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FORENSIC LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL PATTERNS IN FIRST INFORMATION REPORTS (FIRS): A STUDY OF LEGAL DISCOURSE AND INSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE

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Forensic Linguistics, First Information Reports (FIRs), Critical Discourse Analysis, Lexical Patterns, Legal Discourse, Institutional Language, Police Discourse.

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Abstract:
First Information Reports (FIRs) are fundamental documents in the criminal justice system, and they are the starting point of formal records of a crime reported, which would then provide a basis for further action. FIRs are considered as a valuable place for forensic linguistic studies from both evidence and institutional perspectives. This study looks at the lexical patterns used in the selected First Information Reports (FIRs) in order to investigate the way legal discourse and institutional language are created in police documentation. The study is based on the theories of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that helps to understand the linguistic devices that depict authority, legality, criminality and institutional power in FIR narratives. The data are five purposively selected FIRs that cover different types of offences such as theft, traffic and possession offences. A qualitative research design was used to detect repetition of lexical items, legal terms and institutional vocabulary in the texts and the patterns of discursivity. The representation of social actors, the use of the bureaucratic language, the construction of legal authority, as well as the lexical strategies used to position accused persons and complainants in the discourse, were paid special attention.
The results show that FIRs have a very formalised and standardised lexical pattern which is dominated by legal and procedural terms. Institutional language is frequently used, as it helps to build police authority and to make legal procedures legitimate. Moreover, the selection of words has its own importance in providing context to criminal acts, setting the tone for credence of the evidence and ensuring the police report's bureaucratic nature. The study shows that the FIR is not a simple narrative of events, but rather a discursive text that embodies institutional ideologies and power relations. The results will add to the expanding area of forensic linguistics and document the influence or role of lexical patterning in legal and institutional discourse in the criminal justice documentation process.
Keywords: *Forensic Linguistics, First Information Reports (FIRs), Critical*

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Discourse Analysis, Lexical Patterns, Legal Discourse, Institutional Language, Police Discourse

INTRODUCTION

Language is essential to the administration of justice as it is a key means by which legal proceedings are recorded, understood and acted upon. In legal institutions, language is not just a means of communicating but also a means of building authority, controlling social conduct, defining and legitimizing institutional actions. For this reason, the study of law has developed an interest in legal texts which has made them an area of investigation in forensic linguistics. Forensic linguistics is the study of language and law, particularly the effect of linguistic decisions in legal contexts on the interpretation of the law, the conduct of court business, and the representation of people in court. The First Information Report (FIR) is one of the most important legal documents in the arsenal of police officers, as it represents the first official police document of an offence and is also the basis for the initiation of criminal investigations and prosecutions.

The FIR is drafted and registered under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, in Pakistan, and serves as the initial written record of a crime, alleged or otherwise, that is reported to the police. The document includes key details about how the offense was committed, who the perpetrators were, where the incident happened and what circumstances led up to it, and the initial response of law enforcement. The FIR is not just a formality of narrating the events, as it has a very significant evidential value. The language is formalized and comprised of a variety of institutional language and procedural terms. The language used in FIRs is as a reflective communicative practice of legal institutions and specific administrative and legal use. Therefore, a linguistic analysis of FIRs can give insight to the construction and maintenance of legal authority, criminality and institutional power through the use of discourse.

The study of legal language has received much scholarly interest in the last few decades. It has been found that legal discourse displays lexical, syntactic and stylistic features which distinguish it from normal discourse. Technical expressions, formulaic phrases and bureaucratic language are often used in legal texts to achieve precision, uniformity and legality. But, these linguistic elements also play a role in the institutionalization of power and can shape the subjects of the law in legal discourses. In a forensic linguistic context, the language of legal documents is not neutral but rather it is a reflection of certain institutional goals, ideological positions, and power relations. Hence, studying the lexical patterns in the FIRs allows to draw out some important aspects of legal discourse that would otherwise not be noticed.

Lexical patterns are repetitions in the use of words, phrases and sets of terminological structures in a specific discourse. Lexical decisions can be significant in legal contexts for meaning and institutional legitimacy. Certain words are frequently chosen to categorize acts as crimes, designate people as criminals or victims, and convey events in legally relevant manners. These elements of language, with their repeated usage, become institutionalized and help to normalize the type of legal documentation. Formal documents such as FIRs use formal language, including the use of legal language, procedural language and language related to crime, used in a systematic way to produce a formal document that meets institutional expectations. Such patterns can thus be analysed in terms of the language used to shape the social reality of legal institutions.

