



**NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMERCE, HUMAN SCIENCES AND
EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND
LANGUAGES

A FORENSIC LINGUISTICS INVESTIGATION OF THREAT TEXT MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) VICTIMS REPORTED TO THE NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE,
WINDHOEK

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ENGLISH AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS

BY

RACHEL MWAYOLA HEITA

222120088

SUPERVISOR:

PROF HAILELEUL ZELEKE WOLDEMARIAM

DATE: 29 April 2025

ABSTRACT

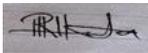
Although police investigators and criminal detectives work diligently to identify perpetrators, they frequently encounter difficulties, especially when dealing with cases involving linguistic elements, thus they request forensic linguists to assist them in finding or minimising the culprits. Forensic linguistics is an investigative tool that allows linguists to study legal documents and spoken language to uncover motivations behind actions and identify culprits. This study investigated the threat text messages addressed to victims of gender-based violence (GBV) reported to the Namibian Police Force in Windhoek. The main objectives of this study were to examine the linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages, investigate the discourse structures of these threat messages, as well as describe the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of these threat messages. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and used a content checklist analysis to gather data, as well as Linguistic Variation theory to analyse the threatening messages. The results demonstrate a strong link between education, language use, and the propensity for violence, with youth more frequently using informal digital communication to issue threats. Through the identification of linguistic markers and sociolinguistic profiles, this research offers insights into the prevention of gender-based violence by informing law enforcement, legal professionals, and policymakers about the role of language in GBV-related threats and aiding in more effective threat assessment and intervention strategies.

Keywords: Forensic linguistics, threat text message, gender-based violence, sociolinguistics profile, linguistic features, discourse structure

DECLARATION

I, Rachel Mwayola Heita, hereby declare that the research titled "A Forensic Linguistics Investigation of Threat Text Messages Addressed to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Victims Reported at the Namibian Police Force, Windhoek" is my original work, completed as part of the Master's degree requirements at Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST). All sources of information used in this work were correctly acknowledged, and the data acquired was managed in an ethical and confidential manner. This research has not previously been submitted for a degree or examination at this or any other university. I accept full responsibility for the information, findings, and conclusions given in this work.

Signature:

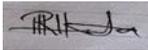


Date: 29 April 2025

RETENTION AND USE

I, Rachel Mwayola Heita, being a candidate for the Degree of Master of English and Applied Linguistics accept the requirements of Namibia University of Science and Technology relating to the retention and use of this thesis deposited in NUST library. In terms of these conditions, I agree that the original of my thesis deposited in the library will be accessible for the purposes of study and research, in accordance with the normal conditions established by the librarian for the care, loan or reproduction of theses.

Signature:



Date: 29 April 2025

AUTHENTICATION OF THE THESIS

I certify that this candidate has successfully completed all the research work for this degree and that:

1. the thesis conforms to NUST postgraduate rules as stipulated in the Yearbook 2024 and that of theses for higher degrees;
2. the thesis includes a certificate indicating the extent to which the research has been conducted by the candidate;
3. the thesis is properly presented and is prima facie worthy of submission;
4. instances of inadequate presentation were pointed out to the candidate for correction before the thesis was bound;
5. the candidate has completed an approved programme of study and research as required;
6. an abstract of not more than 300 words has been included in the thesis;
7. both hard/bound and soft copies of the thesis have been submitted to NUST Library's open-access digital archive.

Name of the supervisor : Prof. Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam

Signature : *Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam*

Date : *29 April 2025*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to begin by expressing my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God for His unending grace, wisdom, and strength that he showered me with throughout this journey. It is by His guidance and blessings that I have been able to complete this research.

To my beloved husband, Mr Thomas, thank you for your unwavering support, patience, and encouragement. Your belief in me has been an unshakeable source of strength. To my wonderful children, Mewiliko, Tangi, and Mwayola, when I was carrying out this research, I may not have been able to provide you with all of the motherly attention you needed, but you understood me perfectly, thank you. You are my inspiration and my motivation to strive for excellence.

I am deeply grateful to my parents, Mr Likius and Mrs Victoria, for their sacrifices, prayers, and encouragement. Their love, support, and guidance have shaped me into the person I am today, and their belief in my potential has served as the foundation for my academic and personal achievement.

Most significantly, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam. Your invaluable guidance, expertise, and perseverance have helped bring this study to fruition. Your insightful feedback, support, and dedication to my academic growth have motivated me to push the limits of my abilities. Thank you for your patience, time, and steadfast support throughout this endeavour. I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to work under your mentorship, and I am deeply appreciative of your contribution to my academic journey.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family, and my loving husband, Mr Thomas, whose unwavering support, patience, and encouragement have been my greatest strength throughout this journey. To our wonderful children, Mewiliko, Tangi, and Mwayola, thank you for being my constant source of joy and inspiration. I equally extend this dedication to my beloved parents, Mr Likius and Mrs Victoria, for their guidance, love, and the values they instilled in me, thereby shaping me into the strong woman I am today. I am deeply grateful for your kindness and belief in me.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	i
DECLARATION	ii
RETENTION AND USE	iii
AUTHENTICATION OF THE THESIS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF FIGURES	x
TABLE OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2. Background of the study	1
1.3. Statement of the problem	4
1.4 Research objectives	5
1.5 Significance of the study	5
1.6 Delimitation of the study	6
1.7 Limitations of the study	6
1.8 Definition of technical terms	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	11
2.1. Introduction	11
2.1.1. Historical account of forensic linguistics	15
2.1.2. The involvement of forensic linguistics in the criminal court cases	15
2.2 Literature Review	21
2.2.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages.	21
2.2.2 The discourse structures of threat messages	31
2.2.3. The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages.	36
2.3 Theoretical Framework	45
2.4 Gap	51
2.5 Chapter summary	52
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS	53
3.1. Introduction	53
3.2 Research paradigm	53
3.3 Research approach	54
3.4. Research design	54

3.5 Text selection criteria.....	55
3.6. Sample and sampling procedure	55
3.6 Research instrument	55
3.7. Trustworthiness.....	56
3.7 Data analysis.....	57
3.8 Ethical considerations	57
2.5. Chapter summary.....	57
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	59
4.1 Introduction.....	59
4.2. Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages	59
4.2.1 Syntax and grammar usage in the threat texts.....	59
4.2.2 Threatening words and phrases as well as vocabulary usage	64
4.2.3 The use of politeness words, directness, and speech acts to identify linguistic evidence	67
4.2.4 Spelling errors that reveal the author’s background and level of education	70
4.2.5 Uses of punctuations and emojis that reveal the relationship between the victims and the perpetrators	72
4.3. The discourse structures of these threat messages.....	76
4.3.1 The format and style of text messages looking at the opening, introduction, body and conclusion, including sentence structure, and formality.....	76
4.3.2 The tone, and genre of the threat messages	78
4.3.3 Sentences structures and presentation of facts to determine if there are intention of committing GBV	78
4.4 Describe the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators	79
4.4.1 The gender of the perpetrator.....	79
4.4.2 The use of vocabulary, idioms, and colloquialisms that could provide insights into the author's sociolinguistic background	80
4.4.3 Regional linguistic markers that might indicate the origin of the author.....	81
4.4.4 Code-switching (switching between languages) or borrowing from other languages to determine potential language influence, educational level, social status, age, religion, etc ...	82
4.5 Discussion	83
4.6 Chapter Summary	89
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	90
5.1 Introduction.....	90
5.2 Conclusions.....	90
5.2.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages	90
5.2.2 The discourse structures of threat messages.....	91

5.2.3 The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages.....	92
5.3 Recommendations	93
5.3.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages	93
5.3.2 The discourse structures of threat messages.....	93
5.3.3. The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages.....	94
References	94
APPENDICES.....	106
Appendices A.....	106
CONTENT CHECKLIST ANALYSIS	106
Appendices B	110
Appendices C	111
Appendices D	112

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Structure of Forensic Linguistics Wing

TABLE OF FIGURES

TABLE 1.1

TABLE 1.2

TABLE 4.1

TABLE 4.2

TABLE 4.3

TABLE 4.4

TABLE 4.5

TABLE 4.6

TABLE 4.7

TABLE 4.8

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

FL	Forensic Linguistics
GBV	Gender-based Violence
L1	First language
L2	Second Language
UK	United Kingdom
US	United State
TTM 1-35	Threat Text Message 1 to 35

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Linguistics is a broad scientific study of languages, with numerous applications in a variety of fields. Forensic Linguistics, a subfield of Applied Linguistics, is one of the most recent disciplines to gain popularity in academia due to its possible applications. Forensic linguistics is a tool that linguists use to resolve legal challenges involving linguistic aspects. Language is used to communicate, and we can express our thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and feelings with others through language communication, whether spoken or written (Rabiah, 2012).

According to Olsson (2004), forensic linguistics is the application of linguistic knowledge to a specific social situation, especially the legal forum, from which the term "forensic" is derived. As Olsson points out, linguists may apply forensic linguistics to any social issue impacting individuals around them. In this study, forensic linguistics was applied to address gender-based violence, which is a current societal concern. It was used to investigate linguistic traits, discourse structures, and sociolinguistic profiles discovered in the language used for communication in the threat text messages.

In a world where technology has made life easier, people prefer to communicate, both verbal and written, through cell phones. People communicate by sending text messages to each other, with some threatening the recipients until the threat escalates to violence. In this situation, forensic linguistics is used to evaluate the language used in threatening communications to determine why people threaten others and why they resort to violence, also known as gender-based violence. The study used forensic linguistics to investigate the language evidence, traits, and choices contained in those threat text messages. It looked at the discourse structures of these threat messages and described the sociolinguistic profiles of those who sent them. The goal was to identify the causes of gender-based violence through the language used in order to eliminate instances of gender-based violence.

1.2. Background of the study

Gender-based violence (GBV) constitutes a pervasive violation of human rights, transcending geographical boundaries and defying any specific victimology profile, as women are potential victims purely due to their gender (Benedetti & Queralt, 2023). As with many countries throughout the world, the Philippines has experienced an increase in the number of women who have been victims of gender-based violence (Philippine Commission on Women, 2009).

This could be traced back to men being traditionally portrayed as leaders and providers, while women were viewed as simply family carers and supporters. As a result, men were regarded to be more powerful than women, and violence against women was a means of control and a demonstration of men's power retention (Philippine Commission on Women, 2009).

In addition, 33% of Sub-Saharan African women aged between 15 and 49 faced physical and sexual abuse, with 44% having experienced GBV inflicted by an imprisoned spouse (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2024). Correspondingly, Namibia has regrettably witnessed such instances as well, where women and children have fallen victim to GBV. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2021), healthcare professionals and other service providers in Namibia often fail to recognise and may even have stigmatised violence against women and girls, thereby infringing upon their human rights, whether these acts occur in homes, schools, or within the communities they inhabit.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that GBV does not discriminate on the basis of gender or age, as men and boys can also be subjected to such violence (WHO, 2022). In recent times, it has become distressingly common for individuals of all genders and age groups to experience various forms of violence, resulting in physical and mental harm and thereby contributing to increased mortality rates. Regrettably, there have been limited, if any, concrete efforts to address or reduce cases of GBV in Namibia. Physiologists, psychologists, social workers, law enforcement officials, and other stakeholders have attempted to end gender-based violence by focusing on the consequences, such as physical and mental suffering, but the number of cases has continued to rise because the underlying cause has yet to be identified and addressed.

Mukungu and Kamwanyah (2020) acknowledge that victims of GBV encountered the criminal or traditional justice system, or neither, depending on local norms, but the damage was already done. Therefore, forensic linguists have to intervene to assist in resolving the underlying causes of gender-based violence, which is the language used in communication. This is as highlighted in a study conducted by Jankey et al. (2017, p. 184) which found that "about 25% of the text messages stories made reference to incidences of physical violence and 8.4% to emotional/psychological abuse" in Botswana alone.

Moreover, it is high time that GBV gets recognised not merely as an emergency, but as a manifestation of structural issues within society (Benedetti & Queralt, 2023). Consequently, people have to begin addressing gender-based violence by focusing on the obvious talks between the persons involved, as this is the core source of gender-based violence. The language used in communication, particularly through cell phones, needs to be examined in order to put an end to gender-based violence, which was the focus of this study. Hobbis (2018) expressed that despite the good benefits of mobile phones, they are, nevertheless, acknowledged as conduits for violence.

Distinct African cultures have distinct ways of expressing love, intimacy, desire, longing, closeness, fear, anxiety, betrayal, or rejection (Jankey et al., 2017). However, in these societies, mobile telephone networks have allowed people separated by distance to communicate more efficiently by sending messages and calling. It is through communication and sending messages with violent language that actions of gender-based violence have exploded. There is a relationship between the increase in sending text messages and the rise in gender-based violence.

Although this is the case, Stevens et al. (2024) indicate that the escalation of gender-based violence can be addressed by the introduction of new technologies such as mobile phones and web programs that allow victim-survivors to document the threatening text messages and report GBV to appropriate authorities. Therefore, forensic linguistic analysis is needed. Forensic linguists study documented threatening text messages reported to relevant authorities to determine the perpetrators and the reasons for their participation in gender-based violent activities. Forensic linguistics is a term used to try to solve legal issues with linguistics. In the present case, forensic linguistics was employed to analyse the violent language and linguistic evidence in threat text messages associated with human rights violations.

The application of forensic linguistics to GBV crimes allowed for the systematic examination of coercion, manipulation, and threatening language, thus facilitating the identification of recurring discourse patterns across cases (Benedetti & Queralt, 2023). Forensic linguistics, as defined by Sudjana and Fitri (2013), is the linguistic study that investigates legal text in the context of criminal cases. It represents an interdisciplinary field integrating linguistic principles with law enforcement methodologies to analyse language within legal contexts

(Coulthard, 2004). From this perspective, forensic linguistics plays a crucial role in assisting the court, police, or legal entities in their criminal investigations.

This study's main objective was to investigate the threat text messages directed at victims of gender-based violence. Many studies have aimed to link linguistic features to the prediction of violence (Kelly, 2018); therefore, the current research also aimed to assess the text conversations between perpetrators and victims and analyse how the use of language contributes to physical, mental, and emotional harm. Victims reported cases, evidence, and proof of threats to legal professionals, primarily police officers. However, the efforts to address such cases at their inception were often insufficient to prevent them from escalating into gender-based violence.

The article, *"Gender-based violence in discourse: A comparative study on anti-violence communication initiatives across Europe, in Austria and Spain,"* explored the anti-violence movement for women, which had been active since the 1970s and had been critical in combating violence against women (Wolf, 2018). However, the media frequently oversimplified intimate partner violence, thereby hiding the underlying issue. The iconography utilised by the movement and institutionalised entities was analysed in this article to comprehend alternate representations and contrast the mainstream media's coverage of the topic. The study attempted to uncover how anti-violence campaigns impacted societal perceptions of male-to-female partner violence by identifying best practices and underlying ideological conceptions

1.3. Statement of the problem

Language serves as a crucial form of linguistic evidence, encompassing authorship analysis and linguistic author profiling, as highlighted by Kupper and Spring (2023). Fitria (2024) delineated language as a tool that people use to communicate in everyday situations. Language statements, whether spoken or written, monolingual or multilingual, have the potential for legal consequences. In the context of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the study of language as evidence is paramount. Wicaksana et al. (2023) state that forensic linguistics techniques enable investigations by analysing discourse context, cooperation principles, and ideological interpretations in texts, which help to determine guilt and sentencing in court procedures.

Furthermore, Reyes and Hasyim (2023) specifies that forensic linguistics approaches help to evaluate linguistic evidence, ensure expert competency, and analyse formal criteria, all of which improve objectivity in investigations and judicial processes, thereby resulting in more just decisions. This could be achieved by scrutinising the communication between perpetrators and victims, including the analysis of potentially threatening language found in emails, chats, or WhatsApp messages, as exemplified by the research conducted by Benedetti and Queralt in 2023. Notably, our literature survey revealed that such research has not been previously undertaken in Namibia.

A significant portion of GBV offences is concealed within the language employed by perpetrators. However, empirical research on the accuracy of these linguistic features remains lacking. Despite the close contact between professionals and GBV victims, they have often failed to detect signs of violence within their modes of communication. This has led to the continuation of gender-based violence practices because professionals would be unable to discern the true root causes of gender-based violence in victims' communications in order to stop gender-based violence in our communities. This gap in understanding has contributed to the ongoing rise of GBV cases. Therefore, the primary objective of this study was to conduct a comprehensive examination of linguistic features of threatening text messages directed at GBV victims, with a focus on how they incited and perpetuated gender-based violence. This investigation was conducted through the lens of forensic linguistics.

1.4 Research objectives

The main objective of this study was to investigate, using forensic linguistics analysis, the threat text messages sent by perpetrators to the victims of GBV. The study was guided by the following specific objectives, namely to:

- examine the linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages,
- investigate the discourse structures of these threat messages, and
- describe the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of these threat messages.

1.5 Significance of the study

According to Masood (2021), the forensic linguistics examination of legal documents is advantageous from linguistic, forensic, and psychological viewpoints. Given that forensic linguistics was a potent tool for detecting psychological abuse, this research aimed to unveil linguistic evidence that exposes the intentions behind causing harm to the victims.

Furthermore, this study sought to shed light on how threatening text messages and conversations between perpetrators and victims contribute to physical and mental harm, ultimately leading to gender-based violence. This holds significant importance for Namibia as it plays a pivotal role in reshaping the perceptions of gender-based violence incidents by emphasising the urgency they entail and fostering a deeper comprehension of the underlying issues. This, in turn, can aid in enhancing awareness-raising campaigns and providing improved judicial counselling for victims.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

Delimitations involve the specific definitions and boundaries that researchers establish for their study, aimed at ensuring that the research objectives remain attainable without compromising feasibility (Dimitrios & Antigoni, 2019). In this study, the researchers were unwavering in their commitment to abiding by legal and ethical constraints, thereby upholding the principles of integrity and responsibility. The researcher diligently adhered to the established laws and ethical norms governing both the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the Namibian Police Force, which included regulations related to privacy. Any inquiries related to the access of personal information or communication records were conducted in strict accordance with relevant policies and laws and were only undertaken with the requisite authorisations to ensure full compliance.

Furthermore, this study maintained a focused scope by concentrating exclusively on the examination of threat texts and communications directly linked to threats and gender-based violence. The researcher refrained from involvement with personal or extraneous messages falling outside the purview of the study.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The inherent limitations in any research endeavour encompass potential constraints that typically lie beyond the direct control of the researcher, often associated with factors such as the chosen research design, constraints within statistical models, financial considerations, and various other variables (Dimitrios & Antigoni, 2019). In this study, several noteworthy limitations merit attention. Firstly, the investigation was confined to the analysis of threat text messages and recorded communications directly linked to threats and gender-based violence. Secondly, the study's scope was limited to the examination and analysis of cases

involving threatening text messages and communications exclusively within the Windhoek Main Police Station, Khomas region.

1.8 Definition of technical terms

Forensic Linguistics: Generally, Forensic Linguistics is defined as a way of employing linguistic expertise in a specific social situation, such as the judicial forum. In other words, forensic linguistics is the tool that linguists use to try to solve legal issues by striving to identify the authors of written works. The examination of works is not confined to written works but also includes oral, sign language, or any significant semiotic event (Ariani et al., 2014). Ahmed (2021) defines Forensic Linguistics as a discipline of Applied Linguistics, particularly a corpus of many domains such as law, crime investigation, trial, and judicial procedures. Its scope covers crime investigation and legal procedures, as well as authorship identification.

Similarly, Olsson (2008) defines Forensic Linguistics as a discipline that encompasses the application of scientific expertise to the field of language within both criminal and civil law. In this study, Forensic linguistics is defined as the application of linguistic knowledge, analysis methods and linguistic insights to the context of human rights violation. Forensic linguistics was applied in the present study to examine the threatening text messages related to human rights violations as a means to identify linguistic evidence, features and word choices, discourse structures and the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of these threat messages. It includes, for instance, the analysis of vocabulary use, collocations, pronunciation, spelling, grammar and many other linguistic features. This aided in the identification of the authors and their motives to take actions that lead to gender-based violence.

Gender-Based Violence: Gender-based violence is defined as "All acts committed against women, men, girls, and boys on the basis of their sex, causing or having the potential to cause physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, or economic harm, including the threat of such acts" (Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication, and Social Welfare, 2020, p. 4). Various forms of gender-based violence exist, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, all of which infringe upon fundamental human rights such as the right to life, freedom from torture, equal protection before the law, liberty and security of the person, the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and the right to be heard (Matthews & Hase, 2013).

The phrase gender-based violence is usually used interchangeably with violence against women, but in this study, it refers to all genders and ages because men and boys can be victims of gender-based violence as well. The Inter-agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises (2010) indicates that although the nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary by culture, country, and region, they include in many cases: sexual violence, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and forced prostitution; domestic violence; forced and early marriage; harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation; honour crimes; widow inheritance; and human trafficking. However, in this study, the phrase gender-based violence refers to the suffering imposed on victims of gender-based violence, as well as violations of human rights caused by the language used in text messages.

Sociolinguistic profile: Sociolinguistic profiling, also known as sociolinguistic analysis or authorship profiling (Grant & Perkins, 2012), is another method of forensic linguistics analysis. The term "sociolinguistic profile" refers to the linguistic clues that can be found in the analysed written works that reveal the age, gender, social, and regional background of the writer. For example, in a case, a text message can be sent by a male spouse pretending to be someone else, warning or threatening the female spouse, but the analysis can isolate some linguistic choices of the author who is claiming to be someone else and not a spouse (Sousa-Silva & Coulthard, 2016). It draws upon the sociolinguistic premise that a speaker's linguistic output is significantly influenced by social factors such as age, gender, educational status, race, social standing, and more. It is essential to note, as highlighted by Olsson (2008), that this concept is distinct from psychological evaluation or personality profiling of the author.

Sociolinguistic profiling relies on extracting relevant linguistic information from the text to make plausible conclusions about the author's social background, such as their level of education or whether they are a native or non-native speaker of the language. Extracting linguistic information from a text can also help identify other aspects of a sociolinguistic profile such as dialectal variation and differentiation, linguistic features like phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon, and other domains like the author's socio-cultural and social status.

Discourse: Discourse is described as a language that is larger than a single sentence and is composed of a succession of sentences. Yang and Sun (2010) define discourse as a type of communication or social activity that can be undertaken by individuals or groups.

Additionally, Halliday and Hasan (1976) define the term discourse as a semantic unit, not one of form but of meaning. Discourse is thus a written or spoken communication performed by a single or more people that conveys a concealed or visible message. In this research, discourse is defined as the language used in threat text messages exchanged between the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) of gender-based violence.

Discourse structure: Discourse structures are the patterns observed in multi-sentence (multi-clausal) writings (Webber et al., (2011). Webber et al. (2011) indicate that recognising and utilising textual patterns is crucial for extracting intended information, and linguists have used this knowledge to their advantage. According to Jasinskaja et al. (2004), discourse structure seeks to define the coherence of units larger than sentences, up to and including complete texts. The current project sought to uncover and explore elementary discourse units, groups of units that compose bigger units, and the relationships that comprise the hierarchical discourse structure. Hierarchical discourse structure is primarily inspired by three types of language phenomena that influence discourse coherence.

First, consider anaphoric relations and discourse antecedents. Second, consider the semantic links between sentences. The third category is prosody. Jasinskaja et al. (2004) elaborate on these three language factors influencing discourse coherence:

Anaphoric relations and antecedents for discourse are the links made between pronouns or other referring expressions (anaphors) and the nouns or sentences they refer to (antecedents). These relations contribute to coherence by connecting disparate portions of the speech. For example, in the sentence "Haufiku sent two threatening text messages." "He sent them to Ndapewa." The pronouns "He" and "Them" are anaphors for "Haufiku and the two threatening texts.

Semantic relations between sentences refer to the meanings of individual sentences and how they relate to one another. Cause and effect, contrast, elaboration, and other semantic linkages contribute to the development of a coherent and meaningful discourse. For example, "Mboma trained well." "As a result, she won the competition and received several medals." The second sentence explains the outcome of the first.

Prosody is the rhythm, emphasis, and intonation patterns of speech. Speakers employ prosody to underline essential information, identify the structure of the speech, and express

emotions. Global prosodic factors including pitch, loudness, and tempo assist listeners perceive the overall structure and coherence of spoken discourse. Punctuation marks can be used in written speech to indicate crucial information and emotions.

These three occurrences combine to ensure that a conversation is cohesive and understandable to the listener or reader.

