

THE ROLE OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS IN RESOLVING LINGUISTIC DISPUTES IN UZBEKISTAN

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O'ZBEKISTONDA LINGVISTIK NIZOLARNI HAL ETISHDA SUD-EKSPERTIZA LINGVISTIKASINING O'RNI

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РОЛЬ СУДЕБНОЙ ЛИНГВИСТИКИ В РАЗРЕШЕНИИ ЯЗЫКОВЫХ СПОРОВ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

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Abstract. Forensic linguistics, a multidisciplinary field that applies linguistic analysis to legal and professional contexts, plays a critical role in legal proceedings and investigations. This study explores its applications in Uzbekistan, where the intersection of linguistics and law is particularly significant due to the country's linguistic diversity and socio-cultural dynamics. The article examines cases involving insults (haqorat), defamation (tuhmat), and other contentious languages, analyzing speech and text's semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic features. It highlights the methodological challenges of regional dialects, cultural idioms, and hierarchical social structures. Additionally, the study addresses the broader applications of forensic linguistics, including analyzing extremist materials, authorship disputes, and evaluating legal documents. Recommendations include establishing linguistic databases, training programs for forensic linguists, and policy reforms to enhance linguistic expertise in legal contexts. The findings underscore the vital role of forensic linguistics in ensuring fairness, accountability, and justice in Uzbekistan's legal system, emphasizing the importance and impact of the field.



Keywords: forensic linguistics, linguistic expertise, insults, defamation, linguistic analysis, Uzbekistan, justice.

Annotatsiya. Lingvistik ekspertiza bu — lingvistik tahlilning huquqiy va professional kontekstlarga tatbiq etilishiga qaratilgan soha bo'lib, huquq-tartibot va sud jarayonlarida hal qiluvchi ahamiyat kasb etadi. Ushbu tadqiqotda lingvistik ekspertizaning O'zbekistonda tilshunoslik va huquqning tutashgan nuqtalaridagi qo'llanilishi o'rganiladi. Maqolada haqorat va tuhmat holatlarining lingvistik xususiyatlari, matn va nutqdagi semantik, sintaktik va pragmatik jihatlarining tahlili, shuningdek, lingvistik ekspertiza metodologiyalari yoritilgan. O'zbekistondagi dialektal xilma-xillik, ijtimoiy-guruhiy normativlar va ierarxik tuzilmalar til talqinida qanday rol o'ynashi chuqur o'rganilgan. Tadqiqot, shuningdek, haqoratli nutq va qo'rqituvchi bayonotlarning ijtimoiy ta'sirini, huquqiy asoslilikni aniqlashdagi qiyinchiliklarni ko'rsatib, lingvistik ma'lumotlar bazasi yaratish va ekspertlarni tayyorlash bo'yicha tavsiyalar beradi. Tadqiqot natijalari O'zbekistondagi huquqiy tizimda adolat va javobgarlikni ta'minlashda sud lingvistik ekspertizasi muhim rol o'ynashini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: sud-tibbiy tilshunoslik; lingvistik ekspertiza; haqorat; tuhmat; lingvistik tahlil; O'zbekiston; ijtimoiy adolat.

Аннотация. Лингвистика — это область, которая фокусируется на применении лингвистического анализа в юридическом и профессиональном контексте и имеет решающее значение для правоохранительной деятельности и судебных разбирательств. В данном исследовании рассматривается использование лингвистической экспертизы на стыке лингвистики и права в Узбекистане. В статье освещены лингвистическая характеристика случаев оскорбления и клеветы, анализ смысловых, синтаксических и прагматических аспектов в тексте и речи, а также методики лингвистической экспертизы. Подробно изучена роль диалектного разнообразия, социально-групповых норм и иерархических структур в интерпретации языка в Узбекистане. В исследовании также показаны социальные последствия оскорбительных высказываний и угрожающих высказываний, трудности определения юридической силы, даны рекомендации по созданию лингвистической базы данных и подготовке специалистов. Результаты исследования подчеркивают, что судебно-лингвистическая экспертиза играет важную роль в обеспечении справедливости и ответственности в правовой системе Узбекистана.

Ключевые слова: судебная лингвистика, лингвистическая экспертиза, оскорбление, клевета, лингвистический анализ, Узбекистан, правосудие.

Introduction

Language is a powerful tool that shapes communication, influences perceptions, and plays a central role in legal and social disputes. The field of forensic linguistics bridges the gap between linguistics and law, offering insights into the intent, meaning, and impact of language in contentious contexts. From analyzing insults and defamation to determining authorship and interpreting extremist materials, forensic linguistics has emerged as an indispensable discipline in modern legal systems.

