



# An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics

*Malcolm Coulthard, Alison Johnson*

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From the accusation of plagiarism in *The Da Vinci Code*, to the infamous hoaxer in the Yorkshire Ripper case, the use of linguistic evidence in court and the number of linguists called to act as expert witnesses in court trials has increased rapidly in the past fifteen years. *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence* provides a timely and accessible introduction to this rapidly expanding subject.

Using knowledge and experience gained in legal settings – Malcolm Coulthard in his work as an expert witness and Alison Johnson in her work as a West Midlands police officer – the two authors combine an array of perspectives into a distinctly unified textbook, focusing throughout on evidence from real and often high profile cases including serial killer Harold Shipman, the Bridgewater Four and the Birmingham Six.

Divided into two sections, 'The Language of the Legal Process' and 'Language as Evidence', the book covers the key topics of the field. The first section looks at legal language, the structures of legal genres and the collection and testing of evidence from the initial police interview through to examination and cross-examination in the courtroom. The second section focuses on the role of the forensic linguist, the forensic phonetician and the document examiner, as well as examining in detail the linguistic investigation of authorship and plagiarism.

With research tasks, suggested reading and website references provided at the end of each chapter, *An Introduction to Forensic Linguistics: Language in Evidence* is the essential textbook for courses in forensic linguistics and language of the law.

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