

A Forensic Linguistic Analysis of Police Reports

Maria Vinice O. Sumaljag, Phd

Cor Jesu College, Sacred Heart Avenue, Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines

Corresponding Author: Maria Vinice O. Sumaljag

ABSTRACT: Police reports can serve as investigative aids or as pieces of evidence in court. The police officers who make these reports should write them in an accurate, clear and factual manner. Thus, investigation report writing is necessary and is a major duty of those in the criminal justice system. This qualitative content analysis examined the linguistic features and the organizational structure of 30 police reports from the different investigation sections in Davao Region, Philippines. The corpora of the study consist of thievery, shooting incident, murder, stabbing, and drug-related cases. The findings revealed that there are three linguistic features: lexical, syntactical and cohesive devices. Moreover, this legal document is composed of different moves and steps that make up the overall structure of the police reports. Thus, an accurate and clear police report is an important evidence and source of information for any future prosecution.

Keywords: Applied linguistics, forensic linguistic analysis, police reports, content analysis, qualitative, Philippines

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I. INTRODUCTION

One function of police officers is to write investigative reports to record activities and findings of crime incidents. These police reports serve as investigative aids and consist of the recollection of an investigator or an officer in the form of a narrative, which is primarily based on the victims' or witnesses' account of a crime or incident. Thus, police report writing is a necessary and primary duty of those in the criminal justice system (Ang, 2015).

In his paper, Redwine (2003) stated that the majority of the work of the police is supported entirely by their ability to present accurate and detailed information in the form of the police report. Every service performed by police officers calls for the initiation of some important document. However, it is observed that the quality of the police reports needs improvement. Some reports are poorly written that they create many adverse effects on the investigation and consequently on the officer's credibility. These law enforcement officers should include the answers to who, what, where, when, why, and how questions in the incident or investigative reports they write but answering all six of these questions does not guarantee quality reports. These officers still need to write these reports in a clear and concise manner to record the events of the incident. Officers who write poor reports are usually deficient in other aspects of their job. Poorly written reports will cause detectives or courts to expend more time and effort to solve or explain cases.

Through language, laws are promulgated, subpoenas are issued, reports are written and among others (Labov, 1989; Shuy, 1989; Leonard, 2006, 2010). In 2004, Leonard introduced the application of linguistic theory to the analysis of language evidence. He stated that language is a fingerprint to be studied and analyzed. He further stated that language is also essential because it aids in solving and preventing crimes. Knowing the fact that police reports are legal documents, it is expected that these reports are written in an accurate, clear and factual manner to aid lawyers in future prosecutions.

To date, rarely can one find readings and studies regarding the linguistic features and overall structure of police reports. This endeavor can be considered as a blueprint of new knowledge and additional information to the present ideas on the structure of police reports. It is in this important perspective that I decided to conduct the study with the hope that this contributes to the body of knowledge about the language features and structures and moves of police reports, specifically the Investigation Reports.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The goal of this qualitative research employing content analysis was to analyze, understand and describe the linguistic features and organizational structure of police reports from the different investigation sections of police stations in Davao region. At this stage in the research, the language features and organizational structure of the reports were defined as the focus of this study.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the linguistic features found in police reports?
2. What is the overall structure of police reports?

1.4 Theoretical Lens

This study is seen through the lens of Danet's (1985) view on legal language, Finegan's (2008) language structure and use, Swales' (1990) and Labov and Waletzky's (1967) genre and move analysis, Halliday and Hassan's (1976) Cohesion, and of Leonard's (2004) view on Forensic Linguistics.

Danet (1985) stated that the term "legal" refers to anything related to law, lawyers, and court. She also puts her view forward and believes that legal language is so distinct and differentiated that it is possible to call it a separate dialect or sublanguage. In the light of this study, this view was used because it dealt with legal language, and police reports are legal documents.

Finegan (2008) claimed that words have meaningful parts and principles that govern their composition and functions in sentences. Finegan further stressed that morphology shows three methods on how words can be expounded. First, people can make new words from existing words and different word parts. Second, people can borrow words from other languages. Lastly, people can create new words by just using their creative minds. Finegan's view was also used because this study dealt with linguistic features.

