
Integrating Forensic Psychology and Linguistics in Criminal Profiling: A Comprehensive Review

Yosefina Elsiana Suhartini

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Karya Ruteng, Manggarai, Indonesia

yosefinaelsuhartini@gmail.com

How to cite (in APA style):

Elsiana, Yosefina Elsiana. (2025). Integrating Forensic Psychology and Linguistics in Criminal Profiling: A Comprehensive Review. *IJFL (International Journal of Forensic Linguistic)*, 5(2), 56-61.

Abstract-This study systematically reviews the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics in criminal profiling. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted using ten peer-reviewed articles from international academic databases relevant to the topic. The analysis examined each article's objectives, methods, and key findings, which were then synthesized thematically. The results indicate that forensic psychology contributes to understanding offenders' mental states, motivations, and personality traits, while forensic linguistics focuses on analyzing language use, communication patterns, and linguistic styles that reveal identity and intent. The integration of these disciplines enhances the accuracy of criminal profiling by providing a more comprehensive understanding of criminal behavior. This approach has become increasingly relevant in addressing digital crimes such as hate speech and online threats, which demand multidisciplinary investigation. Nevertheless, current research faces several limitations, including a lack of standardized methodologies, the predominance of exploratory case studies, and limited implementation in investigative practice due to a shortage of interdisciplinary expertise. Further studies are needed to establish a robust conceptual framework, strengthen empirical research with standardized methods, and foster collaboration between these two fields. Overall, the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics holds significant potential to advance the effectiveness and precision of modern criminal investigations.

Keywords: Forensic Psychology, Forensic Linguistics, Criminal Profiling, Criminal Investigation, Digital Crime.

I. INTRODUCTION

Forensic science in the modern era faces great challenges along with the increasingly complex forms of crime, especially in the digital realm. One of the approaches that is of main concern is criminal profiling, which is a systematic attempt to build a psychological, social, and behavioral picture of criminals based on available evidence. This profile not only serves to narrow the circle of suspects, but also serves as an important basis for understanding the motivations, mindsets, and criminal tendencies of the perpetrator. In investigative practice, criminal profiling is very helpful for

law enforcement officials in directing investigations in a more measurable and scientific data-based manner.

Forensic psychology has long played a role in building criminal profiling by explaining aspects of personality, mental conditions, psychological disorders, and environmental factors that affect criminal behavior. Through a psychological framework, researchers can understand why a person commits a particular crime, whether triggered by past trauma, antisocial personality patterns, or external factors such as social and economic pressures. However, this approach still has limitations when faced with evidence of written and digital

communication, such as text messages, threatening letters, online conversations, and social media posts.

Forensic linguistics is here to fill that void. This field emphasizes analysis on language as a reflection of the actor's identity, cognition, and emotions. The language used by perpetrators in communication often contains clues that are not only semantic, but also reflect the level of education, cultural background, habits, and psychological conditions. Linguistic analysis can help identify anonymous authors, link language styles to specific communication patterns, and provide additional empirical evidence. Therefore, forensic linguistics can be a very important partner for forensic psychology in enriching and strengthening the criminal profiling process.

Unfortunately, previous research still tends to put these two disciplines on separate paths. Forensic psychology is more focused on mental and behavioral aspects, while forensic linguistics focuses on language analysis as a tool of evidence. In fact, if these two disciplines are integrated, the results can bring a more thorough understanding. For example, psychological analysis can shed light on the perpetrator's motivations and mental state, while linguistic analysis can provide authentic evidence of how the perpetrator expresses himself or herself through language. The combination of the two not only improves the accuracy of criminal profiling, but also provides a stronger basis for legal decision-making.

The urgency of this research lies in two sides. Academically, this research is important because it can enrich the treasures of forensic science by offering an interdisciplinary framework that is rarely studied systematically. The integration of forensic psychology and linguistics opens up space for the birth of new perspectives in understanding criminal behavior, so that it has the potential to become a reference in the development of criminal profiling theories and methodologies. Practically, this research has strategic value for law enforcement officials, investigators, and judicial institutions. With an integrative approach, the investigation process can be carried out more precisely, especially in cases of digital communication-based crimes that are increasingly prevalent. This will ultimately strengthen the effectiveness of the investigation, speed up the process of identifying perpetrators, and improve the quality of evidence at trial.

Based on this background, the formulation of the problem in this study is: how

can the integration between forensic psychology and forensic linguistics strengthen the effectiveness of criminal profiling in the investigation of criminal cases?

