark study compiled by Peter Tiersma is a landmark in the evolution of the field of forensic linguistics. His study of the comprehensibility of the language of the law and his approach to legal interpretation, his interdisciplinary approach contributed to extending the field of study further than authorship attribution and stylistic comparison. His work revealed that language was not just an instrument applied in matters of law, but was the fundamental part in the making of legal meaning and the delivery of justice. It is due to this fact that his work is still used as a reference book by the scholars and practitioners of forensic linguistics.

6. ROBERT A. LEONARD CONTRIBUTION TO FORENSIC LINGUISTICS

Robert A. Leonard is generally considered one of the most significant modern personalities in forensic linguistics due to his contribution into making the field a scientifically based and institutionally dedicated area with the direct practical use to the legal system. Of significance especially is his work on the merging of variationist sociolinguistics with actual criminal investigations and courtroom practice. Being trained in the tradition of Labovian, Leonard treats language as a structured and patterned system where variation is non-random but is socially significant, and where variation can be observed and not just perceived as an impression (Leonard, 2005; Leonard, 2010; Labov, 1972). This theoretical foundation helped him to establish the fact that linguistic behavior leaves evidence that can be used as forensic evidence in a very similar form to physical evidence. In his research, expert testifying, and the development of institutional structures, Leonard has demonstrated that language could

indicate identity, social positioning, and communicative intent in legally meaningful contexts (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Leonard, 2014).

The most significant work to have been achieved by Leonard is the concept of linguistic identity that has been developed and implemented in the field of authorship analysis. Based on the sociolinguistic theory, he suggests that each person has a unique repertoire of linguistic pattern that is relatively stable over time and through communicative situations (Leonard, 2005; Leonard, 2010). This linguistic peculiarity which can be said to rest on the idiolect is not founded on individual lexical items rather than on the repetition of patterned elements in more than one level of the language such as lexis, syntax, discourse structure, orthography, and punctuation (Olsson, 2008; McMenamin, 2002). According to Leonard, reliable authorship attribution should be based on groups of features and their allocation and not on similarities since a single feature can happen by chance as a writer works on other people (Coulthard, 2004; Leonard, 2014). This pattern methodology is a major methodological innovation within the field of forensic linguistics that takes the discipline out of the subjective and stylistic comparison to the objective and repeatable examination.

Another way in which sociolinguistic variation can be of direct assistance in criminal investigation is also exhibited by Leonard whose work also shows how sociolinguistic variation can directly bring out socially significant information about an interlocutor or an author. He demonstrates that the features of the language could reflect regional origin, education, professional affiliation, as well as belonging to specific discourse groups, all of which could help investigative agencies reduce the lists of the suspects and decode anonymous messages (Leonard, 2005; Shuy, 1993; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010). His studies on threatening letters, ransom notes, and digital messages help to understand the way in which language represents individual and social experience. In this regard, Leonard goes further and broadens the area of forensic linguistics to mean investigating intelligence and profiling to illustrate how linguistic analysis is still relevant in modern criminal justice settings (Grant, 2007; Leonard, 2010).

The other significant effect of Leonard contribution is that he laid the foundation of admissibility and credibility of the forensic linguistic evidence in the court. He is a renowned expert witness in many criminal cases and has always underlined that linguistic analysis

should be scientific and methodological, especially in the aspect of transparency, reliability, and replicability (Leonard, 2010; Tiersma and Solan, 2002). His practice in the courtroom demonstrates how convoluted linguistic knowledge can be brought out clean and understandable without damaging the the rigor of the analytical process. Leonard has assisted in changing the mindset about forensic linguistics as only a scholarly study, making it an expert piece of evidence capable of surviving in court by basing his conclusions on the observable and systemically analyzed facts (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Leonard, 2014).

An appropriate methodological rigor is one of the distinctive features of the approach of Leonard to forensic analysis. His paradigm is generally the overall set of familiar and controversial writings, the determination of linguistically relevant and recurrent features, and a comparative writing, which combines discourse analysis of quality with quantitative tendencies (McMenamin, 2002; Leonard, 2005). He is also very opposed to some rules of claiming authorship on the basis of few common features but he focuses more on the need to look at the general language system of a text. This multi-layered approach makes sure that the findings are evidence-based and can be evaluated by other analysts, therefore, making forensic linguistics to be aligned to the rest of the forensic science principles (Grant, 2007; Leonard, 2014).