In this study, discourse structure refers to patterns detected in multi-sentence in threatening text messages to extract the hidden or visible content, as well as determine the use of language characteristics such as nouns and pronouns. Discourse structure also examines how vital information and emotions are transmitted in threat text messages. Furthermore, discourse structure takes into account the shape and format of the threat text messages.

linguistic evidence: Linguistic evidence refers to the evidence discovered in a language used in legal papers such as ransom letters, intellectual property documents such as trademarks or patents, and any other language-related piece of evidence. Ariani et al. (2014) highlight that linguistic evidence can help in identifying author identification, forensic stylistics, discourse analysis, forensic phonetics, forensic transcription and variance (intra-author and inter-author) in legal documents.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

Forensic Linguistics is a newer discipline of applied linguistics that investigates the different intersections between language and the legal domain, which is predominantly linguistic in nature. Correa (2013) indicated that understanding linguistic principles aided anyone participating in a legal process (lawyers, judges, police officers, jury members, and others) in order to have a fair, legal, and effective procedure. Forensic linguistics is a branch of language research that focuses on observing language usage in everyday situations such as spoken and written language, listening, and reading (Alduais, 2023). This emphasis on language usage gave a legal framework for analysing language. Alduais (2023) states that forensic linguistics was initially confined to the identification of spoken and written documents in judicial situations, police language, and jail language; however, the field has grown to include:

- ❖ speech detection
- ❖ text detection
- ❖ plagiarism detection
- ❖ social media verbal aggression detection
- ❖ Social Security detection, and
- ❖ prejudice detection.

According to Alduais (2023), forensic linguistics is truly inter- and cross-disciplinary in nature, overlapping with various disciplines like communication, criminology, law, linguistics, sociology, and translation studies. Alduais (2023) also claims that the scope of forensic linguistics is difficult to define because it encompasses characteristics of language from phonetics to discourse analysis during the stages of investigation, trial, and interpretation. Umiyati (2020) lists the areas covered by forensic linguistics as follows:

- ❖ Handwriting and signature identification
- ❖ Phonetics and phonology both auditory and acoustic
- ❖ Semantics (interpretation of expressed meaning)
- ❖ Discourse and pragmatics (interpretation of inferred meaning)
- ❖ Stylistics and questioned authorship
- ❖ Semiotics
- ❖ Stylometry and statistical methods

- ❖ Document examination and plagiarism detection
- ❖ Linguistic dialectology
- ❖ Corpus linguistics and forensic software
- ❖ Language of the courtroom
- ❖ Language and law, and
- ❖ Interpretation and translation.

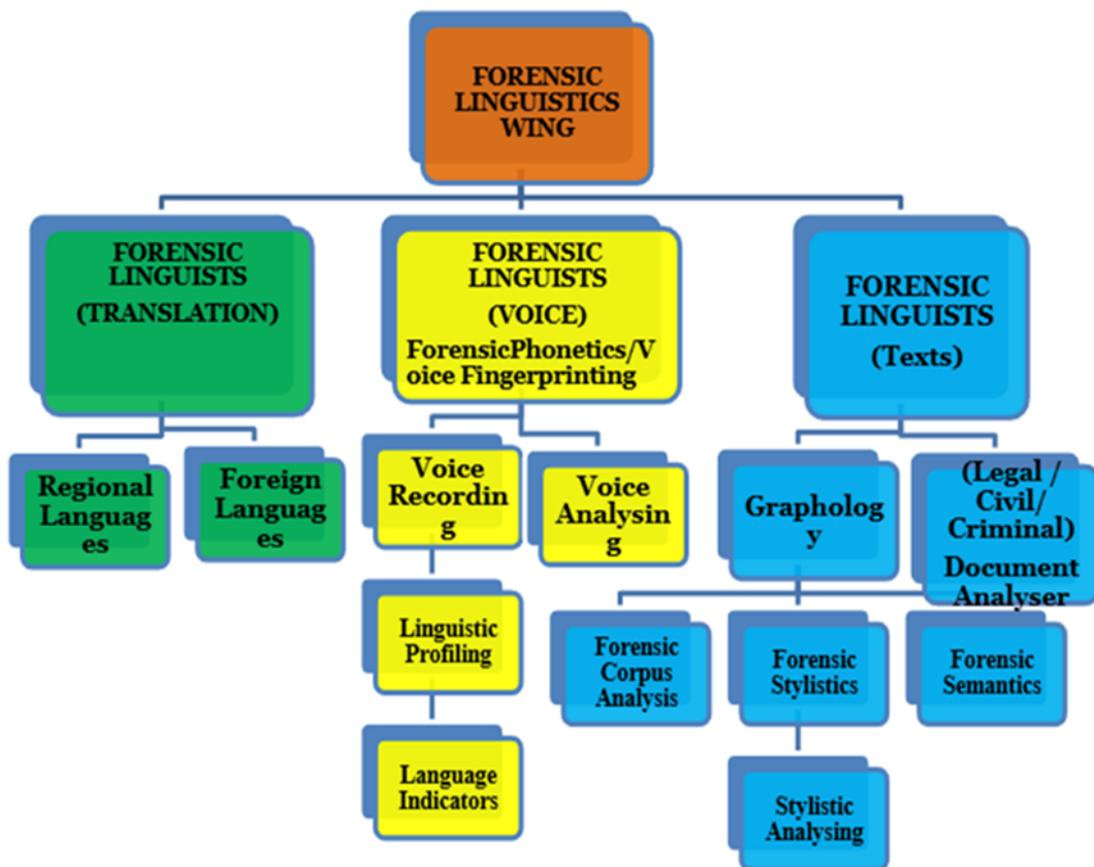
All of the language evidence indicated previously is studied in several discourses, including written and recorded audio and videos. Balcells (2023) and other researchers in the field of forensic linguistics validated the many types of language evidence texts that can be analysed. This includes:

- ❖ Threat letters, suicide notes, and extortion letters are just a few examples,
- ❖ Bomb and terrorist threats,
- ❖ Demands for ransom,
- ❖ E-mails,
- ❖ SMS messages,
- ❖ Police reports and witness accounts,
- ❖ Texts with plagiarism,
- ❖ Forgery, and
- ❖ Recorded conversations, such as phone calls, voicemails, or interviews.

Moreover, in his work, Syam (2018) praised forensic linguistics for truly assisting law enforcement in uncovering the true motives and intentions of crimes through the extensive examination of suspicious sounds or texts using various linguistic theories. According to Syam (2018), every police division should have a "Forensic Linguistics Wing" that includes linguists in addition to those with Physics and Chemistry backgrounds to aid in the detection of unlawful activities and crimes. Syam states that there are many languages in India, and in light of this, he suggests that the Forensic Linguistic team be divided into three divisions in India. Although this study was undertaken in India and the recommendations were specific to India, it would have been even more beneficial if other countries around the world had adopted it if it served a useful purpose in solving court cases via the lens of forensic linguistics, as many individuals are bilingual and multilingual.

Syam (2018) provided a graphic of the "Forensic Linguistics Wing" organisation, which was separated into three groups: forensic linguists as multilingual translators, linguists as voice experts, and forensic linguists as graphologists or text analysts.

Figure 1: Structure of Forensic Linguistics Wing



Syam (2018). *Aspects of Forensic Linguistics in Policing*. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363801157_Aspects_of_Forensic_Linguistics_in_Policing

The graphic depicts how forensic linguistics methods are used to solve crime investigations and how they are implemented in policing.

Linguistic translation is handled by the first team, "Forensic Linguists as Multilingual Translators". According to Syam (2018), because India is a multilingual country, Investigating Officers frequently encounter difficulties connecting with people who speak regional or other languages. Because the officer is not a language expert, he/she may need to rely on outside

translators; it would be preferable if each police department had its own linguistic interpreters who can be used to translate where necessary.

The second team, "Forensic Linguists as Voice Experts," investigates voice records. According to Syam (2018), voice identification techniques are admissible for solving complex cases where suspects leave their voices during crimes, either intentionally or unintentionally. Voice fingerprinting or voice identification techniques, also known as forensic phonetics, involve voice comparison, lay voice recognition, transcription of spoken language, speech signal enhancement, and recording authentication (Syam, 2018). Because each person's voice has a unique wavelength, it can be used similarly to fingerprints.

The third team, "Forensic Linguists as Graphologists or Text Analysers," focuses on the study of written materials. The term Forensic Graphologist refers to an investigative Forensic Linguist who studies handwriting evidence or written documents that are the subject of a police inquiry or criminal proceeding (Syam, 2018). It includes text messages, emails, websites, fraud contracts, conversations, legal paperwork, suicidal notes, social media material, media messaging, book authorship, and all other written documents. All of these elements are addressed in Forensic Semantics.

Namibia, like India in terms of multilingualism, provides language translators in courts and legal papers; nonetheless, language translators are insufficient to discover linguistic differences in legal documents submitted by offenders. Forensic linguists are needed to identify criminals since they focus on grammatical style that differs significantly from that of uncontested parts of the same written documents. Forensic linguists examine written documents for vocabulary, sophisticated grammar, and infrequent punctuation, which are common features of many legal texts, as well as the problems that lay readers have with them. A forensic linguist can discover all linguistic variances, but a language translator can just translate.

After introducing forensic linguistics in-depth, this section delves into other research papers and publications to explore information offered by other academics on forensic linguistics analysis, with a focus on threat text messages and written text analysis. The review examines the linguistic evidence, features, and choices contained within threat text messages, as well

as investigates the discourse structures of these threat messages and describes the sociolinguistic profiles of the offenders of these threat messages.

2.1.1. Historical account of forensic linguistics

Forensic Linguistics is one of the growing fields in applied linguistics. The term forensic refers to the scientific methods used to investigate a crime. Forensic linguistics is a subfield of linguistics that focuses on applying language analytical methodologies to legal and criminal problems such as trial, investigation, rehabilitation, and punishment (Ashraf, 2023). It was when language was employed to solve legal problems. According to Sakakini (2020), the role of forensic linguistics was to develop rigorous linguistic standards in order to improve not only the English language but also the global language, as well as to provide language aspects that aided in the resolution of linguistic challenges.

Looking at the development of forensic linguistics, as with most other sciences, it was impossible to pinpoint a precise moment in time (Kondorashova, 2022). F.A. Philbrick coined the word "forensic English" in 1949 as the title of his book on legal English, "Language and the law: The semantics of Forensic English," but the concept was never widely adopted. In 1968, Jan Svartvik, a linguistics professor, released "The Evans Statements: A Case for Forensic Linguistics," which introduced the term "forensic linguistics." The phrase "forensic English" was used about two decades before Svartvik's report was published. Since then, Tayebi and Coulthard (2022) testified that forensic linguists had assisted police investigators in many countries including England and Wales.

2.1.2. The involvement of forensic linguistics in the criminal court cases

The Timothy John Evans Case

Forensic linguistics made several significant contributions to the criminal justice system. Jan Svartvik, who in 1968 invented the phrase 'forensic linguistics,' first used the concept in his research, "The Evans Statements: A Case for Forensic Linguistics," a study of statements by Timothy John Evans (John, 2008). Svartvik used corpus analysis to analyse the statements of the accused in a murder case (Zhyhadlo, 2021). Evans was suspected of murdering both his wife and a child in this case. Because forensic linguistics could aid in suspect identification, Svartvik used it to assess Evans' alleged utterances and discovered significant style traits (John, 2008). In his research, Svartvik argued how Timothy John Evans' comment could have

been the beginning of a chain of events that would be recorded in criminal history (Meknas, 2016).

Svartvik was one of the earliest linguists at the time, therefore, he was brought in to examine Evans' claims. Timothy John Evans admitted to disposing of his wife and child and provided four contradictory statements to the police (Meknas, 2016). Evans was hanged in England in the early 1950s because the police had no other suspects besides Evans. Later, in the 1960s, a man named John Christie was referenced in one of the confessions and turned out to be a serial killer who lived in the same flat as Evans and his family. According to Meknas (2016), many people, including politicians, were unaware of Evans' conviction and managed to launch an investigation into the four statements. Svartvik examined the four statements and concluded that Evans could not have dictated all four statements to the police because they had such disparate linguistic and grammatical styles. Evans was eventually pardoned posthumously in the late 1960s.

The Chris Coleman Case

Robert Leonard and James Fitzgerald were renowned experts in forensic linguistics. Their language expertise in forensics helped solve numerous cases, including the well-known Coleman case (Hitt, 2012). Chris Coleman was a spouse and father of two children. In 2009, he shared email threats with his friends and co-workers. The threats were first aimed at him, but when they escalated to include his family, he took safeguards. Coleman requested that his neighbour, a police officer, install a camera to monitor his home for any suspicious activity. Coleman attempted to call his wife, Sheri, while working out at the gym but received no response. Concerned for her well-being, he requested that his neighbour, a police officer, check on her and her children. The neighbour walked in on a horrific scene. Coleman's wife and two children had been strangled to death, and the walls were covered in red graffiti with threats like "U have paid!" The police began to suspect Coleman, although the evidence against him was circumstantial.

Robert Leonard and James Fitzgerald were brought in to analyse and assess the case using forensic linguistics. The linguists discovered several similarities between the killer's and Coleman's writing styles. Leonard observed that the shorthand "U" for "you" was commonly used in cell phone text messages, but rarely in emails. Coleman and the killer also used "U"

instead of "you" in their communications. Coleman, like the killer, was noted for incorrectly placing apostrophes in terms like "doesn't" and "can't." After more evidence, Coleman was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to three life sentences in prison (Hitt, 2012). He faced the death penalty.

The Jenny Nicholl Case

In the case of Jenny Nicholl (Meknas, 2016), forensic linguists used text message analysis to convict David Hodgson of her murder. The forensic linguists compared Jenny's text messaging style to the style received from her phone after she was reported missing and discovered a striking similarity between the two styles. Forensic linguists utilized Jenny's use of "my" and "myself" to convict Hodgson, whereas Hodgson's use of "me" and "meself" was classified as the Yorkshire dialect (Meknas, 2016). Unfortunately, Jenny Nicholl's body was never discovered, but the prosecution against David Hodgson was accepted by the jury, and he was found guilty of murder.

The J. K. Rowling Case

Joanna Rowling, also known as J.K. Rowling, was a well-known author of modern fiction, best known for her lucrative Harry Potter series. According to Meknas (2016), in 2013, a forensic linguist stated that Robert Galbraith, the author of the critically acclaimed crime book "The Cuckoo's Calling," was actually J.K. Rowling, writing under a different pen name. Many critics criticised the book since Galbraith was a first-time author who produced a polished and well-written novel (Juola, 2014). Patrick Juola, a computer science professor at Pittsburgh's Duquesne University, was among the linguists tasked with analysing the book's text. Juola was recognised as a specialist in "text-based analysis and profiling for authorial information such as identity," making him an ideal candidate for the case (Fridman et al., 2015).

Juola employed a text-analysis computer programme to match the book's text to J.K. Rowling's other publications. To hide their identity, an author could change their writing style. However, instead of detecting the author's writing style and tone, these computer programs relied on the association between function words and syntactic combination patterns. Juola was able to extract the hundred most often used terms in the author's lexicon, excluding character names and unusual words and leaving him with words like 'of' and 'but', ranked by

usage. The study claimed that "these words might seem inconsequential, but they leave an authorial fingerprint on any word" (Fridman et al., 2015).

The William Shakespeare Case

William Shakespeare was often regarded as one of the greatest writers in history. During his tenure as an author, Shakespeare faced charges of being a fraud. Over the last two decades, a few well-known scholars and critics claimed that Shakespeare did not write the majority, if not all, of his literary works, but rather affixed his name to someone else's work. Those who believed and supported these claims came to be known as 'anti-Stratfordians' - which came from the disagreement that Shakespeare was the man from Stratford - and disputed against Stratfordians, claiming that the Shakespearean name was only an alias or a front for the real author, or authors, of the famous works. According to Meknas (2016), these allegations were founded on a variety of assumptions about the writer's writing style and proficiency in relation to their educational degree and experience. Shakespeare's humble beginnings and limited resources appeared curiously inadequate for producing such astoundingly brilliant poetry. Another theory pointed to the lack of a will or letter following Shakespeare's death; he failed to acknowledge his unpublished works and left nothing behind for anyone (Price 2001).

However, most Shakespearean academics denied these claims, citing extensive research and decades of literature study. Nonetheless, forensic linguists and stylometric professionals took up the investigation to corroborate or refute these allegations (Price, 2001). Nonetheless, the evidence appeared to be insufficient for an appropriate decision on the subject; nonetheless, books and articles on both sides of the dispute were now readily available. In his book 'Alias Shakespeare', Joseph Sobran (1997) contended that Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, wrote the Shakespearean literary works. The author's ideas suggested that Shakespeare from Stratford lacked the necessary knowledge and experience to create such profound literature. Sobran's theory was supported by the inclusion of legal court and royal family elements in Shakespearean works, which were not accessible to ordinary people at the time. Only aristocrats and nobles would have been familiar with such topics. According to Meknas (2016), Oxford possessed all of the characteristics that Shakespeare would have had.

In his study, Meknas (2016) also indicated that another well-known allegation about Shakespeare's authorship was Christopher Marlowe, a poet noted for his genius. Christopher Marlowe, a precocious poet and passionate playwright, was noted for his literary classics such as "Doctor Faustus" and his many plays re-enacted in London theatres. Meknas (2016) noted that Shakespeare and Marlowe were born two months apart and lived during the same period as other notable literary figures in England. This notion, known as the Marlovian theory, was supported by numerous verifications of the authorship.

Marlovians, who thought Christopher Marlowe was the author of Shakespearean literature, cited rumours of a faked death in 1593 to avoid execution (Meknas, 2016). Shakespeare of Stratford learned Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish, French, Dutch, Hebrew, and English, despite only having one tutor. According to Meknas (2016), Mendenhall (1901) studied word frequency in texts, while Slater (1988) focused on vocabulary utilisation and collocations. Mendenhall's claim that Christopher Marlowe was the most likely author of Shakespearean works was challenged by C. B. Williams (1975), who argued that the research was limited and did not account for other factors. According to Meknas (2016), forensic linguistics is constantly evolving and improving its approaches.

The McDonald's Case

Olsson (2004) cited an early instance involving the brand name "McDonald's" in the United States as a catalyst for the creation of forensic linguistics. In the early 1990s, Quality Inns International announced plans to open "McSleep" affordable motels. McDonald's claimed ownership of the prefix "Mc" to any unprotected noun, including "fries" in "McFries," and barred Quality Inns International from branding their hotels "McSleepy" (Olsson, 2004). The two linguists examining this case, Lentine and Shuy, discovered in their investigation that the prefix "Mc" had previously been employed in commercial uses, and McDonald's had no right to use it in the present. The jury did not find Lentine and Shuy's evidence compelling, resulting in Quality Inns International's inability to open hotels under the moniker "McSleep."

Hesham Talaat Mustafa's case

According to Ali (2020), in 2008, a well-known case occurred in Egyptian culture. The members implicated in this case were well-known, including Egyptian businessman Hesham Talaat Mustafa, Lebanese singer Suzan Abdal Satar Tammem, and former security officer

Mohsen AlSokary. Suzan was Mustafa's beloved, whom he supported and protected. She had issues with her ex-husband, Adel Matook. He accommodated her and handed her a large sum of money. He divorced her from her husband, with whom she had many issues and concerns. Suzan left Mustafa after two years and eloped with her lover, Iraqi businessman Riyad AlAzway.

Mustafa was determined to exact revenge on her after she betrayed him and stole his money. So he solicited and collaborated with AlSokary to murder her. He threatened to kill her or cause her lasting impairment. She reported him to police in both Dubai and London. He was observing and pursuing her. In this instance, there were numerous language crimes, including threatening, solicitation, and conspiracy. The prosecution and court convicted Mustafa of solicitation, conspiracy, and aiding in the murder of the Lebanese singer. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison. The prosecution and court convicted AlSokary of killing the artist and sentenced him to life in prison. This court case and forensic linguistics application were pertinent to this study because they addressed threatening and gender-based violence, which was the topic of this research. It was also noteworthy because it included more than one linguistic offence. Furthermore, the court's sentencing was based on a recorded discussion between Mustafa and AlSokary, which revealed both defendants' objectives.

Cavallaro (2005) illustrated that linguists in Australia discussed the application of linguistics and sociolinguistics to legal issues in the 1980s. In 1988, the Federal Criminal Police Office of Germany hosted a two-day forensic linguistics conference, which was followed by the first British Seminar on Forensic Linguistics at the University of Birmingham in 1992, and the first Master's program in forensic linguistics at Cardiff University in 1999 (Ashraf, 2023). Forensic Linguistics eventually came into the spotlight in 1988 when Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office (Bundeskriminalamt) sponsored a two-day Forensic Linguistics symposium, introducing the phonetic-acoustic approach of speaker identification (Evizareza et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Evizareza et al. (2019) indicate that in 1991, France hosted the first Forensic Linguistics conference, followed by Britain in 1992. Australia conducted a meeting in 1995, and the US held one in 1997, bringing Forensic Linguistics to an international academic level (Evizareza et al., 2019). Although universities started teaching Forensic Linguistics in the late 1990s, many countries still lacked formal education in the field. Professor Malcolm Coulthard, a discourse analyst from Birmingham University, addressed this gap by offering international

summer schools in Florida. As Forensic Linguistics gained recognition, linguists became more involved in criminal and legal processes.

The term 'forensic linguistics' now encompassed research and practice in areas where legal and linguistic concerns overlapped. Language had a crucial role in legal and forensic situations, including its structure and evidential significance. Some areas where forensic linguistics appeared to be functioning as an umbrella term were in the organisation of interaction in legal settings (e.g., in police interviews), speech style in the courtroom (e.g., structure of cross-examination, jury instructions, summing-up), structure and semantics of legal instruments, legal terminology, legal translation and interpreting, comprehensibility of legal instruments (examples included police caution and temporary restraining orders), language and disadvantage in the eyes of the law, linguistic minorities and linguistic human rights, linguistic evidence in asylum cases, forensic authorship analysis, analysis of contested meanings in trade name disputes or threats to harm and/or kill, and forensic dialectology.

Forensic linguistics was important for persons who worked in courts or studied law, as well as the general public. Ordinary people routinely interacted with a wide range of legal documents and processes, including real estate, leasing agreements, wills, contracts, and others (Kondorashova, 2022). According to Ali (2020), language codified law and was necessary for its existence. Shuy (2002) contended that physicians were better suited to read X-rays than the average person because of their lengthy training. This was the same way linguists were well-trained to recognise and hear structures that laypeople could not. Forensic linguists could advise police on using less coercive language during conversations (Shuy 2002). This approach allowed police to avoid unclear and inappropriate questions and structures. Forensic linguists should train lawyers, interviewers, and detectives to effectively interact with individuals with communication difficulties. Several academics believed that in the future, forensic linguistics would be widely used to better criminal investigations.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages.

Carney (2014) emphasised that in a hate speech case, a court might have had to determine whether a person's words were hurtful or harmful. This determination of hurtful and harmful words could be detected in both discourses, either written or oral. If the speech acts of verbal exchange were studied and the levels of politeness were gauged, a court would have been

able to affirm the hurtfulness or harmfulness of the speaker's words (Carney, 2014). In a series of lectures in 1955, Carney (2014) indicated that in 1962, Austin was one of the first persons to suggest that by making statements, speakers were also performing acts. He classified the speech acts according to what he called locutionary (what is said), illocutionary (what is meant), and perlocutionary (the effect) acts. His essays paved the way for many more studies on the topic of speech acts and led to the likes of Searle (indirect speech acts) delivering influential contributions.

Indirect speech acts were more polite than direct speech acts because they offered the hearer options on how to react. Any sort of violence was contained in the language used by the offender. The linguistic evidence, the language features, and the choices of language used by the perpetrator inside threat text messages all served as proof and evidence of violence. Language features, evidence, and chosen words could be analysed in many discourses, including letters, emails, messages, WhatsApp discussions, and documents describing the victim's experience, such as declarations, diaries, and interactions with friends or family members. Linguistic evidence revealed threatening and manipulative behaviour towards victims.

This section discusses the literature on linguistic evidence, features, and language choices. It also connects forensic linguistics to the language variation theory employed in this study.

Linguists use the term "linguistic evidence" to refer to language proofs that prove whether or not the accused individual spoke or wrote a specific discourse. In other words, forensic linguists compare the writing styles in the offered evidence to those of the accused. The determination of whether a given individual spoke or wrote something is based on an analysis of their idiolect, or specific patterns of language use such as vocabulary, collocations, pronunciation, spelling, and syntax. Linguists aim to give solid evidence for the following questions when identifying linguistic evidence in court proceedings: "Who wrote or said this?" and "Why are we saying he/she wrote or said it?"

Forensic linguists can easily identify evidence of the author or speaker by analysing the language use of the suspected individual since language is a fingerprint; each human uses language differently. In this study, even if the victim knew who sent him or her a text message, the offender might have denied it in court, thereby necessitating the use of language analysis.

Toghuj (2022) confirms that forensic linguistics was commonly used in the court system to study language evidence, whether recorded or handwritten, in civil or criminal cases. The analysis was conducted for two main reasons:

- ❖ The analysis is used to identify witnesses or suspects in specific instances or situations, as well as determine the value of written or spoken statements in a case, and
- ❖ Forensic linguistics is essential for presenting written or spoken language samples as evidence in court.

However, Coulthard (2010) disagrees with trusting the linguistic fingerprint method for assessing and detecting problematic authors. This suggests that it should have been able to develop a linguistic fingerprinting technique. In other words, the linguistic 'impressions' left by a certain speaker/writer should have been identifiable, just like a signature. In reality, the concept of the linguistic fingerprint is an unhelpful, if not misleading metaphor, at least when used in the context of forensic authorship investigations, because it conjures up images of massive databanks containing representative linguistic samples (or summary analyses) of millions of idiolects, against which a given text can be matched and tested (Coulthard, 2010). Indeed, such an operation is unfeasible, if not impossible, and remains so for the foreseeable future.

