



MOOD ANALYSIS OF INVESTIGATORS IN CONVERSATIONS DURING GENERAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS IN THE POLICE: A FORENSIC LINGUISTICS STUDY

Deni Indrawan¹, Asri Ismail², Muh. Ikbāl³, Daudi Richard Malusu⁴

^{1,2,3} Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

⁴ Tongyi Environmental Service Company Limited, Tanzania

Email: deniindrawan@unm.ac.id

Received
18 November 2025

Revised
15 December 2025

Accepted
24 December 2025

Abstract

The investigation of general criminal offenses exhibits several implementation-related phenomena, including wrongful arrests and an overreliance on eliciting confessions from examinees. This study focuses on the investigative process as reflected in the verbaal van verhoor (interrogation record). Within investigative interactions, the object of analysis is the investigator's MOOD system. MOOD is selected because, as a linguistic resource within the interpersonal meaning domain of Systemic Functional Linguistics, it constitutes the lexicogrammatical basis through which investigators organize meaning exchange in investigative conversations in accordance with particular aims or interests. This research adopts a critical qualitative approach, employed to critically and emancipatorily uncover the realities of investigators' language use. The study is designed as a case study, examining a general criminal case at the investigation stage within the police institution. The findings indicate that investigative conversations in this case contain 25 instances of MOOD usage by the investigator. The investigator's dominant status and the pursuit of confession drive the interaction, as shown by these results. This study makes two concrete contributions: (1) serving as a reference for the development of emancipatory investigative questioning instruments, and (2) informing the development of teaching materials for forensic linguistics courses using a Systemic Functional Linguistics approach. Future research may employ comparative units drawn from other criminal cases or specific contexts, such as doctor-patient interactions.

Keywords: *forensic linguistics; interpersonal meaning; investigator mood; criminal offense*

INTRODUCTION

Certain law-enforcement personnel commit a range of violations that result in wrongful arrests (Musaigwa & Kalitanyi, 2024). These violations frequently take the form of irregularities in the conduct of investigations when constructing criminal cases. Wrongful-arrest cases have been found to be more prevalent than cases of prosecutorial error (Yuliyanto, 2019). This pattern indicates significant problems in police investigative procedures and practices. In the context of criminal investigations, communication between investigators and examinees (witnesses or suspects) plays a crucial role because it lies at the core of evidence gathering (Mulyadi, 2020). The investigative process constitutes a formal domain of interaction that is highly susceptible to abuses of authority

and biacognitive vulnerabilities (Gudjonsson, 2018). Accordingly, research on investigators' utterances becomes essential. In handling criminal cases, investigators often face challenges, particularly when the offense lacks direct evidence. An initial requirement for an investigator is to secure at least two (2) legally valid pieces of evidence based on a report of an alleged offense. This evidence is critical to advance the case to trial or to designate a reported party as a suspect, given that Article 183 of the Indonesian Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) explicitly requires two (2) lawful pieces of evidence, together with the judge's conviction, as a mandatory basis for sentencing.

When direct evidence is difficult to obtain, investigators must work to identify circumstantial evidence that can be used to construct legally relevant facts (Ashworth & Redmayne, 2010). In this context, statements from relevant parties become vital. According to Soesilo (1982), there are traditionally two (2) principal processes in investigation: (1) the *Proses Verbal Van Verhoor*, in which investigators hear the statements of suspects and witnesses to understand comprehensively the offense that has occurred; and (2) the *Proses Verbal Van Bevinding*, in which investigators examine relevant elements at the crime scene (TKP). The *Proses Verbal Van Verhoor* was selected as the object of this study because, within this process, investigators conduct interrogative conversations to obtain statements/information. Such statements may be used to support material evidence already obtained from crime-scene examinations or, more importantly, to serve as indicative evidence during investigation, in accordance with the hierarchy of evidence recognized in Indonesian criminal procedure law (KUHAP Article 184). The investigation stage is a particularly compelling object of inquiry because it is fundamental to criminal law enforcement. As the initial phase of judicial proceedings, investigation strongly influences subsequent stages (Anwar, 2009).

A central phenomenon in investigative practice is the investigator's effort to obtain a confession from the examinee (suspect or witness). Research consistently analyzes police interrogation during investigations and finds that confessions often motivate and provoke police (Leo, 2013). Investigators frequently treat confessions as the "queen of evidence," facilitating prosecution (Kassin et al., 2010). In this regard, Evans (2010) and Baldwin (1993) argue that investigative practice has shifted toward procedures or police guidelines primarily aimed at securing admissions of guilt. This change could be seen as a deviation if investigators use non-standard methods or methods that aren't based on criminal law to get these confessions. The use of coercive or manipulative interrogation methods can increase the risk of false confessions, which have destructive consequences for justice and may culminate in wrongful-arrest cases (Gudjonsson, 2018).

Fundamental principles of criminal procedure must be upheld. Article 117(1) of the KUHAP expressly emphasizes that, in investigative interviews, examinees (witnesses or suspects) have the right to provide statements without pressure or intervention from any party, particularly investigators. This provision emphasizes the value of voluntariness and fair procedures in eliciting statements. To comprehend the functional deployment of language, it is imperative to analyze the dynamics of interaction among participants, particularly between investigators and suspects (Lam & Webster, 2009). These issues can be unpacked by analyzing speech roles and speech functions through lexicogrammatical features, including MOOD types.