The aspect of forensic linguistic research, which is of particular importance, is the representation of social actors in legal speech using the language. Complainants are people who file the FIR; accused persons are those who are alleged to have committed the crime; witnesses are persons who observe the crime being committed; investigating officers are those who investigate the crime; and other parties are parties who are involved with the case. These depictions are not language neutral. Instead, they are determined by the use of lexical elements that define roles, responsibilities, and identities in a narrative. The application of certain

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legal terminology and phrases can shape a person's impression and interpretation in the legal system. Contextual analysis of lexical patterns, therefore, can be used to gain insight into the nature of language's contribution to the construction of social identity and institutional relationship.

This study takes the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the theoretical framework. Discourse Analysis through a lens of CDA is focused on the interplay between language, power and ideology, and is concerned with uncovering the social and institutional structures that lie within discourse. CDA scholars argue that the discourse is created and influences the wider social practices. One particular arena of institutional power is the legal discourse which is a key factor that shapes social behavior and authorizes legal power. By examining lexical patterns, CDA allows the analysis of institutional ideologies, authority structures and social hierarchies in language. The relevance of this to FIRs is significant due to the fact that it is created in a highly regulated institutional environment, and plays an important function in the legal system.

Despite the fact that many studies have been undertaken on legal discourse and forensic linguistics, only few studies have been conducted in the field of linguistic analysis of FIRs in the Pakistani context. Although the FIR is a critical piece of evidence in criminal investigations, it has been comparatively under-researched; previous work has tended to emphasize courtroom speech, police interviews, witness statements and legislative documents. Moreover, there are many studies on legal discourse that focus on the overall structure or procedure rather than on the lexical pattern of texts that help to shape legal and institutional meaning. The lack of focus on the language of FIRs and its influence on legal stories in the literature suggests more investigation is needed in this area of study.

The relevance of the present study is twofold; firstly to the forensic linguistics and secondly to the legal discourse studies. The study aims to gain insights into the functioning of legal language in institutional context through analysing the lexical pattern of FIRs. The results could be used as a basis for continued exploration of the linguistic features of police texts, the development of legal authority, and the social imagery of actors in the criminal process. Furthermore, the study provides an account of how language is used as a tool for institution communication and legal management.

In this study, the researcher has relied upon the analysis of five FIRs, which were related to different categories of offences. The study looks at the legal discourse and institutional language construction in FIR narratives through a qualitative analysis of words in the legal, institutional and crime contexts and the occurrence of lexical patterns. In particular, the study aims to establish the lexical characteristics of the FIR discourse, analyse the social actors that are represented by the words and examine the correlation between the selection of lexical items and the institutional authority. The research adds to the expanding area of forensic linguistic research which focuses on the relationship between language, law, and society.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

What are the lexical patterns of the selected First Information Reports (FIRs)?

To what extent are lexical items involved in the creation of institutional language and legal discourse in FIRs?

3. How is the social actors conveyed by lexical patterns in FIR narratives?

4. How do these patterns of lexicisation highlight the institutional and ideological aspects of police talk.

The purpose of the study is to improve the knowledge of the language characteristics of FIRs and to illustrate the significance of the lexical analysis in the forensic linguistic investigations on legal texts in order to answer the following questions.

Literature Review

The Impact of Language on Law is now an important area of study in modern linguistic research. Forensic linguistics is the discipline that deals with the nature and use of language in legal environments and looks at

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the use of language as evidence in criminal and judicial proceedings. Forensic linguistic scholarship holds that the legal text is not simply a neutral report of events, but a socially and institutionally constructed discourse, which is shaped by power dynamics, ideology and legal authority. Linguistic analysis of legal documents can hence be used to gain insights into the nature of social reality as represented in legal institutions.

Forensic linguistics was coined by Jan Svartvik in the 1960s, and has since become a multi-disciplinary area focusing on the relationship between language, crime and the law. Many scholars, including Malcolm Coulthard, Tim Grant and John Olsson have highlighted the distinctive linguistic characteristics of legal text, and the ways in which it differs from normal discourse. Legal texts often make use of institutional language, institutional forms, technical language, and procedural language, all of which add to the precision and authority of the legal text. Such linguistic features have an important influence on how a legal event is interpreted and how the individual concerned is represented in legal proceedings.

The study of legal discourse has been consistently found to reveal that legal discourse acts as a tool for institutional authority. Van Dijk (1998) points out that discourse involves the reproduction of social hierarchies and ideology; Fairclough (1995) suggests that discourse is closely linked to social power and institutional control. In legal contexts, language is not just for conveying information but also for validating institutional actions and controlling social behavior. It is therefore of significant importance that the study of legal discourse is also a part of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), because it helps to look at how law institutions wield power in their linguistic use.

The use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is useful for analyzing legal texts as it is considering the relationship between language, ideology and social structure. For Fairclough (1995), discourse is a social practice that is used for the reproduction and maintenance of power relations. In the same way, Van Dijk (2006) states that discourse helps to shape social cognition and institutional dominance. The views and attitudes expressed are especially pertinent to legal language since legal language is often used to assert the authority and neutrality of the institution while simultaneously championing a specific social-ideological stance.

