



## LANGUAGE IN INTERROGATION: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING AND HUMANISTIC JUSTICE THROUGH FORENSIC ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

Language plays a central role in legal interrogation, particularly in the construction of Police Investigation Reports (*Berita Acara Pemeriksaan/BAP*). This study aims to analyze forms of interrogative questions in BAP related to defamation or hate speech cases that potentially generate psychological pressure or bias toward the examinee. It also formulates recommendations for more communicative and fair interrogative language as part of humanistic justice. The data are textual utterances extracted from BAP documents, analyzed through a forensic linguistic and psychopragmatic approach. To explore how meaning is coordinated and negotiated in interrogative exchanges, this study applies Herbert H. Clark's (1996) theory of Joint Action and Common Ground, which views language use as a socially coordinated activity. This framework allows an examination of whether interrogative structures facilitate mutual understanding or reinforce asymmetrical power relations. Linguistic tendency analysis is used to measure the dominance of question types. Findings suggest that closed and suggestive questions prevail, limiting dialogic interaction. This study contributes to the field of Indonesian Language and Literature Education by promoting critical awareness of institutional language and advocating peace-oriented, humanistic language practices.

**Keywords:** *forensic linguistics; psychopragmatics; interrogation discourse; humanistic justice*

### INTRODUCTION

Language in the legal realm is a force that goes beyond mere communication. It could change, direct, and limit understanding between the parties involved in the judicial process. Language has pragmatic power in interrogation to construct legal reality unilaterally through formal yet meaningful discourse. According to Conley, O'Barr, and Riner (2019), legal language often replicates power relations and reinforces "institutional truth" rather than objective truth. In practice, the Police Investigation Report (*Berita Acara Pemeriksaan/BAP*) does not always reflect neutrality. The language used can shift meaning for the benefit of the investigator. Greenspan (2024) shows that school-based interrogation policies in the United States grant broad prerogatives to authorities, often without sufficient linguistic limitations, thereby increasing the likelihood of verbal pressure and one-sided interpretations of students' answers. Cleary (2023) states that, in the context of adolescents, the practice of interrogating teenagers often employs leading and psychologically pressuring question structures. This negatively impacts teenagers' ability to understand their rights and communicate freely. Even in geographically different contexts, Akinrinlola (2021) states that, in interactions between police and

suspects in Nigeria, refusing to answer manipulative questions verbally is considered defiance rather than legitimate self-defense. Mount and Mazerolle (2021) state that patterns of manipulative and closed questioning will remain dominant without an empathetic and dialogic approach. Park and Lee (2021) also support this, finding that the structure of questions in legal documents tends to direct and limit clarification, increasing institutional narrative control. Therefore, interrogations that do not consider linguistic ethics and the principle of openness have the potential to increase power imbalances in the legal process and threaten procedural justice.

Police Investigation Report (*Berita Acara Pemeriksaan/BAP*) should not be biased, neutral, or even omit important information. Marbun (2020) states that the creation of the BAP reflects a tense institutional semiotics. The dominance of investigators over the creation of BAP narratives has become one of the sources of hidden legal disparities. Giraldo (2020) emphasizes that investigators play a significant role in determining the methods of proof during the pre-prosecution stage. This ultimately affects the credibility of the examination results. Suryani (2020) states that many BAP of experts linguistic reports often have interpretative biases because investigators prefer narratives over the expert's opinion wording. The form and structure of questions are crucial for the validity of information in cases such as defamation. According to Gaines (2018), presumptive questions can lead to false confessions, undermining the principles of justice and legal transparency. This is reinforced by Tabah's (2021) findings, which state that witnesses reading the BAP in court do not always explain the interrogative process that occurred; often, the evidentiary power is used without considering the underlying linguistic processes of that power's use.