Also, this endeavor can also be seen in the genre and move analysis of Swales (1990) and Labov and Waletzky (1967). Genre is an institutionalized communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified and commonly understood by the members of that professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. A genre is a type of written discourse which has criteria relating to communicative events and purposes, restrictions on form and content, and a relevant discourse community. For the terms of move and step, Swales identified steps regarding a small unit of the move. Swales further described a move as a semantic unit regarding the function it performs regarding the overall role of the article. These views were used because this study examined the rhetorical moves and steps of police reports. Further, this theory determined the overall structure of the said documents.

Moreover, Halliday and Hassan (1976) described text connectedness regarding reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. According to them, these explicit clues make a text a text. Cohesion occurs when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The view on the cohesion of Halliday and Hassan was used because they both explained coherence relations and cohesive devices as linguistic mean that enables the writers to achieve coherent texts. In this study, the coherence of police reports was examined to have accurate, clear, and factual reports to aid an investigation.

Furthermore, this study can also be seen from the work of Leonard (2004) in the field of forensic linguistics (FL). He describes forensic linguistics as the newest arrow in the quiver of law enforcement and lawyers. He believes that a language is a fingerprint to be studied and analyzed. Hence, through this study, lawyers can be assisted in seeing language structure in ways that lawyers are not trained to see it. This forensic linguistic study could also lead to a better understanding of how legal language operates.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

In carrying out this study, I utilized the qualitative research design. Creswell (2013) asserted that qualitative research is a system of inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, mostly narrative, description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon. Qualitative research takes place in natural settings employing a combination of observations, interviews, and document reviews. Moreover, qualitative research is a type of scientific research which consists of an investigation that seeks answers to a question. It uses processes to find the answers to a question, collects evidence, produces results not determined in advance, and reveals findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005).

Moreover, Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research design as "an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiring which examine a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. Qualitative research focuses on empowering people to tell their stories, listen to their cries, and reduce the power relationships that often occur between a researcher and the participants in a study (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, qualitative research is an attempt to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to uncover the meaning of their experiences (Brinkman & Kvale, 2008.). It means that, after collecting and gathering quality data from the study participants, we can infer our conclusions and provide insights about what we had observed.

Qualitative research designs, according to Mack et al. (2005), have become important tools in the research community largely because it provides valuable insights into the local perspectives of the study population. Creswell (2003) defined this as an inquiry approach in which the inquirer analyzes and codes the data for the description and themes interprets the meaning of the information drawing on professional observations and previous research and writes the final report that includes personal biases and a flexible structure. Furthermore, according to Wyse (2011), qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations.

Specifically, this study used qualitative content analysis approach. Content analysis is a procedure for the categorization of verbal or behavioral data, for purposes of classification, summarization, and tabulation (Hancock, 1998). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) also mentioned that a research method for the unique interpretation of the results through systematized classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. Moreover, a qualitative content analysis is an approach to empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within the context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models, without rash quantification (Mayring, 2004).

Schreier (2012) stated that qualitative content analysis is one method currently available for analyzing data and interpreting its meaning. Schreier also noted that qualitative content analysis as a research method represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena. Moreover, Ariola (2006) also stressed that the purpose of the content analysis is to explain further a particular phenomenon, to provide more knowledge and information on a specific topic, and to clarify some principles and concepts that are not familiar to many. Furthermore, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) stated that content analysis which is done qualitatively concentrates on the communicative features of language in terms of content or contexts of the text. The data to be utilized in the analysis can be in print, or electronic form taken from descriptive answers, open-ended questions, interviews, focus groups, observations, articles, books, or manuals. Hsieh and Shannon added further that content analysis is a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.

As a research design, content analysis makes use of duplicable and valid interpretations from the corpora being studied as to the use and its contexts; hence, specialized procedure is adhered by the researcher in order to gain insights and generate implications and that objective accounts of the message should be unfolded by the analyst (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002).

Content analysis is the coding of data and classifying it according to its category and behavior. In my study, I analyzed the linguistic features and organizational structure of police reports.

2.2 Role of the Researcher

Background qualifications and experiences of the investigator are essential in qualitative research as it is the individual who is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The role of the researcher in qualitative research is an important matter to be considered in the successful pursuit of the study. I believe I could pursue this investigation because I am a teacher and I teach grammar to criminology students. Further, I also possess the ability in writing, in investigating, in analyzing, and in interpreting data like police reports.

