



COGNITIVE AND LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF FORENSIC MEDICAL EXAMINATION TEXTS IN LEGAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract. This article examines the cognitive and linguistic features of forensic medical examination texts within legal discourse. Forensic medical reports are complex expert documents located at the intersection of medicine, law, and institutional communication. They convert professional medical observations into legally relevant evidence and therefore require both scientific accuracy and textual clarity. The study examines how expert knowledge, reasoning, categorization, causality, and evidentiality are represented in such texts. From a cognitive perspective, forensic medical examination texts reflect the stages of professional thinking: observation of bodily injuries, identification of medical signs, classification according to accepted criteria, interpretation of causal relations, and formulation of conclusions. From a linguistic perspective, these texts are characterized by terminological precision, objectivity, standardized structure, impersonal constructions, passive voice, nominalization, logical sequence, and factual density. Particular attention is given to modality, since expert conclusions may be categorical, probable, or limited depending on the available data. The article also analyzes the relationship between descriptive and inferential components. Descriptive parts record visible facts, while inferential statements explain the mechanism, cause, time, degree of severity, and possible circumstances of injury. The findings show that the evidential value of forensic medical texts depends on the balance between medical exactness and legal comprehensibility. Ambiguity, excessive terminology, or weak logical connection may reduce the reliability of expert conclusions. Therefore, such texts should be studied as cognitive-linguistic documents that encode expert knowledge and mediate communication between medical specialists

and participants of legal discourse in investigative, judicial, and broader procedural decision-making contexts.

Keywords: forensic linguistics; research methodology; analytical approaches; linguistic expertise; legal discourse.

SUD-TIBBIY EKSPERTIZA MATNLARINING HUQUQIY DISKURSDAGI KOGNITIV-LINGVISTIK XUSUSIYATLARI

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Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada sud-tibbiy ekspertiza matnlarining huquqiy diskursdagi kognitiv va lingvistik xususiyatlari ko'rib chiqildi. Sud-tibbiy xulosalar tibbiyot, huquq va institutsional kommunikatsiya kesishmasida joylashgan muhim murakkab ekspert hujjatlaridir. Ular professional tibbiy kuzatuvlarni yuridik jihatdan ahamiyatli dalillarga aylantiradi, shu sababli ilmiy aniqlik va matniy ravshanlikni talab qiladi. Tadqiqotda bunday matnlarda ekspert bilimi, mulohaza yuritish, kategoriyalash, sababiylik va dalillilik qanday namoyon bo'lishi tahlil qilindi. Kognitiv nuqtayi nazardan sud-tibbiy ekspertiza matnlari professional tafakkur bosqichlarini aks ettiradi: tan jarohatlarini kuzatish, tibbiy belgilarni aniqlash, ularni qabul qilingan mezonlar asosida tasniflash, sababiy bog'liqliklarni izohlash va xulosalarni shakllantirish. Lingvistik jihatdan bu matnlar terminologik aniqlik, obyektivlik, standartlashtirilgan tuzilma, shaxssiz konstruksiyalar, passiv shakllar, nominallashtirish, mantiqiy ketma-ketlik va faktik zichlik bilan tavsiflanadi. Modallikka alohida e'tibor qaratiladi, chunki ekspert xulosalari mavjud ma'lumotlarga qarab qat'iy, ehtimoliy yoki cheklangan bo'lishi mumkin. Maqolada tasviriy va xulosaviy komponentlar munosabati ham tahlil qilindi. Tasviriy qismlar ko'rinadigan faktlarni qayd etsa, xulosaviy bayonlar: jarohat mexanizmi, sababi, vaqti, og'irlik darajasi va ehtimoliy holatlarini tushuntiradi. Natijalar sud-tibbiy matnlarning daliliy qiymati tibbiy aniqlik va yuridik tushunarliklik o'rtasidagi muvozanatga bog'liqligini ko'rsatadi. Noaniqlik, ortiqcha terminologiya yoki zaif mantiqiy bog'lanish ekspert xulosalarining ishonchliligini pasaytirishi mumkin. Shuning uchun bunday matnlarni ekspert bilimini kodlovchi hamda tibbiyot mutaxassislari va huquqiy diskurs ishtirokchilari o'rtasidagi kommunikatsiyani ta'minlovchi kognitiv-lingvistik hujjatlar sifatida o'rganish zarur. Bunday yondashuv ularning funksional tabiatini aniqroq ochishga, ekspert argumentatsiyasida til vositalarining rolini belgilashga hamda sud-tibbiy xulosalarni tergov, sud va boshqa protsessual qaror qabul qilish jarayonlarida to'g'ri talqin etishga xizmat qiladi. Shu bilan birga, u ekspert yozuvida izchillik, ravshanlik va ishonchlilik mezonlarini kuchaytiradi hamda amaliy huquqiy muloqotning umumiy samaradorligini oshiradi.