Forensic linguistics, also called legal linguistics or language and the law, applies linguistic expertise, techniques, and methodologies to legal contexts such as crime investigations, court trials, and judicial processes (Wikipedia contributors. Lingvokriminalistika. <https://uz.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lingvokriminalistika>). This field, a subset of applied linguistics, focuses on language analysis in legal settings to resolve disputes involving ambiguous texts, defamation, and contested authorship.

Forensic linguistics is a practical application of linguistic knowledge, offering solutions to critical societal challenges. It functions as a vital tool for obtaining evidence-based insights. In recent years, the surge in cybercrimes has highlighted the importance of analyzing contentious texts shared through emails, social media, or traditional media platforms. Originally, forensic linguistic work centred around suspect testimonies, but it has since expanded to include SMS messages, tweets, and comments. The field's applications extend far beyond these examples.

The International Association of Forensic Linguistics has been pivotal in applying linguistic analysis to various crime-related contexts. Its key focus areas include voice analysis (forensic phonetics and acoustics), determining authorship (forensic stylistics and stylometry), discourse analysis (forensic semiotics and discourse studies), assessing linguistic proficiency (forensic linguistic knowledge), and profiling texts (forensic dialectology and sociolinguistics).

While forensic linguistics is irrelevant to all branches of criminology, it is indispensable when crimes involve textual evidence. Cases like blackmail, bribery, and threats are inherently linguistic crimes because they rely on language. Forensic linguists are crucial in multilingual cases in interpreting meaning, and their expertise is invaluable even in monolingual texts, especially those involving slang or dialects.

Russian scholar N.D. Golev highlights the relationship between language and law by underscoring two main points:

- Language is subject to legal regulation.
- Language is the primary medium through which laws are implemented (4).

When examining literary texts from a forensic linguistic angle, insights into the author's psychology, intentions, and themes become evident. Such analyses generate broad impressions and specific conclusions about the text's creator. Forensic linguistic investigations encompass written and oral speech acts, bridging theoretical knowledge with practical applications. By examining evidence, witness testimonies, and suspect statements, linguists contribute to synthesizing findings and aiding in legal decision-making.

Forensic linguistics can be defined broadly or narrowly. Broadly, it encompasses:

- The written language used in legal contexts.
- Spoken language in judicial settings.
- The language utilized as evidence.

The narrower definition focuses on instances where language is evidence for analyzing disputed texts (7).

Experts in forensic linguistics carry out investigations authorized by legal bodies to ascertain facts of legal significance. In Uzbekistan, for example, this practice adheres to the norms outlined in the Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Procedure Code, and the Code of Administrative Responsibility. Such expertise is deemed essential when other investigative methods fail and is classified as optional evidence-gathering.

From a forensic linguistic perspective, the discipline involves studying oral and written texts to uncover truths, verify claims, or identify authorship. This includes a detailed examination of lexical, grammatical, and stylistic features to reveal implicit meanings and insights.

Originating in the mid — 20th century, it has become integral to addressing complex legal issues worldwide. Globally, questions of authorship and language disputes have existed since ancient times. Greek playwrights accused one another of plagiarism, while 18th-century scholars analyzed the authorship of Shakespearean plays and sacred texts. In 1949, F. A. Philbrick coined the term "forensic English" in his work on legal language (13). However, Jan Svartvik's groundbreaking analysis of the Evans case in 1968 marked the birth of forensic linguistics as a distinct discipline in his publication *The Evans Statements: A Case for Forensic Linguistics* (14).

Svartvik's stylistic analysis demonstrated inconsistencies in the language of Timothy John Evans's confession, contributing to his posthumous pardon and establishing the value of linguistic analysis in legal contexts. Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) organized a significant conference on forensic linguistics in 1988, marking a key milestone in the discipline's progression. Four years later, in 1992, the First British Seminar on Forensic Linguistics was held at the University of Birmingham. Education in forensic linguistics advanced further with the launch of the first MA program at Cardiff University in 1999 (3). Later, in response to the increasing demand for specialized skills, the Centre for Forensic Linguistics was established in 2008 at Aston University in Birmingham, enhancing both academic research and professional training opportunities in the field (2).

Numerous researchers have since expanded the scope of forensic linguistics, including M. V. Ablin (15), A. N. Baranov (16), Yu. A. Belchikov (17), E. N. Bondarenko (18), K. I. Brinev (19), M. Coulthard (4), N. D. Golev (22; 26; 27; 23; 24; 25), Y. I. Galyashina (20), Tim Grant (6), Nicola-Jane Smith (10), Andrea Nini (11), and John Olson (12). Their work has addressed defamation, authorship attribution, and linguistic evidence in judicial contexts.