According to Coulthard and Johnson (2007), forensic linguistics has evolved into a strategic approach to explain the role of language as a tool of power in the criminal justice system, particularly in the BAP, where the language used is the result of the investigator's interpretation. According to Ardhianti (2018), the drafting of the BAP often contains power imbalances. According to Bachari et al. (2018) and Panggabean & Sinar (2018), the structure and narrative order can influence readers and the judiciary. Even in non-criminal cases, as explained by Fauzia, Laturette, and colleagues (2023), the narrative in the Minutes of Proceedings used as a legal basis for land rights has weaknesses due to a lack of linguistic control and errors in the documentation process. Meanwhile, the psychopragmatic approach opens space to assess the social and psychological effects of language use in interrogation. Clark (1996; 2020) emphasizes that every linguistic act has illocutionary and perlocutionary impacts that affect the subject's perception and emotions. Warami (2020) emphasized that manipulative language affects mental health, and Taha, Iswary, & Asad (2022) demonstrated that directive strategies in BAP often unfairly impact interpersonal relationships.

Psychopragmatic studies have shown that this technique can uncover hidden meanings and verbal violence. Purba (2015), for example, found various types of verbal violence in Indonesian films, carried out through pragmatic strategies such as intimidation and belittlement. According to Cahyani and Sabardila (2022), the dynamics of social power in society are represented by expressions of verbal violence in fictional novels. Interrogative studies have not extensively utilized the perspectives of common ground and joint action in the context of Indonesian law. However, Clark and Brennan (1991) emphasize that the process of grounding, or the formation of mutual understanding, is crucial for the foundation of effective communication. Without grounding, the responses that emerge do not represent the true meaning of the issue. This



is in line with the idea put forward by Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986), which states that every reference in a conversation must be a cooperative process agreed upon by all parties involved in the discussion. Rohmadi (2016) even states that the aspect of psychopragmatics can explain communicative actions and reveal the relationship between power and hidden interests in discourse. A study conducted by Rahmat, Revita, and Fitriyah in 2019 showed that the psychopragmatic approach can help students learn the language and assist them in thinking critically about how language affects society, including legal practices. Therefore, the integration between psychopragmatics and the theory of joint action is crucial for thoroughly and fairly addressing interrogative questions in the BAP.

This research aims to identify and classify the forms of interrogative questions in BAP, particularly in cases of defamation and hate speech. Questions in the BAP, although they should be neutral, often tend to be assumptive or suggestive. This is important to measure its impact on the objectivity of the examination and the quality of legally recorded information. Furthermore, this research also analyzes the tendency of closed or suggestive question forms that can affect the psychological condition of the interrogation subjects. With a focus on the effects of perlocution, this study aims to demonstrate how communication pressure in legal practice impacts the accuracy of information and the potential biases that may arise in legal decision-making. In the end, this research formulates recommendations for a communicative and fair interrogative language model, based on the principles of humanistic justice and Clark's theory of collaborative communication. By integrating the Joint Action and Common Ground theories, this study provides theoretical contributions in strengthening the relationship between forensic linguistics and psychopragmatics, as well as practical contributions in designing ethical interrogations, and educational contributions in expanding critical literacy in the field of Indonesian Language and Literature Education.

## METHOD

This research employs a qualitative-critical approach based in a combination of forensic linguistics and psychopragmatics. This approach was chosen to explore the workings of language in creating meaning imbalances in asymmetrical legal situations, particularly in the context of interrogations documented in the Police Investigation Report (*Berita Acara Pemeriksaan/BAP*). This approach provides a foundation for examining language not just as a form of factual representation, but as a social action that carries psychological, ideological, and institutional consequences. In this framework, the Joint Action and Common Ground theories by Herbert H. Clark (1996; 2015) are used, which emphasize that utterances are part of joint social activities.

The object of this research is interrogative utterances in official BAP documents in cases of defamation and hate speech that have been legally processed. The documents were obtained through limited cooperation with the authorities and have been adjusted to adhere to research ethics principles. The data examined consists of transcripts of questions and answers in the BAP document, which represent the dynamics of interaction between the investigator and the examined party. As emphasized by Coulthard and Johnson (2007), the BAP is not a literal transcription of the dialogue, but rather a reconstruction by the investigator, thus having a high possibility of containing bias and power structure engineering. Therefore, the analysis of BAP data becomes important to evaluate the forms of interrogative language used, and to what extent the questions open spaces for understanding or instead reinforce institutional dominance.