Leonard has also pioneered the linguistic study of threatening communication, a field with a major implication on law enforcement and national security. His studies show that threats are linguistically different and these linguistic difference can offer valuable hints as to the gravity, immediacy and credibility of the threat (Leonard, 2010; Gales, 2011). Through his analysis of modality, temporal reference, deixis, stance, and levels of specificity, he demonstrates how language may draw the line between actual intent to perpetrate violence and anger or fantasy. Applications have been used in the evaluation of anonymous threats, internet extremism, and terrorism and discourse discussion where the use of linguistic analysis is critical in modern day security (Leonard, 2010; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

Besides his theoretical and methodological contribution, Leonard has been at the forefront of institutionalization of forensic linguistics. Institute of Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment and Strategic Analysis at Hofstra University has been one of the milestones in the professional growth of the field. His use of this institute resulted in a prototype where

academically based research, professional training, and practical casework are combined, enabling the student to work with real-world forensics data and work on current cases (Leonard, 2014). This institutional structure has assisted in the professionalization of forensic linguistics and its future as a practical field, as well as enhancing its relationship with the law enforcement agencies and other legal practitioners (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

The work of Leonard is also interdisciplinary in its scope because it has been able to relate the study of linguistics with criminology, psychology, legal studies and intelligence analysis. He has indicated that language is central to most of the legal processes by illustrating how linguistic evidence may be applied in authorship profiling, threat assessment, and in the assessment of confessions and witness testimonies (Shuy, 1998; Tiersma and Solan, 2002). The interdisciplinary orientation shows a larger view of the nature of forensic linguistics as a discipline that stands at the crossroads of language, law, and society and that is involved in both theoretical learning and practical justice.

On the theoretical level, the work by Leonard supports the notion that language must be considered as a trace evidence. Similar to the fact that physical evidence can make one be associated with a crime scene, recurrent patterns of language can make a person be associated with a text so long as the analysis is systematic and empirically based (Leonard, 2005; Grant, 2007). Simultaneously, he is always aware of the extent of linguistic evidence and highlights the necessity of making cautious and probable conclusions but not absolute ones. Such a fair and scientifically responsible attitude has helped the relevant discipline of forensic linguistics achieve the methodological maturity and moral authority (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Leonard, 2014).

To sum up, the contribution of Robert A. Leonard to the area of forensic linguistics is that he managed to successfully integrate sociolinguistic theory, scientific methodology, practical casework and the creation of an institution. He has proven linguistic identity can be quantified and forensically useful, that the art of authorship analysis should be founded on the systematic analysis of patterns, and that linguistic evidence can be very instrumental in the investigation of crimes and on the trial bench. His contributions to the field of threat assessment have broadened the scope of its practical use, whereas his contributions to the development of academic and professional frameworks have secured the future expansion of

the field. Leonard has made a contribution to the establishment of a strong, interdisciplinary, and legally relevant field of knowledge by forensic linguistics (Leonard, 2005, 2010, 2014; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

7. WORK OF CAROLE E. CHASKI

One of the most effective contributors to the scientific advancement and computational construction of forensic linguistics is Carole E. Chaski, especially in the field of authorship attribution. The peculiar feature of her work is a high level of methodological rigor, empirical validation, and the introduction of the computational tools in the linguistic analysis. When most of forensic stylistics was deeply dependent on qualitative and impressionistic methods, Chaski came up with experimentally testable models and statistically based procedures that made the field of forensic stylistics much more believable. Her innovations, which included the creation of the ALIAS (Automated Linguistic Identification and Assessment System) and her insistence on testing the accuracy of errors, validation and replicability, re-established forensic linguistics in the wider context of forensic science (Chaski, 2001; Chaski, 2005; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

The most significant addition that Chaski made is her criticism of previous methods of attribution of authorship that were highly reliant on literary stylistics and subjective interpretation. She claimed that a lot of the more traditional approaches were not empirically tested and thus could not satisfy the evidentiary requirements necessary in a legal setting. Chaski asserts that the forensic linguistic evidence should be reviewed in line with other sciences in the field of forensics, and this implies that the process of analysis should be repeatable, measurable, and correlated with the established error rates (Chaski, 2001; Grant, 2007). This stand connects forensic linguistics with the Daubert test of expert testimony that demands scientific evidence to be testable, peer reviewed, and in general, it must be accepted by the scientific community in question. Predicting such criteria, Chaski was at the heart of taking the discipline off the intuitive analysis level to focus on scientifically testable model (Tiersma & Solan, 2002; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