In Uzbekistan, forensic linguistics is an emerging discipline with growing significance. The country's linguistic diversity, cultural nuances, and hierarchical social structures often influence language use and interpretation, making linguistic expertise essential in legal and professional settings. Dialectal variations, idiomatic expressions, and regional communication styles can complicate the interpretation of speech and text, particularly in cases involving insults, public misconduct, and workplace disputes.

The terminology of the field in Uzbekistan also reflects ongoing debates. Terms such as "lingvokriminalistika" (linguocriminalistics),

“yurislingvistika” (jurislinguistics), and “kriminalistik lingvistika” (criminalistic linguistics) are often used interchangeably. Linguist B. Mengliyev (8) proposed the term “linguistic expertology” to describe the discipline’s application in judicial systems, a suggestion adopted by researcher K. Musulmonova (9). In contrast, English-language studies universally refer to the field as “forensic linguistics”. Forensic linguistics—a specialized form of judicial investigation — is instrumental in uncovering truths during legal proceedings. This discipline has evolved from earlier practices like “lexical and stylistic document analysis” and “authorship verification” into a more standardized field known as “forensic linguistics”. In addition, the term “forensic” is described in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English as an adjective referring to “methods used scientifically to investigate a crime” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). Researchers such as Sh. Iskandarova (29), M. Mirhamidov (31), and Sh. Shahobiddinova (32) has significantly contributed to the field in Uzbekistan by addressing cases involving dialects, defamation, and authorship disputes. However, challenges remain, including limited resources, the need for specialized training programs, and the lack of comprehensive linguistic databases.

This study explores the practical applications of forensic linguistics in Uzbekistan, focusing on real-life public and professional misconduct cases. It examines methodological challenges posed by linguistic diversity, the ethical implications of analyzing sensitive language, and the role of forensic linguistics in fostering justice and accountability. By highlighting the challenges and opportunities in this field, the article provides recommendations for improving linguistic expertise in Uzbekistan’s legal system.

Method

Forensic linguistics methodology encompasses the principles, approaches, techniques, and tools that structure both the theory and practice. It outlines a systematic framework for conducting linguistic assessments and providing expert testimony.

Forensic linguistics methodics refers to the approach or strategy used to examine a particular object, event, or situation in forensic linguistics. This methodology provides a structured way of analyzing and understanding the subject matter to achieve the desired outcome using specialized knowledge and techniques.

The methodological challenges in linguistic expertise involve several aspects, such as determining the focus of the analysis, identifying the objects to be examined, training linguistic experts, and improving their qualifications. It also includes the establishment of specialized centers for conducting linguistic assessments. These challenges help shape the processes by which experts approach and analyze cases.

The methodology for conducting linguistic expertise in cases involving insults is a complex issue that requires careful consideration (30). In such cases, it is essential to focus on several factors, such as identifying when a text can be classified as “insulting” in legal terms and understanding the nuances contributing to its defamatory nature. Existing

literature clarifies that insults, humiliation, slander, and actions that harm an individual's dignity are the primary categories of interest regarding linguistic expertise.

For example, according to The Britannica Dictionary, “insult” is defined as doing or saying something offensive to (someone) or something that shows a lack of respect (*Britannica Dictionary. Encyclopaedia Britannica*). It demeans an individual’s honor, dignity, or other personal attributes and brings humiliation and defamation. In contrast, “defamation” refers to communicating false statements about a person to a third party that damages that person’s reputation (*Britannica Dictionary. Encyclopaedia Britannica*).

In Uzbekistan, the Criminal Code (Article 140) and the Administrative Responsibility Code (Article 41) outline situations where insulting behaviour is subject to legal penalties. Specifically, the law defines an insult as intentionally degrading someone’s dignity, which can be punished with fines ranging from 200 to 400 times the minimum wage or up to two years of correctional labor, depending on the medium through which the insult is spread (e.g., media publications, SMS, or public speeches).

Analyzing defamatory materials through the lens of forensic linguistics involves identifying the linguistic markers of insults, understanding the semantic content of the speech, and determining its purpose (28). Linguists focus on how the words, phrases, and their context create a demeaning message and the method used to communicate these insults. Unlike other forms of legal expert analysis, linguistic expertise does not aim to establish factual evidence but instead interprets the meaning, intent, and effect of language within specific contexts.