Data collection was carried out through documentation and content analysis methods, by identifying and isolating the forms of questions used in the BAP documents. The classification of questions refers to the typology of interrogatives: open, closed, suggestive, and presumptive. These categories are analyzed based on the forensic linguistic framework developed by Coulthard & Johnson (2007), as well as the verbal pressure model that emerges in interrogation practices (Mount & Mazerolle, 2021). The analysis was conducted using the Linguistic Tendency Analysis approach, which is a technique for calculating the frequency and dominance of certain types of questions. With this technique, the research can identify question patterns that have the potential to limit respondents' agency and affect the validity of the information. Additionally, a psychopragmatic approach is used to evaluate the illocutionary and perlocutionary effects of each form of question (Clark, 1996; Warami, 2020).

The analysis procedure is carried out in stages: (1) identification and extraction of questions in the BAP document; (2) classification of question forms based on linguistic functions and pragmatic tendencies; (3) analysis of the psychological and social effects of the interrogative language structure; (4) interpretation based on Clark's theory of common ground and joint action; and (5) formulation of linguistic recommendations that support the principle of humanistic justice in legal interrogation. In Clark's approach, healthy linguistic interaction requires the presence of anchoring utterances and the coordination of shared meaning between the investigator and the examinee (Clark, 2021). This research aims to design a more communicative, fair, and cooperative interrogative communication model that can facilitate the process of truth-seeking. Thus, the results of this analysis are expected to not only provide academic contributions but also practical implications for the improvement of the legal process in Indonesia.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULTS

#### Closed Questions

Table 1. Closed Question from BAP Embezzlement Case

Questions	Linguistic Characteristics
<i>Apakah benar saudara menerima uang dari korban pada tanggal tersebut?</i>	Directing the yes/no answer, without additional explanation
<i>Apakah saudara berada di lokasi saat kejadian?</i>	Closing the space for narration or clarification.
<i>Apakah saudara mengenal korban sebelumnya?</i>	Binary answer, ignoring the context of the relationship or intention
<i>Apakah kendaraan tersebut milik saudara?</i>	Factual validation with a dichotomous answer
<i>Apakah saudara sebelumnya pernah dipanggil polisi?</i>	Focused on administrative chronology

Closed questions, such as those listed in the table, tend to have a linguistic structure that is polar interrogatives, meaning questions that only allow for "yes" or "no" answers. This linguistic characteristic is marked by a conventional interrogative form that uses "Does" at the beginning of the sentence, followed by a factual statement that demands confirmation. Structures like this create strict semantic boundaries and close off the possibility for participants to develop narratives or provide additional context. This indirectly shifts full control to the interviewer or investigator over the direction and content of the conversation.

According to Coulthard and Johnson (2007), closed questions in legal documents such as BAP reinforce institutional dominance by making the investigator's voice the primary source of truth, while simultaneously reducing the active participation of the



examined party. In Clark's (1996) theory of joint action, effective communication must be based on collaboration and common ground, which is a background of shared understanding built through interaction. Closed questions hinder this process because they do not invite exploratory responses, thus failing to establish mutual understanding.

Furthermore, from a psychopragmatic perspective, this question functions as an illocutionary act with high pressure: participants are confronted with a structure that seemingly demands acknowledgment or validation without allowing room for defense. Clark and Brennan (1991) assert that good communication requires the achievement of grounding, which is a two-way confirmation that the information has been mutually understood. In closed questions, the opportunity for this is very minimal, which has the potential to produce partial, inaccurate, or even misleading information. Therefore, from a forensic and ethical standpoint, the dominance of this form needs to be re-evaluated so that interrogation practices are not only efficient but also fair and communicative.

**Suggestive Questions**

*Table 2. Suggestive Questions form BAP Fraud Case*

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Linguistic Characteristics</b>
<i>Jadi saudara sudah tahu sebelumnya bahwa uang itu tidak akan dikembalikan, ya?</i>	Contains assumptions and limits answer choices
<i>Saudara memang sudah merencanakan untuk tidak mengembalikan dana, benar?</i>	Directing the narrative evaluatively
<i>Maka dari itu saudara mendingankan korban selama berminggu-minggu?</i>	Narrative inference without allowing for clarification.
<i>Berarti saudara sengaja menandatangani perjanjian palsu, begitu?</i>	Verbal pressure through conclusive reinforcement
<i>Karena saudara butuh uang, saudara rela melakukan penggelapan, bukan?</i>	Moral and psychological assumptions that are instilled

