

**A COMPARATIVE CRITICAL STYLISTIC STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE
OF SELECTED ASIAN AND AMERICAN SERIAL KILLERS**



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FATIMA JINNAH WOMEN UNIVERSITY, RAWALPINDI,

PAKISTAN 2024

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2020-B. Eng-046

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A Thesis Submitted to the Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Bachelors of Arts

In Department of English

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NAME OF SUPERVISOR

(Supervisor)

Dedication

To All those who fight between Good and

Evil And

Let the Good win!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praises be to Allah S.W.T for bestowing me with the courage and dedication to complete this thesis. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Zohra Fatima. I have looked up to her unwavering dedication since the beginning of my degree as well as my thesis. Her unparallel supervision enabled me to deliver my best in this research. She guided me at every stage of my thesis, attending to every detail with grace and patience. She will forever be a source of inspiration and motivation for me. Lastly, my heartfelt appreciation towards my family for their endless patience and love. Their constant encouragement remained my companion throughout this journey.

ABSTRACT

Serial killers epitomize the extreme edges of criminal behavior, captivating both public curiosity and academic inquiry. Their language offers valuable insights into their thoughts, motivations, and behavioral patterns. While existing researches comprehensively cover the behavioral and psychological aspects of serial killers, there remains a notable scarcity in the analysis of their linguistic tools and elements employed in speech. This study undertakes a comparative analysis of the language used by selected Asian and American serial killers. Employing four tools from the model of Critical Stylistic by Jeffries (2010), the research aims to discern the linguistic tools employed by serial killers. This study analyzes two interviews and confessional letters of selected Asian and American serial killers. Through this analysis, recurring linguistic patterns emerge, revealing a consistent use of language to convey animosity towards society, law enforcement, and self. Furthermore, these linguistic patterns illuminate heightened emotional turmoil and social detachment. Across cultural boundaries, the study reveals striking similarities in linguistic tools. Serial killers from different regions employ comparable rhetorical devices, offering insights into their shared psychological profiles. This research contributes to a deeper comprehension of the role of language in forensic linguistics and criminal psychology, emphasizing its significance in deciphering the complexities of criminal minds.

Keywords: serial killers, critical stylistics, comparative analysis, linguistic tools

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Serial killers represent a dark and unsettling aspect of society, yet their existence is a stark reality we must confront. Moreover, they reflect some deeper, often overlooked aspects of human behavior and societal dysfunction. Language serves as a powerful tool in revealing not just the actions but also the psychological underpinnings of individuals. Therefore, understanding the language of serial killers is a crucial aspect of criminal psychology and forensic investigation. The way serial killers communicate can offer profound insights into their mental states, motivations, and behavioral patterns. Thus, through the linguistic analysis of their communication, we can better comprehend their actions and thought processes.

Serial killing should be distinguished from two other forms of multiple homicides (Levin & Fox, 1998). In Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, the term “Serial killer” has been defined as; “A murderer, who repeatedly commits the same offence, typically follows a characteristic, predictable behavior pattern” (Oxford University Press, 2006) The term was originally used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in America. It came to public notice in the 1980s when criminal cases related to Theodore Bundy and John Wayne Gacy gained notoriety. American Psychological Association (APA) defines serial killer as “individual who repeatedly commits murder, typically with a distinct pattern in the selection of victims, location, and method” (2018).

This research study is focused on the analysis of the language of serial killers from the continents of Asia and America within the timeline of late 20th century to early 21st

century. The framework of Critical Stylistics proposed by Lesley Jefferies (2010) will be used to determine various linguistic elements. The tools of Critical Stylistics are naming and describing, equating and contrasting, assuming and implying, prioritizing, representing actions/ events/ states, modality choices and metaphor (Jefferies, 2010). The language of selected serial killers will be analyzed with the help of these tools.

1.1 Research Questions

With reference to the linguistic elements of serial killers, this study aims to answer the following questions;

1. What linguistic tools have been used by Asian and American serial killers in their interviews and confessional letters?
2. How does the language of selected American serial killers compare to that of Asian serial killers in term of stylistic elements?

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The language employed by serial killers can provide an insight to their psychological and behavioral patterns. The aim of this study is to analyze these patterns by observing their linguistics choices. Distinct linguistic features can assist in identifying individuals having similar pathological behaviors. Therefore, this study aims to trace commonalities between linguistic tools employed by selected serial killers that can help in identification of future criminals and offenders.

The main objectives of this study are:

- To analyze the linguistics tools used by selected serial killers in their interviews and confessional letters
- To compare the stylistic elements of the language of selected serial killers

1.3 Significance of the Study

Serial killers are a dark part of human world and their actions have grave

yet long-term effects on any society. Their language choices provide an insight into their psychological state, including their thought processes, emotions, and motivations. Therefore, this study aids in exploring the language style of Asian and American serial killers, which can further help in criminal studies. The language choices made by serial killers can be quite idiosyncratic, owing to their intricate nature, therefore tracing language commonalities can be challenging. However, this study seeks to contribute to the field of forensic linguistics by aiming to explore common stylistic elements within the communication of serial killers that may serve as distinctive features.

The existing researches have explored the language of serial killers w.r.t psychology, developmental factors, and gender differences. However, the linguistic patterns and linguistic elements of language of serial killers have not been yet explored enough. This research is also significant in the respect that it explores the linguistic patterns w.r.t language commonalities and language markers.

1.4 Delimitations

The main sources of analysis are written scripts, recordings of interviews and written confession letters of selected serial killers. Therefore, the study is restricted to the analyses of stylistic elements particularly associated with written speech and communication. Hence, elements related to non-verbal communication will not be analyzed. As temporal delimitations help us in contextualizing linguistic markers within a specific time, this research is limited to serial killers from late 20th and early 21st century. A specific and limited sample size allows more in-depth analysis therefore; this research is restricted to a limited number of serial killers from the continents of America and Asia.

1.5 Structure of the Study

The research study is divided into 5 chapters. The first chapter "Introduction" is based on providing brief details about the present study. It contains brief discussion about

serial killers, the research questions, research objectives, significance, and the delimitations of the study.

The second chapter "Literature Review" provides a detailed account of Stylistics and Critical Stylistics and studies conducted in this regard. It also contains studies conducted w.r.t the language and psychology of serial killers. The third chapter "Research Methodology" consists of the research paradigm, method and sample of data, rationale, sampling technique and analytical framework of the study.

Forth chapter "Data Analysis" consists of identification of selected Critical Stylistic tools in the communication of selected serial killers. Moreover, this chapter analyzes the ideological implication of these tools. Fifth and the last chapter "Findings and Conclusion" illustrates the main findings of the analysis and summarizes the whole research by addressing the research questions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stylistic analysis of language has emerged as a pivotal advancement in understanding the unique communication patterns of individuals, especially in the field of Forensic Linguistics. This chapter lays a fundamental background for the key concepts of serial killer, Stylistics and Critical Stylistics. It further explores existing research on serial killers along with the gaps in existing studies.

2.1 Language and Psychology of Serial Killers

A serial killer is generally defined as a person who has killed three or more people over a period usually more than one month, with a space in between the murder, and whose reason for killing can be pegged to psychological factors (Singer and Hensley, 2004). Serial killer represents an extreme of patriarchal masculinity and masculinity's valued traits of independence (loner mentality), sexual aggression, emotional detachment, affinity for violence and objectification and hatred of the feminine' (Caputi, 1993, p. 103). The term 'serial killer' was coined in the 1970s by Robert Ressler, a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent. The official FBI definition of the term 'serial killer' is a murderer who perpetrates 'three or more separate homicides with an emotional cooling-off period between homicides, each murder taking place at a different location' (Schechter & Everitt, 1996, p. 69).

Experts from many areas have examined serial killers in depth. However, there is scarcity of analysis under the lens of forensic linguistics. Gales (2010) examined and compared the female and male serial killers' language. The aim of this study was to discover the stance and attitude (emotions) serial killers have embedded within their

language patterns or through the level of commitment to their acts.

Jeffery et al. (2011) conducted a statistical text analysis to observe and examine the features of crime narratives adopted by psychopathic homicide offenders. The research concluded that serial killers employ psychopathic speech to present a predatory worldview and peculiar socio-emotional needs. Kawas & Almajid (2019) claim that not many researches have been made about serial killers from the language point of view, which is surprising because psychopaths are known to manipulate their language.

Kawas et al. (2019) put forth the idea that there is a link between personality and language with how they develop. It has been hypothesized that psychopaths use more disfluencies in their speech, which are the “um” and “uh” when someone pauses during speech. There is sizable evidence considering the proposition that psychopaths have difficulty appreciating emotional stimuli, especially in the verbal domain. For example, incarcerated psychopathic males fail to show the normal affective facilitation of lexical decision (Williamson, Harpur, & Hare, 1991).

Gomez & Elena (2020) analyzed the linguistic features of the speech of selected killers which speakers use to talk about the events that triggered the murders. A similar study in the domain of forensic linguistics conducted by Bartels et al. (2009) analyzed the courtroom transcript of confession of serial killer, Dennis Rader. The aim of the study was to examine how the killer drew upon popular understandings of serial killing. The findings reinforce the widely accepted construction of a serial killer that is “being sexually motivated” (Bartels et al., 2009).