Linguistic experts answer critical questions such as whether the speech targets a specific person, whether the language conveys an underlying malicious purpose, and whether the material can be interpreted as degrading or insulting. Through these analyses, linguists assess the potential impact of the language on the recipient and determine if it meets the legal threshold for insult or defamation.

Linguistic expertise plays a vital role in identifying and analyzing insults in legal cases. It offers a nuanced understanding of how words and their contexts can harm individuals. Using linguistic methods, experts can clarify insulting language's intent and social consequences, providing valuable input for legal proceedings.

Data Collection

Forensic linguists analyze the language used throughout the judicial process, beginning from the point of arrest and continuing through interviews, charges, trials, and sentencing. Their work includes examining how police interact linguistically with witnesses and suspects during interviews, as well as the language employed by attorneys and witnesses during cross-examinations (1).

This study examines multiple cases from Uzbekistan involving allegations of verbal abuse, coercive language, and insults in professional and public settings. Data sources include publicly reported incidents, audio recordings, transcripts, and legal outcomes from court rulings. The focus is on understanding the linguistic, contextual, and cultural elements

contributing to legal interpretations and outcomes. To ensure ethical standards, all identifying details were anonymized.

Case Selection Criteria

The cases were selected based on their relevance to forensic linguistics, specifically those involving disputed language or public controversies. Priority was given to cases where linguistic analysis could clarify intent, context, and impact. The selected cases exemplify common patterns of offensive speech in Uzbekistan's cultural and legal contexts.

Analytical Framework

The linguistic analysis was conducted using a combination of methods tailored to the unique challenges of insult and defamation cases. These methods included the following:

1. Lexical Analysis

Focused on identifying offensive or insulting word choices, including vulgarities, idiomatic expressions, and culturally significant terms.

Key focus: detection of words with negative semantic connotations and their implications within the cultural context.

2. Syntactic Analysis

Examined sentence structures and grammar to detect patterns indicating power dynamics, coercion, or intent.

Key focus: the use of imperatives, conditional statements, or rhetorical questions to assess whether the language was structured to humiliate or threaten.

3. Semantic and Contextual Analysis

Evaluated the content of speech or text to determine whether it contained offensive elements aimed at degrading the dignity or reputation of a specific individual or group.

Key questions:

Was the speech or text communicated publicly or privately?

What was the intended communicative impact on the audience?

4. Pragmatic Analysis

Analyzed the speech's tone, delivery, and situational context to determine its impact and whether it constituted an abuse of authority.

Key focus: the role of cultural norms and hierarchical dynamics in interpreting the speech act.

5. Diagnostic Criteria for Insults

Based on G.V. Kusov's framework and Uzbek legal definitions, the following diagnostic elements were applied to assess insults (30):

The purpose and target of the speech act (e.g., Was it meant to insult or critique?).

Methods used to express the insult include vulgarities, tone, and context.

Non-verbal elements, such as gestures or implied actions, accompany verbal insults.

6. Legal and Linguistic Integration

Forensic linguists ensured that the speech or text met the legal criteria for either insult or defamation under Uzbek law:

Insults are analyzed under Article 140 of the Criminal Code, focusing on intentional acts that degrade dignity.

Defamation is evaluated under Article 139, where false information harms a person's reputation.

Linguistic analysis integrated cultural and linguistic norms to interpret whether the language constituted intentional harm

7. The process of linguistic analysis in forensic linguistics must be conducted in a structured and sequential manner, with each stage logically building upon the previous one. These analytical stages are broadly categorized into two types:

General Analysis Stages as Deductive:

These stages form the foundation and are consistently applied across all aspects of linguistic investigations. Following a deductive reasoning approach, they involve recurring steps essential for thorough and methodical examination. Deductive analysis applies general principles or frameworks to specific cases, starting with broad assumptions and narrowing them down to particular conclusions. This structured, rule-based approach is critical for the general analysis.

Specific Analysis Stages as Inductive:

These stages are designed to address the particular characteristics and complexities of each case. They focus on the unique elements of the disputed text, considering the specific context and issues involved, using inductive reasoning. Inductive analysis starts with detailed observations and leads to generalizations or conclusions. It allows for flexibility and exploration of the specific context, helping identify nuances not covered by general rules.

Expert Procedures

Linguistic experts performed the following during the analysis:

Identified negative semantic markers and patterns in word usage.

Assessed the intentionality of communication, determining whether it aimed at personal degradation or professional discreditation.

Evaluated the social and cultural norms influencing the perception of offensive language.

Provided evidence-based findings to legal authorities, distinguishing between linguistic and legal interpretations.