This study is relevant to prior research on MOOD system analysis, such as analyses of MOOD in television talk-show conversations (Vina, 2023) and classical humor discourse (Chafidzoh, 2020). However, these studies are limited to entertainment and cultural discourse domains. Consequently, there is currently no research that

explicitly clarifies the MOOD system in the utterances of investigators during law-enforcement interactions, especially in criminal interrogation contexts. This study therefore seeks to explicate the MOOD system using a Forensic Linguistics (LSF) approach. Essentially, it aims to examine in depth how interpersonal meaning is expressed and negotiated in investigative conversations through MOOD analysis. This approach is crucial because MOOD analysis can reveal the extent to which investigative interviews are conducted as fair interrogations or instead tend toward coercion (Eggins, 2004), where the dominance of investigators' sentence structures may influence suspects' statements and ultimately contribute to wrongful convictions (Bartels, 2011). This study focuses on analyzing investigators' MOOD choices in conversations during investigations of general criminal offenses within the police. Accordingly, it contributes to significantly extending the application of the LSF framework to elucidate linguistic dimensions that bear on justice within the criminal justice system.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Forensic Linguistics

Forensic linguistics is a field within applied linguistics. McMnamin (1993) defines forensic linguistics as the scientific study of language use conducted for forensic purposes and the construction of law enforcement. In line with this view, Sholihatun argues that forensic linguistics is a scientific study of language that contributes to evidentiary law and helps resolve criminal mysteries as part of efforts to achieve justice. The application of linguistics in law enforcement practice has continued to develop by contributing to the resolution of criminal cases, particularly those involving language use, such as defamation, threats, extortion, hate speech, hoaxes, and related offenses (Tiersma & Solan, 2012). More specifically, forensic linguistics examines: (1) offenses; (2) language use in documents; (3) language use in law enforcement processes within the police, including the language of investigators and suspects or witnesses; (4) an individual's language in interviews; (5) courtroom language; (6) conversational records related to criminal acts; (7) language in written works and plagiarism; and (8) the identification of speech sounds (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007). As the field has developed, forensic linguistics has also been employed as an intervention method in counterterrorism and intelligence work, for example through audio or voice verification. Forensic linguistics distinguishes units of data analysis based on language variety, namely spoken-language data and written-language data. The analytical potential of forensic-linguistic data includes comparative (α/β), differentiating (+/-), and measuring (%) units. These units can be applied to both spoken and written data in the context of language use as process, product, or legal evidence (Susanto & Deri, 2020). In spoken-language analysis focusing on language in legal processes a process, processes, for instance, police interrogation processes, interrogation, the comparative unit (P-1) may be conducted by comparing the investigator's spoken data as unit α with the suspect's spoken data as unit β . For the differentiating dimension (P-2), analysis is carried out by identifying distinctive markers (features) that differentiate (+/-) the investigator's and suspect's utterances; and for the measuring unit (P-3), the analyst calculates the percentage (%) of such distinctive features for descriptive purposes (Upton & Cook, 2014). Comparative units may also be derived across cases when the intended research concerns the construction of intrinsic elements from one event to another—for example, comparing an investigator's language or a suspect's language across different cases (α_1 vs. α_2 , or β_1 vs.

β2). According to [Gibbons \(2003\)](#), methodology in forensic linguistics highlights four areas of study. First, it examines systemic analysis of language use in conversation, involving clause, sentence, and discourse elements deployed in particular social contexts. Second, it analyses percentage of analyzes the exchange of meaning through these linguistic features. Third, it includes tests of speakers' language proficiency. Fourth, it analyses analyzes analyzes the context in which conversation occurs, such as cultural context and situational context.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

In the 1960s, Halliday introduced Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a linguistic tradition. The term systemic analyzes "systemic" views language as a system of choices. Halliday further explains that, paradigmatically, language use involves selecting among forms. In communicative events, language users face choices of clause type, such as declarative or indicative, and whether the clause is active or passive. The term functional i "systemic" "functional" indicates that language develops functions based on its context of use ([Wiratno, 2018](#)). Systemic Functional Linguistics does not focus solely on analyzing "functional" analyzing linguistic resources (words, morphemes, sentences, or texts), but texts) butt also emphasis texts) but emphasizes social, cultural, and ideological meanings ([Cof & Donohue, 2012](#)). SFL regards patterns of linguistic structure and meaning as co-genetically linked to social and cultural factors in the settings where language is produced and used ([Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014](#)). Halliday sought to link language with social structure as a key dimension of human experience. Language is one of several meaning systems alongside traditions, livelihood systems, and politeness systems that collectively form human culture ([Santoso, 2008](#)). Halliday conceptualizes language as social semiotics. Formulating language as social semiotics means interpreting language within its sociocultural context, where culture is semiotically understood as an information system. Language does not merely consist of sentences; rather, it consists of texts or discourse, namely an exchange of meaning in an interpersonal context. Within the interpersonal metafunction, the clause is viewed as a meaning resource that organizes conceptualizes organizes interactional processes between speaker and addressee ([Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014](#)).