Mendonca & Peixoto (2023) conducted a content analysis of serial killers’ letters to press and authorities. It was concluded that they are similar in terms of the descriptions of

crimes, the mental states of authors, in addition to threats to the population and mocking criticism at the police forces and authorities. The study conducted by Hancock et al. (2011) employed statistical text analysis to examine the features of crime narratives provided by psychopathic homicide offenders.

Research done by Kosson and his colleagues (2002) explores how psychopaths process emotions. It has resulted in findings that serial killers and psychopaths exhibit discrepancies in processing non-verbal emotions, psychopaths were less accurate at categorizing facial expressions. Other researches show that psychopaths can understand and comprehend other people's emotions and even imitate them. However, they do not believe that others feel as they do. In order to understand the psychology of serial killers, Parulska (2020) conducted an analysis of body language of serial killer, Ted Bundy. Certain expressions, which were considered deception cues, were found in this study.

2.2 Stylistics

Stylistics appeared as discipline around the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century to describe the style used by authors in their written productions. The beginning of Stylistics was historically linked to the emergence of modern linguistics and Stylistics. It refers to the ideas of the Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) who established modern linguistics. Saussure's ideas were further adopted and modified by one of his pupils, Charles Bally (1865-1947), who later on declared Stylistics as a distinct discipline from Saussurean linguistics (Busse & McIntyre, 2010).

Stylistics can also trace its roots to the formalist tradition that developed in Russian literary criticism at the beginning of the twentieth-century. The work done by Moscow Linguistic Circle in this regard is of great significance. Its member Roman Jakobson (1896-

1982) is often credited with being the first coherent formulator of stylistics. In the Conference of Style held in 1958, Jakobson presented the theoretical studies of Stylistics. He further on discussed these ideas in his paper *Linguistics and Poetics*, published as a chapter in Thomas Sebeok's book, *Style in Language* (1960). The arguments laid down by Jakobson are considered as the pioneer of Stylistics, paving way for future linguists and stylisticians (Busse & McIntyre, 2010).

Verdonk (2002:4) defines stylistics as “the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect”. Moreover, Bradford (1997:1) points out that stylistics is “an elusive and slippery topic every contribution to the vast, multifaceted discipline of literary studies will involve an engagement with style”. Leech and Short describe ‘style’ as a particular approach used by an individual in a specific situation owing to a specific purpose. Style can exist in spoken or written language, as well as in literary or ordinary language. (2007).

Wales (2019) has explained the goal of stylistics “is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but in order to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or in order to relate literary effects to linguistic 'causes' where these are felt to be relevant”. Widdowson (1975) is of the view that stylistics is a link between the disciplines of literary Criticism and linguistics. David Crystal (1980) sees stylistics as a part of linguistics, which “studies certain aspects of language variation.” According to Simpson, studying and applying stylistics will lead to an in-depth comprehension and analysis of language and literary texts (2004).

An extensive body of work exists on stylistic analysis w.r.t fb advertisements, sitcoms, and short stories. Rashid (2022) has done a stylistic analysis of advertising

discourse in Iraqi Facebook. Baroudi (2020) employed stylistic analysis on the Seinfeld Sitcom TV series to focus on the honest deception in the series. The study conducted by Junaidi (2021) that used stylistic analysis to analyze the short story “Surakh al-Qubur” written by Kahlil Gibran. These analysts have focused on the use of style and stylistic elements in respective texts. Stylistic tools of listing; prioritizing, assuming, naming, and describing have also been analyzed in communication and interpretation of word choices.

Gregoriou has studied the portrayal of the criminals in American crime fiction to explore the poetic structure of the criminal's mind style (2002). She has explored the construction of criminal ideology and identity in serial killer narratives. The stylistic analysis of Sam Smith's latest songs by Orpilla et al. (2024) has focused on the process of meaning making through linguistic tools. Various grammatical, syntactical, phonological patterns as well as lexical elements of Parallelism, Anaphora, Alliteration, Metaphor, and Hyperbole have been analyzed in abundance in the chosen text.

2.3 Critical Stylistics

Lesley Jeffries is credited with founding this approach, which fills the gap left by Critical Discourse Analysis by providing the necessary tools to explore ideologies within texts. According to Jeffries (2010), Critical Stylistics is an approach for determining the ideology present in any text. Along with literary texts, this approach also covers other types of texts like political and social, etc. Jeffries considers Critical Stylistics as a development of Critical Discourse Analysis (2010). Wodak claims that CDA explores the relation between language and power (1997). The concern for power as domination links CDA to struggles against inequality and power abuse. (O'Regan, 2009)

Jeffries adopts Fairclough's argument that CDA has three dimensions or stages which are 'description', 'interpretation' and 'explanation' (2007, 2010).

- Description is the stage, which is concerned with formal properties of the text.
- Interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction with seeing the text as the product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation of text.
- Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context — with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects.

Jeffries adds that Critical Stylistics is interested in the first two stages, namely, description and interpretation. Critical stylistics uses 'models of language, analytical techniques, and methodologies from linguistics to facilitate the study of style in its widest sense' (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). CDA is concerned with a set of ideas that is opaque such as Dominance, dissimilarity, power as control can be seen clearly in language in use (Wodak and Meyer, 2001). Therefore, for this study, Critical Stylistics has been chosen as it provides a more relevant framework for the analysis of serial killer narratives and ideologies.

2.3.1 Tools of Critical Stylistics

Critical Stylistics, which takes a strongly language-oriented stance, provides a set of tools, which cover not only the ground suggested by Fairclough and others but also have more semantic and pragmatic functionality (Jeffries, 2010). They also allow the analysts to understand the ideological perspective of the speaker of text producer.

Naming. This tool refers to noun choices employed by the author within a text. All

the distinct ideas entertained by the author/speaker related to distinct entities are delivered through nouns/ noun phrases referring to those entities. It involves noun modification as well as nominalization (Jeffries, 2010).

Representing Actions/ Events/ States. This tool refers to the choice of the verbal element of a clause, also known as the Predicator. A writer or speaker is at the liberty to choose a specific lexical verb, which will reflect their situation, and intentions (Jeffries, 2010).

Equating and Contrasting. This tool allows the analysts to observe how and what elements of the world are considered as equivalent and what as contrasting in a particular text. It speaks of the use of opposition and equivalencies and how they function in the formation of ideologies.

Exemplifying and Enumerating. It is the tool employed by the authors of a text for listing and categorizing things. Commas in written text and intonation as well as conjunction ‘and’ are the ways to linguistically recognize exemplification and enumeration. An ideological implication of this tool is visible in their obvious overlapping over each other in case of long listings.

Prioritizing. This tool focuses on particular information in the sentence. It is mainly related with the order and structure of utterance employed by the author/ speaker of the text. The application of this tool involves placing the new information at the end of the sentence. It can also be achieved by converting active verb to passive verb.

Assuming and implying. This tool refers to the application of presupposition and implicature. Implicature is the employment of Grice’s Co-operative model of interaction, with its four maxims; maxim of Quality, maxim of Quantity, maxim of Relation, and

maxim of Manner. Existential presupposition and Logical presupposition are the two types of presupposition, which are to be considered here.

Negating. The tool of negation is used to construct alternate realities within a text. This delivers the idea that something, which exists for one reality, may not exist for other and vice versa. Certain pronouns such as 'nobody,' 'no one,' 'nothing,' 'none,' etc., reflect the idea of negation.

Hypothesizing. Through this tool, text producers create alternative realities. It involves usage of modal auxiliary verbs like 'will,' 'would,' 'shall,' 'should,' 'can,' 'could,' 'might,' etc. This tool refers to the expressions of speaker's doubts, certainty, or desirability. Lexical verbs of 'think', 'suppose'; Modal adverbs' probably,' 'maybe,' 'definitely'; Modal adjectives 'probable,' 'possible,' 'definite,' 'sure,' 'certain'; and Conditional structures 'if,' 'then' are included in this tool.

Presenting Other's Speech and Thought. This tool examines how characters' voices are conveyed through direct, indirect, and free indirect speech. This tool reveals underlying ideologies, power dynamics, and biases in texts. Direct speech includes the original words of speaker or writer therefore; it is the norm or the standard.

Space, Time, and Social Representation. This tool focuses on the application of deixis in a text. Analysts observe how place, time, and social dimensions play role in production of a text. This tool is focused on deixis of Place, Time, Personal and Social.

2.4 Review of Existing Researches on Critical Stylistics

Ibrahim (2021) in his study about the framing of serial killers in Thomas Harris' *Hannibal Lecter* Trilogy has used a corpus-assisted critical stylistic approach. This synergy between corpus linguistic procedures, the notion of framing and the Critical Stylistics tools,

provided a comprehensive model for the study of the serial killers in the selected novels, and possibly, and more generally, for the study of characters in fiction.

Ahmed (2022) analyzed Critical Stylistics in comparison with CDA. According to his study, Critical Stylistics elucidates Discourse Analysis by combining stylistic, systemic linguistics, and critical studies. The CS tools are the linguistic cues contained in any document that can be used to uncover the concealed ideology existing in a text. Contrary to CDA, where the analytical focus is on the power relations and dynamics conveyed through a text, Critical stylistics focuses more on its ideological perspective.