Moreover, according to Coulthard (2010), the value of a physical fingerprint is that each sample is both identical and exhaustive, meaning that it contains all of the information required for an individual's identification, whereas any linguistic sample, even a large one, provides only very partial information about its creator's idiolect. This predicament is exacerbated by the fact that many of the texts that the forensic linguist was requested to evaluate were quite brief: most suicide notes and threatening letters, for example, were well under 200 words long, and many contained less than 100 words (Coulthard, 2010). Any speaker or writer could employ any word at any moment; nonetheless, speakers tend to make typical and distinguishing co-selections of preferred terms (Hoey 2005).

Linguistic evidence and analysis are critical in the field of forensic linguistics because they can assist in disclosing the language viewpoint in crimes or contribute to determining the author and the true motives of the culprits (Sudjana & Fitri, 2013). Correspondingly, Ali (2020) established that forensic linguistics provides an interpretation of slang or ambiguous words.

In forensic linguistics, threat messages can be analysed to reveal linguistic evidence, traits, and choices that might aid in identifying the source and interpreting the nature of the threat. Linguistic evidence can be found in many written texts including text messages; a target discourse to be analysed in this study. These are text-threatening messages addressed to gender-based violence victims.

In GBV offence discourses, a significant portion of the violence is included in the perpetrator's language. Benedetti and Queralt (2023) divulge that forensic linguists examine language evidence in violent aspects such as attitudes of entitlement to power, delegation of responsibility to the victim, the existence of threats, coercive control, and manipulation. Language, being a tool for communicating thoughts and information to the next person, can reveal the intention of GBV offence by critically analysing the choices of words and linguistic features contained in threat discourses. So, all of these linguistic cues can be considered and incorporated into the Cycle of Violence, providing context for the identification of various linguistic methods used by offenders and the violence manifested (Benedetti & Queralt, 2023).

Forensic linguistics examines how vocabulary was utilised in discourse to uncover linguistic evidence. The list of words that an individual knew or had access to and used was referred to as their vocabulary. The vocabulary employed in the discourse, such as threat text messages, can disclose whether the text was produced by a native speaker of a language or an L2 user, as well as whether the author was educated or not, and the author's level of education. For example, an educated person could use more complicated, formal, and diverse vocabulary than an ignorant person, who could only use simple and informal vocabulary and is more likely to repeat terms in the text due to restricted vocabulary. The table below shows instances of a few vocabularies that could be used by educated people and those that could be used by uneducated people, as identified by forensic linguists during their analysis.

This table provides examples of formal and informal vocabularies.

Informal/simple vocabulary	Formal/complex vocabulary
home	Residence
childish	Infantile

keep	Retain
Say no	Reject
hurt	Damage
big	Enormous
naked	Nude

Table 1.1

Depending on the context of the threat text, an educated individual can employ formal vocabulary in a sentence such as, "I will visit your residence and expect more damage to your family." Whereas the uninformed replies, "I will come to your house and hurt you and your family."

The identification of vocabulary is also dependent on the author's age, which is influenced by the experiences they have had with the language throughout their lives. A young person's vocabulary is vastly different from an adult's. Shirley et al. (2024) agree in their study that when evaluating child offenders, it is critical to elicit language samples that can provide precise information about an adolescent's ability to speak for legitimate objectives. Shirley et al. (2024) note that adolescents frequently exhibit poor syntactic development, such as the use of short, fragmentary utterances, low verbal productivity, word-finding and utterance formulation issues, numerous repetitions, false starts, and revisions of words and phrases, as well as difficulty with pragmatic skills such as topic maintenance, turn-taking, and responding to questions. Many adolescents have trouble learning new words and have little vocabulary (Shirley et al., 2024). This demonstrates that adults have learnt several vocabularies over their lifetime, whereas children are continually learning.

Furthermore, the use of vocabulary changes according to the author's age and the understanding of the language era used by humans. Zheng et al. (2024) demonstrate that language evolves over time. For example, Shakespeare's vocabulary differed substantially from ours. Some of the terminology understood by adults was ancient vocabulary and unknown to youth, providing forensic linguists with a hint and evidence that the author of the text was elderly. In other circumstances, even if the vocabulary remains constant, word

meanings can shift dramatically as a result of being employed to meet communication goals (Zheng et al., 2024).

Furthermore, unlike adults, youth's vocabularies can be rich in slang vocabulary. Young individuals utilise slang language, whereas adults may use complete regular vocabularies.

The following table provides examples of slang vocabularies and their meanings.

Slang words	Meaning
spinner	knife or a blade weapon
Kweff	Violence
box	Prison
feds	Police
Fishing	Looking for victims
Skate/ ten toes	run away

Table 1.2

Young people might employ slang words like "kweff," "feds," or "spinner" in threatening, abusive, or generally malevolent discussion texts, but adults would use words like violence, knife, or prison. The author's usage of slang vocabulary is also influenced by their gender, as young females use slang differently than young males.

Forensic linguists can also determine who wrote a threat SMS message based on the text's colloquial language. Forensic linguists analyse the accused's writing style and usage of colloquial language in everyday conversations to determine how he or she used different sorts of vocabulary. Colloquial language is a broad linguistic concept that encompasses all forms and linguistic units used in informal language variations (Fattah & Salih, 2022). Colloquial language refers to informal words like "y'all," "am gonna," or "wanna" that people use in conversation with those they know. According to Coulthard (2010), although the investigation of the authorship of text messages is a new area of study, in a growing number of murder cases, the mobile or cell phones of people later found dead had sent messages after the time when the police suspected they had already died.

Moreover, text messaging is an intriguing linguistic phenomenon because there is a great deal of freedom in encoding. The abbreviations are not yet fixed, and even small samples of usage can be distinctive, allowing a linguist to express an opinion on the likelihood that the deceased or the accused sent one or more of the suspect messages (Coulthard, 2010). In the most recent incidents, Coulthard encountered suspect text messages included the items, "I will," "yes," "come," and "home" when, in the preceding three days, the user of the cell phone favoured the forms "ill," "ya," "com," and "hme."

Furthermore, colloquial language could be useful in text analysis because people employ abbreviations and colloquial language differently, especially in text messaging. One person would say "ya," another would say "yah," and yet another would say "yeh" to indicate yes. This suggests that text message abbreviations and colloquial language are used differently since such phrases lack a formal meaning. One example came from the Jenny Nicholl Case, in which Hodgson's use of "me" and "meself" was categorised as the Yorkshire dialect for "my" and "myself" (Meknas, 2016). Another example of colloquial language use can be seen in the Chris Coleman case, when the police discovered the walls covered in red graffiti with warnings such as "U have paid!" instead of "you have paid!" (Hitt, 2012). These were all language indications that could help forensic linguists identify and/or eliminate the number of accused individuals.

Linguistic evidence in forensic linguistics studies lexical choices to resolve ambiguity in legal concerns (Alhums, 2019). The threat message's individual words and phrases are examined using lexical choices. Linguistic evidence also includes the use of grammatical structures, which examine the message's sentence structure and grammar; spelling and punctuation, which examines spelling and punctuation peculiarities such as consistent misspellings or idiosyncratic punctuation usage; and vocabulary, which examines the vocabulary used, including the level of formality or informality, as well as any slang or jargon that might have provided clues about the sender's identity. According to Balcells (2023), language elements such as dialect, syntax, grammar, lexicon, and register are also examined in order to identify linguistic patterns that might have led to a relationship with a suspect. According to Ali (2020), everyone has different vocabulary, lexical, and grammatical preferences.

In the analysis of texts of gender-based violence cases, the level of education also matters. SIDA (2015) indicates that it is important to prevent GBV and assuring improved access to good quality education at all levels are central focus areas.

Furthermore, Fitria (2024) emphasises the morphological aspect as it relates to the grammatical order of the language being communicated. The morphological order functions similarly to the lexical order; it is simply an order. Morphology is also relevant to how people generate words during communication events. Fitria (2024) explains further that in forensic linguistic studies, morphology is used in several analyses, namely: to examine the suitability of the morphological processes of the words in the product law with grammatical rules so as not to cause ambiguity or misunderstanding of meaning; and to examine individual language style, for example, by examining the tendency to use certain morphemes in figurative language, distinguishing it from other people's language.

The syntactical aspect concerns the adequacy of sentence structure, which includes a subject, predicate, object, and description. Syntax is a language level that covers the process of constructing phrases, clauses, and sentences, particularly the grammatical relationships between function parts and their categories (Pastika, 2019). Syntactic order refers to the sentence pattern that someone utilises throughout a communication event. A linguist must be able to examine every sentence spoken by someone with legal experience and explain and show the facts in court as an expert witness.

Insults and abusive language could be detected in both grammar and lexicon as well (use of adjectives), the use of evasive language with indirect, ambiguous, and contradictory forms, as well as nominal and passive constructions, and the use of emotion-related language in relation to potentially face-threatening acts (Benedetti & Queralt, 2023). Benedetti and Queralt also add that analysing the speaker's stance and attitude can reveal language choices relating to using children, masculine privilege, or exhibiting economic status. Forensic linguists can study linguistic cues beyond the level of syntax and vocabulary to try to infer the speaker's intention.

Benedetti and Queralt (2013) distinguished four types of threats: direct, through explicit pronouncements such as "I will kill you," indirect, such as "You will see," conditional: "If you leave now, you will never be able to return," and veiled, such as "She is going to pay for this."

Once a threat has been identified and classified, an assessment of the likelihood that the perpetrator will carry out the threatened violent act is critical for the victim's safety. As a result, legal professionals, particularly police officers who receive reports of such cases, must act quickly to address such cases at their inception in order to prevent them from escalating into gender-based violence.

In the short texts that are typically the focus of forensic linguists, it is usually only possible to focus on grammatical and orthographic rule-breaking, because examining characteristic vocabulary choices that are also idiolectal requires much more textual data than is typically available (Coulthard, 2010). The most difficult author-identification scenarios involve anonymous letters, which typically have a large number of probable authors and a little amount of written text to evaluate. As a result, success is generally confined to cases involving semi-literate and/or non-native authors, who must supply a disproportionately large number of idiolectal blunders and errors in a comparatively little amount of text (Coulthard, 2010).

Below are a few examples of brief excerpts from a typed anonymous letter that the addressee-company assumed was authored by one of its own employees. Coulthard highlighted the words that contain spelling errors and typos:

I hope you appreciate that i am enable to give my true idenity as

- ❖ this wolud ultimately jeopardize my position...
- ❖ I would like to high light my greatest concern...
- ❖ have so far deened it unnecessary to investegate these issus...

However, Coulthard (2010) elaborated that there are several interesting non-standard features immediately apparent, although one of the problems of dealing with typed text is that errors and mistakes may be confused and compounded - one may not know, for any given item, particularly, if it only appears once, whether the 'wrong' form is the result of a mis-typing or a non-standard rule - for example, if a (British English) text includes the word 'color', is this a typing mistake, a spelling error, or, worse, the result of the computer user being unable to change the spell-checker to British English?

Coulthard (2010) went on to emphasise that spelling errors play an important role in forensic linguistics analysis in determining the offender. The writer can write or type the first-person

pronoun "I" as "i" and the very unusual numeral "1"; however, in other cases, the author would add or omit letters, or the writer has serious problems spelling words containing unstressed vowels - thus we have the following spellings: "enable" = "unable", "investigate" = "investigate", and elsewhere "except" = "accept".

Also, in other circumstances, the writer is unsure whether to express certain morpheme sequences as a single word or as two independent words, such as "high light" and "with out". Furthermore, there are homonym issues; "weather" appears for "whether" and "there" for "their". In addition to the obvious spelling errors, some writers have grammatical issues, such as the frequent omission of past tense markers, the 3rd person singular present tense, and even articles - "have now (a) firm intention". These faults and inaccuracies are idiosyncratic and idiolectally distinctive, and they were only found in the authenticated letters of one of the eight employees who had access to the material contained in the threatening letter, according to Coulthard.

Furthermore, stylistic factors such as tone and register are assessed, which analyse the overall tone of the message to determine if it is forceful or passive. According to Onoja and Oguiche (2021), forensic linguists examine conversation talk-in-turn, textualise, and analyse them to extract tone, tenor, mood, meaning, contexts, and intentions. According to Lam-Cassettari and Kohlhoff (2020), tone is thus evaluated not only in speech analysis, but also in written discourse. The directness and indirectness with which the threat is communicated, emotional content, as well as pronouns and personal reference linguistic choices of suspects, are all examined.

Punctuations are one of the most important aspects of grammar while reviewing a written work. Punctuations can aid in identifying the culprit because punctuation usage varies from person to person and many people do not consider utilising them correctly in their writing. Schoene and Dethlef (2016) found that an individual's punctuation style is influenced by their background, education, social position, and family situation. Punctuation can convey emotions and disclose a victim's mood. Punctuation also serves to clarify the meaning of a statement. Suicide notes and SMS messages often use "meaningful" punctuation patterns. Eber-Schmid (2017) argues that punctuation clarifies meaning and conveys emotions in written communication.

Moreover, exclamation points, semicolons, apostrophes, left and right brackets, asterisks, plus signs, emotions, ellipses, and question marks are commonly used punctuation models in literature (Fata et al., 2021). An exclamation mark (!) distinguishes between playful and desperate. Using a semicolon (;) may indicate overly ambitious behaviour. The apostrophe (') can represent specific information in the victim's thinking. The use of left and right brackets (()) indicates overly logical statements. An asterisk (*) indicates that readers may not recognise the victim. The plus sign (+) represents intense fondness. Emoticons (e.g. 😊, 😞) enhance communication by making it more engaging. Ellipsis (...) indicates meaning between lines. According to Fata et al. (2021), the question mark (?) does not always indicate a question word. If used multiple times, the meaning changes depending on the previous sentence.

In the context of forensic linguistics analysis, "marked language" refers to the use of language in a way that a first speaker of any language, or an English first speaker, would be unlikely to do when compared to a second speaker of the same language. Overall, the identification of linguistic features is based on a thorough examination of a subset of the available data. Perkins (2021) explains in his work that the marked language concentrated around specific elements had apparent interlingual explanations.

This includes faults and grammatically correct but unexpected preferences. Perkins (2021) demonstrates that the traits can be roughly classified into hierarchical groups, with his essay focusing on the middle-level features. Higher level features indicate the feature's broad grammatical class (e.g., preposition, ordering and positioning, or lexical), whereas lower level features offer more detailed information about the marked language, its amount of marking, and potential impacts. The features in the upper-level categories concentrated around several areas within each category: conspicuous presence, marked absence, marked choice, and marked construction (Perkins, 2021).

2.2.2 The discourse structures of threat messages

Discourse structure refers to the wholeness created by interconnected components inside a discourse organisation (Kadir, 2020). Discourse structure is designed to have a relevant topic that binds all portions together. According to Halliday and Hasan (1994), discourse structure is a series of sentences that have an emotional and meaningful association among all segments, implying that each element in discourse should be aligned with one another, either in terms of sentence form or meaning. Halliday and Hasan (1994) expanded on the definition

of discourse structure, stating that it consists of linguistic units with complete meanings that are practical and situational. This implies that each unit in discourse structure should not only be meaningful, but also functional and relevant. Discourse structures are one of the many variables that a forensic linguist must examine in order to discover and determine the genuine motives of the perpetrators.

According to Kadir (2020), the functional and contextual discourse structure is separated into three primary sections: opening, content, and closing. The introductory portion introduces the text, the content section provides the text's substance, and the closing section contains the text's conclusions. According to Kadir (2020), in the discourse structure of a case he investigated, the verdict in the state court of Gorontalo, the introductory portion includes the letterhead, defendant's full identify, time and official's name of detention, and prosecuting attorney. The content part includes the prosecutor's indictment, witness testimony, defendant statements, judge's deliberation, and hearing statement. Finally, the final portion includes the judge's name and position.

Kadir (2020) explains that discourse structure is formed by the use of language to create a systematic and thorough flow of thoughts. Systematic and comprehensive are demonstrated by the outline of an entire thought, beginning with topic selection, introduction, content, conclusion, and progressing to the product of rules.

Discourse analysis is a method that forensic linguists use to investigate discourse structures. Discourse analysis is concerned with the analysis of written, oral, or sign language use, as well as any significant Semiotic occurrence. This indicates that discourse analysis is a study of text and context, with both text and context used to analyse conversation (Kardi, 2020). Discourse analysis requires both text and context. Rani et al. (2006) clarify that the major purpose of discourse analysis is to obtain information rather than rules. Discourse analysis does not precisely formulate rules in the same way that grammar does. When studying a discourse linguistically with an emphasis on discourse structure, the linguist focuses on the discourse's shape and structure rather than the author's syntax rules and faults. The lexical choices, vocabulary usage, and spelling have less to do with speech analysis. Linguists are concerned with the form, structure, and semantics of the entire text, as well as the author's figurative language.

According to Ariana et al. (2014), discourse analysis is concerned with analysing written, oral, or sign language use, as well as any major semiotic event. Many specialists, according to Ndatyapo (2022), agree on the types of texts that can typically be analysed in forensic linguistics. Ogolekwu (2022) recognised the following text forms, which include those typically encountered in forensic linguistic casework: To name a few instances, threat letters, suicide notes, extortion letters, bomb and terrorist threats, ransom demands, e-mails, SMS messages, police report and witness testimony, and texts with plagiarism.

A succession of sentences may be classified as a discourse structure if there is an emotional and meaningful association between all segments (Kadir, 2020). This means that each element in the discourse should be linked with the form or meaning of the sentence. The historical background information about the case where forensic linguistics was first used (the case of Timothy John Evans who murdered his wife and child at 10 Rillington Place, London) shows that Svartvik was able to show, in 1968, using linguistic analysis of the discourse structures, that the key sections of the statement, where Evans apparently confesses to the murders, are written using a formal register, typical of police texts, but most typical of the speech of Svartvik has connected discourse elements to one another, either the form or meaning of the sentence.

Discourse structure is a language unit with complete meaning that is both practical and situational. This implies that every unit in a discourse structure should not only be meaningful, but also functional and contextual (Kadir, 2020). Adding, Kadir (2020) divides the discourse structure into three major sections: the introduction, the content, and the conclusion. The opening part specifies the text's introduction, beginning with the message's identification of the receiver, and the sender can use the recipient's name or other identifiers. Some threat messages may begin with a welcome that reveals information about the sender's relationship with the recipient. According to Kadir (2020), the content section describes the text's essence. This is the body of the threat message, as well as the core of the message, where the threat is presented. Explicit threats, demands, or cautions may be included in the content. Forensic linguists will examine the threat's phrasing, tone, and intent. Finally, Kadir (2020) mentions that the ending part contains the text's conclusions.

Moreover, in a study conducted by Maulida (2023) on a suicide note found, that the structure of a suicide note is similar to that of text messages, despite the fact that the study did not

focus on suicide text. Suicide notes, like other written materials, have a consistent pattern or structure. According to Prokofyeva (2013), people often consider their willingness to commit suicide before making the final decision. This allows them to prepare the necessary phrases for the letter.

Sudjana and Fitri (2013) report that victims addressed their suicide letters for various reasons. The note address is typically the first line in a suicide note. In NJW's suicide letter, the victim expressly addressed her mother in the first line, ensuring that readers realise the intended recipient. The second line apologises for the victim's actions and serves as the introduction to the note's messages. In the body, the victim expressed some bad sentiments without exposing her suicide motivations or detailing what happened in her life that led to her decision. In many situations, the closing letter is enclosed in a statement of gratitude and apology, along with the victim's proclamation of love for those left behind. NJW's message concluded with the victim's final request and remorse, as well as a concluding comment demonstrating her consistent willingness to make the final decision.

The message could conclude with closing remarks that are serious, informal, or even friendly (Ndatyapo, 2022). The concluding language chosen can offer information about the sender's demeanour. Ndatyapo (2022) also indicates that the sender of a written threat message may sign it with their real name or not sign it at all. In addition, Katsvara (2019) shows that some messages may contain contact information, such as a phone number or an email address, which can be used to hunt down the sender. Forensic linguists can learn more about the sender's intents, emotions, and linguistic choices by deconstructing the discourse structure of threat text messages, which can be useful in criminal investigations and legal actions.

Furthermore, semantics is critical in discourse analysis for identifying language evidence of the culprit. The semantic refers to the meaning of words or the selection of words or sentences. Semantics investigates the meaning of language contained in words, phrases, sentences, or text in general, without regard for the context in which it occurs speaking (Fitria, 2024). While semantic order refers to the meaning of a word or term. A linguist must be able to assess both language form and the meaning expressed by someone involved in legal proceedings. According to Fitria (2024), in forensic linguistics, semantic analysis is increasingly employed to determine the meaning of words or expressions that the reader may find difficult

or impossible to understand. According to Fitria (2024), it is difficult to understand since the word or statement has a common meaning or is unclear.

In addition, in the study of discourse structure, pragmatics that focus on the meaning of a linguistic unit that arises in a specific situation are inextricably linked. Forensic language studies rely heavily on pragmatic analysis. According to Sulistiyo (2020), pragmatics is the study of the link between language and context grammaticalization in order to understand how language is used in text messages. Understanding the context, such as the participants' spatial, temporal, and social ties in a legal environment, is critical (Sulistiyo, 2020). When people comprehend these notions, they can draw appropriate deductions and conclusions since language frequently retains meanings that do not follow from its use.

The use of language, particularly in a legal setting, must be understood through pragmatic principles in order for legal assertions to be comprehended in context (Sulistiyo, 2020). Pragmatic studies are used in discourse analysis in forensic linguistic studies, where both oral discourses such as conversations between actors in a case, conversations in the investigation process, or conversations in the trial process, as well as written discourse such as potential social media texts, give rise to legal action (Fitria, 2024).

Moreover, in terms of discourse structure complexity, Widiatmika et al. (2023) confirm that male suicide notes are more precise and to the point, with less use of conjunctions, resulting in a simpler structure. Female suicide notes, on the other hand, are simply elaborative, with significantly more conjunctions, adjectives, and adverbs (Widiatmika et al., 2023). Suicide notes have the same language as threat text messages. Although victims are expected to write suicide notes, threatening text messages, and other discourses, a difficulty arises when legal records appear to be modified, implying that the discourses are false. This condition can be discovered and examined through the lens of language, particularly from a forensic linguistic standpoint.

Widiatmika et al. (2023) conducted a forensic semantic analysis, incorporating relevance theory, to extract social issues that led to suicide in Pakistan. The results showed that male suicide notes were more straightforward, with fewer conjunctions, making the structure less complicated. The study also indicates that female suicide notes were only elaborative, with relatively more conjunctions, adjectives, and adverbs (Widiatmika, 2023). Male suicide notes

usually mentioned 'money', 'work', and 'family', whereas female notes talked about their 'decisions', 'dreams', and 'pain'. The Linguistics Inquiry and Word Count software, as well as forensic semantic theory, are also used in the study to discover suicide goals and reasons. According to the investigation, Woolf's bipolar disorder caused her to feel guilty and miserable for upsetting her family's lives.

2.2.3. The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages.

Sociolinguistics studies the link between language and society (social). Forensic linguistics analysis is inextricably linked to the study of language and social influences. According to Soepardjo and Warsono (2018), as long as language is used as a communication tool in society, it is influenced by feelings, lifestyle, and the speakers of the language's societal tradition, which is why language and society are inextricably linked. In Forensic linguistics, sociolinguistics deals with the studying of how language varies across different social contexts and groups. According to Emike (2021), numerous researchers' definitions show that sociolinguistics explores why, how, and where humans use language.

Fitria (2024) says that language requires sociolinguistic notions in order to investigate its usage in the sphere of law. Sociolinguistics is the study of how people use language in relation to their social context, gender, age, ethnicity, geographical location, occupation, and other characteristics (Fitria, 2024). The social dimensions are intimately linked to the study of forensic linguistics. As previously stated, this linkage is based on the fact that the use of language cannot be separated from the speaker's social aspects such as their area of origin, ethnicity, social class conditions, and others, as evidenced by the use of lexicons in communication.

According to Coulthard et al. (2011), forensic linguistics combines various branches of applied linguistics, including discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, stylistics, phonetics, phonology, graphology, sociology, and sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistic profiling is intimately related to the study of sociolinguistics. Forensic linguists can detect the author or origin of an anonymous document based on the idea that our linguistic performance is heavily influenced by a number of social factors, including age, educational level, gender, geographical location, and social status (Coulthard et al., 2011).

When a person receives a text message, especially one that is threatening, chances are he or she does not know who sent it or who wrote it; this is where the need for sociolinguistic profile analysis comes into play. Sociolinguistic profiling is necessary or required when police have no strong suspicions regarding the author's identity. In this case, a forensic linguist seeks linguistic clues to unravel the mystery of the conflict. The author's age, gender, social and regional background are all linguistic signals (Coulthard et al., 2011).

Unlike other linguistic features in forensic linguistics that look for the intentions and linguistic errors within a text, sociolinguistics does not make psychological observations about the author or their intentions, but instead, depending on the features within the text, they focus on the societal factors in a text to describe the author's social origins or background. Sociolinguistics is founded on the idea that age, gender, geographical background, other languages spoken, and educational standing all have an impact on an individual's linguistic output (Busso et al., 2022). Forensic linguists use sociolinguistic profiling to determine information about an anonymous author or the origins of a text. It has been extensively used with computer-mediated communications, and there have been numerous documented cases where it has improved the outcome of a case and the provision of justice (Busso et al., 2022).