Kalit so‘zlar: sud-tibbiy ekspertiza; huquqiy diskurs; kognitiv lingvistika; dalillilik; modallik; terminologiya; ekspert xulosasi; obyektivlik; sababiylik; matn strukturasi.

Introduction

Forensic medical examination texts occupy a specific and highly responsible position within legal discourse, since they transform medical observation into procedurally relevant knowledge. Unlike ordinary medical records, these texts serve not only for clinical communication purposes, but also investigative, judicial, and evidential functions. A forensic medical report describes the physical condition of a person, identifies injury-related signs, interprets their origin, and formulates conclusions that may influence legal qualification, procedural decisions, and the evaluation of evidence. Therefore, such texts should be regarded not merely as technical documents but as complex cognitive and linguistic constructs in which expert knowledge, legal relevance, and textual organization intersect.

The importance of forensic medical examination texts can be better understood when they are viewed as products of institutional expertise. In legal practice, the expert does not simply “write down” medical facts. The expert observes, selects, classifies, compares, infers, and verbalizes information according to professional norms and procedural expectations. In this respect, forensic medical writing reflects a particular mode of professional cognition. The text records the movement from perception to interpretation: visible bodily signs are converted into medically meaningful indicators, and these indicators are further transformed into legally significant conclusions. Similar features of expert discourse have been described in studies of forensic and legal communication, where the expert text is interpreted as a genre shaped by evidential responsibility, institutional constraints, and standardized forms of reasoning (Vladimirova 2019: 9).

From a cognitive point of view, the central feature of forensic medical examination texts is the representation of expert reasoning. The expert must organize knowledge about anatomy, pathology, trauma mechanisms, time of injury, degree of severity, and causal relations. This process presupposes categorization: injuries are named, grouped, evaluated, and related to possible circumstances of occurrence. In forensic medicine, such categorization is especially significant because the same bodily sign may have different legal interpretations depending on its mechanism, intensity, localization, and consequences. The procedural value of forensic medical expertise is therefore connected with the expert’s ability to present medical knowledge in a form understandable and usable for legal actors (Babadjanova et al. 2025: 14). This makes the forensic medical text a

bridge between two professional domains: the biomedical domain, which requires accuracy of diagnosis and description, and the legal domain, which requires clarity, relevance, and evidential reliability. The linguistic structure of such texts is also determined by their institutional function (Gibbons 2003: 89). Forensic medical examination texts usually demonstrate terminological precision, impersonal narration, passive constructions, nominalization, logical sequencing, and a high degree of factual density. These features help to create an impression of objectivity and reduce the visibility of the individual author. However, objectivity in this genre is not achieved by the absence of interpretation; rather, it is achieved by the controlled and transparent presentation of interpretive procedures. The expert's conclusion must show how the described facts lead to a particular professional judgement. Similar requirements are emphasized in forensic linguistic studies, where clarity, consistency, and traceable argumentation are considered essential for expert communication in legal contexts (Coulthard et al. 2007: 31).

Legal discourse requires a special type of language because legal meaning is often produced through precise wording, classification, and interpretive stability. P. Tiersma notes that legal language tends to develop specific lexical, syntactic, and textual conventions because it must regulate institutional action and preserve authoritative interpretation (Tiersma 1999: 56). This observation is directly relevant to forensic medical examination texts. The expert's linguistic choices significantly influence how investigators, prosecutors, judges, and lawyers understand the medical facts. For this reason, the language of the conclusion must balance scientific precision with legal comprehensibility. The same problem is noted in studies of forensic medicine, where the diversity of definitions, roles, and professional boundaries influences the practical use of expert evidence (Meilia et al. 2018: 3).