The study by Chaski is especially memorable due to its concentration on defining the linguistic characteristics that can be used the most to determine the author of a specific work. However, instead of depending on vocabulary richness or manipulable stylistic features, she

through experimental studies proved that syntactic features give more reliable and less consciously controlled evidence of authorship. It has been demonstrated in her work that such features as the use of function words, presence or absence of syntactic patterns, presence or absence of grammatical constructions are less susceptible to disguise and thus prove more dependable during forensic comparison (Chaski, 2001; Chaski, 2005). This observation has been enduring on the discipline as it has influenced the analysis to go further on the levels of linguistic structure that cannot be readily manipulated by a writer. By so doing, she offered a linguistically grounded and empirically based basis of authorship study.

The other significant input of Chaski is the creation of computational tools of forensic linguistic analysis. Using the ALIAS system she made a proposal of automated means of comparing linguistic patterns among texts in a manner which reduces bias in analogy and maximizes replicability. The system contemplates syntactic analysis and statistical distribution of grammatical features which can be used to compare objectively known texts to controversial texts (Chaski, 2005). Such a method of computation allows not only to make the analysis more efficient, but also offers some measurable results which could be offered in the court as scientifically based evidence. In this regard, the work by Chaski is an essential move toward modernization of the field of forensic linguistics as well as its conformity to the advances in the field of corpus linguistics and natural language processing (McMenamin, 2002; Grant, 2007).

Chaski has also been a powerful supporter of experimental testing of the forensic linguistic techniques. To ascertain the accuracy and reliability of the analytical procedures, she did a series of validation studies where her procedures were applied to known authorship texts. Such studies showed that her syntactic-based model was able to discriminate between authors at statistically significant scale thus giving empirical evidence as to its applicability in a forensic setting (Chaski, 2001; Chaski, 2005). This work has not only a certain impact because of its exact findings but the methodological implication has the value as well. Chaski created a precedent of how the methods of analysis are to be evaluated, and then applied, before serving as evidence in the court. This focus of validation has been a key demand in the modern forensic authorship analysis (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Grant, 2007).

Besides her contribution to the authorship attribution, Chaski has helped to make forensic linguistics a more professional field. She has been actively engaged in formulating standards of the practice of forensic linguistic analysis, and in helping to establish the field as a forensic science. Her studies emphasize the importance of definite procedures, detailed approaches, and written steps because linguistic evidence has to be considered similarly to other types of evidence in the court of justice (Chaski, 2001; Leonard, 2014). Such professional orientation has contributed to the enhancement of the credibility of forensic linguists as expert witnesses and to the fact that their work can be deemed as admissible in court.

The input of Chaski is also relevant concerning the relationship between qualitative and quantitative method of approach in forensic linguistics. Although she is a firm believer in statistical and computational approaches, she does not rule out the linguistic theory, but bases her computer models on close linguistic study, especially in syntax and grammar. This combination of theoretical linguistics with a quantitative approach proves that there is no contradiction between scientific rigor and linguistic intuition but both can be combined to help to come up with useful forensic evidence (McMenamin, 2002; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010). Her work thus forms a connection of classic analysis of linguistics and newer methods of computation.

The next significant detail of the research by Chaski is that she also addresses the question of disguise and simulation in authorship. She points out that since the lexical and stylistic elements are manipulable through conscious means, analyzing the language at a deeper level of cognitive processes and hence, an aspect of language that is more imbued with control is necessary in forensic analysis. She offered the forensic linguists a less efficient foundation on which to attribute authorship in instances where suspects are trying to hide their identity by showing them that syntactic patterns are less prone to a deliberate manipulation (Chaski, 2001; Olsson, 2008). This has significant consequences in the cases of the anonymous threats, online communication, and conflicting digital texts.

Theoretically, the work by Chaski does help in the reconstruction of forensic linguistics as empirical science as compared to the strictly interpretive subject. Her focus on hypothesis testing, calculation of error rates and transparency of the methods used in the field makes it consistent with the scientific method, interdisciplinaryizing it further. By so doing, she has

contributed to the placement of forensic linguistics as other forensic sciences which depend on quantifiable and viable types of evidence (Grant, 2007; Tiersma & Solan, 2002).