Although the conclusions of the investigated cases about the likely social background of an anonymous author alone cannot be relied on to provide evidence in court, when combined with other linguistic evidence, it is possible to identify the suspect or reduce the number of suspected individuals to a few. Sociolinguistic profiling believes that language is like a fingerprint that each of us uses differently. The disparities in language usage are related to societal circumstances that each individual has encountered differently. According to Busso et al. (2022), sociolinguistic profiling is founded on the idea that a variety of social factors influence an individual's linguistic output, including age, gender, geographical background, other languages spoken, and educational standing.

In forensic linguistics investigations, documents such as blackmail letters, threatening letters, defamatory letters, ransom notes, accusatory letters, and claims of responsibility are analysed in relation to criminal offences (Eilika, 2014). Sociolinguistics profile analysis is necessary when the author of a text is unknown or unwilling to reveal themselves (Eilika, 2014). Authors of incriminating texts often focus on what they want to communicate to the

victim rather than how they communicate. In other words, authors tend to be oblivious to the fact that the language that they employ is, in and of itself, a hint worth exploring. Forensic text analysis involves both the investigation of single incriminating texts and comparison analyses. Forensic text analysis is used in sociolinguistic profiling to identify authors and offender identities.

Eilika (2014) identifies two types of forensic text analysis: single-text analysis and comparative text analysis. The goal of single-piece text analysis is to extract biographical information about the author. The findings of such categorisations may be included in the offender's personal profile. The analysis of style and errors, as well as text structure, may provide some insight into the following areas, such as educational level. The author's degree of education is evident in the frequency of errors, the manner of expression, and the amount to which the text adheres to the conventions of the particular genre (Eilika, 2014).

The level of schooling one acquires can help identify the probable culprit. There is a significant difference between the text written by a highly educated, semi-educated, and a school dropout from lower grades. The lexical choice and structure of such conversation reflect the level of education received, both spoken and written. The highly educated author or speaker is more likely to utilise well-organised, grammatical-error-free phrases and sentences than the less or illiterate one. The educated choose technical phrases, whilst the uneducated utilise generic vocabulary. For example, in one case, the author said in a letter that he was with a youngster who was not feeling well and had taken the child to the hospital. Examples of reporting phrases include: "I took the child to a paediatrician because she had a stomach ache," "I took the child to the doctor because she was not feeling well," and "I took the child to the hospital because she was sick." The study of these three phrases would reveal the medical technical terms used by the educated author and the general words used by the semi- and illiterate authors.

Eilika (2014) goes on to clarify that because certain genres, such as blackmail letters, lack prescriptive conventions, authors tend to adopt the rules governing business letters or requests presented to administrative bodies. If an author maintains the appropriate style throughout the work, appropriately employs foreign words, and writes with few errors, this can be used to assess the author's writing skills and, as a result, his or her educational level. A clear structure and strict organisation are further indicators of higher levels of education

(including a tertiary degree). Spelling errors, particularly in the case of foreign words such as intelligence, exceed, or potassium, incorrectly used words, contaminations (such as irregardless instead of regardless or irrespective), and stylistically awkward formulations, such as (lets assume You are concerned that proceedings are carried out.)

Another issue that is closely related to educational level is writing proficiency. The society expects those with higher degrees of education to be good writers. Text segmentation and layout, as well as the use of connectors such as conjunctions (e.g., although, if), adverbs (subsequently, heretofore), pronouns (he, those), and segmentation marks (e.g., numbered lists or internal references like the former, the latter, see above, or in conclusion), can all serve as indicators (Eilika, 2014). Good writing abilities also contain formulations and distinguishing textual features that reflect the author's ability to follow the specific rules of writing business letters. Furthermore, the sociolinguistic profile indicates whether the language user is a native or second-language speaker. For example, a linguist must be able to determine the nativeness of a language by distinguishing a high number of language faults from a foreign language speaker and few or no language errors from native speakers.

The author's region of origin may be expressed through dialects or regionalisms. Authors' writing style may be influenced by their local accent and phonetic qualities. For instance, misspelling "selious" instead of "serious" suggests an Oshiwambo speaker, whereas "Juniversity" instead of "university" denotes a Damara speaker. Furthermore, if a speaker pronounces "aks" instead of "ask", it indicates that the speaker is from Zimbabwe. This implies that their second language (L2) is influenced by their native languages.

One interesting example can be found in Kadir (2020), where linguists were tasked with identifying the sociolinguistics evidentiary clue in an extract regarding the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, extracted from an anonymous letter delivered on headed notepaper and purported to be from the UK police force. When the police have no leads to identify a criminal, a linguist may be asked to identify any sociolinguistic traits that could reveal information about an author. After reviewing the text, the linguist discovered a number of sociolinguistic indicators in the letter that can help establish a profile of the writer (Kadir, 2020). The dialect items "innocent girl", "gutted", "these shameful things" and "bad-minded people" are the most significant sociolinguistic clues (Kadir, 2020). Kadir (2020) adds that, despite the writer's claim to be a white police officer, "bad-minded people" is a popular expression in Jamaican

English. This can only be interpreted as proof that the writer has had contact with Jamaican English; but, in this case, the author was discovered to be a black British man of Jamaican ancestry who had never served in the police.

Fitria (2024) elaborates that language's location could also be linked to social interactions. Each person has their own dialect. As a result, if the language used by the individual is difficult to grasp, the expert must be able to analyse it. Evidence of authorship refers to whether a person makes remarks orally or in writing. This can be determined by the dialect of a person who will testify as an expert witness if that person speaks. However, if he produces his speech in writing, expert witnesses can examine it as evidence. The analysing methods include handwriting, punctuation, typography, and writing characteristics.

Furthermore, code-switching and code-mixing are important aspects of language analysis in authorship identification when dealing with bilingual and multilingual populations. Ezeh et al. (2022) define code-switching and code-mixing. Code-switching is the juxtaposition of two languages in a spoken discourse that requires moving from one code to another in communication, whereas code-mixing uses two or more codes in a single utterance. According to Trudgill (2000), the usage of lexicons that lead to specific social situations is beneficial for continued communication.

Trudgill (2000) also states that the use of language in a social context has two key aspects. First and foremost, language serves to foster social relationships. Second, language can convey specific information about speakers. In a legal setting, code-switching or code-mixing indicated by someone during the questioning process will assist the interrogator in composing information that can be used in making associated legal conclusions based on the person being interrogated in the social situation. Code-switching and mixing can also be found in written documents and text, such as an author combining English and Afrikaans or switching from English to the Otjiherero language.

Code-switching may have originated for a variety of reasons, including conveying concepts in a society with a distinct language (Fitria, 2020). These events may also occur in the speaker's second or third language since he is not as proficient in the second or third language, therefore he uses the first language to clarify certain concepts. In a legal setting, these

indicators offer law enforcement a variety of information on the status of the person involved in the legal case.

According to Fitria (2023), the social aspects of age, gender, education level, and others are closely related to the study of forensic linguistics because forensic linguistics is a branch of linguistics used to uncover criminal acts, specifically by analysing evidence of a crime in the interest of criminal or civil investigations. This relationship is based on the idea that the use of language cannot be isolated from the speaker's social elements, such as the speaker's place of origin, ethnicity, social class conditions, and others, as evidenced by the usage of lexicons in communication.

According to Fitria (2023), other topics related to linguistics forensics include bilingualism and multilingualism. More than half of the world's population is bilingual or able to speak two languages. Fitria (2023) shows that many people can speak more than two languages or are multilingual. Tongue is typically the first thing an individual learns, and it is usually an ethnic or tribal tongue. Fitria (2023) also states that language is acquired through social interactions with those closest to them, such as parents, relatives, neighbours, or those surrounding them. Second or third languages are typically acquired through education. As a result, in language studies and forensics, it is important to demonstrate the social position of individuals involved in judicial disputes.

Language is learned through social interaction, which occurs when individuals, particularly young people who are still learning, observe and interact with the people around them in places such as their homes, churches, schools, playgrounds, and other places in their communities. For example, children from the Ovawambo ethnic group live in Windhoek with their Oshiwambo-speaking parents and speak Oshiwambo at home. The Oshiwambo children talk, negotiate, and solve problems through interactive play in Khoekhoe and Afrikaans with their Damara neighbours' children while playing in the street.

During school, these Oshiwambo youngsters utilise English as a study language and to communicate officially with other children from diverse ethnic groups. These Oshiwambo children may have friends of Ovaherero ethnicity and communicate with them in Otjiherero. Finally, the Oshiwambo children will be able to speak their native language fluently. They will be able to speak and write English extremely well as their second language, which they learn

in school and use most of the time; they will also master English grammar rules very well, however, they will not be able to apply it as effectively as a native speaker. In addition, the Oshiwambo youngsters will be able to communicate in Khoekhoe, Afrikaans, and Otjiherero, which they have learned from their friends.

The variety of languages is another important factor in sociolinguistic profiling. The standard variety is one of the language varieties. The standard language variety is known as the official language, and it already has restrictions in place, therefore everyone must follow these regulations in order for language use to become standard. Non-standard language use can result in disorderly disclosures, misinterpretation, and inability to meet communication objectives (Fitria, 2023). The standard language variety is the one employed in a formal setting, such as law. Language in the context of law is a language that is critical to maintaining standards because it contains a wide range of legal concepts that must be presented in a consistent manner so that everyone can understand them.

According to Sunde and Sunde (2021), author profiling, which is the same as sociolinguistic profiling, is used to categorise authors into different categories. While the author or sender of the communication is unknown, the sociolinguistic impacts of the text should be taken into account while analysing the text (Surmon, 2020). Sousa-Silva (2022) notes in forensic linguistics that, in any instance when there are no suspects, the inquiry could try to establish the sociolinguistic profiling of the anonymous author(s) to restrict the pool of candidates.

Authorship analysis, a subfield of forensic linguistics, seeks to determine the author(s) who are most likely to have produced a specific cited text, which is frequently in dispute (Krassa, 2021). When there is uncertainty and author anonymity, forensic linguists sometimes utilise authorship analysis to determine the author of a written document from among two or more suspects. Relevant professionals utilise this technique to resolve authorship disputes in a variety of situations, including hurtful communications, abusive behaviour, and threatening acts. According to Nayan and Das (2022), forensic linguists routinely use authorship identification in court proceedings to determine whether a specific suspected person wrote or spoke a specific text by thoroughly and expertly analysing significant language aspects such as idiolect and specific language use patterns such as grammar, spelling, collocations, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Sociolinguistic profile analysis applies not only to written conversations but also to voice notes and recordings. Watt and Brown (2020) demonstrate that police can identify and arrest a suspect while also obtaining a sample of the suspect's speech to compare with the suspect speaker's voice. To determine the suspect's accent, the forensic linguist uses a corpus of speakers with the same type of accent and age/sex profile (Watt & Brown, 2020). When investigators do not have solid theories about the identity of the author(s) of the suspect texts, sociolinguistic profiling is sought (Sousa-Silva, 2022).

Surmon (2020) also states that anything written in a threatening manner should be included in the broader context of forensic texts and can be used to provide law enforcement with linguistic profiles of the unknown producers of those messages based on sociolinguistic clues provided by the suspects' language. As a result, a forensic linguist must search the text for linguistic clues that help identify social qualities of the author that reflect on the language employed, such as age, gender, socioeconomic and geographical background, or degree of education, among others.

Because sociolinguistics analysis is not limited to written materials, research indicates that voice/speaker identification is one of the most important jobs performed during speech and voice analysis, particularly in doubtful voice recordings in forensic linguistics (Lutsenko & Nikulin, 2020). Academics and forensic linguists use voice/speaker comparisons as part of the speaker profiling process. When examining the distinguishing traits of a problematic voice, it is necessary to consider the speaker's ethnic, social, and geographic backgrounds. Voice comparison compares the in-question voice to reference recordings made by a specific speaker who is assumed to have used the in-question voice (Nayan & Das, 2022). Regardless of how denial one is, voice characteristics analysis has inherent limitations because it cannot precisely identify the speaker. However, Nayan and Das (2022) explain that its use in forensic linguistics is critical because it provides a rich and plentiful source of pertinent information about the likely speaker, giving specialists a high level of certainty and accuracy in determining who might have spoken the ambiguous voice among suspected individuals.

According to Sousa-Silva (2022), the goal of sociolinguistic profiling is to discover the linguistic characteristics of the group to which the anonymous speaker may belong, rather than the linguistic characteristics of the individual speaker. In other words, the goal of sociolinguistic profiling is not to identify the exact or even the most likely author among all language

speakers. According to Babarinde and Uko (2020), the purpose of profiling is not to explicitly identify the person guilty of the crime, but rather to forecast the most likely traits of the offender.

Babarinde et al. (2020) also state that for linguistic profiling to be effective, the linguist's training and competency should contain a strong component of language variation and change. In fact, the linguistic profiler would have done well to have studied sociolinguistics, because language diversity provides many hints about the likely identity of an anonymous writer or speaker. Language indications linked to a person's political ideas, social standing, economic status, ethnicity, and attitudes, on the other hand, may aid in identifying the suspects.

Anesa (2021) emphasises that forensic linguistics narrows the suspect pool of prospective writers, discerns demographic information from language evidence, and then helps identify or disallow likely authors given samples from people. According to Pincornell et al. (2022), in order to determine the possible author, a wide variety of linguistics forms distinguishing between the two writers' styles, elements that are predominantly utilised by one or the other in the known sets of texts, can be identified. According to Sousa-Silva (2022), a linguistic profile, while not claiming to identify specific writers, illustrates how the suspect's language matches social, economic, education level, and other variables revealed in prior sociolinguistic studies.

Sousa-Silva et al. (2023) also clarify that a linguistic author profile attempts to establish social and demographic clues of a writer based on one or more communications, such as age, gender, geographical origin, educational background, occupation, or political affiliation. Additionally, Kadir (2020) indicates that language style is also influenced by situational circumstances such as people, places, discussion subjects, and difficulties. This assertion can be associated with human inventiveness in developing a new language distinct from other types (Kadir, 2020). This inventiveness will continue along the road, allowing the social environment to evolve from a new perspective.

Although legal professionals and other disciplines consider sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic ideas to be interconnected, forensic linguists believe they are distinct and should be treated as such (Raosa-Madrurnio & Martin, 2023). Sociolinguistics entails establishing whether a

specific author is accountable for a specific piece, and author profiling looks at the suspect's occupation and educational level by focusing on language and grammatical use (MacLeod & Wright, 2020). Cutillas-Espinosa and Hernández-Campoy (2020) report that their research on forensic linguistics reveals a connection between gender and literacy, as women face significant obstacles in their pursuit of education and literacy because of traditional views that held that women should be subservient to men, with their labour going towards managing the home and raising children, and thus providing little opportunity for formal education.

But as Sousa-Silva (2022) points out, one of the regular difficulties faced by forensic linguists has to do with the volume of data that is available for examination. In an ideal world, linguists would require large amounts of data to identify patterns in texts and draw safe conclusions about the author. Nonetheless, there is typically less text available for study in forensic investigations.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a carefully established and linked set of concepts and foundations derived from one or more theories with the express purpose of facilitating a study (Salawu et al., 2023). A theoretical framework is a collection of connected ideas that can be used to guide research with the goal of predicting and explaining study findings. Two theoretical frameworks were chosen and applied in this study to elucidate the phenomenon under investigation and to correlate with the researcher's assumptions: Linguistic Variation Theory and Linguistic Profiling Theory.

Linguistic Variation Theory was used in this investigation. Linguistic variation theory was developed by William Labov (a notable expert in sociolinguistics) in the late 1960s (Honeybone, 2011). This theory emerged from a study of language from a socially realistic perspective (Honeybone, 2011). It addresses broad concepts in the field of language. According to Barzan and Heydari (2019), linguistic variation theory refers to geographical, social, or contextual variances in how a particular language is used. According to Honeybone (2011), Linguistic Variation theory is concerned with the notion that languages have a diverse set of resources for producing a given linguistic expression. In simple words, Linguistic Variation Theory describes how language is utilised differently.

The way a language is spoken varies between persons and situations faced by the same person. Linguistic Variation Theory investigates how languages can represent the same idea in numerous ways (Barzan & Heydari, 2019). If we examine the following three sentences from Honeybone's work, we can see that they differ in syntax yet they have the same literary meaning. The sentences are:

- “Betty took off her coat and gave him it.”
- “Betty took her coat off and gave him it.”
- “Betty took her coat off and gave it him.”

According to Honeybone (2011), the fact that all of these sentences are feasible in English clearly demonstrates syntactic variation, as well as phonological variation, which is unavoidable. The same speaker from England's North-West may pronounce Betty as [betɪ], her as [ə], and off as [ɒf]. Some speakers from that area, notably those from Lancashire, would pronounce her as [əɪ]. Indeed, the same speaker may pronounce it as both [ə] and [əɪ]. A speaker from the North-West of the United States, on the other hand, would very probably pronounce her rhotically, as the Lancashire speaker did, but Betty as [bɛri] and off as [ɔf] (Honeybone, 2011).

This theory focuses on the variety of linguistic resources that speakers can employ to convey a specific meaning, including vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation. It helps to address the following questions: "how" and "why" different linguistic forms are used in different circumstances or by distinct groups of people.

Furthermore, Barzan and Heydari (2019) explain that when dealing with linguistic variation theory, regional variation is one of the conceivable sorts of variations between speakers of the same language. Examples of dialects include occupational (e.g., "bugs"), sexual (e.g., "adorable"), and educational (e.g., "less likely to use double negatives"). There are dialects of age (teenagers have their own slang, and the phonology of older speakers is likely to differ from that of young speakers in the same geographical region), as well as dialects of social context.

Barzan and Heydari (2019) refer to variances in grammar, vocabulary, and sound as dialects. Barzan and Heydari give an example: if one individual speaks the statement 'John is a farmer'

and another says the same thing but pronounces the word farmer as 'fahmuh,' the difference is one of accent. However, if one person says 'You should not do that' and another says 'Ya hadn't oughta do that,' there is a dialect difference because the variety is bigger. Dialect differences occur on a continuum. Some dialects are quite different from others.

According to Barzan and Heydari (2019), a dialect is a complicated term consisting of a set of features (phonetics, phonological, syntactic, morphological, and semantic) that distinguish one group of speakers from another group of speakers of the same language. So dialect is a variation that is specific to the user. It includes variations in speech, vocabulary, and grammar.

Barzan and Heydari (2019) discuss how dialects differ at the regional, minority, societal, and individual levels. A regional dialect is a variation of a language spoken in a specific area of a country. Some regional dialects have been given traditional names that distinguish them from the mainstream variations spoken in the same location. The regional dialects of English include British English, American English, Canadian English, Australian English, Nigerian English, and others.

Minority dialect refers to when members of a specific minority ethnic group have their own variety that they utilise as a marker of identity, usually alongside a standard variation. Examples include African American Vernacular English in the United States, London Jamaican in Britain, and Aboriginal English in Australia (Barzan & Heydari, 2019). A social dialect is associated with a specific class. A social dialect is used by a certain group of people in a culture. Finally, individual dialect, also known as idiolect, is utilised by all members of a culture. A country's whole population speaks in this dialect. Everyone has a unique tone, accent, and pronunciation, which is known as 'idiolect'.

Labov has advocated for a stronger empirical grounding in linguistics, questioning the validity of analyses based on native speaker intuitions (Honeybone, 2011). Labov contends that linguistics should focus more on empirical evidence and real language usage rather than native speakers' intuitions about their language. He believes that analyses based on what individuals really say and do with language are more trustworthy and valid than those based on what speakers expect to say.

Barzan and Heydari (2019) identify two types of variance: interspeaker and intraspeaker variation. Interspeaker variation refers to differences between languages, dialects, and

speakers, whereas intraspeaker variation refers to differences within a single speaker's own language. According to Barzan and Heydari (2019), all parts of language (phonemes, morphemes, syntactic structures, and meanings) vary. Variation in language use across speakers or groups of speakers is a significant characteristic or shift that can occur in pronunciation (accent), word choice (lexicon), or even preferences for specific grammatical patterns. Variation is a major problem in sociolinguistics. It has been established that variety is frequently the vehicle for language change.

The Language Variations tenets include systematic variation, social variation, geographical variation, contextual variation, stylistic variation, and historical variation as articulated in detail by Honeybone (2011):

Systematic Variation: Language variation is not random, but rather follows systematic patterns. Linguists seek to discover and describe these patterns in order to better understand how languages differ. Language shreds of evidence such as vocabulary, syntax, grammar, semantics, punctuation, and spelling influence these patterns.

Social aspects play an important part in determining linguistic variety by focusing on aspects such as age, how people communicate, and so on. Different age groups use language differently, as do men and women, and so does social status, with individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds using language differently. Ethnicity and social identification, such as how people from different ethnic groups speak in different dialects.

Regional variation refers to how language differs geographically, which explains why people have distinct accents impacted by their dialects. It is used to identify a speaker based on his or her accent, pronunciation, and regional origin, as well as to determine similarities and differences between speakers by studying recorded cassettes.

Contextual variation: Language use varies according to the context of the topic being discussed, which includes the setting, participants, mood, and communication aim. Formal and informal environments frequently generate distinct linguistic behaviours.

Stylistic Variation: People might change their language to reflect different identities or social roles. This encompasses both code-switching and code-mixing, which is when speakers

transition between languages or dialects during a discussion. The style also considers vocabulary choices and any originality that the writer or speaker used to spice up the work.

Historical Variation: Because language is not static. It evolves over time as a result of diverse social, political, and cultural influences. Historical variation examines how languages evolve and differ.

Systematic and social factors variations tenets of this theory will be applied to the first objective (To examine the linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages) to identify and analyse the linguistic features, evidence and choices within threat text messages and examine how these tenets influence the language used by various perpetrators. The features to be examined are vocabulary, syntax, grammar, semantics, punctuation and orthography.

Situational variation was applied to the second objective (To investigate the discourse structures of these threat messages. Situational variation has to do with changes in language based on different situations or contexts, so the researcher applied it to investigate discourse structure and analyse the formality and the contexts of the texts.

Systematic, social and regional variation tenets were applied to the third objective (To describe the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of these threat messages) to help in describing the sociolinguistics and author profiles of the perpetrators such as social status, age, and level of education and others.

On the contrary, Honeybone (2011) demonstrates that linguistic variation is frequently regarded as an issue for linguistic theory because some linguists assume categorical language behaviour and idealise it away from the diversity present in speech. Honeybone says that the explanation for this may be found in Chomsky's (1965) work, which states that much of the variance observed in utterances is due to non-linguistic elements, and hence idealisation is required to identify the underlying patterns behind speakers' linguistic performance. A number of lines of research in theoretical linguistics have attempted to take linguistic variation seriously.

The incorporated theoretical framework in this study was Linguistic Profiling theory. This theory was developed by Professor John Baugh in the 1980s. This theory is the technique of

recognising an individual's social qualities based on auditory clues, including dialect and accent (Patricia, 2017). He created the idea to explain discriminatory practices in areas such as the property market, where people's accents or dialects are used to infer their background and social standing, potentially leading to bias. Linguistic profiling is basically using speech traits or dialect to determine a speaker's race, religion, or social class. Linguistic profiling include judicial actions, career possibilities, and education. Linguistic profiling was utilised in this study to explore the written language used by criminals in text messages threatening recipients, rather than their voices. It was utilised to analyse the study's two objectives: to examine the linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat SMS messages, and to investigate their discourse structures.

Linguistic profiling has a lengthy history of usage in court matters. Its history dates back at least to the Old Testament of the Bible, where Judges 12 describes the aftermath of a battle in which the Gileadites soundly defeated and killed 42,000 Ephramites, after which they occupied and controlled the Jordan River shore, among other biblical incidents (Shuy, 2012). Another historically documented incidence of linguistic profiling occurred during the Revolt of the Sicilian Vespers, which erupted in Palermo on Easter 1282 (Shuy, 2012). Today, linguistic profiling is solely based on linguistic tools other than the consonant sounds utilised by the Gileadites with the word "shibboleth" and the Sicilians with the word "ciciri". Linguistic profilers today draw on research from dialect geography, lexicography, sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, and psycholinguistics, all of which use phonology, grammar, semantics, and pragmatics.

Baugh (2024) describes the tenets of Linguistics Profiling Theory as follows:

Auditory Cues and Social Inferences

People intuitively link various speech patterns with specific social groupings, drawing conclusions about the speaker's background. The results show that landlords discriminate against potential tenants based on the sound of their voice over the phone (Squires & Chadwick, 2006).

Linguistic Redlining

This refers to discriminatory actions based on accent or dialect, which can occur in sectors such as housing, work, or education.

Social Indexing

According to the hypothesis, language diversity functions as a form of social indexing, with some speech traits serving as identifiers of membership in a specific group.

Potential for Discrimination

Linguistic profiling can contribute to discrimination and prejudice by prompting negative judgements and actions based on perceived language differences.

Interplay with Racial Profiling.

Linguistic profiling is sometimes linked to visual racial profiling since both require using auditory or visual cues to form assumptions about a person's social features.

Impact on Various Domains.

The theory has applications in employment, legal procedures, and educational contexts, as linguistic variances can be used to assess someone's competency or trustworthiness.