In line with the formulation of the problem, the purpose of this study is: to comprehensively examine the integrative role of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics in criminal profiling, by reviewing the existing literature, mapping the contributions of both, and identifying potential synergies that can support modern investigative practices.

II. METHODS

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach with the aim of thoroughly examining the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics in criminal profiling. The SLR process is carried out through several stages. First, the determination of inclusion and exclusion criteria, where the selected article should focus on the study of forensic psychology, forensic linguistics, or the integration of both in the context of criminal profiling. Articles that only discuss general aspects of psychology or linguistics without any connection to forensics are excluded from the analysis. Second, the literature search process is carried out systematically on international academic databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and Google Scholar using relevant keywords, such as forensic psychology, forensic linguistics, criminal profiling, investigative linguistics, and psycholinguistic profiling.

The third stage is the filtering of articles by reviewing titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure a fit for the focus of the research. Eligible articles are then read thoroughly to evaluate their methodological quality, paying attention to the aspects of research design, relevance of findings, and contribution to the development of integration of the two fields. Furthermore, the data obtained from the selected articles are extracted in the form of a table containing information about the author, year of publication, research objectives, methods used, and key findings.

The last stage is analysis and synthesis. The analysis was carried out thematically to identify patterns, research trends, and research gaps that still exist. The synthesis of the results of the study was conducted to present a comprehensive picture of how forensic psychology and forensic linguistics can be integrated in criminal profiling. Through this stage, the research is expected to be able to

produce a systematic mapping of the literature and make a conceptual and practical contribution to the development of criminal investigation science and practice.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The manuscript presented below is the article chosen for analysis, accompanied by detailed explanations of the findings;

Table 1. Overview of Research on Forensic Psychology, Forensic Linguistics, and Criminal Profiling

No.	Author & Year	Title	Relevance	Key Results / Findings
1.	Eze et al. (2025)	Forensic Psychology and Criminal Profiling	Focus on forensic psychology and criminal profiling techniques, very close to the integration of psychology and profiling.	Shows that forensic psychology provides insights in the form of mental evaluation, competence, behavioral patterns from evidence, and aids investigations; also emphasizes the importance of ethical standards and potential bias.
2.	Mateo-Fernandez (2024)	The Evolution of Criminal Profiling in the Digital Age: An Approach from Clinical Forensic Psychology	Discussing how forensic psychology adapts in a digital context, there is overlap with digital linguistic analysis.	AI & social media analytics help detect patterns of behavior that are difficult for humans to see; interdisciplinarity is essential; there are ethical challenges & new competency needs.
3.	Shymko (2025)	Psycholinguistic Profiling as a Scientific Field: Theoretical Foundations and Interdisciplinary Methodology	Highly relevant, directly addresses the integration of psychology & linguistics in psychological profiling.	Propose idiolect and linguistic patterns as indicators of stable psychology; conclude that the psychological profile through language is effective; recommend the expansion of the empirical basis and the use of automated methods.
4.	Bada & Nurse (2021)	Profiling the Cybercriminal: A Systematic Review of Research	Profiling in the realm of digital crime, behavioral analysis + psychological aspects + nature of online communication.	Found that the definition of cyber-offender profiling is still not standard; most studies use a deductive approach; Personality traits and online behavior are still little explored.
5.	Fraser (2022)	A Framework for Deciding How to Create and Evaluate Transcripts for Forensic and Other Purposes	Relevant from a forensic linguistic point of view, how to talk about the validity of texts/recordings in a forensic context; useful for text/speech-based profiling.	Develop a framework for evaluating transcripts (police interviews, courts) that may affect justice; find many issues related to the reliability & suitability of transcripts for legal purposes.
6.	Stawnicka & Klonowska (2017)	Psychological and Linguistic Portrait of Criminals. Introduction to Discussion	An article that examines psychological & linguistic collaboration in the profile of the perpetrator, fits perfectly with the theme.	Explains that psychologists + linguists can work together to compile profiles; language styles, anonymous text content, social identity, cultural background emerge as indicators; methods are still empirically limited.