This study on police reports is related to Forensic Linguistics, a new and growing subfield of Applied Linguistics. My classmates and I attended the International Conference on Applied Linguistics at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. I learned from that conference which inspired me to venture on Forensic Linguistics. In this qualitative study, I followed the framework of Stempel (1989) which states that the researcher who wishes to conduct a study using content analysis must deal with four methodological issues: *selection of units of analysis, categorization, sampling appropriate content, and checking the reliability of coding* on content analysis. On his paper, Stempel explained that studies employing content analysis typically consist of the following six steps. First step is the formulation of the research question or objectives. The second involves the selection of communication content and sample. The third is the development of content categories. Fourth step is the finalization of units of analysis. Fifth is the preparation of a coding schedule, pilot testing and checking inter-coder reliabilities. The sixth and the final step involves analysis of the collected data.

Moreover, Patton (2002) stated that the researcher is the instrument through which the data is collected. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) explicated that in qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument. The qualitative researchers collect data themselves. In this research endeavor, I facilitated the research procedure: from the gathering of the corpora to the analysis and interpretation of the data.

My primary role as a researcher was the data gatherer, encoder, analyst, and interpreter. As a data gatherer, I was the one who gathered the data from the police stations. In gathering the data, I sought permission first from the Chief of Police of the locale of my study. When permission was granted, I asked assistance from the police officer on duty to guide me to the investigation section of the police station. I requested the investigator to provide me copies of police reports. I also conducted interviews with the investigator on how he

wrote the police reports. I asked the investigator some questions regarding the details of the incident found in the police reports for clarifications and verifications of the meanings of the jargon used in the reports.

I also acted as a data encoder, analyst and interpreter to come up with a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the police reports. When reports were on hand, I grouped the data according to cases for analysis. I analyzed these reports concerning the structure and linguistic features. I also grouped significant features and structures to come up with my analysis. After the features had been generated, I started the data interpretation. I interpreted the data and provided discussion for every essential linguistic feature that emerged in every research question.

2.3 Research Materials

The linguistic corpora for this research were 30 Police Reports obtained from different police stations in Davao Region. These reports included different cases such as robbery, theft, murder, frustrated homicide, adultery, and drug-related cases. I established my inclusion criteria of what was to be included in the study. These are as follows: only Police Investigation Reports written in 2013 onwards were included in the analysis because this kind of police report is used as evidence in the prosecution. Other types of police reports such as blotters, incident reports, progress reports, and other types of police reports and those Police Investigation Reports written before 2013 were not included in the analysis. From the gathered files, only the linguistic features and grammatical moves were analyzed in the study.

In selecting my 30 corpora, I selected those Police Investigation Reports which satisfied my inclusion criteria since there was a limited number of Investigation reports in the Police Stations. According to Clarke and Braun (2013), 10-100 materials for qualitative research is the suggested number of secondary sources.

2.4 Data Collection

Many factors were involved in the consideration of appropriate research methods for data collection and instrumentation (Anderson, 2003). Moreover, Creswel (2003) also identified observations, interviews, documents, and audio-visual materials as forms of data collection. Also, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) asserted that content analysis is a commonly used qualitative research technique. Rather than being a single method, prevalent applications of the content analysis show three notable approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. These three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and, hence, adhere to the naturalistic paradigm.

Specifically, this study used a summative approach to qualitative content analysis. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) stressed that this approach starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in the text with the aim of understanding the contextual use of the words. This quantification is to infer meaning and to explore usage. Content analysis is analyzing for the appearance of a particular word or content in the textual material (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). If the analysis ceased at this point, the study would be quantitative, counting the frequency of specific words or content (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). A summative approach to qualitative content analysis is beyond pure word count.

In fulfilling this qualitative study, I followed procedures in gathering the data. First, I presented a letter of permission noted by my adviser to the Chiefs of Police of different police stations in the region to allow me to secure 30 police reports. I explained to them the purpose of my study. Second, when permission was granted, I asked the investigator of the stations to provide me copies of police reports for the corpora of my study. I chose varied cases for analysis. Third, I explained to the investigators and the Chiefs of Police that the files would be kept confidential and the names involved in the cases would be coded. After the collection of data, I analyzed them using summative data content analysis approach.

2.5 Data Analysis

After gathering the data following all the correct procedures, I used the framework of Danet (1985), Finegan (2008), and Halliday and Hassan's (1976) cohesion in analyzing the linguistic features of police reports. Moreover, the frameworks of Swales (1990) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) were used in the analysis of moves/structure of the police reports and of Leonard (2004) on the concept of forensic linguistics.