The study of forensic medical examination texts is relevant not only for linguistics but also for legal practice. A poorly structured expert conclusion may create interpretive difficulties, even when the medical findings are professionally correct. Conversely, a well-organized text can increase the transparency of expert reasoning and support fair legal decision-making. Researchers of judicial and expert discourse emphasize that the language of expertise must be analyzed as an institutional instrument, because it participates in the construction, transmission, and validation of evidence (Radbil et al. 2014: 187). From this perspective, forensic medical examination texts are not neutral containers of information; they are communicative acts that organize knowledge for procedural use. Accordingly, the present article aims to examine the cognitive and

linguistic features of forensic medical examination texts within legal discourse (Kuznetsov 2023: 8). The research focuses on, the structuring of expert knowledge, the verbalization of causality and evidentiality, the interaction between medical terminology and legal clarity, and the role of textual organization in establishing the authority of expert conclusions. Such an approach allows forensic medical examination texts to be conceptualized as specialized cognitive-linguistic documents that encode professional reasoning and mediate communication between medicine and law.

Methods

This study applies a qualitative cognitive-linguistic design aimed at identifying how forensic medical examination texts encode expert knowledge and transmit it within legal discourse. The corpus is understood as a set of forensic medical reports, expert conclusions, methodological instructions, and legal-medical documents in which bodily injuries, causal relations, severity assessment, and evidential interpretation are verbalized. The methodological basis combines discourse analysis, cognitive text analysis, terminological analysis, and genre-structural description. Such an integrated approach is appropriate because the forensic medical report functions simultaneously as a medical description, an expert judgement, and a procedural document (Vladimirova 2021: 43).

At the first stage, the compositional structure of the texts is examined. Particular attention is paid to introductory, descriptive, analytical, and conclusive parts, since the movement from observation to conclusion represents the logic of expert cognition (Tumanov: 2008, 6). At the second stage, lexical and terminological units are classified according to their professional, legal, anatomical, pathological, and evaluative functions. This makes it possible to determine how medical precision is adapted to the needs of legal interpretation (Giyosov 2021: 57).

At the third stage, cognitive categories such as causality, evidentiality, modality, categorization, and inference are analyzed. The study observes how the expert marks certainty, probability, limitation, and responsibility in formulating conclusions. These features are especially important in forensic writing, where excessive categoricalness or ambiguity may affect evidential reliability (Kuznetsov 2022: 9). The analysis also considers nominalization, passive constructions, impersonal forms, logical connectors, and standardized formulae as linguistic mechanisms of objectivity.

Finally, interpretive analysis is used to reveal how expert reasoning is made accessible to investigators, judges, lawyers, and other participants of legal discourse. The cognitive-linguistic approach allows the text to be studied

not as a neutral container of facts, but as a structured representation of professional reasoning shaped by institutional requirements (Valenzuela Manzanares 2014: 188).

Results

The analysis demonstrates that forensic medical examination texts are organized around a systematic progression from medical observation to legally relevant interpretation. The expert text does not simply accumulate medical facts; rather, it arranges them in a sequence that allows professional perception to become evidentially meaningful. In the examined genre, the expert first fixes visible or clinically established signs, then interprets them through medical categories, and finally connects them with legal questions such as mechanism of injury, time of occurrence, degree of harm, and possible causal relation. This staged structure confirms that forensic medical texts function as cognitive maps of expert reasoning. The text records not only what was seen or established but also how the expert's knowledge transforms the observed material into a conclusion acceptable for legal discourse.

One of the key findings of the analysis is the central role of descriptive precision in forensic medical examination texts. Forensic medical examination texts rely heavily on anatomical, pathological, and procedural terminology. Lexical units connected with body parts, injury types, tissue condition, physical traces, and diagnostic indicators form the factual basis of the text. Such terminology is necessary because the evidential value of a report depends on the accurate naming of objects and signs. In Uzbek forensic medical literature, the requirement of exact description is also treated as a professional norm, since vague or general wording may weaken the evidential function of the conclusion (Iskandarov et al. 2009: 42). However, the analysis shows that terminology alone is not sufficient. A medically correct term must be placed within a clear syntactic and logical structure so that legal participants can understand its procedural significance.