To sum up, the work of Carole E. Chaski plays a major role in the history of forensic linguistics as it provides the scientific and computational foundations of the authorship attribution process. Through new experimentally testable techniques, a focus on syntactic analysis, the creation of automated systems like the ALIAS and the promotion of error rate testing and replicability, she converted forensic stylistics into a methodologically sound and legally admissible kind of forensic evidence. Her work has not only made the linguistic analysis more reliable and credible in the courtroom, but also served as a blueprint on how the work in the field should be carried out in the future. Chaski has been key in forming the modern and empirical direction of the forensic linguistics through her integration of linguistic theory, computational analysis, and forensic science standards (Chaski, 2001, 2005; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Grant, 2007).

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CHAPTER 7

THE NEED FOR DEVELOPING FORENSIC LINGUISTICS IN PAKISTAN (WITH CASE EVIDENCE)

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The emergence of forensic linguistics in Pakistan has become an acute scholarly and institutional need as the legal system becomes more and more reliant on evidence presented by language and communication in the real and virtual worlds is becoming more complex.

Languages in legal contexts are not just a neutral form of expression, but it makes stories, creates images and determines the verdict. In spite of this central figure of language, the forensic linguistic skills have not yet been comprehensively incorporated in the investigative and judicial systems of Pakistan. This is especially troublesome where the interpretation of the law, the interrogation of the police, the confessions of the accused and reasoning in the court is based on linguistic forms that are analytically unexplained. The interpretation of written and spoken discourse has been used decisively in the final decision in a number of Pakistani court cases, but these have been conducted without the aid of trained forensic linguists (Coulthard and Johnson, 2010; Tiersma and Solan, 2002). Pakistani studies on courtroom discourse that have been conducted recently support that examination and cross-examination are linguistically framed in a manner that places legal professionals in a superior position and puts lay witnesses in a disadvantaged position, which in turn influences the persuasiveness of evidence given in court and makes procedural fairness a matter of significant concern (Khan, 2023; Javed and Ghani, 2019).

The Asia Bibi blasphemy case (Asia Bibi v.) is one of the most common instances that can be mentioned to prove that linguistic analysis is necessary in Pakistan. (The State, 2018). The case was substantially based on the verbal communication between the accused and her co-workers that was reported. This interaction had an evidentiary value that was based on the narration, translation and situating the alleged utterances in the FIR and subsequently in courtroom discourse. The ruling of the Supreme Court brought to light inconsistencies, slowness in coming up with reports and how oral expressions were converted to written legal accounts. Via forensic linguistics, this case depicts the problems of reported speech, discourse building by witnesses, intertextuality, and the linguistic mediation to construct legal truth. Research into Pakistani forensic discourse has demonstrated that entextualization or the act of moving verbal communication into a written legal record frequently leads to the loss of contextual meaning and the introduction of institutional voice, which can dramatically change the interpretative meaning of events when it comes to providing an evidential account of them (Malik and Iqbal, 2022). The lack of systematic discourse analysis on the level of investigation proves the institutional gap that could be covered by forensic linguistics to investigate the process of allegations linguistically created and how the meaning changes during speech, transcription, and legal records.

The other case that is also important is that of Mukhtar Mai (The State v.) Mastoi, 2002-2011) where the reliability of testimony, the regularity of the narrative structure, and the analysis of statements acquired the leading role in the judicial process. This trial was handled by several courts and the acquittal by the Supreme Court was partly grounded on the alleged discrepancy in the testimony of the witnesses. Empirical basis of determining whether these discrepancies were inherent characteristics of trauma narratives or signs of fabrication could have been given by forensic linguistic tools like narrative analysis, statement comparison, and analysis of questioning strategies. Studies carried out on the judgment of rape trials in Pakistan reveal that the story of a rape victim is often rated based on the expectations of linear and grammatically complete narratives, as compared to the trauma discourse that is often fragmented and disorganized in time (Shaheen, 2024). Such linguistic illiteracy in this case shows how justice may be influenced by lacking a comprehension of the discourse patterns of weak witnesses.

