

TACTICS OF CONFRONTATION, SEARCH AND SEIZURE,
EXAMINATION OF EXHIBITS AT THE SCENE OF THE INCIDENT

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Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются тактические основы трёх взаимосвязанных следственных действий: очной ставки, обыска и выемки, а также проверки показаний на месте преступления. Хотя традиционно они рассматриваются как отдельные процедуры в рамках следственного процесса, их методологическая сущность объединяет их общей доказательственной логикой, направленной на выяснение противоречий, выявление сокрытой информации и максимально достоверную реконструкцию событий. В исследовании анализируются процессуальные требования, динамика поведения, психологические механизмы и тактические риски, присущие каждому действию, и утверждается, что их эффективность зависит от последовательного планирования, ситуационного прогнозирования и научно обоснованного подхода к толкованию доказательств. Используя доктринальный анализ, изучение конкретных случаев и когнитивно-поведенческое моделирование, в статье показано, что правильное выполнение тактических действий значительно повышает доказательственную надёжность уголовного судопроизводства.

Ключевые слова: тактика очной ставки, обыск и выемка, проверка показаний, криминалистическая методология, следственная тактика, доказательственная надёжность, уголовный процесс, ситуационный анализ, психологическая стратегия, криминалистика.

Abstract

The article explores the tactical foundations of three interrelated investigative actions: confrontation, search and seizure, and the verification of statements at the crime scene. Although traditionally considered discrete procedures within the investigative framework, their methodological essence unites them under a common evidentiary logic aimed at clarifying contradictions, locating concealed information, and reconstructing events with maximal reliability. The study analyses the procedural requirements, behavioral dynamics, psychological mechanisms, and tactical risks

inherent in each action, arguing that their effectiveness depends on coherent planning, situational anticipation, and a scientifically grounded approach to evidentiary interpretation. Using doctrinal analysis, case-based examination, and cognitive-behavioral modeling, the article demonstrates that proper tactical execution significantly enhances the evidentiary robustness of criminal proceedings.

Keywords: confrontation tactics, search and seizure, verification of testimony, forensic methodology, investigative tactics, evidentiary reliability, criminal procedure, situational analysis, psychological strategy, forensic science.

INTRODUCTION

Confrontation, search and seizure, and the verification of testimony at the crime scene occupy a distinctive place in the architecture of investigative actions. Together, they form a triad of evidentiary techniques through which contradictions are clarified, concealed information is revealed, and narrative reconstructions are tested against material reality. Their tactical importance cannot be overstated: confrontation serves to resolve discrepancies between statements and uncover deliberate or unconscious distortions; search and seizure secure material traces that would otherwise remain hidden or be destroyed; verification of testimony in situ binds verbal assertions to the physical environment, exposing inconsistencies that abstract questioning cannot reveal. Each action is rooted in procedural law, yet their tactical meaning extends far beyond formal compliance, demanding psychological insight, anticipatory reasoning, and methodological precision.

The rationale for confrontation lies in the epistemological challenge posed by conflicting accounts. Human memory is inherently variable, subject to distortion through bias, stress, or secondary influence. When two individuals present incompatible narratives, the investigator faces the risk of building conclusions on unstable ground. Confrontation is thus a psychological test of consistency, a structured interaction in which the investigator observes not only verbal responses but also behavioral cues, hesitation patterns, emotional deviations, and spontaneous corrections. The process, however, must avoid coercive overtones, as its probative value depends on authenticity rather than pressure.

Search and seizure introduce a different dimension of evidentiary pursuit. Here the investigator enters the domain of physical reality, where traces—whether minute or conspicuous—are embedded within spatial configurations shaped by the offender's behavior. The tactical challenge lies in locating these traces before they deteriorate, are removed, or become contaminated. Search is not merely physical inspection; it is a hypothesis-driven exercise where the investigator anticipates hiding places, assesses

behavioral habits, and interprets environmental cues. Seizure follows as a legal act ensuring that discovered objects are properly attributed and preserved.

Verification of testimony at the crime scene constitutes one of the most powerful, yet methodologically demanding, investigative activities. It tests verbal statements against the immutable geometry of real space. An individual may recall events vaguely when questioned in a formal office, yet on-site the physical environment triggers memory pathways inaccessible elsewhere. Conversely, individuals fabricating accounts often falter when spatial constraints contradict their narrative. This action also allows the investigator to observe routes, positions, distances, and temporal sequences with a degree of precision unattainable through verbal questioning alone.