Another significant finding concerns the high degree of standardization characteristic of forensic medical examination texts. Forensic medical examination texts usually contain repeated compositional blocks: introductory information, case materials, examination data, descriptive findings, analytical interpretation, and final conclusions. This structure makes the expert's reasoning traceable and reduces the possibility of arbitrary interpretation. Legal-medical instructions also emphasize the importance of procedural order in expert writing, because the report must correspond to institutional requirements and be usable in investigation or

court proceedings (O‘zbekiston Respublikasi Sog‘liqni saqlash vazirligi 2011). Standardization, therefore, is not a purely formal feature. It reflects the institutional need to control the production of expert knowledge and to make the expert’s judgement verifiable.

A further result concerns the cognitive category of causality. Forensic medical examination texts constantly establish relations between bodily signs and possible causes. The analysis shows that experts routinely associate wounds with a sharp object, a bruise with blunt force, a fracture with mechanical impact, or physiological changes with a particular traumatic process. These causal relations are rarely expressed as simple narrative statements (Владими́рова 2019: 11). They are usually formulated through controlled, evidence-based constructions that indicate the level of certainty. This feature shows that causality in forensic medical texts is both cognitive and linguistic: cognitively, it reflects the expert’s interpretation of the injury mechanism; linguistically, it is expressed through verbs, nominal groups, conditional structures, and modal markers. Studies on the procedural value of forensic medical expertise also show that causal explanation is central to the transformation of medical findings into evidence (Kanatbekova 2017: 18).

The analysis also reveals that modality plays a decisive role in the formulation of expert conclusions. Forensic medical experts often avoid absolute statements when the available data do not allow full certainty. Instead, they use cautious formulations that mark probability, compatibility, limitation, or insufficiency of evidence. This practice is especially significant because the expert’s task is not to replace the court’s decision but to provide specialized knowledge within the boundaries of professional competence. In this sense, modality protects both the expert and the legal process from overinterpretation. Similar observations are made in studies of expert and forensic linguistic discourse, where the choice between categorical and probabilistic expression is considered one of the key indicators of professional responsibility (Radbil et al. 2016: 73).

Another finding is the strong role of impersonality. Forensic medical examination texts tend to minimize the presence of the individual speaker. Instead of subjective expressions such as “I think” or “I suppose,” the text usually employs impersonal constructions, passive forms, and nominalized statements. This linguistic strategy creates the effect of institutional objectivity. The expert appears not as a private narrator but as a representative of specialized knowledge and procedural authority. In Russian studies of judicial discourse, impersonality is often interpreted as a marker of institutional communication, where the speaker’s personal voice is subordinated to the authority of the legal procedure (Dubrovskaya 2010:

112). The same tendency is visible in forensic medical writing: personal authorship is present, but it is linguistically restrained.

The results further indicate that forensic medical examination texts are characterized by high factual density. A single sentence may contain several layers of information: anatomical location, size, shape, color, condition of surrounding tissue, diagnostic interpretation, and procedural relevance. This density increases the informative value of the text but may also create difficulties for non-specialist readers. For this reason, the expert text must balance compression with clarity. If the report is overloaded with technical vocabulary and lacks explanatory links, its communicative effectiveness decreases. Recent research on the use of forensic medical information by prosecutors confirms that legal actors may experience difficulties when expert information is not sufficiently transparent or practically oriented (Goudswaard et al. 2025: 6). Thus, clarity is not an external stylistic preference but a condition of evidential usability. The relationship between medical and legal codes is another important result. Forensic medical examination texts belong simultaneously to medical and legal discourse. On the one hand, they are based on scientific observation, diagnostic knowledge, and professional classification (Владимирова 2021: 48). On the other hand, they are written for legal institutions and must answer questions relevant to investigation, accusation, defense, or judicial evaluation. This dual orientation creates a hybrid textual nature. Medical terminology provides accuracy, while legal discourse demands relevance and interpretability. The genre-stylistic analysis of medical-forensic reports also confirms that such texts combine expert description with legal communicative purpose (Sokolova et al. 2022: 614). Therefore, forensic medical examination texts cannot be fully explained only as medical documents or only as legal documents; they should be studied as interprofessional texts.