There are several studies focusing on the linguistic features of the legal discourse in the judicial and institutional context. According to Gibbons (2003) the language used in laws is very specific and has its own lexical and structural systems. Similarly, Tiersma (1999) states that legal language is technically and formally sophisticated, which enhances its authority. The observations indicate that the use of the lexicon is an important factor in the construction of legal legitimacy and institutional control.

In forensic linguistic research, attention has turned more and more to examining police discourse and legal documents. The linguistic mechanisms which the institutional power is built are studied by analyzing the police reports, witness statements, courtroom transcripts and judicial judgments. Police language is often found to be saturated with institutionalized patterns of language, procedures, and bureaucratic language, all of which help to legitimate the institutions themselves. The use of such language promotes the portrayal of sartorial events in a manner conducive to legal and administrative needs.

The analysis of First Information Reports (FIRs) is a relatively new field of forensic linguistic research. FIRs are especially significant as they are the first official legal documentation of the recorded crimes and often form the basis for subsequent criminal investigations. Although the linguistic analysis of FIRs is of great importance, so far comparatively less research has been conducted with respect to the linguistic features of FIRs. Some studies already conducted indicate that FIRs have special lexical and structural characteristics which distinguish them from the normal narrative texts.

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Zaman, Khan and Mahmood (2024) have studied FIRs as a unique genre of legal discourse, which has significantly contributed to the study of FIRs. Their corpus-based forensic analysis proved that FIRs have distinct textual and linguistic features, which can be considered as a legally oriented type of language. The study found that the same legal expressions, words, and phrases are commonly used as well as the same basic narrative structures in the FIRs, which is responsible for the standardization of the discourse. The researchers found that the FIRs could be considered as another genre of the legal genre because of its institutional function and institutionalized linguistic organization.

Recent studies have also pointed to the ideological aspects of FIR discourse. In the study of narcotics-related FIRs files in Lahore, Sagheer (2026) examined the study using Critical Discourse Analysis methodology, and he concluded that the construction of criminality and institutional authority is achieved through the use of lexical choices, transitivity patterns, and narrative structures. The study uncovered very clearly that legal language can often symbolize social stratification in its language and that the FIR can be an ideological text in which the power of the State is legitimized and certain social groups are marginalized.

Likewise, Sattar, Tehrim and Arif (2026) conducted a Forensic linguistic discourse analysis of rape FIRs, and observed that the institutional language often depersonalizes legal representations of violence. They showed that passives, procedural language and legalistic structure play a role in the discursive marginalisation of trauma in legal documents. The study highlights the need to study the language within the context of the social reality that it constructs, a context that is formed by legal institutions.

There has also been research on the legal discourse in Pakistan that has studied generalized judicial texts. In a critical linguistic analysis of the Panama Case Verdict, Ahmed, Yousaf, and Habib (2020) showed how the evidence of linguistic patterns can aid in the creation of judicial authority and ideological positioning. Their research indicates that the legal text is often linguistically designed to communicate a sense of the legitimacy of institutions and the absence of bias and subjectivity in legal decision making.

Changing vocabulary patterns is one of the most important aspects of discourse analysis, as they may show the institutional and ideological structures influencing the communication. Lexical analysis can give insights to recurring themes, social representations and discursive strategies in texts (Baker, 2006). Lexical entities are repeatedly used in legal discourse to classify actions, identify social actors and make legal relevance. These patterns help to normalize legal communication and to promote institutional norms.

The representation of social actors in discourse is especially important for the reason that legal lexical choice affects the representation of such actors in discourse. People who are involved in the lawsuits are commonly labeled by institutions as “accused,” “complainant,” “witness,” or “offender.” These lexical designations are not neutral, but they help to build social identities and legal roles. Fairclough (2003) suggests that the use of words make a difference to the social relations and ideology embedded within institutional discourse. Therefore, the study of lexical patterns can shed light on how social reality is constructed in particular versions in legal language.

The idea that institutional language is a characteristic of legal discourse has gained considerable traction in the study of the law. The legal language and formula of legal institutions ensures uniformity, clarity and assurance (Tiersma 1999). These linguistic elements lend the formal status to legal texts and help to establish the authority of institutional practices. In the realm of FIRs institutional language has multiple functions as well as an administrative one: it helps to make the activities of police officers and the legal system appear standardized and objective.

The notion of power is a fundamental one in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis and is also of great significance to the analysis of Legal Texts. Van Dijk (1998) believes that power relations are generally re-created in institutional discourse in terms of language. Legally drafted documents often have assumptions

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about authority, responsibility and social order at their core that are not always obvious at first reading. Lexical patterns then offer a way of exploring the ideological aspect of legal language and the ways in which institutional authority is preserved in discourse.