These three investigative actions, though distinct, intersect on the plane of tactical reasoning. They require an investigator to anticipate defensive strategies, manage psychological resistance, and orchestrate procedural steps that preserve evidentiary integrity. They also require interdisciplinary awareness: cognitive psychology informs confrontation; environmental forensics enhances search tactics; memory research supports on-site verification. This article seeks to integrate these dimensions into a coherent understanding of their tactical foundations, drawing on doctrinal analysis, forensic methodology, and practical case studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The scholarly literature on investigative tactics presents confrontation, search and seizure, and verification of testimony as pillars of evidence formation. Early writings in European forensic science, particularly those of Gross and Locard, emphasized the significance of eliciting contradictions and testing statements against physical traces. Their works note that confrontation is not solely a procedural formality but an epistemic instrument designed to resolve conceptual gaps in witness and suspect accounts. Later psychological research expanded on these foundations, showing that cognitive dissonance, memory reconstruction, and suggestibility significantly influence how individuals maintain or revise their earlier statements during confrontations.

Search and seizure tactics have been shaped largely by the evolution of forensic technology. Scholars highlight that successful search activity depends on preliminary hypothesis-building rather than exhaustive, undirected inspection. The literature identifies typical hiding patterns based on offender typologies, environmental factors, and situational pressures. Studies also warn of common errors: premature assumption of scene boundaries, insufficient documentation, and procedural violations that render evidence inadmissible.

Verification of testimony at the crime scene has been extensively studied in German, Russian, and Scandinavian forensic schools. Authors such as Belkin, Yablokov, and Osterburg argue that it is one of the most reliable methods for identifying inconsistencies, provided it is conducted with strict methodological discipline. Experimental research demonstrates that memory retrieval is context-dependent; environmental cues significantly enhance recall accuracy. This supports the tactical value of site-based verification, particularly in complex violent crimes or cases involving dynamic sequences of events.

The literature also examines the interdependence of these actions. For example, Turvey's behavioral evidence analysis framework stresses that contradictions identified during confrontation often indicate concealed evidence, suggesting the need for targeted searches. Conversely, search results frequently serve as psychological leverage during confrontation, pressuring deceptive individuals to revise their testimony. Verification of statements at the crime scene, in turn, confirms or disproves claims arising in both actions.

Contemporary authors emphasize the risks associated with improper conduct: confrontations conducted with leading questions may generate false admissions; poorly planned searches risk contamination; on-site verification performed without proper modeling of movements and spatial relationships may yield misleading conclusions. Thus, modern scholarship consistently calls for integrated, scientifically grounded tactical approaches.

The research relies on a multilayered methodological framework combining doctrinal legal analysis, tactical-forensic modeling, behavioral psychology, and comparative case examination. The doctrinal component establishes the procedural boundaries of confrontation, search and seizure, and on-site verification, ensuring that tactical recommendations remain compatible with legal safeguards concerning admissibility, proportionality, and rights protection. This legal foundation is crucial because tactical efficiency must never compromise procedural legitimacy.

Tactical-forensic modeling provides a structured method for reconstructing how investigators anticipate and respond to situational changes. The model takes into account environmental variables, behavioral patterns, spatial configurations, and risk factors influencing trace discovery and testimonial accuracy. For confrontation, the model incorporates cognitive and emotional indicators of deception or genuine recollection; for search, it draws on environmental criminology and micro-trace theory; for on-site verification, it evaluates spatial-temporal constraints affecting narrative plausibility.

Behavioral psychology forms a central methodological element. Understanding how individuals react under stress, how memory reconstructs past events, and how cognitive biases distort perception enables the construction of interrogation and confrontation strategies that minimize suggestive influence. Research in environmental memory and embodied cognition informs the methodological approach to verifying statements on-site, emphasizing how spatial cues facilitate accurate recall.

Comparative case analysis enhances the empirical grounding of the study. By examining documented investigations in violent crime, fraud, organized crime, and cyber-enabled offenses, the research identifies recurring tactical patterns: deception markers emerging during confrontation; evidence concealed in non-intuitive locations; discrepancies between spatial realities and fabricated narratives. These cases illustrate both successful applications and critical failures, allowing the methodology to distill principles that are robust across varying investigative contexts.

Finally, risk assessment constitutes an underlying methodological thread. Tactical actions carry inherent risks—illegal search, contamination of evidence, psychological coercion, or misinterpretation of spatial cues. The methodology incorporates a probabilistic model that evaluates how tactical decisions influence evidentiary reliability, guiding investigators toward options that minimize potential procedural and analytical errors.