Tabbert (2013) has analyzed and compared the linguistic constructions of offenders, victims and crimes in the British and German press. For the purpose of analysis of data, the tools of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010a) have been employed by combining them with Corpus Linguistics. Certain linguistic features have been used in newspapers to pre-convict offenders and to invoke a feeling of insecurity and fear in the public. Moreover, offenders are constructed in opposition to victims, through naming choices, premodification of these nouns, the use of transitivity choices, speech presentation and implicatures as well as presuppositions.

Ahmed et al. (2020) conducted a Critical Stylistics Analysis in order to investigate the representation of crime in English newspaper of Pakistan. The study examines the linguistic tools, which construct offender, victim, and crime in child sex abuse cases. It has been concluded that the linguistic devices used to construct the offender were not neutral. Stereotypical ideologies, which arouse sympathies for the victim and aversion for the offender, were used. Crime naming nouns, offender-naming nouns and victim naming nouns were frequently employed.

Researchers have also applied the tools of Critical Stylistics for analysis of poems, media representations, and science fiction literature. Al Janabi & Al Marsumi (2021) have employed Jeffries model of Critical Stylistics to explore the ideological stance in Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*. Olaluwoye (2015) examined the representation of minority groups in Nigerian print media through tools of Critical Stylistics. Furthermore, research conducted by Mustafa & Khalil (2019) provides a critical stylistic analysis of the social themes of order and chaos in young adult science fiction.

Al-Zubaidi & Al-Mamoori (2023) examined the theme of human and sex trafficking of children in Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold*. In all of these researches, Critical stylistic tools of representing actions, event and states, negation, hypothesizing, naming and description, metaphor and irony, have been employed.

2.5 Research Gap and Conclusion

This chapter has presented the background and development of Stylistics and Critical stylistics. Moreover, existing pieces of literature related to Serial killers and Critical stylistics have also been reviewed. Therefore, extensive body of research exploring the psychological and behavioral aspects of serial killers is present. However, there is a notable scarcity of works focusing on the linguistic elements of serial killers. Though some researches have discussed their language patterns, they have done so through a lens entirely different from Critical stylistics. This study aims to fill the identified research gap by exploring the linguistic elements of communication of serial killer in the light of Critical stylistics. The findings of this study will provide a more holistic understanding of the behavioral patterns of serial killers.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the foundational approach of this study, detailing the research paradigm, the sample of the study, and the analytical framework used to analyze the data.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Qualitative research gathers and analyzes non-numerical data that provides understanding of individuals' beliefs, perceptions and social aspects. This study falls under the category of qualitative research as it examines textual data to uncover abstract aspects such as the motivational and behavioral patterns in the communication of serial killers. Through qualitative analysis, the common elements in the language of Asian and American serial killers will be explored. The tools described by Jeffries in Critical Stylistics will be the framework for analysis.

3.2 Sample of the Study

The sample of this research is two serial killers from Asia and two from America. Two interviews and confessional letters of each sample will be analyzed.

American:

- **Richard Ramirez (1960-2013):**

Richard Ramirez is an American serial killer, rapist, and burglar who murdered at least 13 people in 1984-85. He died of lymphoma, on June 7, 2013, while awaiting execution on California's death row.

- **Edmund Kemper (1948-):**

Edmund Kemper is an American serial killer who murdered six young women, including his mother and grandmother, in Santa Cruz, California from 1964- 1973. Kemper

is currently imprisoned at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville, at the age of 74.

Asian:

- **Chandrakant Jha (1967-):**

Chandrakant Jha is a hawker-turned serial killer from Bihar state of India. He killed more than 18 migrant workers between 1998 and 2007. His modus operandi was befriending the victims first and then killing them. He used to send a letter along with the dead bodies to the police authorities. Jha is currently serving a life term in Delhi's Tihar jail.

- **Javed Iqbal (1961-2001):**

Javed Iqbal is a Pakistani serial killer and child molester who murdered 100 young boys ranging in age from 6-16. His modus operandi was befriending young boys, killing them and disposing their bodies off in an acid container. Iqbal sent his confession letter to Jang newspaper and surrendered him to the police authorities. He died on October 8, 2001 by allegedly committing suicide.

3.2.1 Sampling Technique

The samples are chosen through the technique of non-probability convenience sampling.

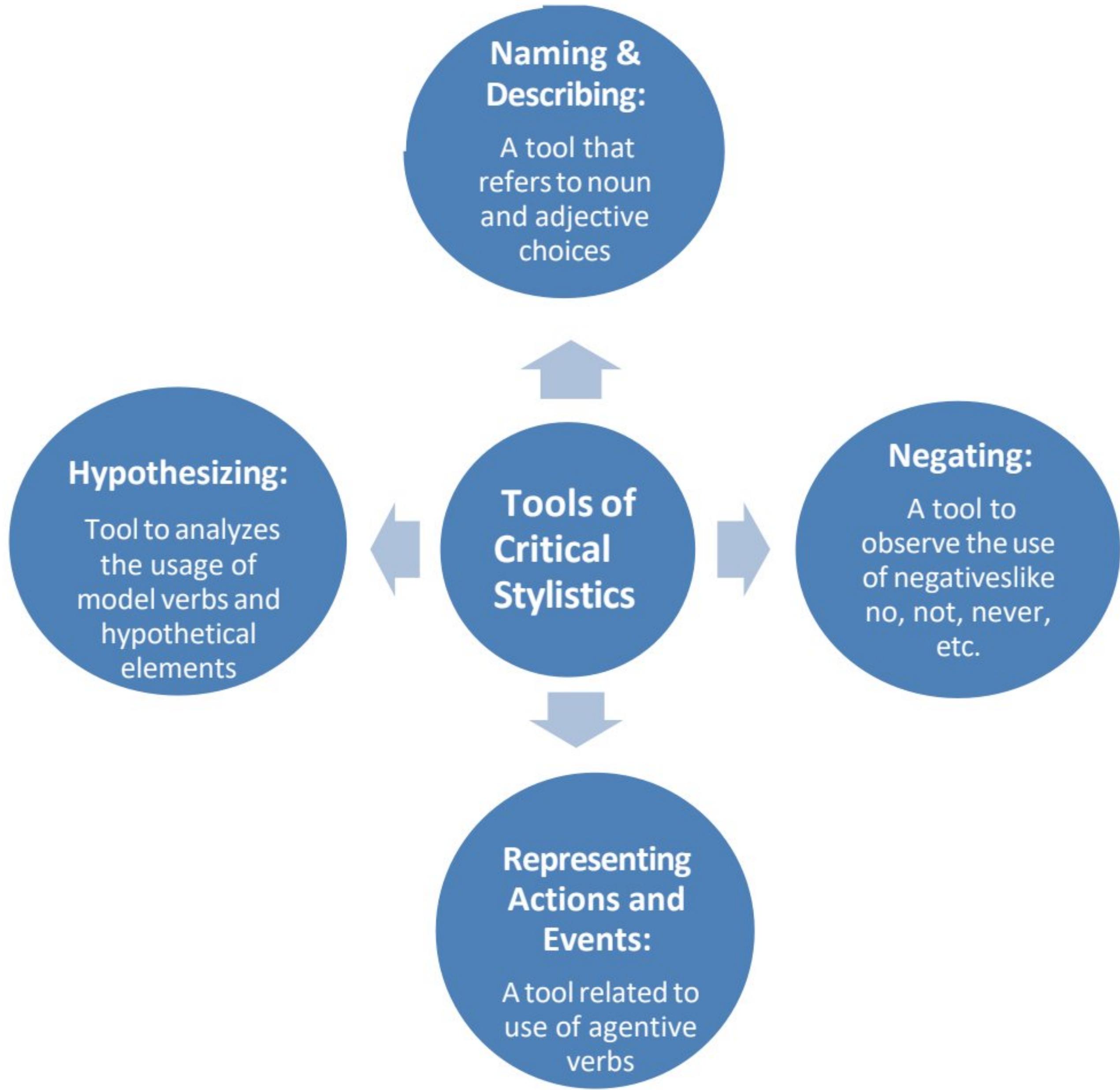
3.2.2 Rationale

The sample chosen for this study assists the researcher in a comparative analysis. The samples from Asian continent provide a cultural as well as geographical relevance to the study. Moreover, there is a scarcity of research on Asian serial killers especially those having Pakistani background. Lately, few serial killers from India have been granted media coverage due to technological and social media advancements. However, their linguistic

elements, in particular, have not been covered or paid enough attention. Current researches explore serial killers from a psychological, social, or legal perspective, with samples different from the samples of this study. Moreover, the killing sprees and period of interviews of selected samples are ranging from late 20th and early 21st century therefore the data obtained through their linguistic analysis can have relevance to contemporary times.

3.3 Analytical Framework

This research is aimed to compare the stylistic elements of language of selected Asian and American serial killers. Critical Stylistics, an approach rooted in critical discourse analysis and stylistics, provides the analytical foundation for examining how language constructs meaning and ideology. It aims to ‘assemble the main general functions that a text has in representing ‘reality’ and organizing ‘the world we experience’, which can be ‘demonstrable in the words and structures of the text themselves’ (Jeffries, 2010a, p. 14). The data will be gathered and analyzed through the elements of Naming and Describing, Representing Actions/Events/States, Negating, and Hypothesizing. Key tools such as transitivity analysis, modality, and lexical choice analysis will be used to dissect the texts.