While a great deal of work has been done in the fields of forensic linguistics, legal discourse and institutional language, but comparatively little work has been done on lexical analysis of FIRs in the context of Pakistan. FIRs are one of the most vital documents in criminal justice processes, but they have not been explored to the same extent as courtroom interactions, judicial decisions, legislations and police interrogations. In addition, previous research has tended to focus on structural or procedural aspects of legal language exclusively without closely considering how lexical features are used to represent the institution and legal meaning.

To fill this gap, the present study focuses on the patterns used in selected FIRs in the light of Critical Discourse Analysis. The study aims to serve as a contribution to the ongoing research in the field of forensic linguistics, which emphasises the legal language, institutional terminology, lexical preferences related to crime and the representation of social actors. The analysis seeks to illustrate the lexical structures which serve as key tools for the construction of legal authority, institutional legitimacy and criminality in FIR narratives.

Methodology

Research Design

The type of research design used in this study is a qualitative research design in which First Information Reports (FIRs) are studied using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to find the lexical patterns in FIRs. Legal texts are best investigated in the context of qualitative research as it enables a detailed exploration of the linguistic choices and discursive structures found in legal discourse, along with the meanings found in the institutions as they are included in legal discourse. Qualitative analysis, as opposed to quantitative approaches that emphasize more on numerical measures, allows the researcher to understand how the language shapes social reality, legal authority, and institutional power. To analyse the lexical aspects of the FIR discourse and to find out the relationship between the above and legal and institutional language, a qualitative method is the most suitable method for the present study.

This study is based on the theory of Forensic Linguistics which is a branch of linguistics that deals with the relationship between the law and language. In the field of forensic linguistics, legal texts are considered to be linguistic artefacts which embody the practices of an institution, social relations and ideologies. FIRs are a significant type of legal writing as they are the initial formal document recording a crime and may impact further investigations and judicial actions. Therefore, the analysis of FIR language can be used as a tool to gain insights into the communication practices of law enforcement institutions.

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of the study uses the concept of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA is interested in the relationship between language, power and ideology and aims to expose the social and institutional relations that lie within the language. Fairclough (1995) claims that discourse is a social practice through which the relations of power are established and maintained. Likewise, Van Dijk (1998) states that discourse is a means to the reproduction of institutional authority and social dominance.

It is the CDA that has been chosen for the present study due to its suitability for analysing legal and institutional texts. FIRs are not simply descriptive records of criminal events, but documents of the institution in a legal context, which has specific rules and ideological beliefs for their production. CDA will

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examine the ways in which words shape legal authority, the representation of social actors and institutional legitimacy.

Data Collection

The data used for this study are obtained from five FIR (First Information Reports) collected, using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was used because the selected FIRs covered a variety of criminal offence types, creating a variety of examples of legal/ institutional discourse. These are selected FIRs for theft, traffic offences, offences against the person and offence against property which are typically reported by police departments.

FIR's were chosen on three criteria. Completeness and legibility of the documents were essential for proper linguistic analysis. Second, the FIRs had to contain various categories of offence to make it possible to compare the lexical patterns of different contexts in the legal field. Third, because of the requirement to perform detailed discourse analysis, the documents had to include enough narrative and procedural content.

The present study is based on the selected FIRs which form the mainstay of the study and to investigate the lexical patterns, legal vocabularies, institutional language and discursive representations in those FIRs.

Unit of Analysis

Lexical item is the major unit of analysis on this investigation. Special emphasis is laid on the legal terminology, the vocabulary of the institutions, the expressions used in procedures and the vocabulary used to narrate a criminal act as well as on the pattern for which it is recurrent in the FIRs. Apart from lexical units, the study also includes lexical clusters, frequent phrases and term structures that are further elements of building legal discourse.

The analysis is not restricted to lexical items, but also takes into account how the selection of lexical items is used in larger discursive structures. This way, not only is the content of the words examined, but also how they help to create meaning, authority, and institutional representation.

Analytical Parameters

The following key parameters are analysed:

Legal Lexical Items

The study provides an analysis of the legal vocabulary used in the FIRs, such as the words related to the criminal offence, criminal procedure, the investigation, evidence, police work etc. This analysis explores the legal vocabulary used in the discourse of FIR and the formal and authoritative character of FIR.

Institutional Vocabulary

Special focus is placed on the language items related to police administration, legal processes, and institutional power. The study examines the role of institutional language in the process of creating official legitimacy and the process of bureaucratic control.

Crime-Related Lexical Patterns

Criminal acts, offenders, victims, incidents are analysed in terms of recurring lexical items. These patterns are used to give insight into the linguistic representation of criminality in FIR narratives.

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The Social Actors are represented in the lexicon.

The study investigates the representation of the complainants, accused persons, police officials and witnesses in terms of lexical selection. Special attention is given to the labels, descriptive terms and the categories of terms that build social identities in discourse.