Another significant aspect of the forensic linguistic evolution is that of the case of terrorism in Pakistan, especially that of digital communication and the multilingual evidence. Text messages, social media posts and recorded speech have been served as the main evidence in various investigations conducted under the Anti-Terrorism Act. But it has been technological and not linguistic to a large extent that such material has been analyzed. The analysis of extremist discourse on the Pakistani digital space reveals that ideological placing, group belonging, and operational intent are frequently coded in the form of metaphor, switchings, and allusions to religious texts, which cannot be viewed as purely technical and therefore can be properly understood only with the help of linguistic analysis (Rasul and Mushtaq, 2023). Threat assessment and forensic authorship analysis might hence help to differentiate between operational communication and extremist content that is recreated or forwarded.

The Panama Papers case (Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi v. The significance of linguistic interpretation in the statutory ruling is also depicted in Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, 2017). Another significant fact of the case was the definition of the term in the financial documentation which was the meaning of the word receivable. Judicial interpretation of this lexical word also had a hand in deciding who owned which assets and eventually led to a sitting Prime Minister being disqualified. The forensic investigations of the judicial verdicts in Pakistan supported by corpus show that the legal authority and evaluative assessment are

made in a form of modality, nominalization, and evaluative lexis, constructed on the basis of judicial reasoning and public opinion (Malik, 2026). This case hence emphasizes that expert linguistic analysis in the interpretation of law is essential, especially in cases that are sensitive in terms of financial and politics.

On the same note, Zahir Jaffer murder case (The State v.). Zahir Jaffer, 2022) entailed the massive use of recorded speech, text messages and questioning in the court. The defense and the prosecution have built contrasting narratives using selective linguistic framing, stance marking and appraisal. Pakistani literature on media coverage of gender-based violence reveals that the choice of lexicon and transitivity patterns in crime coverage determine the assignment of agency and responsibility in crime reporting that subsequently dictate the courtroom perception and people (Nawaz and Hussain, 2021). These examples indicate that the analysis of evidence is inseparable with the language with the help of which it is conveyed and explained.

The other field that forensic linguistics is desperately required in Pakistan is the identification of counterfeit news and disinformation, especially in politically sensitive situations. Investigations by Pakistani scholars on the topic of forensic discourse have revealed); that the fake news is often based on the use of pseudo-intertextuality, posing as, and strategic emotionalization to build credibility and ideological conformity (Tahir et al., 2025). In a media landscape where viral text is defining the political reality, the mechanisms of forensic linguistic verification are the key to the democratic stability and the electoral transparency.

The presence of institutional context of forensic science in Pakistan also contributes to the necessity of linguistic skills. Although the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA) has developed a wide range of sophisticated services in the area of DNA, toxicology and digital forensics, the field of linguistic evidence remains uninformed of this as a separate area of analytical activity. This structural deficiency, Pakistani scholars have stressed many times, is manifested in the absence of interdisciplinary cooperation between linguists and legal specialists and in the lack of academic preparation in forensic linguistics (Maitlo, 2025; Anjum and Yasin, 2023).

The fact that the Pakistani society is multilingual also presents a set of issues that are only solvable with the help of forensic linguistics. Studies of the language use during police investigations indicate that the statements given in the regional languages will go through repetitive translations before arriving in the courtroom, leading to semantic loss, pragmatic shift, and institutional re-voicing (Rehman, 2022). Unless translation and interpretation processes are studied through a forensic method, the credibility of such statements cannot be completely determined.

Along with providing a better interpretation of the law, the advancement of forensic linguistics in Pakistan is fundamental to the safekeeping of the linguistic rights of the intended minorities. The readability research of the Pakistani legal texts shows that most litigants would not read the FIRs, bail orders, and the court judgment because of blocky legal English and complicated syntax (Anjum and Yasin, 2023). Forensic linguistic intervention is thus an important intervention towards accessing justice.

To sum up, the case evidence and the recent empirical studies experienced in Pakistan show clearly that the role of language in the final outcomes of law is decisive, but it is not studied in an analytic way. The emergence of forensic linguistics in Pakistan would play a crucial role in enhancing investigative precision, fair trial process, fortification of democratic institutions as well as resolving the country to the international standards of forensic science. To make forensic linguistics an effective part of Pakistani legal system, it should be institutionalized, it should be a part of academic programs, interdisciplinary cooperation and professional training.

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