Figure 3.1*Tools of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010)*

CHAPTER 4

DATAANALYSIS

This chapter consists of four sections which are the tools for analysis: Naming and Description, Representing Actions/Events/States, Negation, and Hypothesizing. Each section contains analysis of linguistic characteristics in the communication of selected serial killers. All of these aspects have been analyzed to uncover underlying meanings and patterns in their language.

4.1 Naming and Description:

This tool refers to the noun, adjective and descriptive choices present in a communication. The naming choices related to specific aspects allow researchers to get an insight into the psychological and behavioral patterns of the speakers.

4.1.1 Richard Ramirez

The noun choices, adjectives, and descriptive terms implied by Richard Ramirez provide us with an insight to his conflicted state of mind. A constant sense of anger and disgust for society, its people as well as for himself can be explicitly observed through his naming choices.

Table 4.1

Derogatory Nouns Employed by Ramirez

Derogatory Nouns
Hypocritical, Maggots, the paranoid cowards, trematodes, bulk of cattle, pieces of shit, the liars, the haters, the killers, the crooks, so-called civilized society.

The noun choices through which Ramirez refers to himself reflect his criminal state of mind. He explicitly calls himself a “killer” (Soen, 2020, para.3) and “the Stalker” (para.3). This shows that he proudly embraces his identity as a killer. In his interview, when asked who he is he replied, “Just a guy” (Soen, 2020, para.6). The contradictory self-description is reflecting his wickedness through these nouns. The feeling of isolation and alienation is evident when he refers to himself as a “loner” (Carlo, 2013, p.576), an individual with “no friends” (p.578).

In order to refer to crimes and criminals, Ramirez has used nouns that deliver a glorifying and fascinating expression. He labels serial killers as “intelligent” (p.570) and “extraordinary” (p.575). He glamorizes their horrendous crimes as an act for “pleasure” (p.574). His conduct of idealizing and glorifying the criminal acts not only reflects his troubled state of mind but also the dislike for society that suffered because of their actions. *His adjective and descriptive choices deliver this idea of belittling of horrific crimes.* While talking about drugs, particularly use of cocaine, he exhibits a sense of fascination. Through a passionate choice of words, he says, “the sense of pleasure it gives is very profound” (Carlo, 2013, p.572). His glorification of crimes and drugs shed light on his criminal and vicious mindset.

He explicitly acknowledges his obsession and admiration with killings and death as he says, “I’ve always been fascinated with killers, crime, murder and death” (Carlo, 2013, p.575). Ramirez’s captivation with death is evident as he says, “death had a very profound effect on me” (Carlo, 2013, p.575). The actions of killing someone is an “interesting thing” (p.575) for Ramirez. He recalls sensing a “certain scent and a certain smell” (Carlo, 2013, p.575) in the pages of crime magazines. To him, it was a “strange”

(p.575) and “mystical” (p.581) feeling. This mysterious and puzzled description of death sheds light on his dark and shady mindset.

The analysis of noun choices employed by Ramirez also highlights his disapproval for religion and spiritual entities. His religious despise is fueled by his fascination and glorification of Satan and evil. He explicitly calls Satan, “a stabilizing force” (Carlo, 2013, p.564) in his life. Ramirez’s reverence towards Satan is apparent when he labels humans as “unworthy servant” (Carlo, 2013, p.576) of Lucifer. He refers to evil as a “driving force” (p.565). His inclination towards the evil conveys the idea of remoteness and foreignness from the good. At another point in his interview, he states that “devil” (p.566) is an “evil that is inherent in human nature” (Carlo, 2013, p.566). His conduct of glorifying and idealizing Satan reinforces the hostility and enmity for humanity in his personality.

4.1.2 Edmund Kemper

The naming choices employed by Edmund Kemper uncover his extreme hatred, anger, and detest for the society and its people. Having gone through extreme emotional and physical abuse, he displayed severe emotional detachment and lack of empathy for other people.

The emotional trauma he went through in his childhood, at the hand of his mother and later on, his grandmother, is apparent through his noun choices. He imparts abhorrent words for his mother who he calls a “man-hater” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.4) and a “big, ugly and awkward woman” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.6). These strong noun choices shed light on his disturbed and hateful state of mind. They enable us to understand the resented feelings he suffers through towards his mother. Moreover, a similar kind of emotional and verbal hatred is apparent for his grandmother. According to him, his grandmother treated him in

the same distrustful and dominant manner as his mother did. He refers to her as an “old bitch” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.6). These nouns and description deliver the idea of severe abomination and dislike for his grandmother.

While referring to his victims, Kemper tends to use derogatory as well as objectifying vocabulary. The sense of dominance and power can be observed when he refers to them as his “catch” (Rosewood, 2015, p.50) and himself as a “fisherman” (p.50). He also labels them as “victims” (p.49) and “dead” (p.50). An imbalance of power dynamic is evident in his choice of words here. Kemper’s hatred for the society is apparent by the naming choices he imparts to refer to people around him. He refers to his fellow prisoner and serial killer, Herbert Mullin as a “no-class” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.8) and “cold-blooded killer” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.8). He also calls him a “good boy” (p.8) who used to sing in his “squeaky voice” (p.8). In addition to derogation and resentment, words like good boy, give a sense of domination and overpowering.

His noun choices also reflect a desire for association and longing. He felt emotionally and physically distant from the society and its people. According to him, when his victims were “alive” (Rosewood, 2015, p.50), they were “distant (p.81) from him. Therefore, he ended up killing his them as he says, “that was the only way they could be mine” (Rosewood, 2015, p.81). This shows a feeling of detachment and isolation prevalent in him. He also refers to them as his “spirit wives” (p.81). His noun choices deliver the idea of remoteness and alienation from the society.

Kemper’s derogation for society and his victims is apparent when he compares his victims to a “deer” (p.49) or an “elk” (p.49). He refers to one of the victims as “attractive chick” (p.83). This objectification of victims shows a sense of domination and remorse at

his end. Kemper demonstrates an obvious sense of domination and desire for power. He labels his killings as “my work” (Rosewood, 2015, p.50) as if he is an artisan. At more than one instances, he crowns himself with the title of a “hunter” (p.49). His naming choices show the power dynamics he has established between himself and his victims.

The feelings of self-resentment and self-hatred are also prevalent through Kemper’s noun choices. He employs certain derogatory and abhorrent words for himself that reflect his loath and lack of self-acceptance.

Table 4.2

Self-derogatory Nouns Employed by Kemper

Self-derogatory nouns
Dork, Old fogey, Demented person, Mass-murderer, Violent

Contradictory to the previous approach, Kemper also tends to employ self-empathetic vocabulary. He says, “I am a human being” (Rosewood, 2015, p.75). This statement creates a sense of close association with human beings, imparting a sense of empathy and compassion. At another point, he labels himself as “an American” (Rosewood, 2015, p.75). This attempt of identifying himself as a part of a specific community and nation highlights the desire of inclusion.

The noun choices employed by Edmund Kemper to describe his killings or actions shed light on his troubled state of mind. At more than one points, he has labeled his actions as “triumphant things” (Rosewood, 2015, p.49). He also describes it as “winning over death” (Rosewood, 2015, p.50). He declares killing as his “victory” (p.50). These specific word choices related to overpowering others deliver the idea of dominance and control. Kemper states that he could feel a “reverence” (p.41) for his victim. Kemper refers to his

crimes and actions as “sexual thrill” (p.13) and recalls them as being “very exciting” (Rosewood, 2015, p.49) and having an “exaltation” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.2) attached with them. These words not only reflect the disturbing verbal approach of Kemper but also derogation towards the victims and society.

4.1.3 Chandrakant Jha

The noun choices employed by Chandrakant Jha describe his extreme hatred and anger towards the society. He refers to the police authorities with extremely abusive and swearing terminology that sheds light at his rage towards the police. Therefore, our analysis of Jha’s language is mainly composed of examining the terminologies and vocabulary employed in confessional letters.

Table 4.3

Nouns Referring to Police Authorities

Swearing nouns
Idiot, Bastards, Motherfuckers, Useless

His description of his parental figures reflects his disapproval towards them. He expresses the lack of affection and remoteness from his parents. He states that he found them “selfish” (Sood, 2022, 4:57) and developed “hatred” (Sood, 2022, 5:09) towards them. Moreover, in his letter, he uses swears and curses related to maternal and parental figures. This shows a displaced anger towards his parental relations and a projection of deprival from expected maternal figure.

The language and naming choices he has used to describe his victim reflect his demeaning attitude towards them. He refers to them as “dead body” (Sood, 2022, 2:45) and

“body” (22:28) at multiple points in his letters. These nouns show a lack of empathy and association towards the victims. He describes his mode of killing and throwing the “hands” (14:56), “legs” (15:14), and “head” (15:30) of the victim in an emotionally devoid and robotic manner. Jha’s description of his victims also delivers a sense of domination and power. He refers to them as “gifts” (Sood, 2022, 23:42) at various occasions. This ironic and mocking way of depiction displays his objectification of the victims.