MOOD

MOOD is a key term in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which views the clause as a lexicogrammatical system operating within the interpersonal meaning domain. According to [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2014\)](#), the clause functions as a resource for organizing interactional processes in conversations between participants. The clause, as the main unit of grammatical structure ([Bloor & Bloor, 2004](#)), is traditionally defined as a grammatical unit minimally consisting of a subject and a predicate. In the context of MOOD, the term refers to clause types in terms of their function in interaction. In communicative events, speakers are faced with choices between major clause systems, namely indicative or imperative. The indicative MOOD has two types: declarative and interrogative. These MOOD choices shift dynamically as speakers and addressees alternate roles in conversation.

The clause serves as an interpersonal meaning resource resource, functioning as a tool for meaning exchange, resource, namely, exchanging meaning by giving or demanding something. This exchange produces four main speech functions: offer, statement, command, and question. question. The function of giving gives rise to

offers (giving goods/services) and statements (giving information), whereas the function of demanding gives rise to commands (demanding goods/services) and questions (demanding information). In general, when the exchange concerns goods or services, the realized clause takes the form of a proposal; when it concerns information, it takes the form of a proposition. The MOOD system is a linguistic resource for propositions in SFL and forms part of the interpersonal metafunction of language; it reflects speakers' ability to achieve communicative goals and represents meanings such as agreement, doubt, commands, and related interpersonal stances.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a critical qualitative approach. This approach is adopted for several reasons. First, the study seeks to expose the reality of language use by investigators during the investigation of general criminal offenses within the police context, which requires critical examination in the analytical review process. Second, a critical qualitative approach is used to analyze data in a critical and emancipatory manner. The theoretical orientation of this study is critical language studies, drawing on a forensic linguistic approach with a systemic functional linguistic perspective. This theoretical orientation is applied to unpack investigators' MOOD choices in conversational interactions during the investigation of general criminal offenses in the police setting. To examine these conversational events, the study applies an alignment method, in which the researcher is involved in the natural context of the conversation as an effort to ensure objective inquiry and to obtain data naturalistically.

The data in this study consist of investigators' utterances that employ MOOD resources. The data source is conversational interaction during investigations of general criminal offenses fraud and embezzlement (Articles 378 and 372 of the Indonesian Criminal Code [KUHP]) conducted at the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation (Ditreskrim), South Sulawesi Regional Police, between October and December 2022. The use of data in this study upholds the principles of research ethics as formulated by the International Association for Forensic and Legal Linguistics (IAFLL), including: (a) integrity, (b) objectivity and professional competence, (c) confidentiality and the interests of the case, and (d) practitioner recommendations (Butters, 2011).

The data collection procedure is organized into several steps: (1) conducting direct observation without participating in the conversation between investigators and suspects, adopting the role of a complete observer. In this role, the researcher documents (by note-taking and audio recording) events directly while not engaging in the interaction (Chadwick et al., 1991); (2) taking notes on and recording all conversations involving the subjects (investigator and examinee); (3) transcribing the recorded conversations into written dialogue texts; (4) classifying the identified data according to utterance units using a forensic linguistic approach and speech characteristics within the systemic functional linguistic theoretical framework namely, investigators' MOOD choices in investigative conversations regarding general criminal offenses in the police context; and (5) employing documentation as the primary data collection technique, whereby the collected data are classified based on the formulated instrument.

The researcher serves as the key instrument in this study. Data are collected and analyzed in accordance with the predetermined research focus. Supporting instruments used during data collection include a table as follows:

Table 1
Supporting Instruments

Research Focus	Indicators	Sub-indicators	Data
Investigators' MOOD in investigative conversations concerning general criminal offenses in the police context	• Indicative MOOD:	- Declarative indicative MOOD	
		- Polar interrogative indicative MOOD	
		- Why interrogative indicative MOOD	
	- Imperative MOOD		

Data analysis in this study employs conversation analysis through a forensic linguistic approach with a systemic functional linguistic perspective. Conversation analysis is used to observe the linguistic system governing verbal communication between investigators and suspects. Forensic linguistics is applied to classify the focal analytical domains and the data units in this study. Systemic functional linguistics is used to examine the meaning-making system in investigators' utterances during the investigation of general criminal offenses in the police context. In general, the stages of data analysis include reading the data, selecting and sorting the data, presenting the data, and drawing conclusions.

DISCUSSION

Indicative MOOD

The use of the indicative MOOD is divided into three (3) types: the indicative declarative, the indicative polar interrogative, and the indicative wh-interrogative. A complete presentation of the analytical findings is provided below.

Indicative Declarative MOOD

The data analysis shows that the indicative declarative MOOD is realized through propositional clauses that perform the exchange function of giving information and the speech function of statements, which are marked by hedging or other lexical markers, such as the use of particles or particular word classes. This can be seen in Data (1) below.

Data 1

T: As for Ms. Debi, at the beginning of the meeting I did not know her. As for Mr. Muliadi, I knew him, indeed, through an office colleague.

P: So, basically, between the two parties there was someone who did not know the other, but eventually became acquainted.

T: Yes.