Lexical Construction of Authority

The analysis explores the ways in which lexical variation helps to establish legal authority and institutional power. This means analyzing words that are used in the investigation, enforcement, regulation, and procedure.

Intertextual Legal References

The study describes the references to the legal provisions, statutory sections, procedural rules and institutional frameworks. It helps in the legal validity of FIRs and helps in strengthening the relation of the FIRs with other judicial systems.

Data Analysis Procedure

This analysis was done in several steps. First, the FIRs were read carefully to be able to pinpoint any common lexical items and legal jargon. The lexical items were then classified based on their functions in the discourse (legal terms, institutional language terms, crime language terms, and social actor representation terms).

After the categorization of words, the texts were analysed on the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. The researcher analyzed the lexical pattern as a means of building up legal authority, institutional legitimacy and social representation. Special emphasis was given to the connections between linguistic decisions and general institutional values.

Individual FIRs were then analyzed and compared to find common themes throughout the data set. This comparative method allowed the researcher to identify the differences between the lexical characteristics specific to offences and general characteristics of FIR discourse. The last step was interpreting the results in the context of CDA and comparing them with the previous studies conducted on CDA and legal discourse in the field of forensic linguistics.

Ethical Considerations

The study embraces the principles of linguistic research that are established. The analysis is intended for academic purposes only and is not intended to unreasonably affect the legal proceedings or judicial decision. The FIRs are analysed as language documents instead of as evidence in an ongoing investigation. In addition, the study does not deal with personal identities but with discourse patterns and linguistic features. The information shared in the FIRs are kept confidential and are used only in the analysis.

The methodology used in this research consists of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology which is used to analyze the pattern of the words in FIRs in a systematic way. The study aims to identify the linguistic structures involved in the creation of legal discourse and institutional authority in police documentation by highlighting the linguistic features of legal texts, institutional language, crime-related lexical options and social actor representation.

Analysis of Tractor Trolley Overloading FIR

Legal and Institutional Lexical Patterns

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The FIR is distinguished by its use of legal and institutional terminology, thus creating an official and legal record. Vocabulary like کارروائی, ملزم, مقدمہ, and mentions of legal clauses help to make the discourse formal and procedural. The style of the language is bureaucratic and is often found in police work documentation and finds a emphasis on the law and administrative measures as opposed to personal narration.

Representation of Social Actors

The police officials are represented by their institutional role and responsibilities, thereby strengthening the institutional authority and legitimacy of the police. Words which describe their actions include inspection, regulation, and enforcement. On the other hand, the accused is represented mainly with the lexical items related to the notion of violation and violation of the law. This distinction makes it easy to distinguish between the lawful authority of the police and the criminal acts of the accused, and to make the police seem to be protectors of public order and the accused to be a violator of legal regulations.

Crime-Related Lexical Choices

Offence is defined using language that focuses on overloading, obstructing and the breach of traffic laws. These types of terms shape the incident into a threat to public safety that requires police action. The frequent use of crime-related terminology helps to shape the 'language of the crime' and the gravity of the crime in the legal landscape.

The creation of Authority and Legal legitimacy

The FIR has multiple mentions of legal processes and regulations, enhancing its institutional credibility. These intertextual references link the reported incident to wider legal contexts and show the police action as legal and justified. In the use of formal legal language and procedural language, the discourse reinforces the authority of the institutions of law enforcement and validates the acts done against the accused.

The analysis finds that the FIR is characterized by lexical patterns that create police authority, make crime illegal and legalize procedures. The language also reflects the formal and bureaucratic nature of legal language, which highlights how particular words choices contribute to the representation of authority, legality, and social control in the police documentation.

Analysis of Motorcycle Theft FIR

Legal and Institutional Lexical Patterns.

The Motorcycle Theft FIR has a high level of legal and procedural terminology, typical of police records. Lexical items like تفتیش, درخواست, رپورٹ, مقدمہ, and کارروائی, make the text an official legal record. Language is very formal and institutional, with the incident being reported in a legalized framework. Such terminology is commonplace and helps to give the reporting process a bureaucratic feel and to validate its legitimacy.

Social Actors are represented as agents.Social Actors are represented as agents.

Complainant's details regarding personal information and residentiality provide credibility and ownership of stolen motorcycle. However, the accused is designated as نامعلوم (unknown), whereas the well-known victim is known as "victim". The lexical shift away from the individual offender to the criminal act is a significant one. The police are institutional actors whose role is to keep the peace and maintain law and order, and their procedural actions are closely related to registration, investigation and legal processing.

Crime-Related Lexical Choices

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Vocabulary of stealing, losing possessions, and crime dominate the discourse. The construction of theft as a serious crime is built by words and expressions about the disappearance of the motorcycle, reporting of the incident and the beginning of legal proceedings. Repeated use of terminology related to crime helps to highlight the illegality of the act and to strengthen the complainant's victim role in the event of criminal conduct.