The vocabulary employed by Jha for self-description shows his self-pride and self-conceit. He referred to himself as the “daddy” (Sood, 2022, 4:39) of police authorities. This choice of noun delivers his dominating attitude as he considers himself above and higher than the society. Moreover, he calls himself the “Son-in-law” (23:47) and “brother-in-law” (4:40) of the police in his letters. These self-proclaimed titles are mocking and degrading the society and the authorities. He also states that he is not some “petty gangster” (4:28) who is afraid of being caught. This specific noun is derogation to other criminals who he considers low-grade and inferior.

Jha, in his letters, insisted the police to introduce him to the media so that he can get more and more recognition. He demanded that he must be portrayed as a “deranged” (22:55) and “dangerous” (22:56) person. He wanted his crimes to be reported with as much exaggeration as possible. He wanted to be seen and known through his crimes. Jha demanded the police to set an “reward” (23:17) for his arrest that must be “worthy” (23:18) of his work. This shows his greed for notoriety and recognition for himself.

The vocabulary with which refer to his actions reflect the sense of self-righteousness and self-pride. He refers to his horrendous crimes as a “game” (Sood, 2022, 23:02) which he intends to make more “interesting” (Sood, 2022, 23:03). These noun

choices highlight his ruthless and inhumane conduct. He lacks compassion for others and killing them is merely a source of amusement for him, which he refers as “my work” (Sood, 2022, 23:18). He proudly embraces his actions as his creation, a product of his brutality and callous.

4.1.4 Javed Iqbal

The analysis of Javed Iqbal’s confessional letters and interviews uncover certain aspects of his personality. His self-descriptive nouns reveal a high level of self-esteem and self-pride. He deems himself as a mystic, a saint, and a reformer of the society, a spiritual being with powers beyond the understanding of an ordinary individual. Iqbal supports this argument with a reference of his childhood story where a “saint” (p.19) declared him “The Chosen One” (p.22). According to this story, Iqbal was prophesied to do wonders in his life and if somebody hurts him or break his heart, a “curse” (p.21) will be inflicted upon the community. This narcissist recalling of events shows Iqbal’s egoistic and unjustified high self-image (Sohail, 2002).

He claims to have a “star” (p.20), a “sign of the heavenly world” (p.20) between his eyebrows. He considers himself “special to God” (p.21) and a miraculous person who did “miraculous happenings” (p.21). His self-conceit is prevalent, as he does not consider himself an “ordinary boy” (p.21). He refers to his spiritual powers as “miracles” (p.21) and “my blessings” (p.21); therefore, claims to have “healing powers” (p.21). This spiritual manipulation sheds light on his self-centeredness and evil wits (Sohail, 2002).

Iqbal also tends to harness emotions of self-hatred and loath, contrary to the previously mentioned idea. Some of his word choices reflect his low self-esteem and self-disgust. He labels himself as a “mentally unbalanced” (p.53) and a “disabled man” (p.52)

who is not worthy of getting anything done. Iqbal, while drawing a self-descriptive image, refers to himself as a “living corpse” (p.53), a “dead man” (p.24) who is living in a miserable condition. These noun choices highlight his infuriation and anger lingering within him, for his own very self. Moreover, he labels himself as an “unusual child” (p.23) who lived in “solitary” (p.23) and was “a loner” (p.23). These words directly reflect his alienation as well as an emotional devoid and lack of self-compassion (Sohail, 2002).

Iqbal’s hatred for society is also apparent through his hatred for the police and authorities. He admits having “confrontations” (p.23) with the police. He claims to be inflicted “pain” (p.24), “terrible pain” (p.24) from the police authorities; therefore, he has developed extreme hatred for them. His words shed light to a state of hostility and enmity towards the police. He, at one point, directly admits, “I was always very critical of the police” (Sohail, 2002, p.25). He blames them of giving him a hard time. Thus, the police authorities have always been at the receiving end of his resentment and anger.

The nouns he employed to describe his victims describe his lack of empathy and barbaric nature. He refers to them as “100 young boys” (p.52), and “teenagers” (p.53). He proudly admits killing “100 beggar children” (p.53) and disposing of their “dead bodies” (p.53) in drum of acid. He further recalls throwing the “body” (p.53) in the sewer with the help of his acquaintances. These nouns shed light on his cruel state of mind and personality where the lives of innocent children were worthless for him (Sohail, 2002).

The vocabulary highlighting his actions and crimes shows his brutal conduct and inhumane approach. He labels them as “a mode of revenge” (p.53) worthy of being recalled for many coming years. He refers to his crimes as “revenge” (p.53), “experiment” (p.53), “bloodbath” (p.53), and “murders” (p.53). His actions were simply a “project” (p.53), “a

killing project” (p.53) for him. Furthermore, he refers to the killing of young children as simply a “recreation” (p.53), “a source of fun” (p.53) and “source of money” (p.53). He crowns his criminal acts as a “master plan” (p.54) and a “great success” (p.53) that required a lot of “dedication” (p.53). This verbal approach by Iqbal shows his lack of remorse and guilt over his actions (Sohail, 2002).

He labels his brutal acts an achievement, worthy of praise and appreciation. He simply regards it as a solution opted by troubled people of the society. He describes his crimes as “a secret” (p.53) and a “favor” (p.53) for his friends. His desire and greed for notoriety and recognition through his crimes is prevalent when he wishes that his “mission” (p.54) and “message” (p.54) must reach the whole world. These naming choices show that he proudly owns his conduct as a creative product of his mind (Sohail, 2002).

4.2 Representing Actions/ Events/ States:

This tool of critical stylistics allows the researchers to analyze how a speaker represents the verbal element or Predicator of a clause. It refers to the specific lexical or agentive verbs, which are employed by speakers in representing actions, events, or states. The analysis of agentive verbs enables the researchers to observe how an agent (doer of an action) is taking responsibility of action or is directly involved in it. The analysis will be focused on the agentive verbs that serial killers employ in their language that reflects their pathological behavior.

4.2.1 Richard Ramirez

In his interviews, Ramirez has employed agentive verbs to refer to his crimes. He uses direct tone of communication to talk about his actions, which highlights a higher degree of self-awareness.

Table 4.4*Agentive Verbs Employed by Ramirez*

Agentive Verbs
Say, Waste, Believe, Understand, Expect, Deem, Relate, Spend, Write, Listen, Saw, Look, Know, Kill, Show, Avenge, Read, Think, Picked, Intrigued, Choose, Experienced, Told, Stay, Locked, Care, Inspire, Influence, Stealing,

From Table 4.4, only specific agentive verbs, which relate to his criminal conduct, societal views, or spiritual aspect, will be discussed in the analysis.

His captivation with crimes is also evident in his utterances where he employs agentive verbs in a clear, unambiguous manner. He says, “I’ve always been fascinated with killers, and crime, and murder and death” (Carlo, 2013, p.575). His conscious involvement in his actions is also evident when he proclaims, “I did it” (Soen, 2020, para.3) The auxiliary, did works as an agentive verb it shows that he is taking responsibility for his actions. Moreover, the agency in his utterance highlights his deviation and alienation from the society, as he says, “I gave up on love and happiness a long time ago” (Soen, 2020, para.7).

Ramirez has used agentive verbs to display his remorse and disapproval for the society. In this scenario, a negation often accompanied the agentive verb to deny the existence and authority of society. As he says, “I don’t believe in the hypocritical society” (Carlo, 2013, p.518). Ramirez’s rejection and deviation of societal norms is visible here. At another point, he says, “I didn’t think about other people’s feelings and needs” (Carlo, 2013, p.577). He firmly expresses his lack of amicability and association with society. He has employed the agentive verbs to convey his intentions without mitigating them.

Agentive verbs are also prevalent in Ramirez's description of spiritual entities. While referring to God, he exhibits a vague and uncertain perception. In his teen years, he "believed in God" (Carlo, 2013, p.564) but later on he "didn't believe in anything" (Carlo, 2013, p.564). This shows a loss of religion and spiritual guidance. However, his clarity of mind and intentions is obvious in his account of Satan. He crowns Satan with the power to "grant" (p.576) the wishes of humans. His mindfulness is apparent in this utterance that highlights the wicked and devious aspects of his personality.

4.2.2 Edmund Kemper

The agentive verbs employed by Kemper highlight his active state of mind, therefore an active involvement in his criminal activities. When he refers to his crimes, he employs direct verbs without euphemizing them. This highlights that he takes pride in his action with no empathy for the sufferers.

The agentive verb he employs to talk about his killings are "admiring my catch" (Rosewood, 2015, p.50) and "taking the head of a deer" (Rosewood, 2015, p.49). Moreover, he expresses the desire that he would "loved to have raped" (Beroldingen, 1974, p.2) the victims. The agency prominent in these utterances shows lack of remorse and guilt over his actions.