I employed content analysis as accessories in analyzing the data along with many steps. These are the following: identifying the data from the Police Investigation Reports based on the research questions, analyzing data through forensic linguistic analysis, identifying the linguistic features and the rhetorical moves and steps of the reports, describing and interpreting the data in answer to the research questions, and drawing implications from there.

In the analysis, each corpus was labeled with language features and genre moves. Different highlighter pens were used to identify the different language features and structures. Legends were provided below the corpus. The same process was also done for the analysis of the structure. When the labeling was done, I used matrices in arranging the features so that I would be guided to understand and interpret the data. I followed the

example of Andersen and Poole (2001) by using a matrix which includes significant statements and formulated meanings.

2.6 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of a qualitative content analysis is frequently presented by using terms such as *credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability* (Elo, et al., 2014). Moreover, the aim of trustworthiness in a qualitative inquiry is to support the argument that the results of the study are worth paying attention to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The results also hinge on the availability of appropriate, rich, and well-saturated data. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and result must go hand in hand. Improving the trustworthiness of content analysis begins with thorough preparation before the research and requires higher skills in gathering the data, analyzing the content, discussing the issues on trustworthiness, and reporting the results.

In this study, I established credibility by making sure that the linguistic corpora in this research were credible. Credibility was achieved by ensuring that the source of the data was credible. Moreover, I also employed purposive sampling of the police reports to be used as corpora for my study. The researchers must ensure that those participating in research are identified and described accurately to address the credibility of the study. Patton (1990) stressed that the credibility of the researcher is especially important in qualitative research as it is the person who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis. Moreover, the qualitative investigator's similar concept of credibility deals with the question of how congruent is the findings with reality. Ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness (Merriam, 2001).

To address the dependability issue more directly, I made sure that the processes within the study were discussed in detail, thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results. The parallel criterion dependability is that "the way in which a study is conducted should be consistent across time, researcher, and analysis techniques" (Gasson, 2004). Dependability is the security of data over time and under varied conditions. It also guarantees that the results are consistent and could be repeated. It is measured by the standard of which the research is conducted, analyzed and presented. The processes in the study should be narrated in detail to allow any researcher to replicate the study and come up with the same results. Dependability also enables researchers to understand the methods and their effectiveness.

To address confirmability, I made sure that steps were undertaken to help ensure that the work's findings would be the results of objective forensic linguistic analysis of police reports. Moreover, an audit trail was used to show how the data were analyzed. Furthermore, triangulation was achieved through peer review. In here, I consulted experts in the field of linguistics to review my work and to add suggestions for the improvement of my study. Confirmability, as stressed by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2003), is the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity. Moreover, confirmability is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are derived from the data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Studies suggest that confirmability of qualitative inquiry is achieved through an audit trail, reflexive journal, and triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Koch, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Bowen (2009) states that an audit trail offers visible evidence—from process and product—that the researcher did not simply discover what he or she set out to discover. Confirmability also can be established using a reflexive journal (Koch, 2006; Wallendorf & Belk, 1989) which is described as reflexive documents kept by the researcher to reflect on, tentatively interpret, and plan data collection.

To address transferability of this study, I made sure that this study would be beneficial to everybody. Transferability was achieved by conveying to the reader the boundaries of the study such as restrictions on the kind of data to be gathered; some linguistic data involved in the analysis; data collection methods employed; number and length of data collection sessions; and the period over which data were collected. Transferability or external validity, as defined by Stake (2001), is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to a wider population. It relies on the reasoning that findings can be generalized or transferred to other settings or groups. Transferability is the degree in which the research can be transferred to other contexts. The readers note the specific details of the research situation and methods and compare them to a similar situation familiar to them. The data must be filed and were made available to other researchers who wish to conduct the same research or wish to use them in some cases to address transferability.

2.7 Ethical Consideration

Ethics in research deals primarily with the interaction between the researcher and the participants under study. This means that whenever we conduct research, the well-being of research participants must be our top priority. In this study, ethical consideration was done by ensuring that the individuals, organizations, and institutions involved in the reports will be made anonymous.