In Data 1, the verb “so” functions as a hedging marker to realize the exchange function of giving information through the propositional clause “between the two parties there was someone who did not know the other, but eventually became acquainted.” This propositional clause performs the speech function of a statement, realizing the meaning exchange concerning the cause or background of interaction between a suspect and another party, which becomes the topic of the conversation. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data 2 below.

Data 2

P: Okay, what I ask you is based on the loss experienced by the complainant. Has Mr. Muliadi ever received money?

T: Yes.

In Data 2, the indicative declarative MOOD is marked by hedging in the utterance through the verb “based on”, which realizes the exchange function of giving information via the propositional clause “the loss experienced by the complainant.” This clause performs the speech function of a statement, realizing the meaning exchange concerning the consequence of an action discussed in the conversation. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data 3 below.

Data 3

P: In the form of a check, yes cash check, yes?

T: Yes, a cash check.

In Data 3, the indicative declarative MOOD is marked by the particle “yes” to realize the exchange function of giving information via the propositional clause “in the form of a check, yes.” This clause performs the speech function of an offer, realizing the meaning exchange concerning the transactional form discussed in the conversation. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data (4) below.

Data 4

P: The money received by Mr. Muliadi, belonging to Ms. Debi, was used for what?

T: It was used as a basis (underloin) for a contract.

In Data 4, the indicative declarative MOOD is marked by the particle “by” to realize the exchange function of giving information via the propositional clauses “the money received by Mr. Muliadi” and “belonging to Ms. Debi.” These clauses perform the speech function of a statement, realizing the meaning exchange regarding the recipient and the giver of a material object discussed in the conversation. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data (5) below.

Data 5

T: It was used as a basis (underloin) for a contract.

P: That means the money belonging to Ms. Debi that was taken by Mr. Muliadi was used to apply a contract to another person as underloin funds, processing funds, or bridging funds basic funds of that kind.

In data 5, the indicative declarative MOOD is marked by the noun “that means” as a hedging device to realize the exchange function of giving information through several clauses, including: “money belonging to Ms. Debi,” “that was taken by Mr. Muliadi,” “was used to apply a contract to another person,” “as underloin funds, processing funds, or bridging funds,” and “basic funds of that kind.” All of these clauses perform the speech function of statements, realizing the meaning exchange concerning ownership and the intended use of a material object discussed in the conversation. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data (6) below.

Data 6

T: There is a written one; in his account there is some, but not much.

P: Yes, that means the authorized capital does not meet the requirement to carry out a contract.

T: It does not meet it, yes.

In Data (6), the indicative declarative MOOD is marked by the particle “yes” and the verb “that means” as hedging devices to realize the exchange function of giving information through the propositional clause “the authorized capital does not meet the requirement to carry out a contract.” This clause performs the speech function of a statement, realizing the meaning exchange concerning an organizational or corporate provision that fails to satisfy the requirements for entering into an agreement with another party. The indicative declarative MOOD is also observable in Data (7) below.

Data 7

P: Has Muliadi, in this case, returned Ms. Debi’s money?

T: Up to now, not yet.

P: Up to now, not yet, yes?

The indicative declarative MOOD is marked by the adverb “not yet” to realize the exchange function of giving information through the propositional clause “Up to now, not yet.” This clause performs the speech function of a statement, realizing the meaning that a party has violated an agreement, as discussed in the conversation.

Indicative Polar Interrogative MOOD

The data analysis shows that the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is realized through propositional clauses that perform the exchange function of demanding information and the speech function of questions, marked by interrogatives or other lexical markers to negotiate participant confirmation through positive polarity (yes) or negative polarity (no). This can be seen in Data (8) below.

Data 8

P: What I ask you. Do you know Ms. Debi and Mr. Muliadi?

T: As for Ms. Debi, at the beginning of the meeting I did not know her. As for Mr. Muliadi, I knew him, indeed, through an office colleague.

In Data 8, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the verb “ask” as a hedging form and the interrogative “do (you)” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “Do you know Ms. Debi and Mr.

Muliadi?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate participant confirmation through positive or negative polarity regarding familiarity, interaction history, and the suspect’s mode of operation within the conversation. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (9) below.

Data 9

P: Then there is no family relationship or employment relationship?

T: Yes, none.

In Data 9, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the adverb “no” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “there is no family relationship or employment relationship?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate participant confirmation through polarity regarding kinship with another party. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (10) below.

Data 10

P: Okay. What I ask you is based on the loss experienced by the complainant. Has Mr. Muliadi ever received money?

T: Yes.

In Data 10, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the interrogative “has” and the adverb “ever” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “Has Mr. Muliadi ever received money?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate confirmation through polarity regarding transactional involvement that resulted in a loss. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (11) below.

Data 11

P: From Ms. Debi?

T: Yes, by check.

In Data 11, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the particle “from” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “From Ms. Debi?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate participant confirmation through polarity regarding the giver in a transactional event. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (12) below.

Data 12

P: So, does Mr. Muliadi’s company itself have articles of association/household bylaws, or how?

T: There is a written one; in his account there is some, but not much.

In Data 12, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the verb “have” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “does the company have articles of association/household bylaws?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate participant confirmation through polarity

regarding possession of governance arrangements. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (13) below.

Data 13

P: Toward another company, so the money or funds belonging to Ms. Debi that he used to enter into a contract with another person yes?