Linguistically suggestive questions are marked by a declarative form with an interrogative tag (for example: "right?", "yes?", "no?") or a structure that inserts assumptions into the premise of the sentence. Its characteristic is the use of evaluative presuppositions—namely, assumptions or moral judgments embedded in the question, thereby encouraging respondents to agree with or justify a certain narrative. Such structures systematically close off the possibility of neutrality, as word choice, causal conjunctions (like "because"), and the use of phrases like "so," "therefore," or "which means" reinforce inferences that are accusatory or unilaterally conclude actions. Pragmatically, this form has a high illocutionary force effect, as the linguistic pressure not only shapes the direction of the answer but also implies the intent and morality of actions that have not yet been proven.

In the perspective of joint action proposed by Clark (1996), communication is a collaborative social act that demands the achievement of common ground — that is, a point of meaning built equally by both parties. Suggestive questions disrupt this process because from the outset, they impose a single perspective (namely, the investigator's version), making the participation of the suspect or witness merely confirmatory. Clark and Brennan (1991) emphasize that effective communication requires grounding, or repeated confirmation, so that meaning is truly understood together. In this case, suggestive questions violate that principle by deliberately manipulating the direction of understanding towards a predetermined conclusion.

Psychopragmatically, this form carries a significant perlocutionary effect. Respondents may feel cornered, pressured, or ashamed, even when the alleged facts are

not necessarily true. Clark (2020) mentions that language acts have emotional and social power, and when used in a power context, suggestive forms can lead to confessions that are not entirely free from pressure. This is reinforced by Mount and Mazerolle (2021) as well as Park and Lee (2021), who demonstrate that this form exacerbates the imbalance in the relationship between the investigator and the respondent, making the information obtained from suggestive questions prone to bias and unrepresentative. Thus, the practice of using suggestive questions must be re-evaluated within the standards of investigation that uphold the principle of humanistic justice.

### Presumptive Question

Table 3. Presumptive Question from BAP Fraud and Embezzlement Case

Questions	Linguistic Characteristics
<i>Setelah saudara mengalihkan dana itu, untuk apa uang tersebut digunakan?</i>	Assuming the act has already been done
<i>Kenapa saudara baru melapor setelah kejadian berlangsung lama?</i>	Contains implicit accusations
<i>Apa alasan saudara tidak mengembalikan barang hingga sekarang?</i>	Not questioning whether the action was taken, but "kenapa"
<i>Dari mana saudara mendapatkan ide untuk menipu seperti itu?</i>	Assuming the intention has been acted
<i>Siapa saja yang membantu saudara dalam rencana tersebut?</i>	Implying the involvement of others that has not been proven

Presuppositional questions are linguistically marked through embedded presuppositions which assumptions inserted into the structure of the question without giving the respondent a chance to affirm or deny those assumptions. Forms like "after you diverted the funds" or "whoever helped you" create a linguistic reality that assumes the event has already occurred, even though its truth has not been proven. This characteristic makes the question no longer exploratory but rather frames the event unilaterally. In a pragmatic structure, presupposition has a directive illocutionary force effect, where the question directs the response without opening alternative possibilities.

According to Coulthard and Johnson (2007), this form in BAP represents a form of covert institutional power because the investigator positions themselves as the creator of the narrative and not merely a recorder of facts. Presupposition not only becomes a linguistic strategy but also a means of legitimizing institutional interpretations of an event. This is dangerous because respondents can be trapped into agreeing with a narrative simply by answering peripheral aspects of the question, without having the chance to reject its underlying premise.

In Clark's perspective (1996, 2015), presuppositional questions undermine the principle of common ground, which is the mutual agreement that both participants in a conversation must have for communication to proceed effectively and fairly. Good communication requires clarification and the establishment of shared meaning. However, presuppositional questions violate this principle because they insert knowledge that may not be known, agreed upon, or experienced by the respondent. As Clark and Brennan (1991) assert, grounding in conversation requires an interactive process, not an impositive



one. In BAP, this form replaces the dialogic mechanism with a closed narrative that can produce inaccurate and manipulative documentation.

From a psychopragmatic perspective, the perlocutionary effect of presuppositional questions is very significant. Respondents may feel they have no room to deny the premise, which ultimately triggers emotional pressure or even passive agreement with the accusation. Thus, the presupposition in interrogative questions is not just about sentence structure but is an instrument of power that constructs truth asymmetrically, contrary to the principles of cooperative communication and humanistic justice.