The analysis of linguistic organization shows that nominalization is one of the dominant grammatical features. Processes are frequently presented as nouns: “formation of injury,” “violation of anatomical integrity,” “development of hemorrhage,” “occurrence of trauma,” or “determination of severity.” Nominalization allows the text to compress complex processes and present them as objects of expert evaluation. However, extensive use of nominalization may reduce textual transparency and increase processing difficulty for non-specialist readers. In legal language, similar grammatical features are often associated with abstraction and institutional authority (Solan et al. 2005: 47). In forensic medical texts, nominalization performs a double function: it gives scientific compactness to the description and supports the impersonal style of expert conclusion. The analysis also

identifies the importance of evidentiality. Forensic medical examination texts must show the basis of professional judgement: examination results, case materials, laboratory findings, medical documents, photographs, or investigative information. Evidentiality is reflected in references to what was examined, what was established, what was recorded, and what cannot be determined. This feature links the text to the broader evidential system of legal discourse. In forensic linguistic research, evidence is not treated only as an external object but also as something linguistically constructed, organized, and presented for institutional interpretation (Olsson 2008: 26). The same principle applies to forensic medical examination texts: the evidential force of the report depends on how the basis of knowledge is verbalized.

Another result concerns the role of categorization. The expert text classifies injuries according to type, localization, mechanism, severity, and legal-medical relevance. Categorization is not a neutral listing of signs; it determines how the case will be understood by legal actors. For example, the distinction between minor, moderate, and serious bodily harm is not only medical but also legal in consequence. This means that the language of categorization participates in procedural decision-making. Research on legal and expert language has repeatedly shown that classification terms may guide institutional interpretation and influence the direction of legal reasoning (Yumatov et al. 2012: 255). In forensic medical examination texts, categorization is one of the main cognitive operations through which bodily reality is converted into legal meaning. The findings also show that forensic medical texts contain a specific interaction between explicitness and implication. Certain facts are described directly: number of injuries, their location, size, color, and shape. Other meanings are inferred through professional knowledge. For example, a particular wound form may imply the type of object, while tissue reaction may suggest the approximate time of injury. This interaction makes the text cognitively complex. The expert must decide which elements should be directly stated and which can be left to professional inference. From the perspective of forensic linguistic methodology, such implicitness must be controlled, because unexpressed assumptions may create ambiguity in legal interpretation (Heydon 2019: 64).

In addition, the analysis indicates that forensic medical examination texts share several features with other types of expert discourse, including forensic linguistic expertise. Both genres require objectivity, specialized terminology, transparent reasoning, and an institutionally acceptable conclusion. Uzbek studies on judicial-linguistic expertise also emphasize the significance of text categories, coherence, and interpretive reliability in

expert analysis (Utanova 2026: 144). Although forensic medical and forensic linguistic expertise differ in their objects, both demonstrate how expert writing transforms specialized observation into legally relevant knowledge. This confirms the broader interdisciplinary nature of expert discourse. At the same time, the comparison with legal translation and legal terminology studies shows that clarity of specialized language is especially important in multilingual and multicultural legal environments. Legal-medical terms may lose precision if they are translated or paraphrased without considering their institutional meaning. Studies on legal translation and contextual interpretation of legal terms stress that terminological accuracy must be combined with contextual adequacy (Sheraliyeva 2025: 16), (Xujaniyazova 2025: 5). This issue is especially relevant to forensic medical examination texts, whose conclusions may circulate across multiple institutional and linguistic contexts. The findings suggest that forensic medical texts balance expert precision with the need for legal interpretability.