T: Yes, that is correct, Sir.

In Data 13, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the particle “yes” attached to a question mark (?) to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the preceding propositional clauses “funds belonging to Ms. Debi that he used” and “enter into a contract with another person.” This question negotiates participant confirmation through polarity regarding ownership and actions undertaken in the transactional event. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (14) below.

Data 14

P: Has Muliadi, in this case, returned Ms. Debi’s money?

T: Up to now, not yet.

In Data 14, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the interrogative “has” and the perfect marker “has (already)” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “returned Ms. Debi’s money?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate confirmation through polarity regarding the good faith of a party deemed at fault in the transactional event. The indicative polar interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (15) below.

Data 15

P: Because Mr. Muliadi was promised something?

T: He was promised.

In Data 15, the indicative polar interrogative MOOD is marked by the particle “because” and the verb “was promised” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “because Mr. Muliadi was promised something?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate participant confirmation through polarity regarding a verbal act that led to the transactional event.

Indicative What Interrogative MOOD

The data analysis shows that the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is realized through propositional clauses that perform the exchange function of demanding information and the speech function of questions, marked by wh-words or other lexical markers to negotiate specific information or knowledge within the conversation. This is shown in Data (16) below.

Data 16

P: In what form did he receive the money?

T: A check, Sir.

In Data 16, the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is marked by the noun “form” and the wh-word “what” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “in what form did he receive the money?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate explanatory participant knowledge concerning the transactional form after two parties reached an agreement. The indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (17) below.

Data 17

P: How much was the check?

T: One billion.

In Data (17), the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is marked by the wh-word “how much” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “How much was the check?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate explanatory participant knowledge regarding the numerical amount in a transactional event. The indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (18) below.

Data 18

P: The money received by Mr. Muliadi, belonging to Ms. Debi, was used for what?

T: It was used as a basis (underloin) for a contract.

In Data (18), the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is marked by the particle “for” and the wh-word “what” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “was used for what?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate explanatory participant knowledge concerning the intended use of the material received in the transactional event. The indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (19) below.

Data (19):

P: So, does Mr. Muliadi’s company itself have articles of association/household bylaws, or how?

T: There is a written one; in his account there is some, but not much.

In Data 19, the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is marked by the particle “or” and the wh-word “how” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause “does the company have articles of association/household bylaws, or how?” This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate explanatory participant knowledge regarding governance arrangements held by one of the parties in a cooperation agreement. The indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is also observable in Data (20) below.

Data 20

P: So, why did Mr. Muliadi enter into a cooperation contract in this case—Mr. Muliadi as the president director of PT***—entering into a contract with PT*** owned by Alamsyah or Engkos Kosasi?

T: He did so based on encouragement from Mr. Alam and Mr. Engkos Kosasi.

In Data (20), the indicative wh-interrogative MOOD is marked by the wh-word “why” to realize the exchange function of demanding information via the propositional clause concerning the act of entering into a cooperation contract. This clause performs the speech function of a question to negotiate explanatory participant knowledge regarding the causality behind two parties forming a cooperation arrangement as discussed in the conversation.

Imperative MOOD

The results of the data analysis indicate that the imperative MOOD is realized through incongruently expressed propositional clauses that function as an exchange of meaning in the form of a request, and as a speech function of command, signaled by particular lexical markers such as the particle *yah*, which is used to prompt the realization of the intended meaning. This is illustrated in the following excerpt.

Data 21

P: In the form of a check, *yah*, a cash check, *yah*?

T: Yes, a cash check.

In Data (21), the imperative MOOD is marked by the noun *check* combined with the particle *yah* as a form of hedging, enabling the exchange of meaning as a request through the propositional clause “cash check, *yah*?”. This propositional clause performs a command speech function by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting an explicit confirmation from the participant regarding the transactional form between two parties engaged in a cooperation agreement within the conversational discourse. The imperative MOOD is also evident in Data (21) below.

Data 22

P: One billion, *yah*?

P: Yes, one billion.

In Data 22, the imperative MOOD is marked by the particle *yah* attached to the numeral *billion*, enabling the exchange of meaning as a request through the propositional clause “one billion, *yah*?”. This propositional clause functions as a command by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting explicit confirmation from the participant regarding the amount of the material transaction involved in an event of cooperation agreement within the conversational discourse. The imperative MOOD can also be observed in Data (22) below.

Data 23

P: You suffered, *yah*, materially, in the amount of one billion, *yah*?

T: Yes.

In Data (23), the imperative MOOD is marked by the verb *suffered* combined with the particle *yah* and by the numeral *billion* likewise combined with *yah*, enabling the exchange of meaning as a request through the propositional clause “you suffered, *yah*, materially, in the amount of one billion, *yah*?”. This propositional clause performs a

command speech function by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting explicit confirmation from the participant regarding the consequences of the cooperation agreement and the material value of the transaction within the conversational discourse. The imperative MOOD is also evident in Data (23) below.

Data 24

T: Not until now.

P: Not until now, is that so, *yah*?