By combining these approaches, this study provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing contentious speech and its implications within Uzbekistan's legal and cultural context.

Moreover, the linguistic examination of texts containing potentially offensive content requires a comprehensive and structured approach, ensuring that all relevant aspects are analyzed and recorded. The expert's conclusions should include the following elements:

1. Details of the Examination:

— Date and location of the examination.

— The legal or procedural basis for conducting the examination.

— Information about the appointing authority (organization or official).

— Expert and Organizational Information:

The expert's full name, qualifications, specialization, work experience, academic credentials, and professional position.

- Details about the organization or institution tasked with conducting the examination.
 - Legal Accountability:
 - Acknowledgment of the expert's responsibility for providing truthful conclusions and the potential legal consequences of knowingly delivering false results or refusing to conduct the analysis.
 - Scope and Materials:
 - A list of questions posed to the expert.
 - Description of the materials provided for examination, including the nature of the text or communication in question.
 - Presence of Additional Participants:
 - Information about any individuals present during the examination process.
 - Methods and Procedures:
 - A detailed explanation of the methodologies used during the examination.
 - Documentation of the analytical procedures, especially if conducted by a committee of experts, specifying the roles of each participant.
 - Findings and Evaluations:
 - A clear evaluation of the results, addressing the posed questions.
 - Identification of significant details relevant to the case, including any issues identified independently by the expert.
- By adhering to these comprehensive criteria, linguistic experts ensure that their conclusions are well-founded, legally robust, and useful for resolving disputes or legal challenges.

Results

3.1. Defamation and Public Insults

One notable case involved an individual insulting rural residents during a public broadcast, referring to them as “disgusting creatures” and stating that they “should cry for being born rural”. The generalized and dehumanizing nature of these remarks sparked outrage (Gazeta.uz, 16 Jul. 2024, <https://www.gazeta.uz/oz/2024/07/16/haqoratlash/>).

Lexical Analysis: Terms like “jirkanch maxluqot” (“disgusting creatures”) carried significant negative connotations, directly attacking the dignity of an entire group rather than addressing specific individuals. The declarative structure (“Qishloqliklar odam emas” — “Rural people are not human”) framed these insults as factual claims rather than opinions, amplifying their defamatory nature.

Pragmatic Context: Delivered during a live public broadcast, the insults reached a wide audience, increasing their societal impact. Forensic analysis demonstrated how such language reinforced harmful stereotypes about rural populations, exacerbating existing social divides.

Legal Outcome: The court ruled the comments constituted defamation, resulting in a significant fine.

This example demonstrates how lexical choices and public delivery amplify the impact of offensive language, necessitating linguistic expertise to determine intent and severity.

Deductive Analysis:

In Case 1, where the insult involved calling rural people “jirkanch maxluqot” (disgusting creatures), we apply a deductive approach to classify this speech act. The term directly targets a group, dehumanizing them and framing the statement as a factual assertion rather than a personal opinion. According to Uzbek law, statements that harm the dignity of a group can be classified as defamation, thus meeting the legal criteria for “haqorat”.

Inductive Analysis:

By examining similar insults in Case 1 and comparing them to broader social patterns, we can conclude that the use of dehumanizing language against rural populations is part of a larger societal trend of marginalization. The recurring insult points to systemic prejudices and cultural stigmas that need addressing in both legal and social contexts.

3.2. Workplace Misconduct and Verbal Coercion

In another instance, a senior official used aggressive and coercive language during a professional meeting, threatening subordinates with dismissal for failing to meet quotas (Senat.uz, 3 Jan. 2024, <https://senat.uz/post/post-1935>). Statements like “yo’qolasan” (“You’ll be gone”) and “kim bo’lishingdan qat’i nazar, ishdan bo’shataman” (“Regardless of who you are, I’ll fire you”) reflected an abuse of authority.

Syntactic Patterns: The repeated use of imperatives (“natija qilasan” — “You will deliver results”) and conditional threats (“agar qila olmasang” — “If you can’t do it”) highlighted a coercive tone.

Pragmatic Impact: The official’s position of power exacerbated the pressure placed on subordinates, creating a hostile work environment. Forensic analysis revealed how these statements combined language with hierarchical authority to manipulate compliance.

Cultural Dynamics: In a workplace culture where deference to superiors is highly valued, such language undermines morale and workplace harmony

Deductive Analysis:

In Case 2, where the official threatens subordinates with phrases like “yo’qolasan” (“You’ll be gone”), this can be classified as an insult using deductive reasoning. The use of a direct threat, particularly within a workplace context, fits the legal definition of “haqorat”. The repeated use of conditional threats (“agar qila olmasang”) and imperatives establishes a clear power imbalance, emphasizing control and the threat of dismissal.