7.	Kadir (2020)	The Application of Forensic Linguistics as an Investigative Tool in Criminal Case Verdicts (Case study at state court of Gorontalo)	Demonstrate the application of forensic linguistics in real cases, which can be combined with psychological profiling.	Found that analysis of language in court decisions (discourse, actors, language styles) could be used to clarify the meaning of the defendant's or witness's statements; aided in the justice and interpretation of evidence.
8.	Ali (2020)	Forensic Linguistics: A Study in Criminal Speech Acts	Focus on criminal speech acts, relevant when it is associated with the psychological aspects behind speech.	Demonstrate that speech acts (e.g. threats, perjury, forgery) contain important elements such as intention, identity; support the need for the involvement of linguists in the legal system; cooperation with psychology is recommended.
9.	Tolbaru (2024)	Profiling Overview in Forensic Investigations	Discuss the incorporation of elements of behavioral psychology & criminal profiling processes in forensic investigations.	Criminal profiling is used primarily in violent crimes; Romanian law has not yet made it a formal piece of evidence; it stipulates that psycho-behavioral interpretations are used very informally; notes the need for standardization and regulation of profiling.

A systematic review of nine relevant scientific articles shows that the integration between forensic psychology and forensic linguistics makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of criminal profiling. The main findings can be divided into four major themes, namely (1) the complementary roles of the two disciplines, (2) methodological approaches, (3) contemporary research trends, and (4) research challenges and gaps.

The Complementary Role of Forensic Psychology and Forensic Linguistics

Most studies confirm that forensic psychology functions to understand the mental state, motivation, and personality of the perpetrator, while forensic linguistics analyzes aspects of language to reveal the identity, communication patterns, and intentions of the perpetrator. For example, Sinisa Franjic (2021) show that word choice in a threat message reflects not only the author's personal style, but also the level of anxiety and underlying psychological distress. Thus, the integration of these two fields strengthens the understanding of the perpetrator profile as a whole.

Other articles, such as Rasheed (2020), reveal that criminal discourse analysis can detect manipulative strategies used by perpetrators to control the perception of victims and authorities. Meanwhile, forensic psychology can interpret these strategies as a form of self-defense mechanism or an expression of antisocial

personality. Both show a synergy that is difficult to achieve if you rely only on one approach.

Methodological Approach in Integrative Studies

The results of the study also show interesting methodological variations. The articles reviewed show that linguistic analysis is often combined with psychological interviews, personality tests, and behavioral observations to produce more accurate profiles. For example, Perkins (2021) used social media message analysis combined with psychometric instruments to understand the motivation of hate speech perpetrators.

In addition, the use of Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology is starting to be widely applied to support forensic linguistic analysis. Some cutting-edge research combines machine learning-based quantitative methods with psychological insights to produce more systematic predictions. This shows that integration does not only occur at the conceptual level, but also at the technical level through an interdisciplinary approach.

Contemporary Research Trends

One of the most prominent trends is the shift in focus towards digital crime. With the increasing use of social media and online platforms, many criminal cases now leave a trail in the form of text messages, comments, and digital uploads. A study by Alduais et al. (2023) confirms that analysis of linguistic styles in online messages can be used to trace the identity

of anonymous perpetrators, while forensic psychology helps to understand the emotional impulses behind such communication.

Other research also shows that the integration of psychology and linguistics plays an important role in dealing with cases of hate speech and online radicalization. Through a combination of language analysis and psychological assessment, researchers can detect the level of verbal aggression as well as the potential for escalation towards real acts of violence. This proves that the integration of the two fields is very relevant in the context of modern cybersecurity and crime prevention.

Research Challenges and Gaps

Despite making a major contribution, the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics still faces a number of challenges. First, the standard methodology used is still diverse, making it difficult to compare results between studies. Some articles use single case studies, while others use surveys or experiments, which make the results not entirely generalizable.

Second, integrative research is still dominated by an exploratory approach. Few studies have attempted to formulate a comprehensive theoretical framework to systematically bring the two fields together. This means that practice in the field often still depends on the interpretation of individual researchers or practitioners.

Third, implementation in law enforcement practices is still limited. Many investigative agencies do not have human resources trained in both fields at once. In addition, legal and ethical factors are also obstacles, for example in the use of personal communication data for linguistic analysis that must consider privacy.

Academic and Practical Implications

The results of this study have several important implications. Academically, the research emphasizes the need to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum that combines forensic psychology and forensic linguistics, resulting in a generation of researchers and practitioners who are able to work across disciplines. In practical terms, this integration can speed up the investigation process by narrowing the scope of suspects, increasing the validity of evidence, and assisting the court in understanding the psychological and linguistic aspects of communication evidence.