In Data (24), the imperative MOOD is marked by the pronoun *that so* combined with the particle *yah* to perform the exchange of meaning as a request and to represent the propositional clause “not until now.” This propositional representation performs a command speech function by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting explicit confirmation from the participant regarding the party that violated the work agreement and the actions that should be taken toward the provider of material resources within the conversational discourse. The imperative MOOD can also be seen in Data (24) below.

Data 25

P: Fourteen working days starting from October 1, 2021, *yah*?

T: Yes, Sir, October 1, 2021.

In Data (25), the imperative MOOD is marked by the particle *yah* to perform the exchange of meaning as a request through the propositional clause “starting from October 1, 2021, *yah*?”. This propositional clause serves a command speech function by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting confirmation from the participant regarding the agreed time span of the transaction between the two parties engaged in a cooperation agreement within the conversational discourse. The imperative MOOD is further observable in Data (25) below.

Data 26

P: And now it is already October 2022. This means it has moved beyond the contractual context; in this case, the contract has not been carried out, *yah*?

T: Yes, Sir.

In Data (26), the imperative MOOD is marked by the verb *means* as a form of hedging and by the particle *yah* to realize the exchange of meaning as a request through the propositional clause “it has moved beyond the contractual context; in this case, the contract has not been carried out, *yah*?”. This propositional clause performs a command speech function by realizing the exchange of meaning incongruently in an interrogative form, eliciting explicit confirmation from the participant that the cooperation agreement is no longer applicable and that the agreed terms have not been realized within the conversational discourse.

Based on the results of the data analysis in this study, a total of 25 instances of investigators’ MOOD use were identified in conversations during the investigation of general criminal offences within the police context (Fraud and Embezzlement cases regulated under Articles 378 and 372 of the Indonesian Criminal Code [KUHP] at the

Directorate of General Criminal Investigation, South Sulawesi Regional Police), as summarized in the following table.

Table 2
Use of MOOD

MOOD Type	MOOD Subtype	Frequency
Indicative MOOD	Declarative	7
	Polar interrogative	8
	What interrogative	5
Imperative MOOD	—	5

Indicative MOOD is a form of utterance that is grammatically elevated to deliver a statement or a question (i.e., declarative or interrogative utterances) to participants in interaction. The use of explicit performative verbs serves as a marker in the realization of indicative MOOD.

Indicative MOOD: Declarative Subtype

In the police investigative conversations examined, the investigators' indicative MOOD in the declarative subtype occurred seven (7) times and was realized through propositional clauses. Investigators organized the interaction through propositional clauses that serve the speech function of giving realizing statements used to negotiate information or discourse with the participants. This results in an asymmetrical positioning between investigators and suspects, given the dominant status associated with the use of indicative declarative MOOD. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) argue that this asymmetry emerges because the speaker (the investigator) is negotiating information or discourse with the addressee (the suspect), thereby producing unequal participant roles in the interaction.

These findings align with Vina (2023) study on MOOD functions in talk-show conversations, which showed that indicative declarative MOOD realizes the speech function of statements in the exchange of meaning. In a different context, the present results are also consistent with research on interpersonal meaning in song lyrics, where clauses function as “giving” to state information or discourse to participants (Kamaliah, 2021) (Tamphu et al., 2024). Consistent with this discussion, J.R. (1992) states that participant status refers to relative positioning within prevailing socio-cultural hierarchies in interaction; such status can dichotomize degrees of equality and differentiate superior and submissive positions (J.R., 1992). Superior status may be realized through the use of modal verbal devices, modulation verbs that reinforce obligation, congruent meaning realization, and related resources. By contrast, submissive status may be realized through stance-taking power manifested in engagement, or through expressions of agreement within the conversation.

Indicative MOOD: Polar Interrogative Subtype

The analysis also identified eight (8) instances of indicative MOOD in the polar interrogative subtype in the investigative conversations. This MOOD type and subtype is among the dominant forms used by investigators because it aims to obtain participants' admissions through positive polarity (“yes”) and negative polarity (“no”) in relation to the information or offence-related discourse being negotiated. This is consistent with an

investigative study by [Gudjonsson \(2018\)](#), which examined police investigation reports in London and found that investigative constructions are oriented toward detailing the offence and determining whether sufficient evidence exists; thus, eliciting admissions becomes a primary objective for investigators ([Imam et al., 2025](#)). These findings are also relevant to [Wicaksana's \(2023\)](#) study of investigative conversations in a murder case, which reported that investigators' utterances in the BAP (Berita Acara Perkara) construct interpersonal meaning and themes through the use of mode (clauses within the scope of ideological meaning) ([J.R., 1992](#)). The modes used by investigators as reflected in the BAP encode an ideology of power, thereby compelling suspects to provide admissions regarding the negotiated information or discourse. In line with [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2014\)](#), interrogative MOOD functions to ask about what becomes topical in a conversation. A key characteristic of interrogative utterances is the control of perspective by the participant who poses questions to another participant.

Indicative MOOD: What Interrogative Subtype

Based on the data analysis, the investigators' indicative MOOD in the WH-interrogative subtype occurred five (5) times in the investigative conversations. Investigators established an interrogative interactional pattern through clauses that realize the exchange function of demanding and the speech function of questioning. [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2014\)](#) argue that the core of an interview activity is the systematic exchange of propositions. Investigators exercise power in negotiating information with participants. This result aligns with [Chafidzoh's \(2020\)](#) study on the MOOD system in humorous conversations, which found that participants with higher social status tend to possess greater power or dominate other participants by requesting and demanding information, and by using indicative interrogative MOOD more frequently. Participants labeled as having higher social status more often realize the speech function of questioning in meaning exchange.