**Open Questions**

*Table 4 Open Questions from BAP fraud case*

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Linguistic Characteristics</b>
<i>Ceritakan kronologi kejadian sejak awal menurut saudara.</i>	Providing narrative space and self-interpretation
<i>Bagaimana proses komunikasi saudara dengan korban sebelum kejadian?</i>	Exploring social and relational contexts
<i>Apa yang saudara pikirkan saat menerima uang dari korban?</i>	Accessing mental and reflective aspects
<i>Bisa dijelaskan kenapa saudara bersedia menandatangani perjanjian tersebut?</i>	Encouraging motivational explanations
<i>Menurut saudara, apa yang seharusnya terjadi agar tidak ada kesalahpahaman?</i>	Providing space for improvement and personal assessment

Open-ended questions in the context of BAP are linguistically marked by non-directive interrogative structures, such as “*Ceritakan...*”, “*Bagaimana...*”, “*Apa yang saudara pikirkan...*”, and “*Menurut saudara...*”.. This form allows respondents to develop personal narratives, interpret situations based on their own perspectives, and provide more contextual and reflective information. The main characteristic of open-ended questions is the absence of premises or implicit assumptions that guide the answer. Syntactically, open-ended questions contain functional interrogatives (*apa, bagaimana, mengapa*) that stimulate the elaboration of ideas rather than binary answers.

From the perspective of forensic linguistics, open-ended questions reflect a more genuine orientation towards truth-seeking because they allow respondents to explain the motivations, chronology, and meanings of events. This is in line with the principle of the maxim of quantity and relevance in pragmatics, where respondents are given the freedom to provide as much and as meaningful information as possible according to the context of their experience.

In Clark's collaborative communication theory (1996; 2020), open-ended questions are at the core of joint action which communication actions that involve the active coordination of meaning and roles among participants. Through open-ended questions, the investigator and the respondent do not merely exchange information but together build common ground or a shared understanding that enables authentic communication. Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986) state that every reference in a conversation is the result of a social negotiation process. Therefore, open-ended questions create opportunities for more equitable meaning negotiation in the interrogation space.

Unfortunately, in the analyzed BAP documents, open-ended questions generally only appear at the beginning or opening of the examination and are rarely used in the exploration of the case's substance. This indicates that although there was initial awareness of a humanistic approach, the practice reverted to forms of closed, suggestive, or presumptive questions that are more advantageous to the institution. However, if open-ended questions are used consistently, they have great potential to improve the quality of

interactions, data validity, and reduce the risk of psychological pressure during the investigation process. Furthermore, this form aligns with the principles of humanistic justice because it humanizes legal subjects as actors with a voice, agency, and personal narrative.

### Inconsistency and mixed questions.

*Table 4 from Fraud and Embezzlement*

Questions	Linguistic Characteristics
<i>Jadi saudara mengakui menerima uang itu, kan? Apakah jumlahnya Rp5 juta?</i>	Suggestive and closed combination
<i>Mengapa saudara menerima uang itu, padahal tidak berniat mengembalikannya?</i>	Presumptive + suggestive
<i>Apakah saudara tidak merasa bersalah atas tindakan tersebut?</i>	Rhetorical question, containing a moral evaluation
<i>Setelah kejadian itu, apa yang saudara lakukan dengan uangnya?</i>	Presumptive + Openly
<i>Apakah benar saudara menghindar karena takut diketahui publik?</i>	Psychological assumptions and potential social pressure

Mixed questions in BAP are characterized by the integration of various types of linguistic strategies—closed, suggestive, presuppositional, and even rhetorical—within a single interrogative structure. Linguistically, this form involves the integration of illocutionary acts such as covert directives, evaluative judgments, and assertive statements within a single formulation, for example: "Why did you accept the money if you didn't intend to return it?" or "Is it true that you are avoiding this because you are afraid of public knowledge?" Syntactically, these questions are laden with subordinate structures that embed assumptions and covert judgments.