Overall, the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics in criminal profiling has been proven to provide a richer and more comprehensive understanding than the use of a single approach. The findings suggest that although there are still methodological and practical challenges, the direction of research development indicates great potential for this interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly in the face of the complexity of digital crime in the future.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study shows that the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics in criminal profiling makes a significant contribution to the development of modern criminal investigation methods. Forensic psychology plays a role in revealing the mental state, motivation, and personality of the perpetrator, while forensic linguistics analyzes language characteristics, communication patterns, and linguistic styles that can reflect the identity and intentions of the perpetrator. The synergy between the two results in a more comprehensive understanding of criminal behavior, especially in the context of evidence-based written and digital communication.

The results of the literature review show that this integration is increasingly relevant to the increase in technology-based crime, where digital messages, social media, and electronic documents are the main sources of evidence. Linguistic analysis combined with psychological understanding has been proven to be able to narrow the scope of suspects, improve profile accuracy, and support scientific evidence-based decision-making by law enforcement officials.

However, there are a number of challenges that need to be considered, including the lack of uniform methodological standards, the dominance of exploratory research based on case studies, and limited application in the field due to the lack of interdisciplinary resources. Therefore, efforts are needed to develop a more established theoretical framework, expand empirical research with standardized methods, and increase inter-disciplinary collaboration at the academic and institutional levels.

Overall, this study confirms that the integration of forensic psychology and forensic linguistics is a strategic step to strengthen criminal profiling in the modern era. If developed systematically, this approach has the potential to not only enrich academic treasures, but also increase the effectiveness of criminal investigation practices, especially in the face of increasingly complex digital crime challenges.

V. REFERENCES

Alduais, A., Al-Khulaidi, M. A., Allegretta, S., & Abdulkhalek, M. M. (2023). Forensic linguistics: A scientometric review. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(1), 2214387. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2023.214387>

Ali, J. H. (2020). Forensic Linguistics: A Study in Criminal Speech Acts. *Beni-Suef University International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 39–65. <https://doi.org/10.21608/buijhs.2020.91333>

Bada, M., & Nurse, J. R. C. (2021). Profiling the Cybercriminal: A Systematic Review of Research. *2021 International Conference on Cyber Situational Awareness, Data*

Analytics and Assessment (CyberSA), 1–8.
<https://doi.org/10.1109/CyberSA52016.2021.9478246>

Eze, S., Alabi, K., Ibrahim, S., Yusuf, A., Hamzat, F., A, A., Atoyebi, A., Lawal, I., Oa, I., Ay, I.-F., & Dare, B. (2025). Forensic Psychology and Criminal Profiling. *Journal of Forensic Science and Research*, 9(1), 092–096. <https://doi.org/10.29328/journal.jfsr.1001085>

Fraser, H. (2022). A Framework for Deciding How to Create and Evaluate Transcripts for Forensic and Other Purposes. *Frontiers in Communication*, 7, 898410. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2022.898410>

Kadir, R. (2020). THE APPLICATION OF FORENSIC LINGUISTICS AS AN INVESTIGATIVE TOOL IN CRIMINAL CASE VERDICTS (A case study at the state court of Gorontalo). *JournalNX - A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal*, 6(6), 251–259.

Mateo-Fernandez, P. V. (2024). The Evolution of Criminal Profiling in the Digital Age: An Approach from Clinical Forensic Psychology. *International Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 9(4), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.23880/ijfsc-16000427>

Perkins, R. C. (2021). The Application of Forensic Linguistics in Cybercrime Investigations. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 15(1), 68–78. <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pay097>

Rasheed, N. J. (2020). FORENSIC PSYCHOLINGUISTICS: USING LANGUAGE ANALYSIS FOR IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING OFFENDERS. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 10(01), 392–398. <https://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v10i01.040>

Shymko, V. (2025). Психолінгвістичний профайлінг як науковий напрям: Теоретичні основи та міждисциплінарна методологія. *PSYCHOLINGUISTICS*, 37(1), 177–199. <https://doi.org/10.31470/2309-1797-2025-37-1-177-199>

Sinisa Franjic. (2021). Forensics and Applied Linguistics. *Instant Journal of Forensic Science*, 27–33. <https://doi.org/10.36811/ijfs.2021.110017>

Stawnicka, J., & Klonowska, I. (2017). Psycholinguistyczny portret sprawcy przestępstw. Wstęp do dyskusji. *Resocjalizacja Polska*, 12, 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.22432/pjsr.2016.12.03>

Tolbaru, C.-E. (2024). PROFILING OVERVIEW IN FORENSIC INVESTIGATIONS. *International Journal of Legal and Social Order*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.55516/ijlso.v4i1.178>