A comparable pattern was reported by [Khaofia and Info \(2018\)](#) in a study of political talk-show conversations, which concluded that the host is not equal to other discourse participants. This is attributed to the intensity of modal and obligation resources employed by the host to maintain conversational control. Consequently, the host holds a superior position in selecting which information is exchanged or negotiated with other participants.

Participants who realize this MOOD type construct a situation that signals an expectation of information exchange more specifically, that the speaker using interrogative MOOD requires an answer from the addressee. [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2014\)](#) further note that indicative interrogatives may be open or closed: interrogatives are open when the negotiated information is not limited and is explanatory in nature, whereas they are closed when what is negotiated is polarity namely, "yes" or "no."

Imperative MOOD

The analysis identified five (5) instances of investigators' imperative MOOD in the investigative conversations. Investigators employed this MOOD type to realize the exchange function of demanding and the speech function of commands incongruently or metaphorically in an interrogative form. In support of this finding, [Aini, et.al. \(2022\)](#) study on conversational implicature in police interrogation reported that suspects tend to admit (i.e., comply with maxims) during interrogation because the context and situation are structured to lead them to acknowledge wrongdoing. More broadly in relation to

investigative practice, [Hirsch \(2014\)](#) argues that a key competence for investigators is the ability to interpret language before and after it is produced and to use investigative language patterns in conversation as part of ensuring the validity of the suspect's alleged offence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the findings, the MOOD system plays a significant role in realizing investigative interview discourse in cases of fraud and embezzlement (Articles 378 and 372 of the Indonesian Criminal Code) at the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the South Sulawesi Regional Police. The investigators' MOOD choices in these interactions are predominantly indicative, especially declarative clauses and polar interrogatives. The dominance of these two MOOD types indicates the investigators' position of authority in managing the exchange of meaning with suspects, thereby producing an unequal interaction. In addition, the incongruent use of the imperative MOOD through interrogative forms further reinforces investigators' dominance in directing the course and structure of the investigative conversation. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the data focus on a single institution and one type of criminal offense; therefore, the findings cannot yet be generalized to other investigative contexts. Second, the quantity and variation of conversational data are relatively limited and thus may not fully represent the diversity of linguistic practices in investigative processes. Third, the analysis concentrates solely on linguistic aspects, without incorporating non-verbal factors such as intonation, gesture, or psychological dynamics that may shape power relations. Fourth, the study does not comparatively examine how suspects' MOOD choices function to accept, negotiate, or resist investigators' dominance. Fifth, the study does not explore the influence of institutional context such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) and police organizational culture which may also determine patterns of MOOD use in investigative interactions. In light of these limitations, future research is recommended to expand data sources across various case types and institutions in order to obtain a more comprehensive account of MOOD use in investigative practice. A multimodal approach that includes analysis of non-verbal elements should also be considered to provide a fuller understanding of how power relations are constructed. Moreover, comparative analysis between investigators' and suspects' MOOD choices may enrich understanding of meaning negotiation in investigative conversations. Further studies are also expected to integrate linguistic analysis with examination of regulations, SOPs, and institutional culture so that the resulting findings carry stronger implications for improving the quality of investigative communication. An interdisciplinary approach combining linguistics, forensic psychology, and critical discourse studies may also offer a productive direction for future research.

REFERENCES

- Aini, Miza Rahmatika., Fajr Hauzaan Hisyam Mufadhal., Rosid Humam. (2022). Implikatur Percakapan dalam Interogasi Kepolisian Polres Kota Blitar (Sebuah Kajian Linguistik Forensik). *Alfabeta: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pembelajarannya*, 5 (2), hlm. 32—38.
- Anwar, Y., dan Adang. (2009). *Sistem Peradilan Pidana*. Widya Padjadjaran: Bandung.