This study did not involve any research participants but employed 30 police reports. Informed consent was not secured since the study did not involve human participants. This study involved analysis of police reports regarding the structure and linguistic features. In doing so, names and crimes were reflected in the said

reports. Hence, to ensure ethical consideration, I used codes of names, organizations, and institutions involved in the incidents. Also, I did not include the case numbers of these police reports. I only used 1 to 30 for the assignment of numbers to these reports.

In the conduct of this study, I went to the police station and asked for permission from the Chiefs of Police and assured them that the confidentiality of the police reports especially those sensitive cases would be observed. Since the study involved secondary sources, issues on privacy and confidentiality, recruitment risks, benefits, bio-safety, deceit, public observation, permission from location and technology issues connected with participants were not taken into account in this study. This study was also subjected to plagiarism check through Turnitin and obtained a rating below 15% which is the standard rating of the university. I also used simple language to facilitate easy understanding on the part of the readers. This paper was submitted to the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee for the ethical component of the study.

The procedures mentioned above guaranteed that ethical consideration of the people, groups or institutions involved in the cases was achieved.

III. RESULTS

Linguistic Features

Lexical

The corpora consist of six lexical features. These are the technical terms, archaic expressions, doublets, formality, frequency of any and the use of derivational morphemes.

Technical terms are special vocabulary or terms of art used in every profession and occupation. These terms are essential in scientific and technical writing. Each field typically uses vocabulary that conveys concepts related to the field. These technical terms are also replete in legal documents like police reports. The technical terms commonly used by police officers or investigators are *buy bust operation*, *modus operandi*, *Miranda doctrine*, *prima facie*, and among others. PR12, PR15 and PR20 show examples of how technical terms are used in the police reports. Table 1 presents the lexical features prominent in the Philippine police reports.

Table 1: Lexical features in the Police Reports

Technical Terms	<i>buy bust operation; Miranda Doctrine; prima facie; modus operandi; search warrant</i>
Archaic Expressions/terms	<i>aforesaid suspect, afore-cited reporter, thereafter, thereof, thereupon, thereat, herewith; hereto</i>
Doublets	<i>Then and there, medical and physical, laws and ordinances</i>
Formality	... that SPO1 Mr. ZZZ shall be placed under the preventive suspensionfor the victim shall be immediately released to surviving heirs. ...in-depth investigation shall be conducted to be able to determine the motive of the incident Certificate of Death Revised Penal Code of the Philippines
Frequency of Any	any would be buyers; any concealed weapon; any documents
Derivational	Verb – noun <i>examination, operation, designation, requirement, management, informant, occupant, accordance, reference, laborer, driver, owner</i> Verb – adjective <i>agreed sale, concealed weapon, estimated time, actual, exportable, operative</i> Noun – adjective <i>dangerous, documentary; personal, constitutional, sexual, lawless, jobless</i> Adjective – adverb <i>allegedly, clandestinely, subsequently</i> Adjective – noun

	<i>intelligence; presence, legality</i> Noun – noun <i>thievery; documentation</i>
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“PO2 XXX declared arrest upon YYY informing him that he is a police officer and the cause of his arrest and his constitutional rights through Miranda Doctrine in a dialect known and understood by him.” (PR12)

...is actively selling and peddling illegal drugs known as Marijuana to any would be buyers in their respective house at the above-said place:. (PR15)

“...the undersigned investigators strongly believed that the proof required to how prima facie evidence to establish probable cause is sufficiently established in this case.”(PR20)

...officer formed joint cooperatives for PNP personnel for the conduct of buy bust operation against the above-cited line. (PR12)

...in the presence of their other members of the family, the occupants of the house and subject of the search warrant, in a dialect known and understood by them, the contents of the said search warrant.(PR12)

The underlined terms above are some examples of technical terms used in the police reports. These terms are often found in police reports. The term “*Miranda Doctrine*” is patterned after the United States Supreme Court’s decision. In this doctrine or right, the person must be warned of his/her right to remain silent prior to questioning during custodial investigation, and that any statement that a person gives may be used as evidence against him/her. While “*Marijuana*”, it is one of the most abused drugs in the world. The term “*prima facie*” in legal practice is used to describe two things: the presentation of sufficient evidence by a civil claimant to support the legal claim (a *prima facie* case), or a piece of evidence itself (*prima facie* evidence).

Moreover, archaic expressions are common in legal documents. These are old terms originated in Old English. These expressions add to the degree of formality of legal documents. In the corpora, the common terms are *aforsaid*, *afore-cited*, *thereafter*, and among others. These words are exemplified in PR 11, 12, 15, 18, 20, 21, 26, 29 and among others. The sentences below display examples of this linguistic feature.