RESULTS

The study identifies several core results demonstrating how confrontation, search and seizure, and on-site verification mutually reinforce one another within a unified investigative framework. First, confrontation performed with methodological rigor significantly clarifies testimonial contradictions. The results show that discrepancies rarely stem from deliberate deception alone; many arise from memory degradation, misperception, or external influence. In such cases, the investigator's strategic formulation of questions and controlled presentation of contradictions encourages truthful reconstruction rather than coercive confession.

Second, search and seizure yield material evidence whose value depends heavily on tactical sensitivity. The study confirms that search success correlates strongly with the investigator's ability to anticipate behavioral tendencies of offenders. For example, offenders under time pressure tend to conceal objects in easily accessible but poorly documented locations, whereas planned crimes often involve deliberate concealment in areas requiring tool use or environmental manipulation. The results also confirm that properly executed searches significantly improve the accuracy of subsequent

confrontation by providing irrefutable material anchors against which verbal statements can be assessed.

Third, verification of testimony at the crime scene emerged as the most reliable of the three actions when executed under stringent methodological control. Individuals confronted with the actual spatial environment tend to correct earlier inaccuracies spontaneously. The study reveals that fabricated accounts often collapse when the narrator is required to demonstrate movements or describe positions incompatible with the physical layout. Conversely, truthful witnesses often recover forgotten details when interacting with environmental cues.

Finally, the results demonstrate that integrating these actions into a coordinated tactical plan magnifies their evidentiary effectiveness. Confrontation uncovers leads prompting targeted searches; search results inform questions during confrontation; spatial verification confirms or refutes claims arising in both actions. This triadic interaction significantly strengthens evidentiary coherence and reduces investigative errors.

DISCUSSION

The integration of confrontation, search and seizure, and on-site verification raises complex questions about the nature of truth in criminal investigations. The findings suggest that evidence emerges not from isolated procedural acts but from a dynamic interplay between human memory, physical traces, and environmental cues. This reconceptualization challenges the traditional view that places each action in a rigid procedural sequence. Instead, the discussion supports a model where tactical decisions evolve organically as the investigator synthesizes material and testimonial data.

A key insight concerns cognitive load and the reliability of human recollection. Confrontation must be understood as a psychological stress test. Excessive pressure may distort memory further, while insufficient challenge allows deceptive narratives to persist. The discussion highlights the importance of calibrated confrontation strategies grounded in cognitive science, avoiding both leading questions and unstructured discourse.

Regarding search and seizure, the discussion underscores the necessity of behavioral prediction. Offenders' decisions about concealment reflect psychological traits—panic, overconfidence, desire for symbolic distancing, or familiarity with the environment. Understanding these traits enables more targeted, efficient searches, reducing the risk of contamination and unnecessary intrusion.

The verification of testimony at the crime scene raises unique methodological considerations. Spatial geometry imposes constraints on narrative plausibility, and investigators must use these constraints not as accusatory traps but as analytical tools. The discussion warns that misinterpreting spatial cues—overestimating distances, ignoring visibility lines, or failing to consider environmental changes—may lead to false conclusions, emphasizing the need for systematic spatial analysis.

Moreover, the discussion highlights the ethical dimension. Confrontation, search, and verification must be conducted in a manner that respects rights and procedural fairness. Investigators who disregard these principles risk invalidating evidence, undermining justice, and damaging the legitimacy of the investigative process.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that confrontation, search and seizure, and verification of testimony at the crime scene form an interdependent tactical system essential for establishing evidentiary truth. Their combined value exceeds the sum of their individual contributions when they are executed with scientific rigor, procedural discipline, and psychological insight. The research emphasizes that confrontation clarifies contradictions and tests authenticity; search uncovers hidden or overlooked material traces; and on-site verification binds statements to the spatial realities that either confirm or invalidate them.

To maximize effectiveness, investigators must approach these actions not as discrete procedural rituals but as components of an integrated evidentiary strategy. This strategy requires anticipation of offender behavior, awareness of cognitive processes affecting witnesses and suspects, sensitivity to environmental dynamics, and a commitment to procedural fairness. Modern investigative practice, particularly in cases involving complex or ambiguous facts, benefits greatly from such integration.

The conclusion highlights that continuous methodological refinement, interdisciplinary training, and institutional support are necessary for sustaining high standards in investigative tactics. As crime evolves, so must the tactical toolkit used to uncover truth. The triad examined in this article—when applied scientifically and ethically—anchors the investigator's pursuit of reliable, admissible, and coherent evidence.

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