Inductive Analysis:

By analyzing this coercive language in the workplace, we see a recurring pattern where hierarchical power structures allow for verbal abuse. The higher status of the official influences how subordinates perceive these threats, often leading to forced compliance. These patterns indicate that the language used here is not only about individual incidents but also part of a broader issue of power abuse in administrative environments.

3.3. Offensive Speech in Public Disputes

In a rural labor dispute, a superior insulted a worker using the term “chumo” (“plague”), a derogatory term implying worthlessness (Kun. uz, 5 Apr. 2020, <https://kun.uz/74753651>).

Lexical Analysis: The term “chumo” was identified as a severe insult in Uzbek culture, carrying strong social and moral judgments. It dehumanized the worker and undermined their dignity in a public setting.

Contextual Analysis: The insult was delivered in a cotton field with other workers present, amplifying its impact and creating a hostile environment for the targeted individual.

Outcome: The speaker issued a public apology following public backlash, which partially mitigated the situation but failed to address the systemic nature of verbal abuse in labor environments

Deductive Analysis:

In Case 3, where an individual uses the term “chumo” (plague) to insult a worker, we apply deductive reasoning to determine the severity of the insult. The word “chumo” is a severe insult in Uzbek culture and, under legal standards, constitutes an attack on the worker’s dignity, fitting the criteria for an intentional insult (haqorat). The language, combined with the public setting, significantly amplifies the impact.

Inductive Analysis:

Examining Case 3 inductively, we can infer that the language used is not merely an isolated incident but reflects deeper social attitudes toward workers in low-status positions. The public delivery of the insult suggests a broader societal issue, where certain groups are more vulnerable to verbal abuse and dehumanization. The repeated use of dehumanizing terms in public contexts further exacerbates the issue of social stigmatization.

3.4. Analysis of Coercive Speech in Administrative Settings

Another case involved a public official recorded coercing subordinates to meet specific targets under the threat of dismissal (YQQUZB Kanal, 26 Oct. 2019, (Telegram post). https://t.me/yqquzb_kanal/142).

1. Linguistic Analysis

• Lexical Choices:

Words like “yo’qotaman” (“get rid of”) and “noinsoflar” (“dishonest people”) were used to demean the organization heads, suggesting incompetence and disloyalty.

Phrases such as “menga bunaqa komanda kerak emas” (“I don’t need such a team”) highlight the speaker’s rejection of subordinates who fail to meet his demands.

• Syntactic Structure:

The frequent use of imperative and conditional statements, such as “agar bugun o’zgarish qilmaydigan bo’lsang” (“If no change happens today”), establishes a clear power dynamic and conveys an ultimatum.

• Repetition for Emphasis:

Phrases like “menga bugun natija kerak” (“I need results today”) and “men sizni kechirmayman” (“I won’t forgive you”) are repeated, reinforcing the threatening tone.

2. Pragmatic and Contextual Analysis

Tone and Delivery: The aggressive tone and direct threats create a coercive environment where subordinates feel pressured to comply, irrespective of personal or professional limitations.

Cultural Implications: In hierarchical administrative culture, such language enforces compliance but also highlights systemic issues of power imbalance and verbal abuse.

3. Deductive Analysis:

In the case where the official used phrases like “menga bunaqa komanda kerak emas” (“I don’t need such a team”), the deductive method shows how these terms not only reflect a threat but also degrade the competence and loyalty of subordinates. Under Uzbek law, these are insults that directly attack the dignity of the individuals targeted, as they suggest professional incompetence.

4. Inductive Analysis:

From an inductive perspective, the repetitive nature of such insults in administrative environments highlights a systematic issue with abusive authority. The use of aggressive language to assert control can be seen as part of broader patterns within hierarchical organizations, where power dynamics often lead to coercion and exploitation.

3.5. Diagnostic Criteria in Linguistic Expertise

The linguistic analysis of cases involving “haqorat” focuses on identifying specific verbal and non-verbal elements of insult. These include:

1. Verbal Cues:

The choice of vocabulary and tone often indicates the speaker's intent to degrade or humiliate.

2. Non-Verbal Indicators:

Gestures, such as pointing at the head or clenching fists, often accompany verbal insults, adding another layer of meaning to the act.

In Uzbek society, combining derogatory words with offensive gestures can amplify the insult’s severity.

3. Categorization of Speech Acts:

Public insults made during meetings or broadcasts (ommaviy haqorat) have a broader societal impact than private remarks.