Authorities and Legal Legitimacy – Construction.

The FIR serves as a means of providing legal legitimacy by reference to procedural requirements and police activities after receiving the complaint. In the institutional language the registration of the case is described as a normal and lawful reaction to the reported crime. The discourse establishes the institution of the police as an authority in the formal use of the legal language and legal structure, and is about crime-solving and protecting citizens' rights to their property. The vocabulary used in the text helps to establish a sense of objectivity, legality and procedural fairness.

The Motorcycle Theft FIR is legalistic in terms of its legal jargon, institutional language, and lexical patterns specific to crime. The complainant is deified and the unidentified offender criminalized. Lexical choices help identify the legal and institutional meaning in the FIR documentation and the discourse reaffirms the legitimacy and authority of the police.

Analysis of Mobile Theft FIR

Legal and institutional lexical patterns.

The Mobile Theft FIR has a formal and bureaucratic language style with legal and procedural terminology. Alongside the text, there are lexical items like تفتیش, رپورٹ, درخواست, مقدمہ, and کارروائی that play a part throughout the document, further strengthening its official legal nature. The language used is standard and is reported in the same way that is used in police reports, so that the incident is documented in the way that the institution requires. The use of legal jargon also gives an official impression to the FIR and underscores the formal aspect of criminal documentation.

Representation of Social Actors

The personal details and ownership claims of the complainant help to validate the narrative and establish its authenticity regarding the stolen mobile phone. The accused is either never named or only poorly described and the discourse that ensues is mostly about the crime committed, not the individual responsible for it. Police officials are portrayed as institutional actors who receive complaints, record incidents and take action in the courts. These lexical representations distinguish the victim, the offender, and the law enforcement institution from each other in the discourse.

Crime-Related Lexical Choices

The FIR is peppered with words connected with theft, loss, possession and illegal appropriation of property. The vocabulary surrounding the missing mobile phone, the circumstances of the event and the ensuing complaint process creates the offence as a legally relevant incident. The language used in the description of the incident has a criminogentic effect with a number of different words referring to crime. In addition, the words used emphasize the economic and personal significance of the stolen item, thereby emphasizing the effect of the offense on the complainant.

The development of Authority and Legal Legitimacy

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The discourse constructs institutional authority by invocation of official procedures, the registration of complaints and investigation. The language and phrases used in the legal process convey a sense that the police response was objective, lawful, and systematic. Citation of legal mentions and administrative processes lend credibility to the document and link the reported crime to the wider criminal justice system. These lexical patterns convey the credibility of the police and the police's role in the resolution of criminal offences.

The Mobile Theft FIR is very legalistic in nature, with a high density of legal, institutional, and crime-specific vocabulary. The complainant is language neutral and more individualized, while the accused is linguistically distant and more of a victim of theft. Lexical choices in the process of constructing institutional authority and legal legitimacy in FIR documentation in the discourse are important in building up the legal and institutional discourse.

Construction of Liquor Store in the Town of Munger

The state of the law and the institutional landscape. Legal and Institutional Lexical Patterns.

The FIR on liquor possession is very legalistic and institutionalised in its usage of legal and institutional terms. The lexical elements like 'کارروائی', 'گرفتار', 'برآمدگی', 'مقدمہ', 'ملزم', and mention of relevant legal provisions feature the text as a formal legal document. Repeated use of the procedural terms adds to the bureaucratic tone of FIR and highlights the regulatory aspect of their work. These word selections ensure that the incident is recorded under a legal framework and further strengthen the institutional power of the police.

Representation of Social Actors

The police officials are represented as active institutional agents who perform surveillance, detection, arrest and evidence collection functions. They are legitimated in the discourse through the use of words that are linked to investigation and enforcement. Lexicals connected to possession and contravention of the law are the key lexical elements used to represent the accused. Unlike FIRs related to theft in which the victim plays a key role of the story, this FIR is more about the communication between the accused and the police. Consequently, the accused is fashioned as a transgressor who requires a legal response to his or her transgression(s).

Crime-Related Lexical Choices

Possession, recovery, seizure, and illegal activities are the prominent terms in the discourse. The term liquor, confiscate, and evidence are all an important part of building the criminal aspect of the crime. The mention of recovery of banned items repeatedly in the FIR strengthens the evidential basis of the FIR and provides a legal basis for police action. The lexical patterns serve to make the offence look as if it's a direct violation of legal norms and also to highlight the seriousness of the alleged offence.

Authorities and Legal Legitimacy as processes of construction.

The FIR allows for the legal legitimation of the crime by making reference to the procedure of the actions to be taken, the recovery of the evidence, and the acts of the law in relation to the offence. The language legitimizes, justifies, and proceduralizes the police intervention. Formal legal language and citations to legal duties of law enforcement reinforce institutional authority. These lexical selections develop a discourse that defines the police as the guardians of the law, and the accused as a violation of the legal norms.