From the perspective of forensic linguistics, such a structure makes it difficult for respondents to separate the question from the implicit accusation, so the answers that emerge can be reactive, defensive, or even distorted due to implicit pressure. Coulthard and Johnson (2007) assert that such forms of questioning create a non-neutral narrative framing, reinforcing the dominant role of legal institutions in shaping reality.

In psychopragmatics, Clark (1996; 2020) emphasizes that meaningful communication must be based on common ground and joint action, namely the understanding of goals and context between participants. Mixed questions, with their numerous assumptions, violate this fundamental principle by introducing hidden meanings that are not explicitly negotiated. Clark and Brennan (1991) remind us that effective communication requires grounding the process by which information is ensured to be understood and accepted by both parties. When a question contains multiple layers of messages at once, grounding becomes impossible, ultimately hindering collaborative and open communication.

In the analyzed BAP, mixed questions not only indicate the methodological uncertainty of the investigator but also signify institutional intervention in narrative formation. This inconsistency undermines the transparency and integrity of legal data because the suspect's narrative is framed within complex semantic pressures. From the perspective of humanistic justice, this practice contradicts the principle of equal treatment because it does not provide a stable space for the suspect to convey their views and explanations clearly and without bias. Therefore, mixed questions must be restructured so as not to undermine the process of seeking a fair and communicative legal truth.



## DISCUSSION

Closed questions in the BAP document tend to fix the direction of communication to "yes" or "no" answers, which eliminates participatory space in the conversation. In Joint Action theory, Clark (2015) states that communication is a social process that demands cooperative participation from both parties. However, questions like "Were you at the location at the time of the incident?" leave little room for elaboration of meaning. This reflects an imbalance of control in the conversation, where the investigator holds full authority in setting the interrogative agenda. Forensic linguistics views this practice as a form of narrative dominance that stifles the potential for clarification and self-defense (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007). In the context of humanistic justice, this approach reduces the individual's right to fully explain the events experienced, and turns the legal process into an administrative mechanism, rather than a dialogic one.

Suggestive questions like "You have indeed planned not to return the funds, right?" are a form of meaning manipulation that blurs the distinction between fact and assumption. Clark (2019) explains that common ground is built from information that is explicitly agreed upon by both parties. However, suggestive questions contain premises that have not been agreed upon, thus framing the response within the investigator's narrative. In forensic linguistics, this is known as a framing strategy that systematically shapes perceptions of the subject (Park & Lee, 2021). When questions are framed suggestively, social interaction is no longer symmetrical, and the respondents' involvement becomes passive. This contradicts the principles of humanistic justice that prioritize transparency and empathy in interrogation (Mount & Mazerolle, 2021). As a result, the perpetrator can be positioned as guilty even before the investigation is complete.

Presumptive questions like "Why haven't you returned the item until now?" "assuming the event has occurred without providing room for denial." Clark (2020) reminds us that in anchoring utterances, meaning must be formed participatorily, not assumed unilaterally. Presumptive questions violate this principle by forcing respondents to respond to assumptions as if they were facts. In forensic linguistic practice, this strategy is often used to expedite the documentation process by disregarding narrative validity (Ardhianti, 2018). Psychopragmatically, this creates communication pressure that can encourage false confessions or perceptual errors (Warami, 2020). From the perspective of humanistic justice, a presumptive approach endangers substantive justice because it leads investigators' opinions to be seen as the basis of procedural truth, rather than as the result of open dialogue.

Open-ended questions like "Tell me the chronology of the events from the beginning according to you," provide expressive space for the interviewee to build their own narrative. This is in line with Clark's (2016) idea that effective communication requires active participation in building a shared mental representation. Open-ended questions reflect the presence of joint action and the creation of collective meaning that facilitate clarification and reinterpretation. In forensic linguistics, this is the form of questioning considered the most neutral and oriented towards exploration, not confirmation (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007). Humanistic justice can only be achieved if the interrogation process provides a narrative space for all parties to explain the context and motivation. Therefore, open-ended questions are an ideal form of practice to produce an investigation report that reflects dialogical truth, not merely legalistic.