2.4 Gap

The field of Forensic Linguistics is still in its early stages globally, with particularly nascent development in Namibia. In the Namibian context, there has been a recent surge of interest in forensic linguistics across various disciplines. This growing interest is evident in the engagement of a few forensic linguists, thus contributing to the exploration of this field within the country. A noteworthy outcome of this interest is the increasing number of research endeavours in forensic linguistics, with several publications already available and many more anticipated.

Forensic linguistics plays a pivotal role in addressing language-related issues within the legal domain. In Namibia, a select group of researchers has delved into this discipline, aiming to tackle some of the fundamental challenges facing the nation such as suicide, extortion, ransom, plagiarism, forgery, scams, as well as threats which is the focus of this study. These scholars focus on extracting and elucidating pertinent themes from diverse sources such as courtroom proceedings, legal publications, and police investigations. Despite the relative

scarcity of studies in other countries, an intriguing gap exists in the Namibian context: there has been no exploration utilising linguistic analysis of the threat SMS messages associated with gender-based violence.

Another gap is identified in the theories and methodologies employed in diverse investigations. Depending on the area of investigation, many researchers have used theories such as Speech Act Theory, Discourse and Text Analytic Theory, and Schema Theory; however, few to no studies have used the Linguistics Variation Theory to investigate issues related to language and criminal as well as court cases in Namibia.

This study sought to fill these voids by employing Linguistic Variation theory to examine linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages. Additionally, it aims to investigate the discourse structures employed in these threatening messages. Moreover, the research is committed to describing the sociolinguistic profiles of the individuals behind these threat messages in Namibia, with a specific focus on the police station at the main branch in Windhoek. This initiative represents a crucial step towards understanding and addressing the unique challenges posed by threat text messages related to gender-based violence in Namibia.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on a literature review, which analysed previous academics' expertise and conclusions on forensic linguistics analysis of threat documents and other legal documents. First, it focused on background information and the origins of forensic linguistics, with an overview of the founder and first academic to apply forensic linguistics, Jan Svartvik. This section also highlighted some of the incidents in which forensic linguistics was used to resolve issues and identify culprits. The chapter continued to provide reviews of other writers' findings from earlier investigations. It also looked at Linguistic Variation Theory as a framework for data analysis in this study and, finally, highlighted the gap that spurred this investigation.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research method that was used in terms of the study's research design, research paradigm, and research methodology. Furthermore, the chapter describes the study population, sampling process, and sample size for the research topic. The chapter also explains data collection tools/instruments. In addition, the instrument used as a data collection tool is specified, as well as how the acquired data was evaluated to get the findings and final conclusions.

3.2 Research paradigm

According to Ebohon et al. (2021), a research paradigm is a collection of shared views and agreements among specialists within a discipline about how problems should be understood and treated. A research paradigm is a style of looking at the universe that is defined by its ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Because this study employed a qualitative research approach, the philosophical assumptions and paradigm that drove it are interpretative research paradigms, as the researcher strove to bring her own worldviews to the study, which will determine the study's course. This study is guided by the interpretivism philosophy, which deals with how people are influenced by events in their surroundings, in this case, the dramatic growth in GBV and language usage.

Interpretative paradigm claimed that experiencing the world or reality could help one understand it better (Swaraj, 2019). An interpretivist, according to Swaraj (2019) believes that reality can never be objectively viewed from the outside, but must be observed from the inside through direct experience of the people. It seeks to investigate rather than simply describe the underlying meanings of reality. The examination of each threat text message was factual, accurately interpreted, and directly viewed in the community where the threat messages were made by studying the threat text messages exchanged amongst the community.

An interpretivist thinks that there is no single reality or truth (idealism); rather, reality is formed by individuals in groups and is thus socially constructed (Ebohon et al., 2021). This research examined more threatening text messages, and the validity and truth of its conclusions were socially created. What does this imply for this study? The researcher in this study had the ability to construct meaning from threatening text messages from the

perspective of the community/area from where the authors and recipients of text messages originated. Or to put it another way, "The world exists on how people experience, interpret and perceive it; thus, there is an external world, but it is viewed/perceived/interpreted differently by different groups/individuals research object/phenomena" (Woldemariam, 2020, 30, p. 2).

The epistemological stance is that knowledge is subjective and that reality must be understood in order to determine the underlying meaning of events and activities (Ebohon et al., 2021). This research's material was based on each threat text message that is evaluated, and interpreted to determine the meanings behind the language used in those text messages.

3.3 Research approach

To assess the threat text messages, this study adopted a qualitative research approach. The study of the nature of phenomena, included their quality, various manifestations, the context in which they appeared, or the perspectives from which they could be perceived, but excluded their range, frequency, and place in an objectively determined chain of cause and effect (Ugwu & Eze, 2023). The qualitative method is concerned with people's feelings, ideas, or experiences in a certain community. This research approach was developed to collect non-numerical data in order to generate insights. According to Ugwu et al. (2023), qualitative research entails acquiring and analysing non-numerical data (such as text, video, or audio) to better comprehend ideas, opinions, or experiences. Because of these qualities of the qualitative research approach, it was well suited to this study because it analysed threat text messages in the form of words rather than statistics.

According to Aspers and Corte (2019), the goal of qualitative research is to get a full understanding of social phenomena in their natural settings. It is based on people's first-hand experiences as meaning-making agents in their daily lives, and it focuses on the why rather than the what of social occurrences. The current study evaluated texts from inside the impacted community (perpetrators and GBV victims who receive threatening text messages) and addressed the main problem of why language may promote gender-based violence in the chosen area.

3.4. Research design

According to Akhtar (2016), research design is the conceptual foundation for conducting research. According to Akhtar (2016), research design defines the ways to gather the

knowledge required to organise or solve marketing research problems. Exploratory research is a study method that investigates why something happens when there is limited information available. Exploratory inquiry is the first step in research, to get new insights into a phenomenon (Swaraj, 2019). This research formulated an issue for more precise investigation or hypothesis generation, and it was used when there were little or no past research/studies to which references could be made for information (Swaraj, 2019). Exploratory investigations, according to Akhtar (2016), are usually more appropriate when there is less research experience available.

3.5 Text selection criteria

The study's population consisted of all threat text messages received by GBV victims and reported to the Gender-Based Violence Victim Protection Division of Police Force in Windhoek, and written in English.

3.6. Sample and sampling procedure

This study used a purposive sampling method to select 35 threat text messages from a total of 22,174 recorded cases of GBV from the year 2019 to 2023. Purposive sampling was selected to be used in this study because it assisted in selecting 35 text messages from a total of 22,174 that included the information and features that the researcher needed to analyse. The threatening messages were purposely picked from the archives of the cases closed that are written in English, authored by a perpetrator, and sent to victims of gender-based violence in Windhoek between 2019 and 2023. With the assistance of the police officer/s in charge of the division, who was tasked to deliver the text messages to the researcher, thoroughly reviewed each threat text message to ensure that all 35 threat text messages contained the information and characteristics required for data analysis and study completion. Threat text messages that did not meet the criteria were not analysed.

3.6 Research instrument

The threat text messages received by GBV sufferers were gathered using the content analysis checklist and analysed using the Linguistics Variation Theory in this study. According to Parveen and Showkat (2017), content analysis is the study of recorded human communications such as diary entries, books, newspapers, videos, text messages, tweets, and Facebook updates. Content analysis is a study approach for the subjective interpretation of text data that involves the analysis of what is spoken, written, or recorded and the systematic

categorisation process of coding and detecting themes or patterns (Parveen & Showkat, 2017). As a result, it is a research tool for determining the presence of specific words or concepts inside texts or collections of texts. The interpreter examines and interprets the information contained (content) in a communication.

Relational analysis, a sort of content analysis that aims to go beyond presence by analysing the links between the concepts found, was employed, with a focus on Linguistic approaches—an analysis of texts at the level of a linguistic unit, often single phrase units. Cognitive science is an examination of the ideas and motivations behind the text, and mental models are groupings or networks of interconnected concepts that are supposed to mirror conscious or subconscious perceptions of reality. The current study examined the author's usage of language on a lexical and beyond level, as well as their intent towards GBV.

3.7. Trustworthiness

This study is trustworthy since it followed strict forensic linguistic methodologies and is based on established theoretical frameworks. This study drew on a wide range of credible sources in forensic linguistics, including Coulthard's work on linguistic fingerprinting, Shirley et al.'s studies on slang and vocabulary, and Benedetti and Queralt's empirical findings on linguistic evidence in gender-based violence (GBV) discourse. This robust theoretical framework contributes to the study's analytical depth and reliability.

In addition, the study's methodology displays transparency and reliability. The study delivered verifiable and replicable results by focussing on certain language features, such as vocabulary, grammar, and morphological structure, and investigating how these features are used in real-life threat SMS messages. Linguistic patterns were analysed in a precise and methodical manner, allowing the study to reach reliable conclusions about authorship identification and the stylistic aspects associated with various sorts of people, such as age, gender, and educational background.

The data sources for this study were also ethically sound and relevant to the study's context, with a particular emphasis on anonymised and reported GBV-related texts. The research's emphasis on secrecy and sensitivity to the delicate nature of GBV cases strengthened its ethical foundation and added to its credibility. This study's dependability was enhanced by its

explicit, well-documented research methodology, which make the findings and analysis apparent to other researchers.

Finally, the study draws on different views and professional insights in forensic linguistics, merging various studies to present a balanced, comprehensive picture of how language analysis can help identify perpetrators in GBV instances. This comprehensive strategy reduces bias and strengthens the findings, guaranteeing that the study's conclusions are useful and reliable in both forensic and academic settings.

3.7 Data analysis

This study employed content analysis, with relational analysis serving as a subset of content analysis. The method for categorising verbal or behavioural data for the purposes of classification, summary, and tabulation is known as content analysis. The material was analysed at the interpretive level, which looked at what the data means. To do this, the researcher used a qualitative research approach to analyse data, first organised the data, identified the framework, sorted data into the framework, and used the framework in descriptive analysis.

3.8 Ethical considerations

According to Cohen (2018), research ethics is all about what researchers should and should not do during the research process and conduct. As a result, the research process includes gaining access to respondents, collecting data, processing and storing information, and analysing it. Data was collected and analysed in order to develop research findings. Before beginning the research, the researcher requested a clearance letter from NUST, which permitted the researcher to undertake this study. Before the researcher collected the threatening text messages from the police station, she first obtained permission from the officer in charge of the Windhoek police station. Names and any personal details stated in the threat text messages, including location names, were removed and were not divulged, and any data provided remained confidential.

2.5. Chapter summary

This study's methodology chapter dealt with the explanation of how the data for this study was collected. It focused on the study's research approach, design, and paradigm. This section went on to discuss how threat text messages were selected, including the study's population, the type of sampling employed, and the research's sample size. Furthermore, the instrument

utilised as a data collection tool was defined, as well as how the gathered data was analysed to produce the findings and final conclusions. Finally, the section assured readers of the ethical considerations and described the study's credibility.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

By examining threatening text messages, forensic language analysis can uncover more evidence about gender-based violence. This chapter contains the study's findings as well as its discussion. The data analysed in this study were gathered using a Content Checklist analysis instrument designed to analyse thirty-five threatening messages from closed archive cases received by victims of gender-based violence from perpetrators in the Namibian police force in accordance with the study's objectives. The researcher used qualitative research to evaluate these threatening signals in accordance with the Linguistic Variation theory. The threatening messages examined in this study vary in length. Some printouts include follow-up or response messages, but the researcher only examined the initial primary communication from each culprit.

Forensic linguistic analysis necessitates, among other things, an investigation of the sociolinguistic profile of both the author and the recipient of written discourse. However, because of the confidentiality, sociolinguistic profile components such as names and tribal names are provided anonymously in this finding and represented by letters X, Y, and Z. In addition, threat text messages are labelled with TTM.

4.2. Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages

According to Coulthard and Johnson (2007), violent crimes are represented through the perpetrator's speech. The data presented here provide a complete analysis of syntax, grammar, vocabulary, and idiomatic idioms in threat text SMS messages. The message research also comprises lexical analysis, which examines terminology, jargon, or unique terms, as well as pragmatic analysis, which looks at politeness, directness, and speech acts in threat communications. Linguistic indicators such as hedging words, emotional language, and haste are used to determine the intention to commit GBV. Manipulative language patterns are also identified.

4.2.1 Syntax and grammar usage in the threat texts

Syntax is the structure of sentences, which includes how words and phrases are organised to express meaning. The manner in which the author of a threat text applied the rules of a certain language, in this case, English, is critical in forensic linguistic research. According to Balcells (2023), language characteristics such as dialect, syntax, grammar, lexicon, and register are also investigated to find linguistic patterns that may indicate a relationship with

a suspect. In this study on gender-based violence, even if the victim knows who sent him or her a text message, the perpetrator may deny it in court, necessitating the use of linguistic analysis. Analysing how the author applies English rules reveals the author's language patterns and objectives, as well as their identity, educational background, and region of origin.

During the investigation of the threatening text messages, the researcher discovered that a few of them were written in accurate grammatical, formal, and well-structured sentences throughout the message, despite the fact that they contain few syntax and grammatical errors. The authors of these communications followed correct syntax and English norms. The use of whole sentences with good grammar is indicative of a controlled and deliberate tone. Few senders actively avoid informal language. The grammatical accuracy with which these senders wrote indicates that they have a high degree and medium of education and are familiar with English syntactical and grammatical rules. The author's writing style also implies that they are accustomed to formal communication. Examples include phrases such as:

For example, phrases extracted from TTM1 are: *"I have been thinking about your..."*, *"You trust that X lives with me, so I suggest that you trust that I will not have her around..."*, *"do exercise your full rights as a mother..."*, *"I do not know if you interrogate the X about my personal life, but..."*, *"that is no reason to insinuate that I would do anything inappropriate around X or put X in harms way."* *"The one common factor between us will be X, now and always so finding ways to make co-parenting better..."*, *"I do not know if you interrogate the X about my personal life, but..."*, *"I completely encourage you to take ALL options to you to protect X."* *Do exercise your full rights as a mother and go to the courts or police..."*, *"but you will stop sending me these kinds of messages."* *"if you feel X is in danger or unkept."*

Additionally, phrases extracted from TTM3 are: *"I will come at your place and break down everything an burn it down n..."* follows a subject-verb-object (SVO) structure, which is typical of English grammar. Few messages begin with the subject, followed by verbs, and include objects. TTM5 also followed the S-V-O English structure, as it says, *"I m going to open a case against of beating me..."*. Most of the phrases and sentences are grammatically constructed accurate, and in a formal way of communication.

Although some of these messages are accurately worded, there are a few syntax and grammatical problems in these syntactically correct written threatening text messages. For example: In TTM 1, it says, *“I have been thinking about your text messages you sent me.”* There is a repetition in this phrase *“your text messages”* is redundant when *“you sent me”* follows it. The correct phrase is supposed to be *“I have been thinking about the text messages you sent me.”* There is also, *“but that is no reason to insinuate that I would do anything inappropriate around X or put X in harms way.”* The author supposed to place an apostrophe at a word *“harms”* to be *“harm’s”* to indicate possession.

However, the sentence patterns or grammar of many messages lack adequate sentence boundaries. The following table shows phrases from the threatening text messages with inaccurate syntax and grammatical errors.

Phrases with syntax and grammatical errors	Accurate syntax and grammatical phrases
<i>“How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with X by force and threatening to kill her or having her money if you are paid to act like a fool not with me .”</i>	How can you accuse me of wanting to sleep with X by force and threatening to kill her, or having her money? If you are paid to act like a fool, not with me.
<i>“You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you”</i>	You are a useless, stupid man on earth. If you are disturbing me, I will show you.
<i>“I know you in an out from A to Z. I will expose you and come for you in person. dont play with me”</i>	I know you in and out, from A to Z. I will expose you and come for you in person. do not play with me.
<i>“I don’t care about ur partners around my child I will sadly not tolerate that...”</i>	I don’t care about your partners around my child, I will sadly not tolerate that...
<i>“I hve a problem wth my ex boyfriend he is threatening to kill me. We broke up November whre he broke 2 of my fones...”</i>	I have a problem with my ex-boyfriend. He is threatening to kill me. We broke up in November when he broke my two phones.
<i>“We have to solve this matter You know I can sent all your nacked pictures to your</i>	We have to solve this matter. You know that I can sent all your necked pictures to your

<i>husband if you dont sent my things as promised. The choice is yours."</i>	husband if you don't send my things as promised. The choice is yours.
<i>"Why are you allowing the kids to be beaten up the kids in Swakopmund are being beaten up"</i>	Why are you allowing the kids to be beaten up? The kids in Swakopmund are being beaten up.
<i>"come at your place"</i>	come to your place.
<i>"I am reporting you at the police and tell them how you abuse me..."</i>	I am reporting you to the police and tell them how you abuse me...
<i>"whn goin at ur church I m not a witch..."</i>	When going to your church, I am not a witch...
<i>"just be ready anytime they call you..."</i>	just be ready any time they call you...
<i>"1 years in prison without bail..."</i>	One year in prison with no bail.
<i>"I did not rape you I sleep with u becuz u want my money."</i>	I did not rape you, I slept with you because you wanted my money.
<i>"If you are disturbing me I will show you"</i>	If you are disturbing me, I will show you.

Table 4.1

The analysis of these threatening messages found out that there are some messages with syntax and grammatical errors. These errors appear as shown in: TTM2 *"How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with X by force and threatening to kill her or having her money if you are paid to act like a fool not with me ."* "You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you". This sentence is overly long, unpunctuated, and contains several ideas in one structure. This statement indicates that the author has a very low level of education and is not a native English speaker. In TTM6 *"I know you in an out from A to Z. I will expose you and come for you in person. dont play with me"* and TTM 10, *"I don't care about ur partners around my child I will sadly not tolerate that..."*, TTM18 *"I hve a problem wth my ex boyfriend he is threatening to kill me. We broke up November whre he broke 2 of my fones..."*. All of these phrases demonstrate improper grammatical usage, with no accurate word spelling or punctuation.

Some texts contain inappropriate grammatical usage because they use a variety of tenses, suggesting inconsistent grammar. For example, TTM3 *"How can you accused me..."*. The phrase "accused" is in the improper tense, it supposed to be *"How can you accused me?"*. There is also an improper pronoun used in this message, such as in the statement, *"You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you,"*. There is a lack of clarity in the conditional clause. A phrase *"If you are disturbing me..."* does not fit well within the overall structure and seems to be awkwardly inserted. This sentence was supposed to be *"If you disturb me, I will show you."* to be grammatically accurate. All these errors and a mixture of tenses reflect lower language proficiency.

Furthermore, some phrase structures lack coordination among clauses. The sentence in TTM3 should ideally separate the two actions *"break down everything"* and *"burn it down"* for better clarity. In TTM 21 *"We have to solve this matter You know I can sent all your naked pictures to your husband if you dont sent my things as promised. The choice is yours."* TTM23 says, *"Why are you allowing the kids to be beaten up the kids in Swakopmund are being beaten up"*. These messages demonstrate an informal style of writing that lacks conjunctions.

The analysis of these messages also reveals that there are grammatical faults in prepositions and in a phrase TTM3. *"come at your place"*, TTM 26 *"I am reporting you at the police and tell them how you abuse me..."*, and TTM 28 *"whn goin at ur church I m not a witch..."* These phrases are grammatically incorrect. The correct preposition would be TTM3 *"come to your place."* TTM 26 *"I am reporting you to the police and tell them how you abuse me..."* and TTM 28 *"whn goin to ur church I m not a witch..."* The misuse of "at" instead of "to" signifies non-standard English prepositional usage, which may reflect a regional dialect or informal usage.

The study also revealed that some communications contain two or three clauses in a sentence, which are connected together without adequate punctuation to distinguish them properly. For example, in phrases extracted from TTM 4 *"I'm not going there anymore..."*, *"just be ready anytime they call you..."* and *"1 years in prison without bail..."* in TTM 34 *"I did not rape you I sleep with u becuz u want my money."* TTM 35 *"If you are disturbing me I will show you"* There should preferably be periods or semicolons between them, especially as the second and third clauses represent distinct notions. The lack of punctuation causes the sentences to appear fragmented. This grammatical blunder could show a lack of attention to detail or represent the speaker's language background and possibly a lower educational level.

4.2.2 Threatening words and phrases as well as vocabulary usage

In a forensic linguistics examination, the vocabulary in the threatening text message exposes the speaker's tone, intention of action, and possible background. Forensic linguistics investigates how vocabulary is used in discourse to elicit linguistic evidence. Vocabulary refers to the collection of words that an individual knows or has access to and uses. The lexicon used in the conversation, such as threatening text messages, can disclose the intention behind the violence. Furthermore, the author's use of terms reveals if the text was written by a native speaker of a language or an L2 user, as well as whether or not the author is educated and to what degree.

The tables below indicate the threatening terms or phrases that provide evidence of gender-based violence, as well as the well-chosen vocabulary from all of the studied threatening text messages of gender-based violence. It also demonstrates the authors' limited knowledge, as evidenced by the simplistic vocabulary they use.

Threatening words/ phrases	Extracts from the messages
<p><i>sleep with Y by force</i></p> <p><i>threatening to kill her</i></p> <p><i>I will show you</i></p>	<p><i>"accused me of wanting to sleep with Y by force and threatening to kill her or having her money if you are paid to act like a fool not with me . You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you"</i></p>
<p><i>break down</i></p> <p><i>everything</i></p> <p><i>burn it down</i></p>	<p><i>"I will come at your place and break down everything and burn it down n..."</i></p>
<p><i>1 years in prison without bail</i></p>	<p><i>"I'm not going there anymore, just be ready anytime they call you, 1 years in prison without bail"</i></p>
<p><i>beating me</i></p> <p><i>twisting my arm</i></p> <p><i>throw me off the balcony</i></p>	<p><i>"I m going to open a case against of beating me, twisting my arm, n trying to throw me off the balcony"</i></p>

<i>expose you</i> <i>come for you in person</i>	<i>" I will expose you and come for you in person. dont play with me"</i>
<i>YOU ARE A DEAD</i> <i>I WILL FIND YOU</i>	<i>"JUST MARK MY WORDS IF ME AND YOU CROSS, YOU ARE A DEAD. AND YOU KNOW WALVIS IS SMALL. I WILL FIND YOU"</i>
<i>destroy u</i> <i>I wl fuck u up</i>	<i>"I wl destroy u. u cant forc me to help a child who is not mine.you re in X n u want money frm me and the kid is in windhk. I wl fuck u up stop involve..."</i>
<i>to beat u</i> <i>Continue an u wl see</i>	<i>"I dnt wnt to beat u. Continue an u wl see"</i>
<i>u will regret it for the rest of ur life</i>	<i>"I will make sure u will regret it for the rest of ur life"</i>
<i>killed</i> <i>raped</i>	<i>"That's why we get killed and raped because of the lack of police assistance."</i>
<i>u are a dead person</i>	<i>" that where eva I meet u, u are a dead person."</i>
<i>Broke my ribs, Burned me</i> <i>b witched, Miscarriage, broke my tooth</i>	<i>"he is threatening to kill me. We broke up November whre he broke 2 of my fones. Broke my ribs 2 times. Burned me wth a cigarette on my face and neck n beat me until u hve a, miscarriage. He also broke my tooth and I had to get it pulled." he is threatening me tht I'll be bad luck n will b witched"</i>
<i>take your pictures to the witchdoctor</i>	<i>"I will take your pictures to the witchdoctor"</i>
<i>sent all your nacked pictures</i>	<i>"know I can sent all your nacked pictures to your husband if..."</i>

<i>kill him an kill my self</i>	<i>"I will kill him an kill my self if u re not helping us. Just wait and self"</i>
<i>upload all your naked pictures on facebook</i>	<i>"I will upload all your naked pictures on facebook and it will be the end of you!"</i>
<i>rot in jail</i>	<i>"Lemme stop bothering you for now and rot in jail"</i>

Table 4.2

The data analysis revealed that the majority of the words used by the perpetrators in their messages to instil fear in the victims are: I will show you, you are a dead person, you are dead, I will expose you, I will kill you, I will bewitch, and other threatening words that reveal and prove a willingness to commit gender-based violence.

The table below displays the types of words used by the authors in their threatening text messages.

High level vocabulary used	low level vocabulary used
<i>Insinuate</i>	<i>destroy</i>
<i>Conducive</i>	<i>Be ready</i>
<i>Interrogate</i>	<i>By force</i>
<i>Wellbeing (well-being)</i>	<i>prison</i>
<i>exercise your full rights</i>	<i>Tell you</i>
<i>Authorities</i>	<i>Talking around</i>
<i>Accusatory</i>	<i>lie</i>

Table 4.3

The research discovered that some authors employed a variety of well-chosen vocabulary, suggesting their degree of education and expertise in formal or professional communication. These vocabularies indicate that the message's author is likely to have a higher degree of education, possibly with experience in legal, psychological, or academic settings. The use of these words demonstrates knowledge with professional or technical vocabulary, indicating

an educated and articulate individual. The statement included phrases such as imply, conducive, interrogate, exercise your full rights, authorities, and accusatory. However, many dangerous text messages use basic terms like - bad/good, destroy, by force, prison, and others, which led to the conclusion that the offenders of such text messages had a poor level of education.