Texts like anonymous letters or social media posts require additional analysis to determine the intent and audience.

4. Legal Alignment:

Statements deemed “haqorat” are analyzed against Article 140 of the Criminal Code, which defines intentional and obscene insults aimed at undermining personal dignity.

3.6. Challenges in Linguistic Expertise

Based on the cases studied, the following challenges arise:

Lack of specialized databases for vulgar terms, regional dialects, and insult categorizations.

Difficulty in distinguishing general criticism from targeted insult in legal contexts.

Limited availability of trained forensic linguists with expertise in semantic and pragmatic analysis.

Discussion

4.1. Role of Forensic Linguistics in Addressing Insults and Misconduct

Forensic linguistics is crucial in analyzing contentious language used in public and professional contexts. By examining lexical choices, syntactic structures, and pragmatic delivery, linguistic experts can uncover speech's underlying intent and societal impact.

Applying deductive and inductive methods in forensic linguistics has proven crucial in identifying and addressing insults and verbal misconduct. By analyzing specific cases, such as those involving public officials, subordinates, and marginalized groups, it is clear that verbal abuse is not only a legal issue but also a reflection of societal power dynamics and prejudices. Forensic linguistics helps uncover these patterns, offering critical insights into the intent and impact of harmful language in public and professional spaces.

In the case of rural insults, forensic analysis revealed how generalized derogatory language reinforced harmful stereotypes, exacerbating societal divisions. Similarly, in workplace settings, linguistic analysis uncovered patterns of coercion and verbal abuse. The hierarchical dynamics of such settings often amplify the impact of offensive language, contributing to hostile work environments. By dissecting language components, forensic linguistics provides a nuanced understanding of how language operates as a tool of power, manipulation, or defamation, aiding in legal accountability.

4.2. Socio-Cultural Challenges

The application of forensic linguistics in Uzbekistan faces unique challenges shaped by the nation's linguistic and cultural diversity:

1. Linguistic Diversity

Uzbekistan's varied dialects and cultural idioms make linguistic analysis complex. Terms that are neutral in one region may carry offensive connotations in another. For example, the word "ahmoq" ("fool") is casual in informal settings but can be deeply insulting in formal or professional environments. This variability necessitates a deep understanding of regional linguistic norms to interpret the intent and impact of speech accurately.

2. Hierarchical Power Structures

Many cases of verbal abuse in Uzbekistan reflect broader systemic issues of unchecked authority. In professional and administrative environments, superiors often use coercive language to maintain control, as seen in instances where individuals were threatened with dismissal for failing to meet quotas. These dynamics complicate the linguistic analysis, as they require a simultaneous consideration of social hierarchy and communication norms.

3. Lack of Linguistic Expertise

Uzbekistan currently faces a shortage of trained forensic linguists, limiting the judiciary's ability to rely on linguistic evidence in complex cases. Without sufficient expertise, the risk of misinterpreting or oversimplifying contentious language increases, potentially leading to unjust legal outcomes. A decree issued on July 5, 2021, highlighted

systemic efforts to improve judicial expertise but underscored the limitations in areas such as forensic linguistics. Specifically, the decree called for enhanced training and capacity building in specialized forensic fields, including linguistic analysis, to meet increasing demands in legal proceedings (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. *Decree No. 662* 28.10.2021. <https://lex.uz/docs/-5701504>).

Example of Challenges:

- **Case Analysis and Evidence:** Forensic linguists are crucial for analyzing contextual language and intent in situations involving public defamation or insult. However, lacking a structured linguistic database for local dialects and cultural idioms often complicates these investigations. Courts rely on generalized interpretations without adequate resources, which may fail to capture the nuanced meanings of contentious language (*National database of legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan*. <https://lex.uz/en/?locale=ru>).

- **Judicial Dependency on Non-Experts:** Due to the lack of qualified forensic linguists, courts often turn to general legal experts or linguists with limited forensic training. This gap can result in oversights in interpreting linguistic evidence, potentially skewing legal outcomes.

- **Training Gaps:** Existing judicial reforms recognize the need for specialized training programs but have not yet fully implemented them. The absence of local universities offering specialized forensic linguistics programs contributes to the reliance on external or less-qualified experts.

The role of forensic linguistics should not be viewed solely as relevant to judicial proceedings; it can also be applied across other areas of practice. Specifically, conducting linguistic expertise to regulate and systematize speech acts and manage the flow of information would be beneficial. This is important because, typically, linguistic expertise is only requested by the prosecutor's office when a need arises in legal proceedings. Considering the potential for conflicts in any form of communication, it is necessary to broaden the scope of linguistic experts and the practice of forensic linguistics. This would enable experts to analyze and address linguistic issues in broader contexts beyond the courtroom.