The Liquor Possession FIR is highly dependent on the usage of legal terminology, institutional vocabulary and lexical patterns of offence. The arguments are about the retrieval of evidence, portrayal of the accused

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as an offender, and the justification of police action in procedural discourse. The analysis revealed that the use of words is a key component in the construction of criminality, institutional authority and legitimacy in FIR.

4.5 The Fifth FIR analysis (FIR no. 4.5)

Legal and Institutional Lexical Patterns

The fifth FIR is a representative of topos of legal and institutional discourse that shows the formal linguistic traits widely found in this type of discourse. A large number of legal terms and procedural terms like مقدمہ, کارروائی, and رپورٹ, درخواست, ملزم are used, which is consistent with a legal document. Such lexical items help to make the discourse bureaucratic and the reported incident is focused on the demands of the criminal justice system. The language is objective, formal, and standard, and conforms to the conventions of police reporting.

Representation of the social actors.

The complainant is described by personal information and through a narration of the circumstances of the incident. This lexical representation helps to establish the complainant as a credible and legitimate participant in the legal process. The accused is represented mostly in terms of crime – related terms, linking the person with illegal activity. Vocabulary associated with investigation, documentation and enforcement is used to describe police officials. Lexical representations thus distinguish between institutional authority and criminal activity, adding to the hierarchy of legal discourse.

Crime-Related Lexical Choices

The lexis dominates the discourse, primarily that of theft, unlawful appropriation, loss of property and criminal action. The language of theft pervades the construction of the offence and helps to make it a legally meaningful crime that needs institutional involvement. The murky language of missing property, a criminalization of the accused and a focus on legal reporting reinforce the criminalization of the accused and the gravity of the event. These lexicographical choices serve as a way to convert an experience of loss from a personal to a formal legal context.

Construction of Authority and Legal Legitimacy

The FIR strengthens the authority of institutions by invoking legal processes, filing complaints, and initiating inquiries. The police institution is built as a legitimate authority by the use of formal legal terms and procedural phrases. Statutory references and official procedures enhance the authenticity of the document. The language and the ideas used in this discourse reflect the objective, legal and legitimate nature of police action, aiming at the administration of justice.

The fifth FIR is distinguished by the high proportion of legal words, institutional words and crime-related lexical patterns. The complainant is portrayed as a valid victim, and the accused is built by means of lexical items linked to the crime. Lexical patterns are used in the discourse to strengthen the authority of the institutions and legal legitimacy in the documentation of the FIR, which uses formal and procedural language.

Discussion

Lexical patterns were explored in the present study in five selected FIRs to analyze the way legal discourse and institutional language are produced in the police documentation. The results suggest that the language of FIRs is very formal and standardized, with certain words used repeatedly, institutional words and words

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related to the offence. These lexical patterns do not only help to do legal documentation but they are also involved in building authority, legitimacy and criminality in the discourse. The analysis shows that FIRs are a particular genre of legal documents, in which all language elements are geared towards the communication practices and institutional goals of the police.

The most important finding in the study is the richness of legal and procedural language in all five FIRs. Common words like کارروائی, رپورٹ, ملزم, مقدمہ, and تفتیش were present throughout the data regardless of the type of offence. The frequent occurrence of legal terminology confirms previous findings, that legal writing is very much dependent on lexical structures, which are common and standard, for consistency, precision and procedural clarity. The results are in line with the research of Tiersma (1999) and Gibbons (2003) pointing to the existence of a specialized vocabulary of law and the fact that this vocabulary serves a distinct purpose of preserving the institutional authority and legal validity of the profession. The high frequency of such words suggests that the FIR is not actually created as a personal report of a criminal event, rather that it is created as a legal document.

The study also uncovers the importance of institutional language to the creation of police authority and procedural legitimacy. In all the FIRs, police officials were represented by terms that related to investigation, enforcement, inspection, arrest, reporting, and legal action. The use of such words helps to demonize the police as the well-known enforcers of law and order, keeping social stability intact. Continuing to repeat the same procedural steps strengthen the credibility of the institutions and the sense that police intervention can be considered legal and necessary. The results of this research confirm what Fairclough (1995) argued about institutional discourse as a means by which authority is created and sustained. The language of the FIRs thus comes to exemplify wider institutional practices that seek to validate state power in legal proceedings.