Table 4.5

Agentive Verbs Present in Kemper's Communication

Agentive Verbs
Killed, Raped, Grew, Know, Helped, Picked, Love, See, Taking, Scared, Wanted, Admiring, Talking, Screamed, Standing, Sharing, Yelling, Gone, Establish, Promised,

Toyed, Talked, Jumped, Retaliate, Threw, Went, Blow, Squeezed, Broken, Surprised,
Disconnected, Going, Felt, Screaming, Shooting, Sniveling, Losing, Murdered

Kemper recalls the event of killing his mother in an assertive and confident manner. The agentive verbs he employs in this regard show the dominance of his brutal and vicious personality traits. Without soft-pedaling it, he expresses his dislike for his mother and says, “I hated her” (Rosewood, 2015, p.16). He recalls the time when he “screamed at her dead head” (Rosewood, 2015, p.66) for almost a whole hour. Moreover, he “crooked” (p.67) his arms behind her, “broke” (p.67), and “disconnected” (p.67) her neck. The agentive verbs here highlight his aware state of mind, thus a conscious involvement in his actions.

Edmund Kemper employs agentive verbs to describe his awareness of his conduct as a murderer. At multiple points, he directly conveys his intention of killing people around him including his grandmother, the girls he dates, and a fellow prisoner, Herbie Mullin. He proclaimed that he “killed human beings” (Rosewood, 2015, p.75), and he “killed Americans” (p.75). While referring to killings, he proclaims that, “I did it in my society” (Rosewood, 2015, p.75). The auxiliary of did, is functioning as agentive verb in displaying his active state of mind.

Through agentive verbs, Kemper also attempts to develop empathy for himself in the eyes of society. He expresses that he killed people as he was “trying to establish a relationship with them” (Rosewood, 2015, p.81). His speech also exhibits a feeling of self-hatred and low self-esteem. He mentions that he “didn’t deserve the good treatment” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.7), so he “started cutting” (p.7) himself. All the agentive verbs hint towards a lack of self-empathy and self-compassion.

4.2.3 Chandrakant Jha

An assertive and threatening tone of communication is dominant in Jha's letters. He has done so by employing explicit agentive verbs in his speech.

Table 4.6

Agentive Verbs Employed by Jha

Agentive Verbs
Left, Punished, Commit, Find, Filed, Challenge, Solve, Waiting, Investigate, See, Tortured, Think, Receiving, Found, Failed, Care, Examine, Know, Ridicule, Put, Send, Give, Dare, Admit, looked after, Moved, Developed, Began, Repent, Closed, Cut off, Dumped, Tossed, Threw, Destroy, Kill, Ask, Murdered, Tell

Jha has used agentive verbs to impart a threatening aura about his personality. He has a heightened self-image, which he exerts in his speech as well. He proudly admits his crimes as he says, "I have left a dead body" (Sood, 2022, 2:45). Moreover, he says, "I have committed a murder" (Sood, 2022, 4:20). Both agentive verbs deliver a direct way of communication at his end. In his letters, he repeatedly provokes the police as, "I challenge you" (Sood, 2022, 4:31) and "catch me if you can" (Sood, 2022, 4:32). This shows his assertive approach and active consciousness.

In a challenging tone, he addresses the police as, "I'll be waiting for you" (Sood, 2022, 4:37) and "I'll put you to shame" (Sood, 2022, 23:24). This shows that he is physically and emotionally active in committing his actions. His engagement as a text producer is evident when he says that he will "send another gift" (Sood, 2022, 23:42) to the police. In addition, when he "proudly admit killing 7-8 people in a year" (Sood, 2022, 27:24)

His demeaning attitude towards the police authorities is obvious through the agentive verbs he uses while addressing them. He constantly challenges their capabilities and degrades them in his letters. He reprimands them as he says, “You will never be able to find me” (Sood, 2022, 4:23). Jha employs agentive verbs of “failed” (23:31) and “tortured” (7:28) to mock the abilities of police authorities. He repeatedly asserts that police can “never catch” (Sood, 2022, 4:23) him. Thus, he ridicules and undermines them. This highlights his active engagement in the production of his speech and his actions.

The agentive verbs employed by Jha to refer to his parents and his victims also shed light in his active role as a text producer. He recalls that his parents “cared” (5:03) for him. His mother “didn’t take care” (Sood, 2022, 21:23) of his studies. Therefore, he “developed hatred” (5:04) for them. This highlights his disappointment and disapproval for his parental figures. Moreover, his recollection of encounter with his victims shows a deep resentment for them. He wanted them to “repent” (14:35) but they “made” (11:25) him furious. He employs agentive verbs of “cut off” (14:57), “dumped” (15:15), and “threw” (15:31) to portray his killings. The agency shows a conscious state of mind in performing these actions.

4.2.4 Javed Iqbal

In his interviews and confessional letter, Iqbal has employed the verbal choices, which signal his active involvement in his crimes. He claims to have “killed” (p.53) 100 children in an assertive manner. His lack of guilt is prominent when he expresses that he “wanted to kill 100 beggar children” (p.53) and “wanted their mothers to cry” (p.53). His intent of killing them is obvious when he says, “I wanted to take revenge” (p.53). He wanted the world will remember his mode of “revenge” (p.52), his desire for recognition

and lack of empathy is dominant. He frequently uses the agentive nouns of “killed” (p.53) and “murdered” (p.53) to refer to his actions. He takes full responsibility of his actions, which is prominent through these explicit agentive verbs

Table 4.7

Agentive Verbs Employed by Iqbal

Agentive Verbs
Killed, Hate, Ashamed, Put, Taken, Wanted, Beaten, Crushed, Broken, Left, Denied, Cried, Suspects, Cares, Decided, Commit, Incinerated, Punished, Disturb, Remember, Flowed, Seek, Involved, Disposed, Find, Reached, Roll down, Reaches, Hit, Prayed, Helped, Saw, Became, Succeeded, Sending, Hope, Planning, Contemplating, Pleading

His lack of remorse and empathy for his victims is prominent when he shares “deliberately not disposing off” (McGraw, 2003) their bodies. His manner of recalling events and actions shed lights on his clear and active state of mind in committing them. He recalled the event of “dissolving” (p.53) the body of his victim. Moreover, he expresses his intent of “contemplating guilty” (p.54) in front of law. He utilizes specific agentive verbs, which reflect his witty intellect and intent. Furthermore, Iqbal blames the society for “torturing” (p.53) him and leaving him disabled (Sohail, 2002). According to his statement, he was “left crippled” (Khan, 2017) and was “badly beaten” (para.15). These passive utterances intend to blame the authorities as he was “denied justice” (Khan, 2017).

Javed Iqbal employs agentive verbs for spiritual and religious manipulation as well. He claims that he “prayed” (Sohail, 2002, p.53) to God to help him in completion of his mission. His tends to misuse religion to defend his criminal acts. For this purpose, he uses

agentive verbs as, “God helped me in completing my mission” (Sohail, 2002, p.53) and “God helped me in taking my revenge” (Sohail, 2002, p.53). These utterances deliver the idea that he considers God and religion his source of inspiration and assistance. He claims that God guided his actions by “giving courage” (p.53) and “listening” (p.53) to him. All of the agentive verbs in these utterances highlight his religious exploitation and conscious involvement in doing so (Sohail, 2002).

4.3 Negation

The purpose of this tool is to analyze how speakers use negations to shape their interpretation of text by denying an existing reality. Our analysis is mainly concerned with the usage of explicit negations like “no”, “not”, “never”, “don’t” etc. The aim is to observe how the selected serial killers have employed explicit negations within their letters and interviews and what are the intended purposes behind this usage.

4.3.1 Richard Ramirez

Ramirez has employed negation to deny the existence of a particular entity or truth and to demean the capabilities of the society. He has also used negation to express his contradictory belief and ideology about the societal norms.

Table 4.8

Negations Employed by Ramirez

Negations
Not (8), Don’t (8), No one (2), No (7), Didn’t (4), Wasn’t (5), Aren’t (3), Cannot (4), Never (2), Nothing, Disagree, Couldn’t

Ramirez uses negation to demean the society, to express his hatred and despise towards it. He declares the society unworthy and incapable of understanding his stance. In his interview, while referring to people around him, he says, “It’s nothing for you to understand” (Carlo, 2013, p.517) and “You don’t understand me” (p.517). Furthermore, he says, “You aren’t expected to. You are not capable of it” (Carlo, 2013, p.517). This approach shows his derogatory perception about the society which he has incorporated through the tools of negation.

The negations employed by Ramirez highlighted his conflicted and troubled state of mind. As he says, “I don’t know even why I am wasting my breath” (Carlo, 2013, p.517). He expresses his perplexed state of mind disorientated emotional state here. Let us consider some utterances in this regard; “I don’t believe in the hypocritical dogma of this so-called civilized society”, “I need not look beyond this room to see the liars and the haters”, “I don’t need to hear all of society’s rationalizations” (Carlo, 2013, p.518). By the usage of explicit negations, his disapproval and dislike over several aspects of the society is visible.

Ramirez employs negation to express his opinion of other criminals. He deems them as people with “no morals, no scruples, no conscience” (Carlo, 2013, p.568). This shows his disapproval towards them, reinforced by the repeated use of negation. Furthermore, his alienated and remote personality is highlighted in his speech through the employment of negations as well. He describes himself as a person with “no friends” (p.578) and “no contact” (p.576) with people. This shed light on a feeling of isolation experienced by him.