- Ashworth, A., & Redmayne, M. (2010). *The criminal process: An evaluative study (4th ed.)*. Oxford University Press.
- Bartels, L. (2011). Police interviews with vulnerable adult suspects (Research in Practice No. 21). *Australian Institute of Criminology*. (<https://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rip/rip21>).
- Bloor, T., dan Bloor, M. (2004). *The Functional Analysis of English a Hallidayan Approach*. London: Arnold.
- Butters, R. R. (2011). Ethics, best practices, and standards. *Proceedings of The International Association of Forensic Linguists' Tenth Biennial Conference*, 351–361.
- Chadwick, B.A., H.M. Bahr, dan S.L.Albrecht. (1991). *Metode Penelitian Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial*. Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press
- Chafidzoh, Tsaniananda Fidyatul. (2020). The Choice of Mood System in Functional Systemic Linguistics as Diplomacy Strategy (An Analysis of Classical Arabic Humor Conversation Discourse). *Islah: Journal of Islamic Literature and History*, 1 (1), hlm. 1—20.
- Coulthard, M., dan Johnson, A. (2007a). *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence*. Routledge.
- Cof, C., & Donohue, J. P. (2012). Academic literacies and systemic functional linguistics: How do they relate? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 11, 64–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.11.004>
- Eggs, S. (2004). *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics (2nd ed.)*. Continuum
- Feng, H., & Liu, Y. (2010). *Analysis of Interpersonal Meaning in Public Speeches — A Case Study of Obama's Speech*. 1(6), 825–829. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.1.6.825-829>
- Gibbons, J. (2003). *Forensic Linguistics: an Introduction to Language in The Justice System*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Gudjonsson, G. H. (2018). *The psychology of interrogations and confessions: A handbook*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar (4th ed.)*. Routledge.
- Hirsch, A. (2014). Going to The Source: The “New” Reid Method and False Confessions. *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law*, 11 (2), hlm. 803—826.
- Imam, I., Ayyubi, A., Prayetno, Nurhikmah, E., Saputri, I., & Susilo, A. (2025). Comparative Analysis of Islamic Religious Education Teaching Methods and Their Impact on Mathematical Thinking Skills. *IJEMR: International Journal of Education Management and Religion*, 2(2), 72–88. <https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijemr>
- J.R, M. (1992). *English text System and Structure*.
- Kamaliah, A. M. (2021). *Interpersonal meaning of mood choices on Taylor Swift's song lyrics in Folklore album [Tesis tidak dipublikasikan]*. Universitas Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.
- Kassin, S. M., Drizin, S. A., Grisso, T., Gudjonsson, G. H., Leo, R. A., & Redlich, A. D. (2010). Police-induced confessions: Risk factors and recommendations. *Law and Human Behavior*, 34(1), 3–38. (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10979-009-9188-6>)

- Khaofia, S. (2018). Modalitas sebagai realisasi makna interpersonal dalam Mata Najwa On Stage “Semua Karena Ahok.” *PRASASTI: Journal of Linguistics*, 3(2), 222–234. (<https://doi.org/10.20961/prasasti.v3i2.18053>).
- Lam, M., & Webster, J. (2009). [Judul artikel tidak tersedia]. *Discourse Studies*. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445608098497>).
- Leo, R. A. (2013). Why Interrogation Contamination Occurs Richard. *Ohio State Journal of Crimtnal Law*, 11 (1), hlm. 193—215.
- Maíz-Arévalo, C., & García-Gómez, A. (2013). “You look terrific!” Social evaluation and relationships in online compliments. *Discourse Studies*, 15(6), 321–344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445613490011>
- Martin, J. R. (1992). *English text: System and structure*. John Benjamins.
- Meitasarie, A. (2018). Pilihan mood dalam wacana mantra Using di Banyuwangi. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 4, 54–63.
- Musaigwa, M., & Kalitanyi, V. (2024). Effective leadership in the digital era: An exploration of change management. *Technology Audit and Production Reserves*, 1(4), 6–14. (<https://doi.org/10.15587/2706-5448.2024.297374>)
- McMenamin, G. R. (1993). *Forensic Stylistics*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Nilawardani, A. (2016). Representasi kekuasaan dalam tindak tutur di Pengadilan Negeri Banjarmasin. *Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 6(2), 180–188.
- Rahardi, R. K. (2019). *Kesantunan imperatif bahasa Indonesia: Perspektif pragmatik*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Rudyanto, T. H. (2017). *Bahasa dan kekuasaan dalam praktik-praktik berbahasa*.
- Saragih, A. (2013). *Bahasa dalam konteks sosial*. Universitas Terbuka.
- Santoso, A. (2008). Jejak Halliday dalam Linguistik Kritis dan Analisis Wacana Kritis. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Seni*, 36 (1), hlm. 1—14.
- Sholihatin, E. (2019). *Lingustik Forensik dan Kejahatan Bahasa*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Susanto, & Deri, N. S. (2020). Dimensi analisis bahasa dalam linguistik forensik. *International Journal of Forensic Linguistics*, 1(1), 17–22.
- Tamphu, S., Suyitno, I., Susanto, G., Budiana, N., & Salim, M. R. (2024). Building bridges to the future of learning : Exploring artificial intelligence research using R- Studio assisted bibliometrics. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2417623>
- Tiersma, P. M., & Solan, L. M. (2012). *The Language of Crime*. 263.
- Yuliyanto. (2019). Problematika Tata Cara Eksekusi Ganti Kerugian dalam Perkara Pidana. *De Jure: Jurnal Penelitian Hukum*, 19 (3), hlm. 349—360.
- Vina, Nafalia., dan Elysa Hartati. (2023). An Analysis Of MOOD and Speech Function in The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon Talk Show. *Klausu: Kajian Linguistik, Pembelajaran Bahasa, dan Sastra*, 7 (1), hlm. 9—25.
- Wicaksana, S. D. (2023). Kajian Linguistik Forensik Dalam Penyidikan Kasus Pembunuhan Engeline. *Humanis: Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 27 (2), hlm. 217—226.
- Wibowo, D. A. W. (2016). Konstruksi wacana percakapan interogasi dalam berita kriminal “GresikTerkini.com.” *Aksara*, 1(1).

Wiratno, T. (2018). *Pengantar Ringkas Linguistik Sistemik Fungsional*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.