4.3. Ethical and Legal Implications

Analyzing real-life cases highlights the ethical and legal importance of addressing offensive language in public discourse. Linguistic experts can identify whether language meets the threshold for being legally actionable under Uzbek law, distinguishing between general criticism, insults, and defamatory statements.

Forensic linguistics promotes accountability by shedding light on the social and professional consequences of abusive language. By ensuring accurate and fair assessments of linguistic evidence, the field helps protect individuals from undue harm while fostering respectful communication norms. However, this requires balancing legal standards with cultural sensitivity, particularly in a diverse linguistic landscape like Uzbekistan's.

4.4. Recommendations for Future Development

To address the identified challenges and improve the integration of forensic linguistics into Uzbekistan's legal system, the following steps are recommended:

1. Training Programs

Introducing forensic linguistics as a specialized discipline in Uzbek universities would help address the current shortage of trained experts. These programs should focus on semantic analysis, regional linguistic diversity, and legal applications of linguistic expertise. For example, Cardiff University established the first Master's degree in Forensic Linguistics in 1999, contributing to this field.

2. Development of Databases

Creating a comprehensive database of regional idioms, culturally significant expressions, and offensive terms would enhance the accuracy of linguistic analysis and serve as a resource for legal professionals and linguists.

3. Policy Reforms

Strengthening policies that address verbal abuse and coercion in workplaces and administrative settings can help mitigate systemic issues. Incorporating linguistic analysis into workplace grievance mechanisms would ensure language-related complaints are handled fairly and effectively.

4. Awareness Campaigns

Educating public officials, professionals, and the general population about language use's ethical and legal implications can foster a culture of accountability. Awareness campaigns can emphasize the importance of respectful communication, particularly in hierarchical or public contexts.

5. International Collaboration

Establishing partnerships with international institutions experienced in forensic linguistics is a strategic approach to addressing Uzbekistan's shortage of trained professionals (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. 05.07.2021. № DP-6256. Lex.uz. <https://lex.uz/docs/6964153>). Such collaborations can provide access to cutting-edge methodologies, specialized training programs, and linguistic databases tailored to diverse legal contexts. For example, institutions like the Aston Institute for Forensic Linguistics in the UK or the Forensic Linguistics Institute in the US (2). have developed robust frameworks for analyzing disputed language in legal cases. Partnering with these organizations could enable Uzbek universities and legal bodies to implement globally recognized standards while adapting them to local linguistic and cultural nuances. These partnerships can also foster exchange programs, enabling professionals to gain hands-on experience and build expertise in handling complex linguistic disputes. By leveraging the expertise of international bodies, Uzbekistan can strengthen its forensic linguistic capabilities, ensuring fair and accurate analyses in legal proceedings.

4.5. Future Outlook

As Uzbekistan continues to modernize its legal and professional systems, forensic linguistics has the potential to play an increasingly significant role. The field can enhance legal outcomes and contribute to a

more respectful and just society with the proper training, resources, and policy support investments.

Conclusion

Forensic linguistics is a powerful tool for resolving disputes and ensuring justice in legal and professional environments. The application of forensic linguistics in analyzing insult ("haqorat") cases has proven invaluable in Uzbekistan's legal landscape. Linguistic experts bridge the gap between linguistic theory and legal practice by focusing on semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic elements of speech. However, challenges such as a lack of standardized methodologies and trained experts remain significant.

To address these gaps, Uzbekistan must prioritize developing linguistic expertise through targeted training programs, establishing linguistic databases that capture regional and cultural nuances, and fostering collaboration between linguists and legal professionals. For example, developing a comprehensive linguistic resource for vulgarisms, dialectal expressions, and regional idioms could improve the accuracy of analyses.

Real-life cases analyzed in this study demonstrate the effectiveness of forensic linguistics in resolving disputes, from addressing defamatory remarks to examining coercive language in workplace settings. These cases highlight the importance of understanding linguistic intent, context, and societal impact to ensure fair outcomes. However, the absence of clear frameworks and the limited availability of qualified forensic linguists often hinder the process, creating room for misinterpretation and unjust decisions.

Investing in forensic linguistics as a specialized field, Uzbekistan can ensure that cases involving insults, defamation, and public disputes are handled precisely and fairly. This will enhance the legal system's credibility and foster accountability in communication across public and professional spheres. Strengthening forensic linguistic practices will contribute to a more equitable society where language is used responsibly and disputes are resolved justly.

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