4.3.2 Edmund Kemper

Edmund Kemper has employed the tool of negation to deny certain facts about his personality and to construct an alternative image of his world. He also uses this tool to reject and degrade the authority of the society and police.

Table 4.9

Negations employed by Kemper

Negations
Not (9), No (10), Isn't (6), Wasn't (7), Didn't (12), Wouldn't (3), Don't (5), Never (7), Haven't, Hadn't, Were not, May not, Couldn't

The negation tools employed by Kemper, highlight various aspects of his personality and their abundance in his communication. His social distance and sense of isolation from society is evident. He explained that people were “not sharing” (Rosewood, 2015, p.81) any bond with him and there was “no relationship” (p.81) between them. The negation tools employed here shed light on his sense of foreignness from the society. At another point, he describes his segregation from the society that people of his age were “not talking” (Rosewood, 2015, p.24) in the same language as his. This means he was unable to relate and connect with people from his age group.

Kemper recalls incidences from his life where he “couldn’t please” (Rosewood, 2015, p.17) his mother, or when his father “didn’t want” (Rosewood, 2015, p.17) him around himself. He also recalls the event where his grandmother “doesn’t trust” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.6) him. All these negations explain the lack of trust from the side of his family, therefore highlighting his isolation and distance. These incidences, accompanied by use of negations, show the lack of association and bonding at his side.

Kemper exhibits a low self-esteem and an inferior perception of his own self. He describes himself, in terms of his physical appearance, as “not so much” (Rosewood, 2015, p.58) to look at and “not” (p.58) always been strong. Kemper exhibits a lack of self-empathy and compassion when he declares that he “didn’t deserve” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.7) all the nice treatment he received. All these negations express a lack of self-satisfaction and self-sufficiency.

To highlight the insufficiency and incapability of society, Kemper employs negations. For him, the jury’s verdict of finding him guilty “wasn’t” (Rosewood, 2015, p.82) surprising at all, as people are incapable of understanding his stance. He deems himself beyond the comprehension of ordinary humans as, “society isn’t ready for that yet” (Rosewood, 2015, p.82). He believed that people “aren’t” (p.82) going to take a chance to comprehend whatever he has done. His approach shows a self-perception of beyond ordinary level.

4.3.3 *Chandrakanth Jha*

Chandrakant Jha has used negations in his letters to defy and humiliate the police, to describe his self-perceptions and to express his hatred for the society.

Table 4.10

Negations employed by Jha

Negations
Don’t(2), Didn’t (4), Not (2), Never (3), Nothing, Failed, Denied

Jha employs the above-mentioned negations to challenge and insult the police authorities of being incapable and unworthy. He emphasized that the police “didn’t do

anything" (Sood, 2022, 2:42). He also states that the police "failed" (23:31) to examine the body properly; they "didn't" (22:43) even publish the name of the body in media. He reinforces the claim that they will "never" (4:23) be able to catch him. All of these assertions, accompanied by a negation, challenge the ability and expertise of the police.

The negations employed by Chandrakant Jha, for his self-description, reflect a supreme self-image. He claims himself to be a person who "didn't commit" (4:19) any crime. He refers to himself as "not a petty gangster" (Sood, 2022, 4:28). This self-portrayal shows a sense of superiority and domination he has associated with himself. His threatening and intimidating tone with the usage of negations highlights his anger and lack of remorse.

Negations are also present in Jha's description of relationship with his parents. He blames his parents who "never cared for" (Sood, 2022, 5:03) him. This shows his emotional isolation from his filial relations. The tool of negation reflects the idea of lack of association and affection with his parents. Therefore, he claims that he developed hatred towards them. He also claims that his mother "didn't take care" (Sood, 2022, 21:23) of his education. This highlights the absence of maternal care and a sense of seclusion.

When referring to his victims Jha employs the tool of negation to express his displeasure and rage towards them. He recalls killing one of his friends who took his daughter out despite him telling "not" (11:21) to do so. He killed another victim because he "didn't like" (14:28) his character. These negations show his sense of superiority where he considers his opinion of utmost value. They also highlight his approach of belittling and degrading his victims who were at his mercy.

4.3.4 Javed Iqbal

The tool of negation has been used in Javed Iqbal's interviews and letters to construct an extraordinary image of him and to degrade the society and authorities.

Table 4.11

Negations employed by Iqbal

Negations employed by Iqbal
Never (10), Don't (8), Cannot (5), Couldn't (5), No (3), Not (3), Didn't (4), Haven't (2), Nobody (2), Wasn't (3), Doesn't (4), Will not (2), Had not, Denied

Javed Iqbal has used negation for his self- description that contains elements of exaggeration and domination. He creates a self-image that is beyond the reach and understanding of an ordinary human. According to him, he was “not an ordinary boy” (Sohail, 2002, p.21). He “does not belong to this world” (Sohail, 2002, p.21) therefore, “he doesn’t need” (p.21) to stay here. The negations in these utterances highlight a rejection of the society and demand a segregated self-image. He also threatens the society to “not hurt” (p.21) his feelings or to “not force” him for things he “doesn’t want (p.21). He, furthermore, says that the police ‘cannot kill’ (p.24) him as he has warned them to “don’t mess” (p.24) around him. This tone of communication reflects his strong sense of self-confidence and superiority.

The element of isolation and alienation is prevalent in Iqbal’s utterances. At one point in his interview, he says that he “never shared” (Sohail, 2002, p.19) his story thus people “do not know” (P.19) the real story. This shows his remoteness from the society. He recalls his childhood that he “never played in streets” (Sohail, 2002, p.23), “never played cricket” (P.23), and “never watched T.V” (P.23). This also sheds light on a feeling of

seclusion and alienation, as he never did any of the normal things a child of his age does. However, a sense of superiority is accompanying this sense of isolation as he takes pride in not doing all these things. He proudly states, “I never forgot that I was “The Chosen One” (Sohail, 2002, p.22). This statement highlights his heightened sense of domination and segregation.

Iqbal employs negation for the description of his distant bond with his in-laws. He expresses that he “did not” (P.23) want to get married but his family forced him, thus both his marriages “did not last” (P.23). He states, “I have not seen my wives or children for years” (Sohail, 2002, p.23). He describes that his in-laws “never liked” (P.25) him. The negations in these utterances describe a sense of disapproval and detachment from both sides.

Police authorities have been greatly at the receiving end of Iqbal’s anger and loathe. According to him, he was “denied justice” (Khan, 2017) from the police thus, he “couldn’t continue studies” (Sohail, 2002, p.23). Due to the punishment inflicted upon him, he “cannot walk” (p.24) without support. Moreover, he considers the police incapable and dishonest, as they “don’t” (p.53) care about runaway boys. He claims that he could kill as many children as he wanted as “nobody” (p.53) protects them. The negations refer to police and society, as they are powerless against him and unable to defend their children.

According to him, if he wanted, he could have killed 500 children, as “money was not a problem”; money was “never a problem” (Khan, 2017, para.12) for him. He simply “did not want” (para.12) to break his pledge of killing 100 children. These negations show his ruthless and inhumane conduct. Iqbal blatantly claims of having “no regrets” (McCarthy, 2000, para.10) over his actions. He repeatedly declares that he is “not ashamed”

(para.10) by what he has done. These negations show his lack of empathy for his victims and absence of guilt.

Iqbal proudly admits his wrongdoings and takes credit for taking 100 innocent lives. In his confessional letter, he says, “I cannot wait to share the news with the world; I cannot keep it a secret anymore” (Sohail, 2002, p.54). The negations in these sentences highlight his pride over his crimes. They shed light on his exaggerated excitement and utmost delight to get recognition for his deeds.

4.4 Hypothesizing

This tool of Critical Stylistics allows speakers to express how the world might be, how it ought to be, or how they wish it were according to their perception. It also hints towards the likelihood of something happening in the eyes of speakers.

4.4.1 Richard Ramirez

The tool of hypothesizing is employed by Ramirez to represent his distinct ideological mindset and alternative perception of reality. He employs certain hypothetical tools them to display a strong sense of assertion and certainty over his beliefs. He confidently expresses that he “will” (Carlo, 2013, p.518) be avenged. This shows him not being reluctant or afraid of facing whatever is ahead of him. He also hints towards a mysterious force that will avenge his death. The hypothetical tool of will, delivers the idea of obligation and inevitable fate.

When asked about his opinion regarding the existence of life after death, Ramirez says that he “couldn’t say for sure” (Carlo, 2013, p.575) and “can only speculate” (Carlo, 2013, p.575) This shows a sense of uncertainty over the ultimate fate of humans which is delivered through these modal verbs. The hypothetical tool of doubt, employed by

Ramirez in his speech highlights his emotional conflict and confusion. While talking about the existence of Satan, he says; “I have my doubts” (Carlo, 2013, p.564). This shows his perplexity of emotions and uncertainty.

4.4.2 Edmund Kemper

In his interviews, Kemper has employed the hypothetical tools of could and would, at various points. They shed light on his desire for inclusion and association. According to him, he killed his victims, so they “could” (Rosewood, 2015, p.81) be his. He further expresses that he “could have done a lot of good for society” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.4) and “could have fit better than anybody else” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.4). This expresses his loss of integration and acceptance within society and longing for it.

