



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring the Stylistic Devices of the Police Interrogations

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Apr 24, 2024	<p>Listeners and readers need to be provided with a number of ways of comprehending the nature and the relationship of questioning, i.e. interrogating of the police interrogation between detectives and suspects inside the interrogation room from a linguistic point of view. However, excerpting the truth from the mouths of the suspects is not that easy task unless it is preceded by certain skills and strategies utilised by the detective to arrive at the confession and the judiciary evidences. The present paper deals with the concept of stylistic devices of the police interrogations. What is more, the current study tries to answer the following questions: first, what are the devices that are used in police interrogation? Second, what is the most frequent one that is used by interrogators. Third, what are the stylistic functions of these uses? Furthermore, the paper aims at investigating the stylistics devices and finding out to what extent their use could serve the process of interrogation and truth The methodology of this paper is based on Leech and Short model of figurative language. The present paper concludes that the stylistic devices are used by the interrogators and the suspects inside the interrogation room, this can serve the process of confession which is primarily meant to be elicited from the mouths of the suspects.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

1. Stylistic Devices

A stylistic device is an expression that departs from the accepted literal sense or from the normal order of words, or in which an emphasis is produced by patterns of sound|| (Baldick, 2001). By using stylistic devices, utterances are foregrounded, made more conspicuous, more effective, and help to get some additional information out of the text (Zhukovska, 2010). Moreover, using stylistic devices enriches the language with a stylistic meaning that makes the perception of words and sentences more expressive. Stylistic devices are seen as the grace of language, they decorate the language and give it style. However, their sole function is not mere decoration; they provide clearness and liveliness to the expression of the speakers' thoughts. They also create and maintain a clear and effective communicative link between the speaker and the audience (Corbett, 1966:). The stylistic devices related to the present study are:

1.1 Metaphor

Etymologically, the word metaphor means (carrying from one place to another). It indicates the renaming of objects depending on the similarity or affinity (whether real or imaginary) of some properties shared between different objects (Zhukovska, 2010). It is the process where a word or phrase, that literally indicates one object, is used in place of another to suggest a likeness between them. Simpson (2004) describes it as –the process of mapping between two different conceptual

domains||: the target domain which represents the concept in need of description, and the source domain which is the concept used to create a metaphorical construction. Stockwell and Whitely (2014:) state that metaphor is used to spice up the speech. Zhukovska (2010) adds that the main function of metaphor is aesthetic, it appeals to the reader's imagination||.

1.2 Irony

Irony is simply saying the opposite (Wales, 2014). It is the case where the actually used words seem to contradict the meaning actually required in the context, and its use can be intended by the speaker.

Irony can be used against another person; in such cases, it is a sarcastic irony which works as an oblique polite form of criticism. However, when the intended irony is not perceived, its force then is lost (Wales, 2014). Simpson (2004) explains that an important way of employing irony is to echo other's utterances.

1.3 Repetition

Repetition means using the same term frequently (Dupries, 1991:390). It is a type of deviation that breaks the normal rules of usage by its over-frequency. Repetitive patterns make an extreme imposition on the background of the expected normal usage and as a result, it attracts attention (Wales, 2014).

1.4 . Rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions are questions asked for a persuasive effect and not as an honest request for information. The speaker may produce a rhetorical question to implicate that since the answer is so obvious, the question does not need a reply. Hence, it indicates something that is known to the audience and cannot be denied (Wales, 2014; Jam et al., 2018).

1.5 Parallelism

Parallelism is a rhetorical device used in writing and speech to create balance and rhythm by repeating similar grammatical structures. It enhances the beauty and effectiveness of language, making ideas more memorable and persuasive. (Cambridge English Dictionary).

2. The Process of Interrogation

Police interrogation has become a well-established field of study within the linguistics field, including pragmatic linguistics. thus, it has a global influence on courts and judicial processes.

A formal discussion in which one person is questioned by an interrogator so as to get information that the subject of the interrogation is likely to have, is known as an interrogation. (Walton, 2003).

Royal and Schutt (1976) define interrogation as "the art and mechanics of questioning for the aim of discovering or resolving issues". They also pinpoint that interrogation style is more formal than interviewing style.

apparently that the main goal of conducting an investigation is information-seeking. "The information could be needed to help a police investigation, or for security purposes, before an intended crime or terror activity is committed" (Walton, 2003; Rashid et al., 2023). In a similar view, Dillon (1990) assures that the purpose of interrogation is to gain factual, truthful information about some criminal matters at issue.

2.1 The Characteristics of Interrogation

Shuy (1998) observes that interrogation is conventionally advocacy and does not contextualize the subject's narrative to suit the interrogator's purpose. Interrogation is a descriptive process, not advocacy; it is a fact-seeking process, not litigation.

Walton (2003) claims that in the light of the argumentation theory, a conversation is usually considered to be balanced and reasonable forms of argumentation and that interrogation is scarcely a model of how to conduct balanced rational argumentation.