4.2.3 The use of politeness words, directness, and speech acts to identify linguistic evidence

Analysing the threatening text message via the perspective of politeness, directness, and speech actions reveals linguistic evidence of manipulation, control, and power dynamics, which are common in cases of gender-based violence. A speech act is the action taken by the speaker in writing. demands, warnings, or promises in the text?

The table below illustrates and indicates polite words and phrases, directness/indirectness, and speech acts employed in the author's threat SMS message.

polite markers and phrases	direct threats	Indirect threats	speech acts (commands, warnings, or promises)
<i>Hi Y</i>	<i>You will stop sending me these kinds of messages</i>	<i>How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with Y</i>	<i>Do exercise your full rights</i>
<i>Hellow X (Hello X)</i>	<i>You are a dead</i>	<i>"If you are disturbing me I will show you."</i>	<i>go to the courts or police</i>
<i>Good morning/ evening</i>	<i>I will kill him and kill myself</i>		<i>Your messages are disrespectful</i>

			<i>and accusatory</i>
<i>I am in no position to discuss</i>	<i>"You are a useless or stupid man on earth."</i>		<i>I will discuss matters with X and adjust according to X feelings</i>
<i>I suggest</i>	<i>1 year in prison without bail</i>		<i>I'm not going there anymore</i>
<i>I completely encourage you</i>	<i>upload all your naked pictures on facebook and it will be the end of you!"</i>		<i>"If you are disturbing me I will show you."</i>
<i>Plz (please)</i>	<i>just be ready</i>		<i>If we cross, you are dead</i>
	<i>U will face the consequences</i>		
	<i>That's it</i>		
	<i>I don't have time with people like u."</i>		

Table 4.4

The data collected indicate that the use of politeness strategies such as greetings "Hi Y/ Hello X/ good afternoon/morning," or hedging "I suggest," and encouragement phrases "I completely encourage you," "do exercise your full rights," and "I am in no position to discuss." creates a civil and ostensibly respectful tone. The sender also employs formal terms like "*I am in no position to discuss*" and "*please*" to demonstrate respect, professionalism, and

neutrality. In GBV circumstances, politeness skills can be misleading, concealing control and manipulation. The abuser may employ polite words to convey a sense of logic and rationale, allowing them to establish control without appearing confrontational. This strategy might confuse or disarm the victim, making it more difficult for them to detect the underlying threat or manipulation. It also portrays the abuser as a calm and composed person, which may undermine any emotional or assertive response from the victim.

Directness threats or instructions are also employed in practically every threat text message to instruct, demand, or warn the victim of specific actions. Among others, in TTM1, there are some instructions such as, *"You will stop sending me these kinds of messages..."* and *"That's it."* These are direct commands as the author is instructing the recipient to stop sending him these kinds of messages or explicitly instructs the recipient to cease a particular behaviour. In most of the messages, authors give a clear and immediate threat with a definite consequence: such as *"1 year in prison without bail."* Other messages that are laced with direct warnings are, TTM7 *"You are a dead"* and promises of violence in TTM 22 *"I will kill him and kill myself"*, all indicating the seriousness of intent behind the threats.

Also, the phrase *"just be ready"* is a straightforward warning, implying that the recipient should prepare for an undesirable event. TTM 16 also has *"U will face the consequences"* where the author is attempting to warn while also forcing the criminal to suffer the consequences of his actions. Direct orders and claims of authority are typical of controlling behaviour in GBV instances. Directness is an attempt to impose authority and set boundaries on the abuser's terms, leaving little room for the victim to negotiate or respond. Such straightforward language enforces compliance by demonstrating that the sender is in charge and expects the recipient to obey their orders without question. It promotes power dynamics and the abuser's control over the victim.

The data analysis found out the indirect threats in these messages, for example, *"How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with Y by force and threatening to kill her or having her money?"* This rhetorical question is posed indirectly since the author questions the accusation rather than simply denying it, thereby implying its ridiculousness. This type of indirectness separates the author from the accusation while also challenging the recipient. In addition, some communications contain indirect threats like: *"I will show you/ you will see"* that convey

the intent to perpetrate gender-based violence without detailing the actual action that the perpetrator will take.

The findings identified many speech acts in these messages, for example, *"I don't have time with people like u."* This is a clear expression of the author's refusal to engage with the recipient. Another speech act is, *"You are a useless or stupid man on earth."* This insult is another forceful act in which the author expresses their opinion about the recipient in a humiliating manner. Another speech act is *"If you are disturbing me I will show you."* The implied threat is an expressive act, demonstrating the author's willingness to retaliate if provoked further. Other speech acts discovered in the communications are: *"Do exercise your full rights...," "go to the courts or police...," "Your messages are disrespectful and accusatory.," "I will discuss matters with X and adjust according to X feelings."* All these are speech acts, instructing the recipients of what they should do, as well as showing the sender's intention to act in a certain way. However, these words are phrased in a way that emphasises control, implying that the sender has final authority over how problems involving the child are handled.

4.2.4 Spelling errors that reveal the author's background and level of education

Coulthard (2010) emphasises the importance of spelling errors in forensic linguistics analysis in finding the criminal. These faults indicate spelling and usage irregularities, which might have an impact on the message's clarity and professionalism.

The table below reveals the words spelt incorrectly in the author's threat SMS message.

Wrong spelled words	Correct spelling
<i>harms way</i>	<i>Harm's way</i>
<i>Unkept</i>	<i>unkempt</i>
<i>any one</i>	<i>anyone</i>
<i>Wellbeing</i>	<i>Well-being</i>
<i>wth</i>	<i>with</i>
<i>Diffrent</i>	<i>Different</i>

<i>dont</i>	<i>Don't</i>
<i>Ddnt</i>	<i>Didn't</i>
<i>Fone</i>	<i>phone</i>
<i>Hve</i>	<i>have</i>
<i>Where</i>	<i>where</i>
<i>Re</i>	<i>are</i>
<i>Tht</i>	<i>that</i>
<i>Fr</i>	<i>for</i>
<i>b witched</i>	<i>Bewitched</i>
<i>Plz</i>	<i>please</i>
<i>Wnt</i>	<i>want</i>
<i>Supotting</i>	<i>Supporting</i>
<i>I m</i>	<i>I'm/ I am</i>
<i>Knw</i>	<i>know</i>
<i>Evn</i>	<i>even</i>
<i>Will</i>	<i>will</i>
<i>How can you accused me...</i>	<i>How can you accuse me...</i>
<i>U</i>	<i>you</i>
<i>Ur</i>	<i>your</i>
<i>Colleaes</i>	<i>Colleagues</i>

Table 4.5

The researcher discovered that there are common misspellings of words in each message. The use of "u" instead of "you" is prevalent in informal text and social media conversation. It

indicates that the author is used to rapid, informal internet communication. Using "accused" instead of "accuse" is another wrong spelling of the word. The correct wording is "How can you accuse me...", as "accuse" is required in the present tense. The usage of the past tense ("accused") in this situation demonstrates a poor understanding of verb tenses and basic grammar rules. This could imply a lesser level of formal education or English grammar skills, which could be influenced by the author's native language or dialect.

The use of words such as: *an, wll, knw, cnt, hve, wnt, whre*, and others, demonstrates that many authors drop vowels in words, making them appear erroneous and informal. These major spelling errors could be attributed to a lack of attention to detail or a lower level of formal education. These writing styles indicate either typing errors in which the sender did not fully fix or complete their words or sentences, or a need to write quickly. The spelling of the term "fone" rather than "phone" illustrates the author's sociolinguistics, in which the second language (English) is impacted by the first. The line "if you are paid to act like a fool, not with me" is clunky and confusing. The structure demonstrates that the author struggles with clarity and sentence form. The sentence may represent influence from another language or dialect with sentence structures that deviate from Standard English, indicating that the author is not a native English speaker.

However, in some cases, writers are unclear whether to describe certain morpheme sequences as a single word or as two independent words, such as "any one" and "wellbeing". Although there are a few spelling errors, they are not too serious, implying that the authors of such words are well educated; yet, these flaws reveal that the authors are not native speakers.

4.2.5 Uses of punctuations and emojis that reveal the relationship between the victims and the perpetrators

Punctuation is strategically utilised in threatening text messages to set the tone, assert authority, and structure the content. According to Fata et al. (2021), the most common punctuation models in works are exclamation points, semicolons, apostrophes, left and right brackets, asterisks, plus signs, emotions, ellipses, and question marks. Eber-Schmid (2017) contends that punctuation clarifies meaning and conveys emotions in written communication. Furthermore, emoticons (emojis and signs) improve communication by making it more interactive.

The table below shows the proper usage of pronunciations in threatening text messages.

Omission or incorrect use of punctuations	Correct use of punctuations
<i>X owaalelange shike ano (X what do you want for me)</i>	<i>X owaalelange shike ano? (X what do you want for me?)</i>
<i>How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with Y by force...</i>	<i>How can you accused me of wanting to sleep with Y by force...?</i>
<i>tseki mani</i>	<i>tseki mani!</i>
<i>or having her money if you are paid...</i>	<i>or having her money. If you are paid...</i>
<i>You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you</i>	<i>You are a useless, or stupid man on earth. If you are disturbing me, I will show you.</i>
<i>I asked for help on Saturday nobody could help.</i>	<i>I asked for help on Saturday, nobody could help.</i>
<i>I was drunk that's rape. U will face the consequences</i>	<i>I was drunk, that's rape. U will face the consequences.</i>
<i>Good morning X</i>	<i>Good morning, X,</i>
<i>I hve a problem wth my ex boyfriend he is threatening to kill me.</i>	<i>I have a problem with my ex-boyfriend, he is threatening to kill me.</i>
<i>Hmmm.....did i not call u to tell u that u will lose ur child if u re not supotting him I m also tired of suffering.</i>	<i>Hmmm...did I not call you to tell you that you will lose your child if u re not supporting him? I'm also tired of suffering.</i>
<i>Why are you allowing the kids to be beaten up the kids in Swakopmund are being beaten up. You think I don't know, I head about it. please get involved before its too late. Or else I will see what I can do.</i>	<i>Why are you allowing the kids to be beaten up? The kids in Z are being beaten up. You think I don't know? I heard about it. please get involved before it's too late, or else I will see what I can do.</i>

<i>Moses I'm talking to you. Lemme stop bothering you for now and rot in jail</i>	<i>X, I'm talking to you. Let me stop bothering you for now and rot in jail.</i>
<i>I am not scared of my life do what ever you are doing. All I know is that I will tell everyone what you do to me.</i>	<i>I am not scared of my life. Do whatever you are doing. All I know is that I will tell everyone what you do to me.</i>
<i>I CAN NO LONGER TAKE IT, WE RE ALL BOTH GOING TO DIE AND OUR CHILDREN. YOU HAVE STRESED ME ENOUGH AND DONT THINK YOU CAN BE IN SOMEONE HAND AS A GIRLFRIEND. GOODBYE.</i>	<i>I can no longer take it, we are all both going to die and our children. You have stressed me enough and don't think you can be in someone's hand as a girlfriend. Goodbye!</i>
<i>U need to be beaten up cze owapota nai man what did I do to u</i>	<i>U need to be beaten up because owapota nai man. What did I do to you?</i>
<i>en jou familie sal van jou vergeet." I will come today so we talk</i>	<i>en jou familie sal van jou vergeet." I will come today so we talk.</i>

Table 4.6

The data analysis revealed that many text message authors omit or use certain punctuation marks erroneously. In all of the text messages studied for this study, punctuation is either used incorrectly or omitted entirely. The table above highlights the most common punctuation errors, such as full stops, commas, question marks, ellipses, and exclamation marks. The phrase “*tseki mani*”, needed an exclamation mark to be “*tseki mani!*”. This is a borrowed word from the Afrikaans language (*futsken man*, used for someone who is being annoying or troublesome). Another phrase “*or having her money if you are paid...*” is supposed to end with a full stop in order to continue with “*if*”, for example, “*or having her money. If you are paid...*”. Moreover, the phrase “*You are a useless or stupid man on earth if you are disturbing me I will show you*” lacks full stops and a comma. The correct phrase would be, “*You are a useless, or stupid man on earth. If you are disturbing me, I will show you.*”

Many text messages have no punctuation at the end of their sentence, for example, “*I will come at your place and break down everything an burn it down n*” which leaves it hanging.

This absence of punctuation, especially at the end of a threatening message, can contribute to an informal tone. It also indicates either a lack of awareness of grammatical conventions or a disregard for proper sentence structure. The absence of commas or periods between phrases and clauses disorganises the sentence and displays an informal or non-standard writing style. All of the missing punctuation may represent the sender's lower level of formal education or rushed writing style.

However, there are several cases where suitable punctuation is used in certain sentences. In some circumstances, an apostrophe is used correctly, demonstrating rudimentary knowledge of standard punctuation rules in phrases, such as *"I'm not going there anymore"*. The comma is needed to preserve flow; however, it inappropriately separates two phrases, demonstrating less regard for formal grammar rules. For example, *"I'm not going there anymore, just be ready anytime they call you..."*. Full stops are utilised frequently in these threatening messages to finish each thought in the statement while also separating ideas from one another. Full stops are frequently employed to convey a sense of finality. For instance, consider the following remarks: *"I will admit that it is tough understanding that your child is around another woman, but that is no reason to insinuate that I would do anything inappropriate around X or put X in harms way."*, *"Your messages are disrespectful and accusatory to me and my ability as a parent."* In forensic linguistic analysis, the use of correct punctuation indicates that the author is educated and knowledgeable about language rules.

Furthermore, the data shows that capitalisation is used in certain threat communications. This could mean that the entire message is written in capital letters, or that only a few words were capitalised, in TTM 7 *"JUST MARK MY WORDS IF ME AND YOU CROSS, YOU ARE A DEAD. AND YOU KNOW WALVIS IS SMALL. I WILL FIND YOU"*, TTM 27 *"I CAN NO LONGER TAKE IT, WE RE ALL BOTH GOING TO DIE AND OUR CHILDREN. YOU HAVE STRESED ME ENOUGH AND DONT THINK YOU CAN BE IN SOMEONE HAND AS A GIRLFRIEND. GOODBYE."*, as well as in TTM1 in *"I completely encourage you to take ALL options to you to protect her."* The use of capitalisation is used to emphasise a serious or important subject. It is a technique for drawing attention to select words while conveying a sense of urgency or importance. It communicates to the recipient that the sender is serious and wants particular measures to be taken, even if the general tone appears supportive on the surface. In the context of gender-based violence,

this can be a tactic for subtly asserting power by employing language that appears helpful but ultimately manipulates.

4.3. The discourse structures of these threat messages

Discourse structure is the wholeness formed by interconnected components within a discourse organisation (Kadir, 2020). According to Halliday and Hasan (1994), discourse structure is a succession of sentences with emotional and meaningful associations between all segments, emphasising that each element in discourse should be linked with one another, either in terms of sentence form or meaning. Discourse structures are one of the numerous aspects that a forensic linguist must investigate in order to find and ascertain the offenders' true motives.

4.3.1 The format and style of text messages looking at the opening, introduction, body and conclusion, including sentence structure, and formality

According to Kadir (2020), the functional and contextual discourse structure is divided into three main sections: opening, content, and closing. The introduction, content, and closing structure of a threatening text message reveal valuable information about the author's identity, relationship with the victim, emotional state, and level of intent. By evaluating the structure, forensic linguists can identify linguistic patterns that connect the author to other messages, estimate the severity of the threat, and potentially narrow down the author's profile.

The findings of this study show that few messages begin with casual salutations or greetings, for example *'Hi Y,'*, *"hellow X" (Hello X)*, and some begin with greeting *"Good morning/afternoon Z"*. This style of writing reveals the superficial sense of familiarity and friendliness, instead of a formal salutation *"Dear..."*. After the salutation, in many instances, authors introduce their text messages with a phrase stating their problems, for example, *"I have been thinking about your text messages"*. This sentence conveys an implicit concern or frustration, immediately establishing a critical tone. This opening may indicate that the sender has been ruminating or fixated on the recipient's previous acts, establishing a tone of indirect accusation.

While few authors begin threatening text messages with a casual salutation or greeting, the vast majority of them are written in an informal manner. They have no greetings or salutations to indicate who the message is addressed to. These types of emails begin with beginning

sentences that are unpleasant, for example, *“I don’t have time with people like u.”* Because many messages are short, they just have one body that is written without adequate punctuation, and thoughts are not properly split. There are no conclusions or endings. The messages end with a threat or abruptly, for example, *“if you are disturbing me I will show you”*.

The messages are divided into paragraphs, each addressing a specific issue or concern. The first paragraph explains the topic, the second addresses the primary idea, the third provides a resolution and warning, and the final paragraph focuses on boundaries and closing remarks. The author's use of distinct paragraphs indicates that he is aiming to construct an ordered argument. This structure resembles formal writing. Despite the formal structure, the threat message mostly incorporates underlying aggressiveness and passive-aggressive tones. The author uses the paragraph form to direct the flow of communication, directing the listener through their argument while incorporating threats and accusations in an ordered manner. In these types of letters, authors clearly plot their accusations and defences, demonstrating a desire to keep control of the debate.

The sentences in messages vary in length and complexity. Some sentences are long and detailed, while others are short and direct, such as *“That’s it.”* These sentences are accurately written, begin with capital letters and end with full stops. This demonstrates that the author is accustomed to well-written discourses, despite the employment of both formal and colloquial language in the text.

Finally, authors conclude messages abruptly with no sign-off or formal ending; yet, there are closing phrases of messages that reveal the author's desire to exert control, create limits, and end the conversation on their terms, for example, *“but as for you my relationship with you starts and stops with X as well as matters pertaining X. That’s it. Again, you are in your full right as her mother to seek the necessary help from the necessary authorities if you feel X is in danger or unkept.”* The closing contains a polite acknowledgement of the recipient’s legal rights: *“You are in your full right as her mother to seek the necessary help from the necessary authorities.”* This outward politeness masks an implicit threat. By stating that the recipient can *“seek the necessary help from the necessary authorities,”* the author implies that the recipient may need to take dramatic measures if they fear the child is in danger. Politeness here is a rhetorical approach to minimise the underlying threat and make the author appear

reasonable. In gender-based violence, abusers frequently employ courteous language to control the situation and avoid appearing overly harsh.

4.3.2 The tone, and genre of the threat messages

The genre of all the discourses examined in this study is threatening text messages of varying lengths. They all have text message formats and express distinct feelings, which are usually emotional and manipulative. The researcher discovered that the tones used in threatening communications were sometimes dominating and defensive. Authors are attempting to defend themselves against statements made or actions committed by them. A tone can be commanding and authoritative as well as violent, since it conveys threats of violence and destruction, resulting in an angry and scary tone. On other occasions, the tones of some threat messages are plain and to the point, with no frills or formalities, indicating a lower or middling educational background in which communication is centred on delivering the threat rather than sophisticated vocabulary.

4.3.3 Sentences structures and presentation of facts to determine if there are intention of committing GBV

When examining the sentence structure and presentation of facts in the thirty-five messages for signs of an intention to commit gender-based violence (GBV), a forensic linguistic analysis would take into account the types of sentences used by the perpetrators, as well as the sentences' purposes. This information can disclose both the author's identity and their intent to commit gender-based violence.

Looking at the structures and types of sentences, data analysis results show that the messages are structured and use complex sentences to reflect intended and composed concepts. For example, *"I suggest that you trust that I will not have her around anyone or in any environment that is not conducive to her wellbeing."* The use of complex sentences portrays the author as rational, measured, and in control. In addition, imperative sentences are used in threatening messages rather than using interrogative, declarative, or exclamatory sentences, which show some direct commands, such as *"Do exercise your full rights as a mother and go to the courts or police,"* as well as *"You will stop sending me these kinds of messages,"* carry an authoritative tenor. While these commands are direct, they are framed in a formal way, which mitigates their perceived aggression but still implies a controlling attitude.

The facts are provided in such a way that authors define their own actions and objectives in a way that positions them as responsible and considerate. For instance, the phrase like, *“I suggest that you trust that I will not have her around anyone or in any environment that is not conducive to her wellbeing.”* presents the author as a protective and reliable figure. This could be interpreted as an attempt to dismiss any criticism from the recipient while asserting moral superiority. Another truth is provided by accusing the recipient of having done anything that will lead to the purpose of committing gender-based violence. For example, *“I CAN NO LONGER TAKE IT, WE RE ALL BOTH GOING TO DIE AND OUR CHILDREN. YOU HAVE STRESED ME ENOUGH AND DONT THINK YOU CAN BE IN SOMEONE HAND AS A GIRLFRIEND. GOODBYE”* This serves to undermine the recipient’s concerns while shifting blame onto her. The phrase *“I CAN NO LONGER TAKE IT”* carries an implied threat of further consequences. This could be interpreted as a type of psychological control, which is a defining feature of GBV, in which emotional or psychological domination is exercised over the victim.

4.4 Describe the sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators

Fitria (2024) describes sociolinguistics as the study of people's language use in connection to their social environment, gender, age, ethnicity, geographical location, occupation, and other characteristics. Sociolinguistic profiling in forensic linguistics analysis examines discourses to identify the perpetrator as well as the reasons for their actions by observing their gender, age, ethnicity, geographical location, occupation, and other characteristics. This means that sociolinguistic profiling not only helps to reveal suspects, but in the case where the perpetrator is known, it can also help to reveal what prompts the action and the reason to act in the way, which in this case aids in revealing the details of the perpetrators of gender-based violence, as well as the reason/s that prompts the action. Finding this information can help society prevent gender-based violence in the future.

4.4.1 The gender of the perpetrator

The data findings demonstrate that the majority of threat messages imply male dominance over female victims and children, particularly when threats are made to control relationships or children. The primary issues that prompt men to respond and harm women and children are: ending romantic relationships, cheating, co-parenting and children support, rape, and others. For example, in TTM 14, *“I will expose you that u sleep wth ur colleaues to offer them jobs in bank X, u got a child wth ur colleague an now u have Y tht lives wth u while my daughter*

is thr. U have joy now tht u went to Z wth n its not my problem but dont confuse my child wth diffrent women just coz u dont have self control over sumthing thts not even circumcised. U dont even know how to make love to a women yet u r showing ur disability around" The entire concept has grown around love relationships and child abuse

Another example is, TTM 27 *"WE RE ALL BOTH GOING TO DIE AND OUR CHILDREN. YOU HAVE STRESED ME ENOUGH AND DONT THINK YOU CAN BE IN SOMEONE HAND AS A GIRLFRIEND. GOODBYE."* The issue around this threat message is the ending of a romantic relationship. All of these texts are written by men, leading to the conclusion that they are responsible for the majority of gender-based violence.

However, few women are involved in committing gender-based violence against men and children. For them, violence is motivated by the children's resentful and unsupportive father, being tired of maltreatment, or battling for a lover or husband with another woman. The aggression can also be sparked by being owed money by a male or another woman. For example, TTM 9 *"Ove X", (You X), I tell u many times to leav my boyflnd alone. I dnt wnt to beat u. go look fr ur own boyfrnds mani. This is my last wrning I m nt tell u again. Continue an u wl see"*. All these indicate the willingness to commit gender-based violence.

4.4.2 The use of vocabulary, idioms, and colloquialisms that could provide insights into the author's sociolinguistic background

The author's region of origin might be communicated through dialects or regionalisms. In analysing the threatening text messages, the researcher took into account the authors' writing style, which can be influenced by their local accent and phonetic features, as well as the influence of first language grammar. Language patterns that may reveal the sociolinguistic background of the threat text authors are also observed.

The findings reveal that using incorrectly spelt words and grammar, such as *"1 years"* instead of the correct singular *"1 year,"* indicates lower literacy levels. This grammatical mismatch shows that the sender may have less formal education. The use of simple legal phrases such as *"prison"* and *"without bail"* suggests knowledge of fundamental legal principles, possibly gained through personal or second-hand experience with the court system. While this could imply an understanding of legal jargon, it is given in a basic, non-technical fashion, implying that the information may not have originated from formal schooling, but rather from social interactions or exposure to legal issues.

Additionally, there is a use of the slang word “Lemme” as in TTM 25, “X I’m talking to you. Lemme stop bothering you for now and rot in jail”. The use of this slang word indicates that the message was not written by an elder, as young people frequently use numerous slang words, whilst adults prefer to use formal English language.

4.4.3 Regional linguistic markers that might indicate the origin of the author

The table below lists the words used in threatening text messages that are most likely influenced by their origins, as well as their regional linguistic markers and linguistic trends.

Regional linguistic markers	Extracted from threatening text messages
tseki mani	tseki mani I don’t have time with people like u.
Boyflnd	I tell u many times to leav my boyflnd alone.
Fone	This is my fone. You won’t call and shout on me
Yu	yu, don’t try me, "As jy my los,

Table 4.7

The data collected demonstrates the presence of some regional linguistic markers in some of the threatening text messages, such as “tseki mani” (*futsken man*, used to describe someone irritating or difficult). This word is likely to have been written by an Oshiwambo speaker, as it displays the influence of Oshiwambo cultural-linguistic patterns in written communication, giving it a strong indicator of an Oshiwambo speaker. Oshiwambo speakers will use the word “fone” instead of “phone” because, like many other African language speakers, they frequently write words phonetically depending on how they are pronounced in their original language. The English “ph” sound does not exist in Oshiwambo, hence it is logical to substitute it with the closest sound, “f.” This results in writing “fone” instead of “phone,” because of the influence of local language orthography, Oshiwambo speakers can write “boyflnd” instead of “boyfriend”. Oshiwambo orthography often employs simpler, more direct representations of sounds, with no “r” in the language’s writing system. As a result, “boyfliend” illustrates how the word has been incorporated into the Oshiwambo speaker’s language context.