Another significant result is connected with the persuasive neutrality of forensic medical examination texts. Formally, the expert report does not aim to persuade in the rhetorical sense; it should present objective specialized knowledge. However, its structure, terminology, logical order, and degree of certainty inevitably influence how the conclusion is received by legal actors. This means that the text has an implicit argumentative organization. It organizes factual observations into a coherent explanatory framework that supports legally relevant interpretation. Research on extremist and judicially significant texts also shows that expert interpretation depends on the interaction between linguistic form, context, and institutional purpose (Kurbonmuratov 2025: 65)

Table 1

Cognitive and linguistic parameters of forensic medical examination texts

Cognitive parameter	Linguistic realization	Function in legal discourse
<i>Observation</i>	Anatomical and pathological terms, descriptive adjectives, measurement units	Fixes visible and medically established facts
<i>Categorization</i>	Injury names, classifications, severity labels	Converts bodily signs into legally relevant categories
<i>Causality</i>	Causal verbs, conditional constructions, mechanism-	Explains how an injury may have occurred

	related terms	
<i>Evidentiality</i>	References to examination results, documents, materials, and findings	Shows the basis of expert judgement
<i>Modality</i>	Probable, categorical, limited, and cautious formulations	Marks the degree of expert certainty
<i>Objectivity</i>	Passive voice, impersonal forms, nominalization	Reduces subjectivity and strengthens institutional authority
<i>Legal relevance</i>	Terms related to harm, procedural questions, and expert conclusions	Links medical findings with investigative and judicial needs
<i>Interpretive reliability</i>	Logical connectors, structured argumentation, standardized conclusion forms	Makes expert reasoning traceable and verifiable

The table summarizes the main cognitive and linguistic parameters observed in forensic medical examination texts. It shows that every cognitive operation performed by the expert has a corresponding linguistic form. Observation is expressed through descriptive terminology, categorization through classificatory labels, causality through explanatory constructions, and evidentiality through references to factual sources. Thus, the forensic medical examination text functions as a structured communicative document in which language does not merely report expert knowledge but organizes it for legal interpretation.

The results further suggest that forensic medical examination texts are formed under the influence of two types of responsibility: epistemic responsibility and procedural responsibility. Epistemic responsibility concerns the reliability of the expert's knowledge, while procedural responsibility concerns the legal consequences of the expert's wording. In medical practice, a description may remain within the limits of professional diagnosis, but in legal discourse the same description can become a basis for qualification, accusation, defense, or judicial assessment. This explains why the expert must be careful not only in what is stated but also in how it is linguistically formulated. The legal foundations of medical activity emphasize that professional conclusions should correspond to both scientific standards and legal norms, because medical judgement may

acquire procedural force when included in case materials (G'iyosov 2012: 64).

At the same time, the findings show that absolute neutrality is difficult to achieve, because the act of expert classification already involves interpretation. When an expert determines the severity of bodily harm or identifies a probable mechanism of injury, the text moves beyond simple description. It enters the domain of professional judgement. Therefore, the objectivity of the text should not be understood as the absence of evaluation, but as the disciplined, evidence-based, and linguistically transparent form of evaluation. This is particularly important in expert discourse, where the persuasive force of the conclusion should come from logic and evidence rather than rhetoric. Another observed feature is the role of coherence. A forensic medical examination text must maintain coherence between the descriptive and conclusive parts. If the descriptive part lists injuries but the conclusion introduces a judgement not clearly connected with those injuries, the text becomes weak from both linguistic and evidential perspectives. Conversely, when the conclusion directly follows from the described findings, the document becomes more reliable and easier to interpret (G'iyosov 2021: 124). Coherence is therefore not only a textual category but also a procedural value. It allows legal participants to see the expert's reasoning as a chain of justified professional operations. The analysis of expert communication also demonstrates that forensic medical texts share common features with other forensic expert genres, including forensic linguistic examination. Both types of expertise require a clearly defined object of analysis, a methodological basis, a distinction between observation and interpretation, and a conclusion formulated within the expert's competence. Studies of linguistic profiling and forensic linguistic expertise show that expert texts must avoid arbitrary interpretation and should rely on verifiable textual indicators (To'rayeva 2025). Although the object of forensic medical examination is the body rather than speech or writing, the same principle applies: expert knowledge must be textually organized in a way that can be checked, questioned, and procedurally used.