Mixed questions like "So you admit to receiving the money, right?" "Is the amount Rp5 million?" combines several forms of interrogative strategies that create confusion in

communication. Clark & Wege (2015) state that in complex narratives, depictions and social actions must be consistent to prevent communication from experiencing distortion. In this case, the simultaneous use of suggestive and presumptive forms obscures the function of clarification and frames a non-neutral meaning. In forensic analysis, mixed questions indicate low linguistic consistency that can weaken the legal validity of the BAP document (Panggabean & Sinar, 2018). This approach contradicts the principle of a fair trial, which demands accuracy and neutrality in the collection of legal testimony. By integrating Clark's approach to depicting social action, we can see that mixed questions reflect systemic failures in building fair and humanistic legal communication.

The combination of five types of questions in the BAP document—closed, suggestive, presumptive, open, and mixed—shows a spectrum of complex interrogative language use in investigative practices in Indonesia. In general, the dominance of closed and suggestive question forms indicates a communication pattern that prioritizes administrative efficiency over narrative clarification. This leads to an imbalanced power relationship between the investigator and the examinee, as emphasized by Clark (2015) that healthy communication should be built on the basis of common ground and active participation from both parties. When questions imply more assumptions than exploration, the resulting legal documents no longer represent the actual communication reality, but rather just an institutional version of the truth. The forensic linguistic approach helps reveal how this imbalance is systematically constructed through the choice of question wording and narrative structure in the BAP (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007; Ardianti, 2018).

Furthermore, from a psychopragmatic perspective, the combination of these question forms has a direct impact on the psychological condition of the respondents, especially in the context of interpretative cases such as defamation and fraud. Suggestive and presumptive questions, for example, can trigger mental pressure that causes doubt in providing answers or even create false confessions (Warami, 2020; Taha et al., 2022). In the framework of joint action, each question in an interrogation ideally forms part of a joint social action that enables the establishment of collaborative understanding between the investigator and the interrogated (Clark, 1996). Therefore, the dominance of question forms that obscure meaning and do not allow for clarification must be re-evaluated to support linguistic reform in legal investigations. The implications of these findings not only target the quality of the BAP drafting but also touch upon the roots of justice ethics in the legal process that uphold humanitarian and participatory values.

## CONCLUSION

This research found that the types of interrogative questions found in the Minutes of Examination (BAP) documents are very diverse and show linguistic patterns that do not always support communication ethics. Viewed from the classification of questions into five categories: closed, suggestive, presumptive, open, and mixed, it is evident that leading, directing, or assumption-laden questions are predominantly used in the legal interrogation process, especially in defamation and fraud cases. This addresses the first problem formulation and supports the goal of identifying and classifying the forms of questions in the BAP. The dominance of closed and suggestive questions indicates a restriction on the narrative space of the examined subject and reflects asymmetric and hierarchical communication practices.



The tendency of suggestive and presumptive questions not only limits the verbal participation of respondents but also has the potential to cause psychological pressure and bias in the formulation of legal facts. Psychopragmatic analysis in this study shows that many interrogative utterances have perlocutionary effects, such as inducing feelings of guilt, triggering moral assumptions, and even leading to the possibility of false confessions. These findings address the second research question and simultaneously achieve the research objective of examining the pragmatic and psychological impacts of these forms of questioning. The Joint Action and Common Ground framework (Clark, 1996) proves that the process of meaning-making does not occur bilaterally in the BAP interrogation but is instead unilaterally controlled by the investigator.

Concerns about legal practices that contradict the principles of humanistic justice arise due to the difference in meaning between interrogation questions and power relations. Should facilitate factual truth, the interrogation process can become a tool to support "institutional truth" through the use of language that emphasizes, does not provide clarification, and diminishes the agency of the examined party. Therefore, this research explicitly makes recommendations on how to use more dialogic, collaborative, and empathetic interrogative language. The forensic linguistics and psychopragmatic approach, based on the fundamental principles of communication, can be used as an ethical framework to create communicative and fair questions. This is required by a legal system that upholds human rights.

Furthermore, these findings have significant implications for the world of education, particularly in the teaching of Indonesian Language and Literature based on critical literacy. Interrogative language is not only a tool for uncovering the truth but also a reflection of how we build social relations, respect participation, and strive for justice. By making language an instrument to create mutual understanding, legal investigations can not only proceed effectively but also maintain moral dignity. This research thus fills the gap in interrogative studies from the linguistic and psychopragmatic perspectives and serves as a foundation for advocating a more humane and just reform of legal language.

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