A Damara individual can write the word "yu" instead of "you" because Khoekhoe languages such as Damara>Nama have a tendency to write words as they are spoken. The "you" sound in English may be interpreted as "yu" depending on how it is spoken, resulting in the simplified spelling. In Damara, vowel sounds are also plain and uncomplicated, with no diphthongs (such as "ou" in "you") like in English. Writing "yu" instead of "you" represents this phonological simplification, allowing Damara speakers to better connect the English word with their original phonetic pattern.

4.4.4 Code-switching (switching between languages) or borrowing from other languages to determine potential language influence, educational level, social status, age, religion, etc

The identification of regional linguistic markers, as well as instances of code-switching or borrowing, is provided in order to establish likely geographical sources of threat texts and language impacts.

The table below illustrates the borrowing terms and code-switching used in this threat communication.

Code-switching	Extracted from messages	meaning
<i>X owaalelange shike ano tseki mani</i>	<i>"X owaalelange shike ano tseki mani I don't have time with people like u."</i>	<i>X, what do you want for me?</i>
<i>Ove X,</i>	<i>"Ove X, I tell u many times to leav my boyflnd alone."</i>	<i>You X,</i>
<i>As jy my los, sal ek jou doodmaak, en jou familie sal van jou vergeet.</i>	<i>"yu, don't try me, "As jy my los, sal ek jou doodmaak, en jou familie sal van jou vergeet." I will come today so we talk."</i>	<i>"If you leave me, I will kill you, and your family will forget about you."</i>
<i>nyoko otadjala oshipando efiku olo</i>	<i>"I have been warning u to stop all ur diffrent but u did not listen. I am just telling u that where eva I meet u, u</i>	<i>Your mother will wear a dark/black cloth on that day.</i>

	<i>are a dead person. nyoko otadjala oshipando efiku olo See you"</i>	<i>(in Oshiwambo tradition, a dark or black cloth is a cloth wore by close relatives, especial a mother who lost his/her child.)</i>
<i>Owahe nda tokole</i>	<i>"if you dont sent it I will take your pictures to the witchdoctor Owahe nda tokole"</i>	<i>Don't play with me.</i>
<i>Borrowed words</i>	<i>Extracted from messages</i>	<i>meaning</i>
<i>Tseki mani</i>	<i>"X owaalelange shike ano tseki mani I don't have time with people like u"</i>	<i>Futsken man (an Afrikaans slang term used for someone who is being annoying or troublesome)</i>
<i>fone.</i>	<i>"This is my fone. You won't call and shout on me ."</i>	<i>Phone</i>

Table 4.8

The researcher identified a mix of English, Oshiwambo, Rukwangali, and Afrikaans (Oshiwambo and Rukwangali are Namibia's native languages), with Afrikaans serving as a lingua franca, spoken by many people, particularly in urban areas and certain communities (e.g., the Coloured and Rehoboth Basters). Code-switching phrases such as "X owaalelange shike ano tseki mani", "As jy my los, sal ek jou doodmaak, en jou familie sal van jou vergeet" and "Owahe nda tokole" provide sociolinguistic insight about the speaker's likely cultural and linguistic background.

There are also borrowed terms "tseki man" (*Futsken man, an Afrikaans slang term used for someone who is unpleasant or troublesome*) and "fone" that help to assert cultural or intimate acquaintance, indicating that the author speaks Oshiwambo. It also demonstrates that the author's English is not very excellent.

4.5 Discussions

Forensic linguistics analysis functions as a detective engine, identifying the culprit in a given case and determining the motive for their conduct. In this study, the forensic linguistics

investigation focused on evaluating threat text messages received by victims of gender-based violence to identify what motivates perpetrators to commit crimes of violence against women, men, and children in order to prevent it from happening again. When compared to other academic works, the conclusions of this study agree with certain of the findings of other researchers' work while disagreeing in some areas. The results are shown below.

Following the study and conclusions of thirty-five threatening text messages addressed to gender-based violence victims, the researcher discovered a link between those who are prone to perpetrate gender-based violence and education. It is clear that more people who participate in and commit gender-based violence have lower levels of education. This is evident from their syntax and syntactic usage in threat text messages. The analysis of syntax and grammar usage in threat texts assisted in determining the culprits' educational level. Only two out of thirty-five threat texts use correct syntax and language, indicating a high level of education. According to SIDA (2015), society must prevent GBV by improving access to high-quality education at all levels. Education not only teaches language skills but also increases an individual's intellectual capacity to handle difficulties amicably. This indicates that educated people are more likely to prevent gender-based violence because they are aware of and sensitive to alternative solutions to gender-based violence.

As Jankey et al. (2017) note, gender-based violence evolves through the language used to communicate. The capacity to speak properly is essential, especially when there is a pressing situation that requires a bold answer. The level of education one possesses may assist one in analysing a hot topic, discussing it, and resolving it without having to fight.

Furthermore, this study agrees with Kelly (2018), who discovered that using words causes physical, mental, and emotional harm to the victim. Observing the terms used by the offenders, it is clear that they have chosen to instil dread in the recipients of the communications, causing mental and emotional injury. Benedetti and Queralt (2013) distinguish four types of threats: direct, through explicit pronouncements such as "I will kill you," indirect, such as "You will see," conditional, such as "If you leave now, you will never be able to return," and veiled, such as "She is going to pay for this." The types of threats that appeared in the threatening messages were the same.

The common threatening words and phrases used in these text messages include: I will show you, I will break down everything and burn it down, I will expose you, if I find you, you are a dead person, I will destroy you, you will regret it for the rest of your life, I will kill him and kill myself, and many other threatening words that can traumatise individuals who receive them. All of the words and phrases used in the threatening texts, as mentioned by Benedetti and Queralt (2023), can reflect the intention to commit gender-based violence. The use of words and linguistic elements in threat discourses reflects the author's goal. When victims get these types of threats from perpetrators, legal professionals and police officials must act quickly to safeguard the victims as the desire to perpetrate violence becomes clear.

The usage of terminology reveals more about the originator of the threat SMS message. Zheng et al. (2024) found that the use of vocabulary varies depending on the author's age and comprehension of the language era utilised by humans. Furthermore, Zheng et al. (2024) show that language changes with time, as Shakespeare's vocabulary differs significantly from ours. The wording employed in the majority of the threatening messages examined in this study indicates that they were authored by youth rather than adults. Youth are more likely to utilise slang and shorter terms, often deleting letters, particularly vowels, from their writing. The majority of casual terms are written as follows: 'u" instead of 'you', "hve" instead of "have", 'wnt" instead of "want", "wll" instead of "will", "dnt" instead of "don't", and many other wrong words.

There is also the use of slang terms, such as "Lemme" instead of "let me", which indicates that the communication was written by a youth. These writing styles not only demonstrate the perpetrators' low level of knowledge, but also the author's age and maturity. Adults are more inclined to avoid omitting letters and write complete words in their writing styles. Observing this style of writing suggests that youth are more likely to be involved in gender-based violence. It's also likely that the youth are intentionally sending messages to victims since they have more access to cell phones and value digital connection than adults.

This study agrees with Jankey et al. (2017), who state that different African cultures have distinct ways of communicating, such as how they express love, intimacy, desire, longing, closeness, fear, anxiety, betrayal, or rejection. However, in today's societies, mobile telephone networks allow people separated by distance to communicate more efficiently by sending messages and calling. Gender-based violence incidents are triggered by

communication and the transmission of signals using aggressive language. Youths are more exposed to cell phone networks, which allow them to communicate more easily, and as a result, they are more likely to conduct gender-based violence. This makes perfect sense when compared to the specific old way in which elders used to express that there was a very low percentage of gender-based violence during their era.

Furthermore, the vocabulary utilised in the threatening SMS message includes formal, courteous language as well as veiled warnings and legal terminology. This conveys a tone of authority and control while appearing sensible and cooperative. The use of ambiguous and unclear phrases indicates a deliberate attempt to avoid direct contact while expressing a menacing meaning. When education is linked to how vocabulary was utilised in these messages, it becomes clear that the messages do not contain direct threatening terms and do not employ vulgar language. These text messages use polite language, despite the authors' displeasure and attempts to intimidate the recipients of the letters. The concepts flow from one to the next, and they do not end or begin abruptly, unlike most such messages written by people with a poor degree of education.

Furthermore, the jargon utilised in these threat text messages is technical, showing that the authors are conversant with and accustomed to formal communication. The use of advanced, precise, and formal words such as "insinuate," "conducive," "well-being," and "accusatory" shows that the author of the threatening text message is likely to have a higher level of education, possibly with experience in legal, psychological, or academic settings. The use of these words demonstrates knowledge with professional or technical vocabulary, indicating an educated and articulate individual. Analysing language use not only reveals the sender's degree of knowledge but also aids in the discovery of subtle methods and an understanding of the sender's manipulative and controlling conduct.

Punctuation is extremely important in forensic language analysis. Eber-Schmid (2017) contends that punctuation clarifies meaning and conveys emotions in written communication. Without suitable punctuation, it is quite difficult to understand the entire content and tone. Many threats lack adequate punctuation, leaving out important arguments and feelings. However, numerous threat texts have employed inappropriate punctuation. The most commonly used punctuation marks are the full stop (.) and the comma (,). Although an author can use a variety of punctuation marks, including exclamation, colon and semi-colon,

question marks, and others, they only employ a full stop and comma, implying that these are the most basic and simple forms of punctuation. Furthermore, there are occasions where the threat contains certain capitalised words, or the entire message is written in capital letters, indicating that the author is highlighting a highly important point, or making a serious threat to the victim, which should be interpreted as a severe warning.

Threat text messages vary in formality and length. Few text messages are lengthy, with two to three or four paragraphs, whereas the majority of them are quite brief, with only one or two sentences. According to Coulthard (2010), the majority of suicide notes and threatening letters are brief, with many including less than 100 words. This is because the culprits do not try to please or elaborate on the recipient. They write and send their threats urgently in order to instil terror or force the receiver. Short threats express a threat without the need for pleasantries or explanation.

Furthermore, few threat communications are written in a formal manner, with a salutation, introduction, body, and conclusion or ending. According to Kadir (2020), the functional and contextual discourse structure is divided into three main sections: opening, content, and closing. However, threats that are extremely brief lack an opening, content, and conclusion. The investigation demonstrates that in many cases, brief treatments are produced by uneducated individuals with little experience in formal writing, leading to an informal discourse. These are texts that contain several grammatical and syntax errors, as well as incorrect word spellings. These brief communications start and end abruptly. It indicates a low degree of education, but it also expresses the sender's anger, jealousy, and dissatisfaction. Angry and furious people don't have time to welcome or offer polite instruction, so they go right to the point.

The threat messages studied provide insights into gender-based power relations, with males frequently using threats of violence or control in relation to partnerships or children. The majority of men commit gender-based violence against women, with only a minority targeting children. The causes for their grievances include the breakdown of a love relationship, child support, and adultery, which are major triggers for men to hurt women. This is comparable to what Ali (2020) says: the variables that generate gender-based violence are recognised as poverty and unemployment, with males arguably resorting to GBV due to frustrations about their inability to care for their families.

According to the findings, women account for a small proportion of gender-based violence. They do it when they owe money or are tired of being abused. Despite this, because violence occurs more frequently among people in love relationships, both parties must learn to choose the appropriate phrases to use when the tense appears. Men become irritated and physically aggressive when women request basic requirements that they cannot meet. The general discourse in these texts lends credence to the concept that language is weaponised to exert power and inspire fear, serving to intimidate as well as manipulate.

Furthermore, this study investigated and analysed the criminals' sociolinguistic characteristics. Coulthard et al. (2011) support this by claiming that forensic linguists can identify the author or origin of an anonymous document based on the idea that age, educational level, gender, geographical location, and social status all have a significant impact on linguistic performance. In other cases, sociolinguistics analysis is useful when the court is unable to identify the offender, as it aids in reducing the number of suspects. However, in the case of gender-based violence, sociolinguistics analysis is crucial because it shows the regional linguistic profile of the offender, allowing the majority of people who are committing violence to be identified and the reason for the violence to be identified, putting an end to gender violence. The analysis of this study's threat text messages revealed three instances of code-switching, placing them as the most likely group to commit gender-based violence.

The dangers include code-switching in Oshiwambo, Rukwangali, and Afrikaans. The threat with a switch in Afrikaans demonstrates certain linguistic patterns in the Khoekhoe language, diverting the perpetrators away from Dutch individuals who regard Afrikaans as their native language. The author's usage of "fone" instead of phone demonstrates code-switching into Oshiwambo. These three code-switching patterns provide regional language characteristics, leading to conclusions about the groups with the highest rates of gender-based violence. This is because code-switching between local languages and English reflects the criminals' sociolinguistic profiles, specifically their multilingual ability and cultural backgrounds.

However, Coulthard (2010) disagrees with relying on the linguistic fingerprint method to analyse and detect problematic authors. In other words, the linguistic 'impressions' left by a specific speaker/writer should be recognised, much like a signature. According to Coulthard (2010), the concept of the linguistic fingerprint is an unhelpful, if not misleading metaphor, especially when used in the context of forensic authorship investigations, because it conjures

up images of massive databanks containing representative linguistic samples (or summary analyses) of millions of idiolects against which a given text could be matched and tested. However, this study challenges Coulthard's claim, arguing that threatening text messages are written by angry and flustered people who are proud to use their true linguistic competence and regional linguistics because they do not have time to think or edit the language errors while angry.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter summarises the important findings and debates from the forensic linguistic examination of threat text messages targeted to gender-based violence (GBV) victims. The studies centred on the study's aims, which were to investigate sociolinguistic aspects, discourse structures, and linguistic evidence inside these threatening communications. The analysis found that the language used in threat SMS messages displayed notable sociolinguistic characteristics associated with the authors' identities and socioeconomic backgrounds. A considerable amount of the data included code-switching, vernacular terms, and culturally nuanced words, indicating that offenders intended to transmit threats in a way that was culturally and linguistically appropriate for the victims.

The study also identified other types of threatening messages, such as direct threats, veiled warnings, coercive ultimatums, and psychological intimidation. Each type has unique linguistic characteristics, such as the use of imperatives, modals, and evaluative language. Direct threats were distinguished by unequivocal words with evident intent, whereas veiled warnings used ambiguous language intended to elicit fear without directly mentioning violence. Coercive ultimatums included conditional phrases designed to manipulate the victim's behaviour, while psychological intimidation relied largely on metaphors and exaggerated claims to heighten the sense of threat.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the threatening texts sent by perpetrators and conveyed to victims of gender-based violence. In accordance with the study's aims and the theory utilised to assess the research data, this chapter summarises the findings of this research and makes recommendations for what should be done by both parties involved in gender-based violence.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages

The main findings of this study suggested that there is a link between gender-based violence and education. People with higher levels of education are more likely to select peaceful solutions to their problems, whereas those with lower levels of education are more likely to resort to gender-based violence. The syntactic and grammar usage in the threat text messages indicated the types of words used in well-written threats, as well as how language is employed in incorrect grammatical and syntax threats. Threats in inaccurate written messages use more courteous and indirect language, whereas unpleasant and direct threats are found in erroneous written messages.

The threats used by the offenders are statements designed to instil dread in the recipients, resulting in mental and emotional pain, as well as physical violence if the action is implemented. Threatening messages contained four types of threats: direct, through explicit pronouncements such as "I will kill you," indirect, such as "You will see," conditional, such as: "If you leave now, you will never be able to return," and veiled, such as: "She is going to pay for this.". The use of this form of language causes physical, mental, and emotional harm to the victim. The use of words and linguistic elements in threat discourses exposes the author's intention and should not be taken lightly.

The usage of terminology reveals more about the originator of the threat text message. The terminology employed in most threatening texts is informal, with words inappropriately reduced and letters omitted, notably vowels. This leads to the conclusion that these threats were written by kids rather than adults, as teenagers are more inclined to utilise slang and informal phrases. These writing styles demonstrate the offenders' low level of education, as well as the author's age and maturity. Adults are more likely to avoid omitting letters and

utilise entire words in their writing styles. This demonstrates that the age group most involved in gender-based violence is youth. It is also plausible that teenagers are perpetrating gender-based violence because they are actively sending messages to victims, as they are more exposed to cell phones and value digital communication than adults.

However, few threat messages include official vocabulary, courteous language with indirect warnings, and legal jargon. These communications do not contain direct threats or foul language. The authors employed courteous language despite their dissatisfaction and attempts to intimidate the receivers. The concepts follow one other, and they do not finish or begin abruptly. Furthermore, the jargon utilised in these letters is technical, showing that the authors are conversant with and accustomed to formal communication. The use of advanced, precise, and formal vocabulary indicates that the author of the threatening text message likely has a higher level of education, potentially with exposure to legal, psychological, or academic contexts. The choice of these words also indicates familiarity with professional or technical language, signalling an educated and articulate individual.

Furthermore, without adequate punctuation, it is difficult to understand the entire message and tone. Many threats lack proper punctuation or utilise inappropriate punctuation. Despite the fact that every author can use numerous other punctuations, they only employ full stops and commas, implying that these are the most fundamental and easiest-to-use kinds of punctuation. Furthermore, there are occasions where the threat contains certain capitalised words, or the entire message is written in capital letters, indicating that the author is highlighting a highly important point, or making a serious threat to the victim, which should be interpreted as a severe warning.

5.2.2 The discourse structures of threat messages

Threat text message structures vary in formality and length. Few text messages are long, with two to three or four paragraphs, while the rest are relatively brief, with some having just one or two sentences, being under 200 words long, and many including fewer than 100 words. This is because the culprits do not have the time to please or elaborate on the recipient. They write and send their threats urgently in order to instil terror or force the receiver. Short threats communicate threats without the need for pleasantries or elaboration.

Furthermore, few threat communications are written in a formal manner, with a salutation, introduction, body, and conclusion or ending. However, threats that are extremely brief lack an opening, content, and conclusion. The investigation demonstrates that in many cases, brief treatments are produced by lowly-educated individuals with little experience in formal writing, leading to an informal discourse. These are texts that contain several grammatical and syntax errors, as well as incorrect word spellings. These brief communications start and finish abruptly, indicating a low level of education but also expressing the sender's rage, jealousy, or dissatisfaction.

5.2.3 The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages

The threat messages show that males frequently employ threats of violence or control in relation to relationships or children. Men are disproportionately responsible for gender-based violence against women and children. Their problems stem from the breakdown of a love relationship, child support issues, and adultery. There are very few women who conduct gender-based violence. They only do this when they are owed money or are weary of being abused. Although this is true, because violence is more likely to occur in romantic relationships, both parties must learn to choose the appropriate words to use when the tense appears in order to prevent violence.

Furthermore, this study investigated and analysed the criminals' sociolinguistic characteristics. Forensic linguists analyse anonymous documents to determine the author or origin based on the assumption that age, educational level, gender, geographical location, and social standing all have a significant impact on language performance. Sociolinguistics analysis is significant in gender-based violence because it reveals the regional linguistic profile of the offender, allowing the majority of people who are committing violence to be identified and the reason for the violence to be documented in order to end gender-based violence. There have been three incidents of code-switching, placing them as the most likely group to commit gender-based violence.

The authors shifted to Oshiwambo, Rukwangali, and Afrikaans. The threat with a switch in Afrikaans demonstrates certain linguistic patterns in the Khoekhoe language, diverting the perpetrators from the Dutch group of individuals who regard Afrikaans as their first language. When the author uses fone instead of phone, code-switching into Oshiwambo follows the Oshiwambo linguistic patterns. These three code-switching patterns provide regional

language characteristics, leading to conclusions about the groups with the highest rates of gender-based violence.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study on the language aspects, discourse structures, and sociolinguistics analysis of threatening text messages in gender-based violence (GBV), here are some recommendations to assist battle and stopping gender-based violence:

5.3.1 Linguistic evidence, features, and choices within threat text messages

- Government, non-governmental organisations, and stakeholders should implement programmes to educate and raise awareness about communication skills training and conflict resolution for gender-based violence.
- Prioritise public awareness efforts on the influence of language on emotional and mental health, highlighting how specific phrases can escalate confrontations and perpetuate violence.
- Prioritise gender-based violence teaching in schools to help students use proper language to solve daily difficulties.
- The Ministry of ICT should implement digital literacy programs in schools and communities to promote respectful communication and reduce impulsive, slang-heavy, and threatening online messages.
- To better respond to gender-based violence, law enforcement authorities should use language threat assessment methods to identify direct, indirect, conditional, and disguised threats.
- The government should enhance legal implications for threatening language, both verbal and written to address GBV.

5.3.2 The discourse structures of threat messages

- The government, non-governmental organisations, and stakeholders should create GBV intervention programmes for areas with low education levels. These programs should teach nonviolent communication skills and raise knowledge of legal repercussions for sending threatening communications.
- The government should empower and teach young people to build emotional intelligence and conflict-resolution skills, reducing the prevalence of threats in digital communication.

- The government and stakeholders teach organised communication in community and school settings to help individuals, especially those who are prone to violence, find effective ways to communicate grievances.
- The government, together with all stakeholders should train law enforcement and social workers to evaluate threat messages based on structure and content. Short, abrupt threats without polite language may indicate heightened anger or frustration, increasing the likelihood of physical violence. Recognising these patterns can help officers intervene before violence occurs.

5.3.3. The sociolinguistic profiles of the perpetrators of threat messages

- The government and stakeholders, in collaboration with forensic linguists should develop regional and language-specific campaigns based on sociolinguistic profiling to focus on groups that are identified as high-risk for committing gender-based violence.
- The government should encourage excellent gender relation and relationship counselling to promote healthy communication and shared responsibility for conflict resolution.
- Law enforcement organisations should collaborate with forensic linguists to create sociolinguistic profiles of perpetrators based on threat messages to prevent violence.

References

- Ahmed, H. (2021). The role of Forensic Linguistics in crime investigation: Uses in legal proceedings. *ANGLISTICUM Journal of the Association-Institute for English Language and American Studies*, 10(2), 23-31. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4609333>
- Akhtar, I. (2016). *Research design*. Jamia Millia.
- Alduais, A., Al-Khulaidi M. A., Allegretta, S., & Abdulkhalek, M. M. (2023). Forensic linguistics: A scientometric review. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(1), 1-42.
- Alhumsi, M. A. (2019). Key aspects in relation to forensic linguistics assistant professor, department of English language and translation. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)*, 2(5), 83-86.

- Ali, J. H. (2020). Forensic linguistics: A study in criminal speech acts. *Beni-Suef University International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 39–65. <https://doi.org/10.21608/buijhs.2020.91333>
- Amadi, D. C. & Ogu, A. E. (2019). *Vocabulary development- 8: The use of English and communication skills for tertiary education edition*. Hysab Prints & Publishers.
- Anesa, P. (2021). *Language as evidence linguistic approaches to online crimes Author*. Focus Conference on Forensic Linguistics.
- Ariana, M. G., Sajedi, F., & Sajedi, M. (2014). Forensic linguistics: A brief overview of the key elements. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 158, 222 – 225.
- Ashimbuli, N. L., & Woldemariam, H. Z. (2024). A Feminist Stylistic Analysis of the Selected Poems from *My Heart in Your Hands: Poems from Namibia*. *Integrity Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(2), 106-113. <https://integrityresjournals.org/journal/IJAH/article-abstract/07F6C5746>
- Ashraf, A. (2023). *What is forensic linguistics?* <https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-is-forensic-linguistics.htm>
- Aspers, P. & Corte, U. (2019). What is qualitative in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 42, 139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Babarinde, O., & Uko, E. O. (2022) Language Variation & stylistics in criminal profiling and authorship attribution. *IKENGA: International Journal of Institute of African Studies*. 18 (1), 179.
- Balcells, C. G. (2023). *An overview of forensic linguistics and its application in real-life cases*. Universitat de Barcelona.
- Baugh, J. (2024). Linguistic Profiling across International Geopolitical Landscapes. *Dædalus, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*. P. 167-177. https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_02024
- Benedetti, N. & Queralt, S. (2023). A literature review of the role of forensic linguistics in gender-based violent crimes in Italy: Supporting legal professionals and

- providing scientific evidence. *Revista de Llengua i Dret, Journal of Language and Law*, 79, 140-157. <https://doi.org/10.58992/rld.i79.2023.3857>
- Cavallaro, F. (2005). *Language maintenance revisited: An Australian perspective*. Nanyang Technological University.
- Collis, J, & Hussey, R. (2013). *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Correa, M. (2013). Forensic linguistics: An overview of the Intersection and Interaction of Language and Law. *Kalby Studijos*, 0(23). <https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.sal.0.23.5020>
- Coulthard, M. (2004). Forensic linguistics. In A. Davies & C. Elder (Eds.), *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. (pp. 759-789. Blackwell Publishing.
- Coulthard, M. (2010). Forensic Linguistics: The application of language description in legal contexts. *Langage et société*, 132, 15-33. <https://doi.org/10.3917/lis.132.0015>
- Coulthard, M., & Sousa, R. S. (2011). *Forensic linguistics*. Universide de Federal de Santa Catarina.
- Cutillas-Espinosa, J. A & Hernández-Campoy, J. M. (2020). *Historical sociolinguistics and authorship elucidation in medieval private written correspondence: Theoretical and Methodological Implications for and from Forensic Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.51814/nm.103350>.
- Dimitrios, T. & Antigoni. F. (2019). Limitations and delimitations in the research process. *Perioperative nursing (GORNA)*. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2552022>
- Eber-Schmid, B. J. (2017). *Digital pulse*. Women's Voices Magazine.
- Ebohon, O. J., Ajayi, T. O., & Ganiyu S. (2021). Understanding research paradigm in social sciences: A critique of two papers on critical success factors for BIM implementation.
- Eilika, F. (2014). Forensic Linguistics –Challenges and Opportunities. *SIAK-Journal – Journal for Police Science and Practice, (International Edition)*, 4, 62-73. http://dx.doi.org/10.7396/IE_2014_F.