The findings also show that forensic medical examination texts participate in the broader process of legal meaning-making. The report does not make a judicial decision, but it provides specialized knowledge that may influence that decision. In this sense, the expert text is both subordinate and powerful: subordinate because it is produced within the framework of legal procedure, powerful because it may shape the interpretation of facts. Legal discourse studies have shown that institutional texts often regulate social action through specialized wording and controlled interpretation (Tiersma

1999: 72). Forensic medical examination texts perform a similar function by organizing medical findings in a form that can be evaluated and applied within legal proceedings. The interdisciplinary nature of the genre is especially evident in cases where medical findings must be correlated with witness statements, investigative versions, or case circumstances. The expert may not determine guilt, intention, or legal responsibility, but the medical conclusion may support or weaken a particular version of events. This creates the need for careful linguistic boundaries. The expert should not exceed medical competence by making legal conclusions, yet the expert must provide enough information for legal actors to draw appropriate procedural conclusions. Thus, the text constantly negotiates the boundary between medical explanation and legal relevance (Valenzuela Manzanera 2014: 191).

A further result is that forensic medical texts rely on controlled interdiscursivity. They combine elements of medical discourse, legal discourse, bureaucratic documentation, and expert argumentation. Medical discourse supplies terminology and diagnostic logic; legal discourse supplies procedural questions and evidential relevance; bureaucratic discourse supplies standardized form; expert argumentation supplies the reasoning from data to conclusion. This interdiscursive nature explains why forensic medical texts may appear dense and complex. Their complexity arises from the requirement to satisfy several institutional and communicative systems at once. The analysis also confirms that terminological consistency is a major condition of reliability. If the same injury or concept is named differently in different parts of the report without explanation, the text may create confusion. Consistency is particularly important in multilingual legal settings, where expert conclusions may be translated, summarized, or discussed by participants using different linguistic resources. Research on legal terminology and translation demonstrates that contextual accuracy is essential because legal terms function within specific institutional frameworks (Sheraliyeva 2025: 17). In forensic medical examination texts, terminological inconsistency can affect both medical interpretation and legal use.

The results point to the need to view forensic medical examination texts as performative institutional documents. They do not merely describe a past event; they participate in the legal reconstruction of that event. Through their structure and language, they help establish what happened, how it happened, and what legal significance the bodily findings may have. This does not mean that the expert creates facts arbitrarily. Rather, the expert organizes observed and medically interpreted facts into a form that can operate within legal procedure. The text therefore functions as a mediator

between physical traces and institutional judgement, between the body as examined object and the case as legally constructed reality. A bar-chart distribution of the observed parameters makes it possible to clarify which features are functionally dominant in forensic medical examination texts. Since the present study is qualitative, the numerical indicators below reflect analytical salience rather than mechanical frequency. They show the relative analytical prominence of each feature in structuring expert reasoning and supporting its communication within legal contexts.

Figure 1

Salience of cognitive-linguistic features in forensic medical examination texts



The bar chart indicates that terminological precision occupies a particularly prominent position among the linguistic features identified in forensic medical examination texts. This findings indicate that expert writing primarily depends on accurate naming, classification, and description of medical signs. The second strongest feature is objectivity, which is realized through impersonal constructions, passive forms, neutral vocabulary, and the avoidance of emotional evaluation. Standardization also receives a high indicator, since the forensic medical report is normally organized according to stable compositional sections. Such standardization is necessary for institutional control and procedural reliability (Vladimirova 2021: 44).

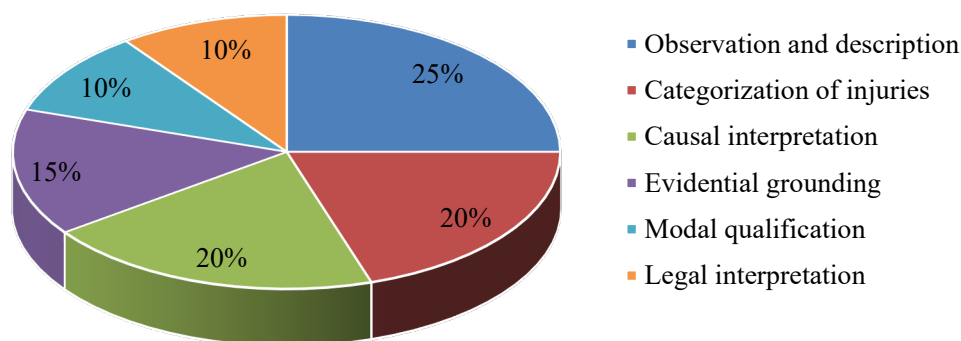
Causality and evidentiality also occupy central positions. Forensic medical reports typically explain not only what injury was found but also how it may have occurred and on what basis this conclusion is made. Therefore, causal reasoning and evidential markers work together: causality interprets