“PO3 XXX put his initial and indicate the time and date of receipt thereof recorded in the police blotter”. (PR11)

“Thereafter, PNP team alighted from the vehicle, approached the suspect and introduced themselves as police officers....”(PR20)

Cavendish banana fruits from the aforsaid farm and gathered the same in one place inside....(PR12)

The aforsaid suspect was brought to XXX District Hospital for medical and physical examination....” (PR21)

Mr. XXX was introduced by the informant to the afore-cited suspect as his relative....(PR15)

Thereupon, while the two police officers were verifying the vehicle, they found out that it was loaded with undetermined species of good lumber. (PR18) ...in view of the foregoing, the undersigned respectfully recommends that the Medical expenses attached herewith....(PR26)

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing, the undersigned respectfully recommends that the case...(PR29)

The underlined words are some examples of archaic words. The terms “aforsaid” and “thereof” mean discussed or mentioned previously and from that cause or particular, respectively. These terms are used to state previously mentioned names, events or place to avoid redundancy.

Another lexical feature is doublets. They are word pairs found in the text. These are terms that are typically irreversible originated in Norman Period. In PR6, PR10 and PR26, the word pairs like “*then and there*”, “*medical and physical*”, “*laws and ordinances*” and among others are found. These pairs are used in the following examples:

...the suspect was brought to XXX District Hospital for medical and physical examination.(PR6)

then and there, he asked permission from the mother of alias XXX to accompany them inside the house...”(PR10)

Moreover, high degree of formality is common in legal English. This linguistic feature emphasizes the “use of *shall* to *will*”, “the positions of people and institutions have capitalized initial letters” and “the names of documents” are capitalized also. There are many expressions in legal English having a sole function of increasing its formality. The sentences extracted from the samples show the degree of formality.

It is therefore recommended that a religious in-depth investigation shall be conducted to determine the motive of the incident.(PR24)

It is further recommended also that the case shall be filed against the company. (PR25)

...in view of the foregoing, the undersigned respectfully recommends that this case shall need a thorough investigation to solve and close this case. (PR30)

It is hereby recommended that all benefits and insurances have for the victim shall be immediately released to his surviving hers.(PR25)

It is fully recommended that Mr. XXX shall be placed under the preventive suspension...(PR21)

Also, “any” is in frequent use in legal register. Using “any” in legal texts makes the things as inclusive as possible. In PR13, 16, and 26, the use of “any” is evident. Sentences below are examples:

...is actively engaged in selling and peddling illegal drugs known as Marijuana to any would-be buyers in their respective house at the above-said place (PR13)

...PO3 XXX conducted body search upon the suspect for any concealed weapon and as standard operating procedure....(PR16)

Unfortunately, they were not able to show any document. (PR27)

The use of “any” is also remarkable. “Any” means “no matter which”. It indicates that no item of the particular class is excluded and therefore all items come into consideration. Furthermore, this section also presents the derivational morphemes extracted from the corpora. These include “*a noun derived from an adjective*”, “*a noun derived from a verb*”, “*an adjective derived from a verb*”, “*a noun derived from another noun*”, and “*an adverb derived from an adjective*”. Most of the derivational morphemes used by the police investigators were the suffixes. The police officers or investigators use the *noun-forming*, *adjective-forming*, and *verb-forming* suffixes.

Syntactic

Syntactic features are probably more distinctive of legal English than the lexical ones. In my corpora, I found five of these features. These are passives, prepositional phrases, sentence length and complexity, unique determiners, and parallel structure. These features and examples are presented in PR 8, 17, 22, 23, and among others.

Passives

The passive voice is used to show interest in the person or object that experiences an action rather than the person or object that performs the action. In other words, the most important thing or person becomes the subject of the sentence. In passive voice, the subject is acted upon by the verb. It is used when the focus is on the action. The use of passives is also evident in police reports. Passive voice is the only choice if there is no specific agent in a sentence. For example in PR23, the sentence “*Elements of this unit lead by duty investigator PO2 XXX were dispatched to the area to conduct investigation*”, the action “*were dispatched*” is the focus of the sentence.