- Emike, A. J., Sanni, A., Agu, M. N., & Olusanya, A. M. (2021). Introducing Sociolinguistics. *Bulletin of Advanced English Studies (BAES)*, 6(2), 36-44.
- Evizareza, T. D., Deliani, S., & Hamuddin, B. (2019). *Exploring the past, present, and future of forensic linguistics study: A brief overview*. Trenz Hotel Panamz.
- Ezeh, N. G., Umeh, I. A., & Anyanwu, E. C. (2022). Code-switching and code-mixing in teaching and learning of English as a Second Language: Building on knowledge. *English Language Teaching*, 15(9), 106-113.
- Fata, I.A., Yusuf, Y.Q., & Kamal, R., Namaziandost, E. (2021). The characteristics of linguistic features enfolded in suicide notes. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(2), 720-735.
- Fattah, B. O. & Salih, S. M. (2022). Colloquialism and the Community of Practice. *Koya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (KUJHSS)*, 5(1):77-84.
- Fitria, T. N. (2024). Forensic Linguistics: Contribution of Linguistics in Legal Context. *PRASASTI Journal of Linguistics* 9(1),117-133.
- Fonseca, M. (2023). *INFOGRAPHIC: Importance of describing the setting of a study in your manuscript*.
- Fridman, L., Stolerman, A., Acharya, S., Brennan, P., Juola, P., Greenstadt, R., Kam, M., & Gomez, F. (2015). Multi-modal decision fusion for continuous authentication. *Computers and Electrical Engineering*, 41(C), 142-156. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compeleceng.2014.10.018>
- Grant, T., & Perkins, R. (2012). *Forensic linguistics*. Aston University Centre for Forensic Linguistics.
- Hafeni, L., Sabao, C., & Woldemariam, H. Z. (2024). A Cognitive Stylistic Analysis of Namibia's 1904-1908 Nama-Herero Genocide through Fictional Narratives. *Journal of Communication and Cultural Trends*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.32350/jcct.62.01>
- Hafeni, L.N. and Woldemariam, H.Z. (2022). *Schematizing societal problems in the Namibian novels: The cases of The other presence and The hopeless hopes*.

Journal of Communication and Cultural Trends, 4 (1). <https://doi.org/10.32350/jcct.41.05>
<https://journals.umt.edu.pk/index.php/jcct/article/view/2155>

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Longman.

Heydon, G. (2014). Forensic linguistics: Forms and processes. *Linguistik Indonesia*, 32(1), 1-10.

Hitt, J. (2012, July 23). *Words on trial: Can linguists solve crimes that stump the police?*
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/07/23/words-on-trial>

Hobbis, S. (2018). Mobile phones, gender-based violence, and distrust in state services: Case studies from Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea: Mobile phones, gender-based violence and the state. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 59(3).

Honeybone, P. (2011). Variation and linguistic theory. In *Cambridge University Press eBooks* (pp. 151–177). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511976360.008>

Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings (2010). *Revision for Field Review*. Geneva: Inter-agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises; 2010. PMID: 26203479. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305160/>

Jankey, O. M., Sinkamba, R. P., & Ngwenya, B. N. (2017). The go-between of liaisons: The social dynamics of mobile-phone text messaging and implications for intimate partner based violence in Botswana. *Botswana Notes and Records*, 49, 184–199.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/90024342>

Jasinskaja, E., Mayer, J., & Schlangen, D. (2004). Discourse structure and information structure: Interfaces and prosodic realization. *Interdisciplinary studies on information structure*, 1, 151-206.

John, O. (2008). *Forensic linguistics (Second ed.)*. Continuum.

Juola, P. (2021). Verifying authorship for forensic purposes: A computational protocol and its validation. *Forensic Science International*, 325, 110824.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2021.110824>

- Kadir, R. (2020). The application of forensic linguistics as an investigative tool in criminal case verdicts: (A case study at the state court of Gorontalo). *JournalNX- A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal*, 6(6), 215-259.
- Katsvara, M. (2019). A forensic linguistic investigation of the features of threat text messages in the Windhoek high court from 2014 – 2019. <https://ir.nust.na/items/d0bab813-dfea-4a71-acdf-ff0ba88f6f2f>
- Kelly, K. (2018). Investigating the phonetic and linguistic features used by speakers to communicate an intent to harm. *Language and Linguistic Science*. University of York.
- Kondorashova, I.V. (2022). Forensic linguistics: Origin, history of development, prospectus. *International Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, 4-3(67),72-77.
- Krassa, S. I. (2021). *First roundtable on practices and standards in forensic authorship analysis*. Overview 4.
- Kupper, J. & Spring, W. S. (2023). *Linguistics and threat assessment: How the analysis of language can assist in preventing workplace and campus violence*. <https://www.wtsglobal.com/linguistics-and-threat-assessment-how-the-analysis-of-language-can-assist-in-preventing-workplace-and-campus-violence/>
- Lam-Cassettari, C., & Kohlhoff, J. (2020). Effect of maternal depression on infant-directed speech to prelinguistic infants: Implications for language development. *PloS one*, 15(7), e0236787.
- Lutsenko, K. & Nikulin, K. (2020). Voice speaker identification is one of the current biometric methods of identification of a person. *Theory and Practice of Forensic Science and Criminalistics*, 19(1), 239-255.
- MacLeod, N. & Wright, D. (2020). Forensic linguistics. In *The Routledge Handbook of English Language and the Digital Humanities*. Taylor & Francis.
- Masood, A. (2021). *The language of suicide notes: A gender-based forensic linguistic study*. National University of Modern Languages.
- Matthews, J. & Hase, I. (2013). Gender-based violence (GBV) in Namibia: An exploratory assessment and mapping of GBV response services in Windhoek.

- Maulida, D. E., Andira, M. A., Onggatta, R., Balqis, S., Hamzah, S. F., & Rangkuti, R. (2023). Forensic stylistic analysis of UNNES student's suicide note. (*IJRETAL*) *International Journal of Research on English Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 26-33.
- Meknas, N. M. M. (2016). *A case of forensic linguistics*. Linguistics Department, Prince Sultan University.
- Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPEWS). (2020). *Basic understanding of gender-based violence*. MGEPEWS.
- Mukungu, K., & Kamwanyah, N. (2020). *Gender-based violence: Victims, activism and Namibia's dual justice systems. Victimology: Research, policy and activism*. Palgrave Macmillan. <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/5370/>
- Nayan, N. D. & Das, T. (2022). Inquiry and evidence-related applications of forensic linguistics: An analysis. *Journal of Law and Human Rights*, 2(2), 69-75.
- Ndatyapo, N. N. (2022). *A forensic linguistic investigation of witness statements on murder cases at Windhoek Police*. <https://ir.nust.na/items/1912894f-eecf-426e-af68-d0a522f223ab>
- Ogolekwu, O. (2022). Forensic linguistics as a catalyst for crime detection among Nigerian youths: A study of selected police investigations and court proceedings.
- Olsson, J. (2004). *Forensic Linguistics: An Introduction to Language, Crime, and the Law*. Continuum.
- Olsson, J. (2008). *Forensic linguistics* (2nd.). Continuum Publishing Group.
- Onoja, G. O. & Oguche, R. F. E. (2021). A Linguistic exploration of the interface between forensic discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis in the trials of brother Jero. *Dutsin-Ma Journal of English and Literature (DUJEL)*. 4(1), 136-151.
- Parveen, H. & Showkat, N. (2017). *Content analysis*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318815342>
- Patricia A. (2017). Linguistic Profiling Investigative Report. Fair Housing Center of Eastern Michigan. <https://gcmpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Linguistic-Profiling-Investigative-Report-2017.pdf>

- Perkins, R. C. (2021). The application of forensic linguistics in cybercrime investigations. *Policing: A Journal of Policy & Practice*, 15(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pay097>
- Philippine Commission On Women. (2009). *Violence Against Women (VAW)*. <http://Pcw.Gov.Ph/Focus-Areas/Violence-Against-Women>
- Pincornell, I., Perkins, R., & Coulthard, M. (2022). *Methodologies and Challenges in Forensic Linguistic Casework*. <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.
- Price, D. (2001). *Shakespeare's unorthodox biography: New evidence of an authorship problem*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Prokofyeva, T. (2013). *Language use in two types of suicide texts*. Department of Culture and Communication, Language and Culture.
- Rani, M., Girdhar, S., & Murty, O. P. (2015). Suicide note: The last words. *Journal of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology*, 32(2), 35-41.
- Rañosa-Madrurnio, M. & Martin, I. P. (2023). *Forensic linguistics in the Philippines origins, developments, and directions*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/abs/forensic-linguistics-in-the-philippines/B6B94DFB1A4AF2388E95203169F43B37>
- Sakakini, A. (2020). Forensic linguistics: An applied theory. *BAU Journal - Society, Culture and Human Behavior*, 1(2).
- Salom, S. N., & Woldemariam, H. Z. (2024). A Functional Stylistics Interpretation of “Losing Out” by Mutaleni Nadimi. *Voice of the publisher*, 10, 413-424. <https://doi.org/10.4236/vp.2024.10403>
- Salawu, R. O., Bolatitio, A. S., and Masibo, S. (2023). Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks in Research: Conceptual Clarification. *European Chemical Bulletin* 12(12), P. 2103-2117. 10.48047/ecb/2023.12.12.139
- Schoene, A. M., & Dethlefs, N. (2016). Automatic identification of suicide notes from linguistic and sentiment features. *Association for Computational Linguistics, Proceedings of*

the Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics, 128–133.
<https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/w16-2116>

Shirley, R., Silverman, C., Tran, C., & Nippold, M. A. (2024). Narrative discourse in youth offenders: Examining individual differences. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 33(3), 1193–1208. https://doi.org/10.1044/2023_AJSLP-23-00240

Shuy, R. (2002). Applied linguistics in the legal arena. Incadlin, C. & S. Saraangi (Eds.) *Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Mouton de Gruyter.

Shuy, R. W. (2012). *Linguistic Profiling: The Language of Murder Cases*. Oxford U Press (in press).
https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rogershuy.com%2Fpdf%2FLinguistic_Profiling.pdf&psig=AOvVaw2QAXvAbMhDBBI8Z946LPZH&ust=1745921736488000&source=images&cd=vfe&opi=89978449&ved=0CAQQn5wMahcKEwiloLq6v_qMAxUAAAAAHQAAAAAQBA

Soepardjo, D. & Warsono (2018). The impact of changes in society on the use of Languages. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (ASSEHR)*, 108. 290-293. <https://doi.org/10.2991/soshec-17.2018.59>

Sousa-Silva, R. & Coulthard, M. (2016). *What are forensic sciences? Concepts, scope and future perspectives: Forensic linguistics*. Universidade de Porto, and Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.

Sousa-Silva, R. (2022). *Forensic linguistics: The potential of language for law enforcement in the digital age*.
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKewipw5b6r-aJAxVAREEAHf12CPwQFnoECBcQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fsigarra.up.pt%2Fflup%2Fpt%2Fpub_geral.show_file%3Fpi_doc_id%3D405616&usg=AOvVaw1ZkEFGzRg3tv5jqkBKYvq_&opi=89978449

Squires, G. D. and Chadwick, J. (2006). Linguistic Profiling A Continuing Tradition of Discrimination in the Home Insurance Industry? *Urban Affairs Review* 41(3), P. 400-415. [10.1177/1078087405281064](https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087405281064)

- Stevens, L. M., Bennett, T. C., Cotton, J., Rockowitz, S., & Flowe, H. D. (2024). A critical analysis of gender-based violence reporting and evidence building applications (GBVxTech) for capturing memory reports. *Forensic and Legal Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1289817>
- Sudjana, E.T.S. & Fitri, N. (2013). Kurt Cobain's suicide note case: Forensic linguistic profiling. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 6(4), 217-227.
- Sulistiyo, A. (2020). *Linguistik forensik: Aspek-aspek sosio-pragmatik dalam hukum*. Yogyakarta.
- Sunde, N. & Sunde, I. M. (2021). Conceptualizing an AI-based Police Robot for preventing online child sexual exploitation and abuse: *Part I – The Theoretical and Technical Foundations for PrevBOT*. <https://doi.org/10.18261/issn.2703-7045-2021-02-01>
- Surmon, M.H. (2020). *Towards a framework for assessing written threat texts for forensic linguistic purposes*. North-West University.
- Swaraj, A. (2019). Exploratory research: Purpose and process. *Parisheelan*, -XV(2). <http://crm.skspvns.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/110-Ananya-Swaraj.pdf>
- Syam, S. K. (2018). Aspects of forensic linguistics in policing. *India's Higher Education Authority UGC Approved List of Journals*, 18(12), 100-111.
- Tayebi, T. & Coulthard, M. (2022). New Trends in Forensic Linguistics. *Language and Law*, 9(1), 1-8.
- Toghuj, R. (2022). *Forensic linguistics function in evidentiary and investigative contexts*. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/eaqmw>
- Ugwu, C. N. & Eze V. H. U. (2023). *Qualitative research*. Department of Publications and Extension Unit.
- Umiyati, M. (2020). A literature review of forensic linguistics. *IJFL International Journal of Forensic Linguisti*, 1(1), 23–29.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). (2024). *Forensic Evidence Processing in Gender-Based Violence Cases: Handbook for Criminal Justice Practitioners*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Southern Africa.

- Watt, D., & Brown, G. (2020). Forensic phonetics and automatic speaker recognition. *The Routledge Handbook of Forensic Linguistics*. Routledge. <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429030581-32>.
- Webber, B., Egg, M., & Kordoni, V. (2011). Discourse structure: Theory and practice. *Association for Computational Linguistics*, 48, 3. <https://aclanthology.org/P10-5003>
- Wicaksana, L. S. D., Pastika, I. W., & Satyawati, M. S. (2023). Forensic linguistic studies in the investigation of the Engeline murder case. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 27(2), p 217-226.
- Widiatmika, U. W., Pastika, I. W. & Satyawati, M. S. (2023). Insider and outsider language in Indonesian suicide notes: Forensic linguistic study. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 6(8), 7509-7516.
- Woldemariam, H.Z. (2020). *Approaching research paradigms and philosophies*. University of Science and Technology.
- Woldemariam, H.Z. (2018). The enhancement of sociolinguistic competence through feminist stylistics. *Asian journal of African studies*, Vol 43, 31-80. DOI: [NODE07404927](https://doi.org/10.1080/07404927.2018.1511111).
- Woldemariam, H.Z. (2015). The development of pragmatic competence (pc) through pragmatic stylistics (PS). *NAWA journal of language and communication* 9 (1), 46-88. DOI:[435095410](https://doi.org/10.1080/07404927.2015.1053111).https://ir.nust.na/jspui/bitstream/10628/705/1/The%20development%20of%20pragmatic%20competence_HZW.pdf
- Wolf, B. (2018). *Gender-based violence in discourse. A comparative study on anti-violence communication initiatives across Europe, in Austria and Spain*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330688235_Gender-based_violence_in_discourse_A_comparative_study_on_anti-violence_communication_initiatives_across_Europe_in_Austria_and_Spain
- World Health Organisation (WHO). (2021). *Namibia's Health Sector responding to violence against women and girls*. <https://www.afro.who.int/news/namibias-health-sector-responding-violence-against-women-and-girls#:~:text=Globally%20and%20in%20Namibia%20one,told%20anyone%20about%20the%20violence>.

- World Health Organisation (WHO). (2022). *WHO's GBV clinical handbook an eye-opener for doctors in Namibia*. <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/namibia/news/whos-gbv-clinical-handbook-eye-opener-doctors-namibia>
- Yang, W., & Sun, Y. (2010). Interpretation of 'discourse' from different perspectives: A tentative reclassification and exploration of discourse analysis. *The International Journal - Language Society and Culture*, 31, 127-138. www.educ.utas.edu.au/users/tle/JOURNAL/
- Zheng, J., Ng, K. C., Zheng, R., & Tam, K. Y. (2024). The Effects of Sentiment Evolution in Financial Texts: A Word Embedding Approach. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 41(1), 178–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421222.2023.2301176>
- Zhyhadlo O. Y. (2021). forensic linguistics: history, main tasks and prospects. *Scientific Bulletin of the International Humanitarian University*, 1(47), 76-79.

APPENDICES

Appendices A

CONTENT CHECKLIST ANALYSIS

Introduction

To conduct a comprehensive analysis, threat text messages on gender-based violence will be collected from cases closed archives of the Gender-Based Violence Victim Protection Division (GBVVPDiv) of the Namibian Police Force, Windhoek. Consent and privacy guidelines will be adhered to when handling personal information and sensitive data will be anonymised. The collected texts will undergo initial pre-processing, including cleaning of any formatting inconsistencies, removal of personal identifiers, and standardisation of text format to ensure that the texts are ready for linguistic analysis. Based on the objectives of this study and the theoretical framework to be used, forensic linguistics analysis will consider:

1. Language Features Analysis

A detailed analysis of syntax, grammar, vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions in threat text messages will be conducted. Patterns that could potentially indicate the sociolinguistic background of the threat text originators will be noted.

2. Stylistic Analysis

The writing style of the texts will be examined, focusing on sentence structures, tone, and formality to establish linguistic profiles of various social groups.

3. Regional Markers and Code-Switching

Identification of regional linguistic markers and instances of code-switching or borrowing will be carried out to pinpoint potential geographical origins of the threat texts and any language influences.

4. Lexical and Pragmatic Analysis

The lexical analysis will involve investigation of vocabulary, jargon, or unusual terms. The pragmatic analysis will focus on politeness, directness, and speech acts in threat texts.

5. Register and Genre Analysis

An in-depth analysis of linguistic features related to formality, tone, and genre will be undertaken to identify linguistic discourse.

6. Intent Linguistic cues on GBV and Manipulative Patterns

To assess the intention of committing GBV, linguistic cues such as hedge words, emotional language, and urgency, will be identified. Manipulative language patterns will also be noted.

TEXT ANALYSIS CHECKLIST

Objective 1: Identify linguistic evidence, features, and choices

- Investigate the syntax and grammar of the threat texts.
- Investigate vocabulary in the threat texts, including the unusual terms, or jargon.
- Examine the use of politeness words, directness, and speech acts to identify linguistic evidence.
- Identify linguistic cues associated with GBV such as hedge words, excessive detail, and vague language.

Objective 2: Investigate the discourses structures

- Investigate the format and style of text messages looking at the opening, introduction, body and conclusion, including sentence structure, and formality.
- Explore the writing style of the threat texts in terms of tone and genre.
- Examine how sentences are structured and how facts are presented to determine if there are intention of committing GBV.

Objective 3: Describe the sociolinguistic profiles

- Analyse the use of vocabulary, idioms, and colloquialisms that could provide insights into the author's sociolinguistic background.
- Investigate the syntax and grammar of the threat texts to identify possible linguistic patterns.

- Examine linguistic features to established linguistic profiles of different social groups.
- investigate the regional linguistic markers that might indicate the origin of the author (e.g., specific dialects, local slang).
- Investigate instances of code-switching (switching between languages) or borrowing from other languages, if present, to determine potential language influence, educational level, social status etc.

CHECKLIST

Linguistic items	Tick/ cross	List of identified linguistic items
Is there any threatening word or phrase?		
Are there modal verbs that indicate certainty or obligation?		
The use of pronouns that reveals the relationship between the sender and the recipient.		
Identify the types of sentences whether they are declarative, imperative, interrogative.		
Are there any speech acts such as commands, warnings, or promises in the text?		
Are there any politeness markers in the text message?		
Identify the use of punctuations.		
Is there any repetition of words or certain emphasis?		
Is there a negative language use?		
Identify direct or indirect threat present in the text.		
Is there any figurative language used?		
Identify lexical choices used.		

Is there any Code-switch present in the text?		
Identify the register and style used in the text.		
Is there any slang or jargon in the text?		
Are the emojis or emotions shown?		
Is there any time indicated in the text?		
analyse the introductions of topics and how they are maintained and shifted.		
Analyse how the structure of the text message: is there an introduction, body and conclusion?		
Analyse if the author wrote his/her name at the beginning or end of the text.		
Are there any cohesive devices?		
How are the sentences structured?		
Is there any power dynamics or dominance shown in the text?		
Are there any discourse markers used in the text?		

Appendices B



SCHOOL OF HUMAN SCIENCE AND EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL

Ref: S00S010/2024
Student / Staff no.: 222120088
Issue Date: 30 July 2024

RESEARCH TOPIC

Title: A Forensic Linguistics Investigation of Threat Text Messages Addressed to Gender-based Violence (GBV) Victims Reported at the Namibian Police Force, Windhoek

Researcher: Rachel Mwayola Heita
E-mail: heitarachelm@gmail.com
Supervisor: Professor Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam
E-mail: hwoldemariam@nust.na

Dear Rachel Mwayola Heita,

The Faculty of Commerce, Human Sciences and Education of the Namibia University of Science and Technology through the School of Human Science and Communication Research Ethics Committee (S-REC) reviewed your application for the above-mentioned research. The research as set out in the application has been approved.

We would like to point out that you, as principal investigator, are obliged to:

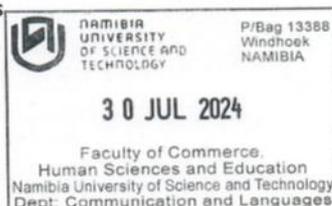
- maintain the ethical integrity of your research,
- adhere to the Research policy and ethical guidelines of NUST, and
- remain within the scope of your research proposal and supporting evidence as submitted to the S-REC.

Should any aspect of your research change from the information presented to the S-REC, which could affect the possibility of harm to any research subject, you are obligated to report it immediately to the S-REC as applicable in writing.

We wish you success with your research and trust that it will positively contribute to the quest for knowledge at NUST and in society.

Sincerely,

Dr Theresia Mushaandja
Acting Head of Department: Communication and Languages
Tel: +264 61 207 2059
E-mail: tmushaandja@nust.na





REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



POL 716

Namibian Police Force

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, IMMIGRATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Tel No: (+264 61) 209 3111
Fax No: (+264 61) 220 621

CONFIDENTIAL

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL
Namibian Police Force
Private Bag 12024
Ausspannplatz
WINDHOEK
Namibia

Enquiries: Comm Mafwila / Sgt (1) Shaningwa

Our Ref.: 8/3/1

Your Ref.:

Ms Rachel M. Heita
P.O. Box 21818
WINDHOEK

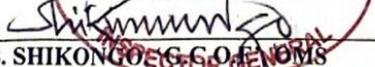
Dear Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH AT GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SUB-DIVISION, KHOMAS REGION

1. Receipt of your letter dated 12 August 2024 regarding the above subject matter is hereby acknowledged with thanks.
2. Your request to carry out an academic research within the Namibian Police Force titled: "*A Forensic Linguistics Investigation of Threat Messages Addressed to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Victims Reported at the Namibian Police Force*" is hereby approved.
3. Therefore, your interest and willingness to carry out a research study within the Namibian Police Force is highly appreciated. Furthermore, you are urged to ensure that information that will be provided to you must be treated with high level of confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose except for this academic research.
4. It would be required that the final research paper must be shared with Human Capital Management Directorate, Police National Headquarters.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely, WINDHOEK

 : LT GEN

J.S. SHIKONGO, G. C. O. GENERAL
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE: NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE

Cc: The Head: Policy Planning and Development Directorate

Appendices D

ACET Consultancy
Anenyasha Communication, Editing and Training
Box 50453 Bachbrecht, Windhoek, Namibia
Cell: +264814218613
Email: mlambons@yahoo.co.uk

16 November 2024

To whom it may concern

LANGUAGE EDITING – RACHEL MWAYOLA HEITA

This letter serves to confirm that a research project titled *A FORENSIC LINGUISTICS INVESTIGATION OF THREAT TEXT MESSAGES ADDRESSED TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) VICTIMS REPORTED AT THE NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE, WINDHOEK* was submitted to me for language editing.

The research was professionally edited and track changes and suggestions were made in the document. The research content or the author's intentions were not altered during the editing process and the author has the authority to accept or reject my suggestions.

Yours faithfully



PROF. (DR) NELSON MLAMBO
PhD in English
M.A. in Intercultural Communication
M.A. in English
B. A. Special Honours in English – First class
B. A. English & Linguistics