the mechanism of injury, while evidentiality shows the source and limits of expert knowledge. This relation is essential in legal discourse because the expert conclusion becomes useful only when its reasoning can be verified by legal participants (Coulthard et al. 2007: 38).

Modality is slightly less dominant but still highly significant. It marks the degree of certainty, probability, or limitation in the conclusion. Accessibility has the lowest indicator, which shows one of the main communicative problems of forensic medical texts. Although these documents are addressed to investigators, judges, lawyers, and prosecutors, their language often remains difficult for non-medical readers. Thus, the results suggest that forensic medical examination texts achieve professional accuracy more successfully than communicative accessibility. This imbalance may affect the practical interpretation of expert conclusions in court and investigation (Goudswaard et al. 2025: 8).

Figure 2

Functional distribution of cognitive operations in forensic medical examination texts



The analysis demonstrates that forensic medical examination texts are built on the interaction of cognitive operations and linguistic forms. Observation and description occupy the largest share because any expert conclusion must begin with medically established facts. Without a detailed descriptive base, subsequent classification, causal explanation, and legal interpretation lose their evidential strength. Categorization and causality are also highly important, since the expert must transform bodily signs into professional classes and explain their possible origin. This confirms that forensic medical writing is not a passive record of injuries but an active process of expert interpretation.

The bar chart and pie chart also reveal a communicative tension between accuracy and accessibility. Terminology, objectivity, and standardization make the text scientifically reliable, but they may also make it difficult for non-specialists to understand. This is especially relevant in legal discourse, where forensic medical conclusions are read and evaluated by participants who do not always possess medical knowledge. Therefore, the expert report must preserve medical precision while improving explanatory clarity. Legal language studies show that institutional texts often become authoritative through specialized wording, yet their practical value depends on interpretability (Tiersma 1999: 77).

Another important point is the role of modality. A responsible expert conclusion does not always provide absolute certainty. In many cases, the expert must indicate probability, limitation, or insufficiency of data. This does not weaken the text; rather, it increases its scientific reliability because the limits of knowledge are openly marked. Thus, cognitive-linguistic analysis demonstrates that the quality of forensic medical examination texts depends on the transparent connection between facts, reasoning, terminology, and conclusion.

Conclusion

Forensic medical examination texts represent a complex type of institutional discourse in which medical knowledge is transformed into legally significant evidence. The analysis has shown that their main cognitive features include observation, categorization, causal interpretation, evidential grounding, modal qualification, and legal relevance. These cognitive operations are expressed through specific linguistic means such as anatomical and pathological terminology, impersonal constructions, passive forms, nominalization, logical connectors, standardized composition, and cautious modal formulations.

The findings emphasize the distinct institutional status of forensic medical examination texts in comparison with conventional medical documentation. They are expert documents designed for procedural use. Their function is not only to describe bodily injuries but also to explain their mechanism, classify their severity, indicate the basis of expert judgement, and provide conclusions that may assist investigation and judicial decision-making. In this sense, the text becomes a mediator between the examined body and the legal interpretation of events.

The findings also identify a challenge related to communicative accessibility. The strongest features of the genre are terminological precision, objectivity, and standardization, while accessibility remains comparatively weaker. This means that forensic medical reports may be

professionally accurate but not always sufficiently clear for legal participants without medical training. Therefore, future improvement of expert writing should focus on balancing scientific precision with legal comprehensibility. A high-quality forensic medical examination text should be accurate, objective, logically organized, evidentially grounded, and understandable within legal discourse.

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