Kemper refers to the substituted reality constructed by hypothetical tools. He shares the he “would like to study French and German” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.8). Furthermore, he expresses that society “would” (Rosewood, 2015, p.82) have accepted him 10 to 20 years on from now. He expresses his belief that if he had a good supervision from the police authorities, he “would” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.5) have a different fate. However, he knew he “would never get a chance” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.7). He expresses his unaccomplished desires by using this tool.

Edmund Kemper stayed under the supervision of Bruce Colomy, the sheriff’s deputy. He established a close relationship with Colomy, thus considers him a fatherly figure. While referring to Colomy, he expresses the lack of a paternal relation in his life as he says, “He’s like the father I wish I had” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.8). This highlights an unfulfilled desire and wish at his end. His distressed emotional state lack of self-confidence

is evident when he says, “I may not be so much to look at myself” (Beroldingen, 1974, p.6).

When recalling killing his victims, he employs model verbs to show his uncertainty over his actions and intents. The hypothetical tools show an alternative reality that has been constructed in Kemper’s mind. He refuses to adhere to conventional ideologies thus prefers to stick to those built by himself.

4.4.3 *Chandrakant Jha*

The hypothetical tools employed by Jha greatly show the idea of assertion and domination. His choice of model verbs represents his desire for utmost authority and power. In his confessional letters, he abundantly uses the hypothetical tool will, to challenge the authority of the police. A strong sense of supremacy and dominance is prominent in his communication. He reinforces his authority as he says, “You will never find me”. (Sood, 2022, 4:23) He is referring to a fate where he is untouchable and inaccessible.

Moreover, he threatens the police that he “will” (2:34) put them to shame. This tool of hypothesis reinforces his approach of considering himself omnipotent. In an assertive tone, he delivers the sense of domination and power. He challenged the police that he “will” (4:37) be waiting for them. He expresses an affirm authority over his actions of killing and sending dead bodies to the police. As he says, “You will keep receiving the gifts” (Sood, 2022, 7:47) and “I will send you another gift” (Sood, 2022, 23:42). The repetition of will employs a sense of anticipation and excitement at his end. Jha has also employed the conditional if and model verb can, to declare him beyond the reach of police authorities. In his letter he says, “Catch me if you can” (Sood, 2022, 4:32). This phrase is a challenge that conveys confidence, defiance, and a sense of superiority.

4.4.4 Javed Iqbal

Javed Iqbal has employed various hypothetical tools to express his hopes and unfulfilled desires. The model verb of would and hypothetical verb of hope, helps us to get an insight to his sense of longing. He recalls visiting a holy shrine in his childhood and express that he would have loved to live there. He also expresses the desire that he would have killed 100 more children. Furthermore, expressing his anticipation and desires, he says, “I hope that I succeed in my plan” (Sohail, 2002, p.54). This sheds light on his desires that are unaccomplished.

In his language, a strong sense of certainty and decisiveness is apparent. The hypothetical tool of will, repeatedly asserts power and reinforcement. At one point in his interview he says, “I will die and the prison people will be in mess” (Sohail, 2002, p.24). Here, the hypothetical tool shows a strong sense of authority and confidence. His assertive and dominating personality is apparent as he says that he “will make sure” (p.54) that his mission reaches the world. The model verb will, shows his vigorous and decisive conduct.

The feelings of loss and despair are also prominent through the tool of hypothesizing. Iqbal has used the model verbs of could and couldn’t, to express his feeling of helplessness and hopelessness. He recalls the event where he was beaten by the authorities that he could hardly walk. Because of those injuries, he recalls that he “couldn’t keep” (Sohail, 2002, p.53) his balance, “couldn’t recover” (p.53), “couldn’t walk” (p.53), and “couldn’t continue” (p. 23) his studies. The model verb couldn’t has reinforced the sense of destitute and incapability.

4.5 Conclusion to the Chapter

The analysis of the language used by serial killers reveals a consistent underlying pattern in their communication. All of them exhibit a profound hatred for society and its people. A clear power dynamic is evident in their discourse, positioning themselves dominantly over their victims. Furthermore, they frequently employ agentive verbs to describe their crimes and actions, highlighting their sense of control and agency in their violent acts. The analysis, by revealing these features in their language, highlights a common psychological and behavioral approach of the selected serial killers.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the key results of the study and is organized into the sections of findings, conclusion, and recommendations, each providing a comprehensive overview of the study's outcomes and their implications.

5.1 Findings

The aim of this research was to observe the linguistic tools that serial killers use in their interviews and confessional letters. For this purpose, four analytical tools of Critical Stylistics were chosen and their prevalence was observed in the chosen samples.

Serial killers consistently use nouns that reflect deep-seated emotions of remorse and hatred towards society, police authorities, and sometimes their own family. These nouns also highlight their strong sense of self-pride and righteousness. Paradoxically, their naming choices also reveal a profound sense of self-loathing and alienation, indicating a complex internal conflict. Moreover, their naming patterns often objectify and derogate their victims, displaying a lack of empathy and remorse over their actions.

In their speech, serial killers actively employ agentive verbs to assert responsibility and control over their actions. This pattern underscores their active involvement in their crimes and serves to express their motives and disdain for societal norms. The use of agentive verbs also reflects a notable absence of empathy and remorse in their communication. Serial killers frequently use negation as a linguistic tool to express hatred, disapproval, and emotional conflict towards society and their victims. This linguistic strategy allows them to demean and objectify their victims further. Additionally, negation

helps in intensifying their own self-image, portraying themselves as outsiders or rebels against societal norms.

Analysis of hypothetical tools and model verbs in the speech of serial killers reveals a preference for creating an alternative reality. These linguistic devices allow them to reject societal norms and express unfulfilled desires or wishes. By employing hypothetical constructs, serial killers construct narratives that distance themselves from societal expectations, reinforcing their antagonistic stance towards mainstream values.

These findings collectively suggest that the language and speech patterns of serial killers serve as crucial indicators of their psychological state, motivations, and their antagonistic relationship with society. The consistent use of specific linguistic devices reflects their deep-seated emotions, internal conflicts, and the distorted self-perception that characterize their pathological behavior.

5.2 Conclusion

The language of serial killers serves as a profound window into their psyche, revealing intricate facets of their behavior and personality. Through meticulous analysis of their linguistic choices and tools, it becomes evident that these individuals utilize language not only as a means of communication but also as a reflection of their complex inner worlds. Their use of specific vocabulary, tone, and narrative structures provides invaluable insights into their attitudes towards society, their victims, and themselves.

Through this study, it was found that both Asian and American serial killers employ several key linguistic tools in their interviews and confessional letters. The analysis was based on the linguistics tools of naming, representing actions /events /states, negation, and hypothesizing. These tools were analyzed for their employment, frequency, and intended

purposes. It has been observed that they were used extensively to display criminal behavior and articulate their self-perception and underlying ideologies. The use of these linguistic elements revealed how serial killers express and justify their actions, providing insights into their criminal conduct and motivations. A correlation existed between linguistic patterns and behavioral traits. For instance, the manipulation of language to justify or glorify their actions often mirrors their distorted perceptions and narcissistic tendencies.

Moreover, a comparison of the language used by selected American and Asian serial killers revealed that these stylistic elements—naming, representing actions, negation, and hypothesizing—were employed in strikingly similar ways by serial killers from both continents. This pattern indicated that while the specific content of their communications may vary, the fundamental ways in which they used language to express their criminal ideologies, justify their actions, and manipulate their audience were remarkably consistent. Despite cultural differences, their language usage showed that serial killers from both regions express comparable emotions and psychological states. This similarity in communication suggests a common underlying psychological and rhetorical strategy used to convey their criminal ideologies and manipulate their audience.

This study faced several limitations that may affect the scope of generalizability of its findings. The sample size was limited to available written material; other aspects of communication were not discussed. Due to privacy laws and ethical concerns, some source material was beyond the reach of researcher. Some data was subjected to translation into English language that may mitigate the intended effect of commination. Moreover, the insights gained through this study were case-specific. Therefore, they may not be

generalizable to broader criminal behaviors, especially those beyond the continents of Asia and America.

In conclusion, the language employed by serial killers transcends mere words; it serves as a powerful instrument through which their thoughts and motivations are articulated. This research underscores the importance of linguistic analysis in unraveling the complexities of criminal behavior, offering a nuanced perspective that bridges psychology, criminology, and linguistics. The findings of this study enable us to get a deeper insight into their pathological ideologies, thus they are significant in identification of people exhibiting similar behavioral patterns. They contribute to broader societal discourse on violence, mental health, and the potential early identification of individuals at risk.

5.3 Recommendations

Future researchers can conduct studies about further aspects of the communication of serial killers including non-verbal and phonetic aspects. Various types of data sources, such as autobiographies, court documents, and media reports can also be utilized to provide a more rounded analysis of the language used by serial killers. This research was limited to application of four tools of Critical Stylistics. Future studies can employ other tools of Jeffery's model in their research. Employing additional analytical frameworks and conducting comparative studies with other criminal types could enhance the understanding of language patterns. Moreover, they can inculcate samples from other continents as well, exploring cultural and contextual variations.

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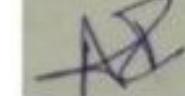
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