The second key aspect of the findings is that of lexicalization of social actors. This analysis revealed that vocabulary related to credibility, ownership, victimhood, and legal status were consistently reflected in the complainants' representations. Personal details and contextual information are often used to make their claims seem legitimate. By contrast, the accused person's representation is largely in the language of the crime, connecting the accused with illegal activity. In some FIRs, especially cases where it is alleged that someone took some property, the alleged person is described as نامعلوم (unknown), thus making it about the crime rather than the individual. These findings align with CDA perspectives that discourse plays a role in creating social identities and institutional relations. The use of certain language in FIRs establishes a clear-cut difference between lawful citizens, criminal offenders and institutional authorities.

The research also shows the importance of the lexicographic patterns of crime in legal narratives. Each FIR raised a different kind of offence but the common words used throughout all the FIRs were the words of illegality, violation, criminality, etc. For instance, the words used in the tractor trolley FIRs were more related to traffic offenses and public safety hazards, while those used in the theft-related FIRs were more related to property theft and misappropriation. The liquor possession FIR also pointed towards recovery, seizure and banned drugs. Language variations, or lexical changes, illustrate the ways in which language is adapted in various types of legal situations, while at the same time preserving the overall institutional nature of the FIR discourse. The results of such findings suggest that the selection of words is important in creating the meaning of specific crimes in the context of legal meaning..

One of the most important points that can be made about the FIRs analysed is that they are intertextual and contain legal references. Many times in the data set legal references and parts of statutes and procedural regulations were used. This kind of references are important as they connect individual incidents to legal frameworks, providing indications of legal validity. Being based on law renders the situation of police action

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legal and legal action objective and rule-governed. The discourse serves to reinforce the acceptability of the criminal justice system and the rule of law, and it seems objective and rule governed. A CDA lens combines concepts of reproduction and institutional power, specifically in linking daily life with institutions of governance and legal control, through the concept of intertextuality.

The results also indicate that the FIRs are in a formal and stereotypical style. The lexical patterns were also identified as the same in all the five documents, irrespective of the type of offences, and the reporting structures were identified as the same in all the five documents. This standardization addresses a need of institutions, which is to have a consistent methodology for documentation and reporting for legal purposes. It also helps to de-individualize criminal events by getting them through the law instead of the individual. This means that FIRs are focused on the legal aspects and the manner in which the case is to be handled rather than the emotions and personal stories involved in the case.

Overall, the findings of this study support the idea of the communicative and ideational functions of the language of FIRs. The lexical pattern is good in one respect as it is accurate on the particular aspects of criminal incidents and legal procedures. Conversely, these patterns help to build authority, legitimacy and social control in legal discourse. The frequent use of the legal and institutional language, as well as lexicological choices associated with crime, makes the overall goal of law enforcement institutions apparent and also the function of language as a tool for law administration. The study makes an important contribution to forensic linguistic research by highlighting the importance of lexical analysis in the study of the interaction of language, law and institutional power.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the lexical patterns of the legal discourse and institutional language of the police documentation of five selected FIRs. The study mainly employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and found out the use of legal vocabulary, institutional vocabulary, lexical preference in relation to the crime and social actors' representation in the context of FIRs' discourse. The findings reveal that FIRs are specific type of legal documents that employ particular language structures and conventions of reporting.

The analysis revealed that the term law and procedure is the most prominent term in the discourse of FIR. The formal and bureaucratic nature of the police documentation is reflected in the fact that the lexical items related to investigation, reporting, legal action and criminal offenses were used in all 5 FIRs in the sample. The lexical modes contribute to the setting-up of the authority of the law and the building of legal and institutional norms for reported events. Police's actions are seen as more legitimate and the significance of the role of the police in the criminal justice system is emphasized by the constant use of institutional language.

The study also showed that the selection of the word is another important issue in the representation of social actors. The complainant is often deemed a credible victim and/or a lawful citizen, whereas the accused is formed by labels of criminality and law-breaking. These representations establish clear distinctions in a victim/offender/institutional authority relationship. Linguistic forms play a role in the formation of social identities and the legitimization of institutional power in legal discourse.

Another important discovery is the offence-specificity of the crime-related vocabulary. Even in the context of various offences mentioned in the FIRs, there was a lexical use which was aimed at highlighting the illegality, criminality and the need of Law. These lexical patterns are important in the construction of crime

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in the discourse and help to legitimize police authority. Further, through the use of legal citations and procedural jargon, the evidentiary and institutional importance of FIRs can be further highlighted, thus creating a connection between the cases and the existing legal procedures.

The overall results demonstrate that lexical patterns are important in the development of legal discourse and institutional language in FIRs. The results validate the view that FIRs are not just a neutral document of a crime, but a carefully crafted legal document that demonstrates institutional goals, legal power and social control. The study's linguistic analysis of FIRs adds to the body of knowledge in the emerging field of forensic linguistics and offers insights into the correlation of language and law. The data set could be expanded, differences in FIRs between various regions could be investigated, and other linguistic features, such as syntax, transitivity or the structure of the narrative, could be investigated to gain further insight into the language of the legal field in the criminal justice system.

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