Linell (2001) strongly thinks that the *perfect conversation* is primarily an open interaction characterized by cooperation and asymmetry with equal opportunities for parties to take turn and develop subjects, Braz (2010) sees that interrogation, on the other hand, is an asymmetrical interaction because the goals and methods of argumentation utilized by both interlocutors are different and determine the strategies that each party utilizes during the course of interrogation as well as the level of cooperation of the participant being interrogated. The interrogator, on the one hand, keeping a certain purpose in mind, makes use of questions strategies to get information from the interrogated person, while the interrogated person, on the other hand, considers his/her own interests and goals to be the ones who will benefit him the most (Braz, 2010; Kanval et al., 2024)

3. The Data Collection and Analysis

This section primarily deals with the type of the data and the analysis. The excerpts that are under analysis are taken from an official YouTube channel namely: "Stranger Stories" which posts such type of data and police interrogation. Moreover, stylistically speaking, this data is going to be analyzed according to the stylistic devices mentioned above.

Excerpt 1

Background: Chanel Lewis was arrested and interrogated for the murder of Karina Vetrano, a jogger who was attacked, sexually assaulted, and killed in Howard Beach, Queens, in August 2016. His confession played a crucial role in the case.

Interrogation Transcript

Interrogator: "Chanel, can you describe what happened on the day Karina Vetrano was murdered?"

Chanel Lewis: "I was mad, I saw red. I grabbed her as she was running past me. She fought back, clawing at my face, so I punched her about five times until she lost consciousness. I strangled her, and she fell into a puddle and drowned."

Interrogator: "Why did you attack her?"

Chanel Lewis: "I lost it. A guy moved into my house and the neighborhood. I was angry."

1. **Repetition:** The repetition of actions ("I grabbed her," "I punched her") emphasizes the violent nature of the crime.
2. **Irony:** There is an ironic undertone in Lewis's explanation of his motivations, given the severe nature of his actions.
3. **Metaphor:** The phrase "I saw red" is a metaphor for intense anger, emphasizing Lewis's emotional state.

4. **Parallelism:** The structure of Lewis's responses creates a parallel structure that emphasizes his consistent narrative and emotional state.

Excerpt 2

Background: Thomas Chan was involved in a high-profile case in Peterborough, Ontario, where he fatally stabbed his father, Dr. Andrew Chan, and assaulted his father's partner, Lynn Witteveen. The incident occurred on December 28, 2015, after Chan consumed magic mushrooms, leading to a psychotic episode.

Interrogation Details: During the police interrogation, Chan initially appeared disoriented and affected by the residual effects of the magic mushrooms he had consumed. The interrogation provided insights into his state of mind and the events leading up to the attack.

Interrogation Transcript

Interrogator: "Thomas, can you tell us what happened that night?"

Thomas Chan: "I took some mushrooms with friends. I started meditating to enhance the effects. Things got out of control. I began hallucinating and thought I was God."

Interrogator: "Why did you attack your father and Lynn Witteveen?"

Thomas Chan: "I don't know. I saw them as devils. It was a vicious, unprovoked attack. I regret everything. It was stupid, stupid, stupid."

Interrogator: "Were you aware of what you were doing?"

Thomas Chan: "I lost touch with reality. The mushrooms made me hallucinate. I thought everyone was against me."

1. **Repetition:** The repetition of "stupid, stupid, stupid" emphasizes Chan's regret and self-recrimination.
2. **Irony:** There is an ironic undertone in the tragic outcome of the drug use intended for meditation and enlightenment.
3. **Metaphor:** Chan's statement "I thought I was God" and "saw them as devils" are metaphors for his hallucinations and altered perception of reality.
4. **Parallelism:** The structure of Chan's responses creates a parallel structure that emphasizes his consistent narrative of losing touch with reality and regret.

Excerpt 3

Background: Kimberly Kessler, known as the "Hairdresser Killer," was convicted of the murder of her co-worker, Joleen Cummings. The two worked together at Tangles Hair Salon in Fernandina Beach, Florida. Cummings was reported missing on Mother's Day in 2018 after failing to pick up her children. Her body was never found, but significant evidence pointed to Kessler's involvement.

Interrogation Details: During the police interrogation, Kessler provided inconsistent statements and exhibited erratic behavior. She

initially denied any involvement but was confronted with substantial evidence, including surveillance footage and DNA.

Interrogation Transcript

Interrogator: "Kimberly, can you explain your whereabouts on the day Joleen Cummings went missing?"

Kimberly Kessler: "I don't know where she is. I didn't do anything to her."

Interrogator: "We have footage of you driving her car and parking it near a Home Depot. Can you explain that?"

Kimberly Kessler: "I... I might have borrowed her car, but I didn't harm her. She's just gone."

1. **Repetition:** The repetition of denials ("I didn't do anything to her," "I didn't harm her") emphasizes Kessler's attempts to distance herself from wrongdoing.
2. **Hesitation:** The use of hesitation ("I... I might have borrowed her car") reflects uncertainty and possible evasion.
3. **Irony:** There is a subtle irony in the disconnect between the footage evidence and Kessler's denials.
4. **Parallelism:** The structure of Kessler's responses creates a parallel structure that emphasizes her consistent narrative of denial and evasion.

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