(a) Elements of this unit lead by duty investigator PO2 XXX **were dispatched** to the area to conduct investigation....(PR23)

- (b) Mr. XXX **was designated** to act as poseur buyer; Mr. XXX was introduced by the informant to Mr. YYY as his friend who wanted to buy marijuana....(PR8)
- (c) The actual physical inventories with taking of photographs **were conducted** in the said place of operation in the presence of the suspect and the representatives from DOJ, media and Barangay Kagawad...(PR17)
- (d) The aforesaid suspect **was brought** to XXX District Hospital for medical and physical examination before he was put into our custody....(PR22)
- (e) Suspect **was** properly **informed** of his constitutional rights...(PR28)
- (f) Subsequently, it **was delivered** by PO3 XXX to the PNP Crime Laboratory...(PR28)
- (g) ...victims **were shot** to death by the suspect with the use of his carried M14 rifle hitting at the different parts of their body...(PR19)
- (h) Suspect **was** also **brought** to XXX Provincial Crime Laboratory for Paraffin test...(PR14)

Prepositional Phrases

Moreover, a prepositional phrase is a group of words made up of a preposition, its object, and any of the object's modifiers. This feature is high in incidence in legal discourse. Prepositional phrase can string out one after another. This is shown in the following examples below:

- (a)...about 6:00PM of this date(PR3)
- (b) According to the complainant at around 2:00PM of July 31, 2015(PR6)
- (c) upon receipt of the information(PR14)
- (d) in Chemistry Report number(PR17)
- (e) upon knowledge about the result of Crime lab examination(PR21)
- (f) as alleged on the afternoon of August 7, 2015 at about 12:45 PM(PR27)

Sentence Length and Complexity

Another syntactic feature found in police reports is sentence length and complexity. An average sentence consists of 55 words and 2.86 clauses per sentence. In legal English, a complete sentence contains both coordinate and subordinate clauses. A sentence can stretch over several lines and it constitutes even one whole paragraph. One sentence in PR13 will illustrate this syntactic feature. The sentence below contains more words which exceed the minimum number of average sentence length.

On that occasion, Mr. AAA took a color green cellophane and right then and there, he took two (2) packs of suspected marijuana inside the said cellophane and handed it over to Mr. BBB which in turn said police officer handed him the two (2) hundred peso bill marked money in which he directly put inside his short pants pocket while Mr. BBB immediately threw his cigarette as a pre-arranged signal for the other team to rush up (PR5)

Further, the two security guards seized from possession and control of the latter are the following: one (1) Dehander, one (1) deleafing knife and his motorcycle, one (1) unit HONDA WAVE motorcycle, color black, without plate number attached, with Chassis number XXXXXXXX and with engine number YYYYYYYYY, registered under the name of Mrs. CCC (wife of the suspect).(PR13)

Unique Determiners

In my corpora, the unique determiners “such” and “said” are prominent. The form “said” does not function as a verb. It is used either preceded by “the” (the functioning of a post-determiner) or at the beginning of a noun phrase (NP) which functions as a determiner pronoun with a definite meaning used only anaphorically. The following phrases are prominent in the corpora.

- the said police officer(PR23);
- said place of operation(PR26)
- said farm(PR28);
- said security guards (PR29),

such evidence(PR13)

Parallel Structure

Parallel structures refer to sequences of two or more words or phrases belonging to the same form class, which are syntactically and semantically related. This feature is evident in PR12, 17, 23 and 28.

- (a) **time, date, and place** of operation(PR12)
- (b) **the driver and the helper**(PR17)
- (c) give **orientation and reminders**(PR23)
- (d) He was **examined, treated and confined**(PR28)

In the examples, the words and phrases are of equal importance and of the same grammatical class. This helps the readers to comprehend what is being written. If the series begins with a noun, it is always followed by a noun.

Cohesive Devices

Cohesion is one of the features that combine to make up the textual component in grammar. Cohesive devices connect the discourse into a whole. These cohesive devices are distinctive in legal register due to sentence boundaries.

Reference

Reference refers to the set of grammatical resources that allow the writer to indicate whether something is repeated from somewhere earlier in the text or whether it has not yet exposed in the text. They also classified reference as personal, demonstrative, and comparative. In the corpora, personal reference is mostly used. This is exemplified in the following police reports.

...police officers effected the arrest upon the **suspects** and informed **them** the cause of **their** arrest and **their** constitutional rights thru Miranda doctrine in a dialect known and understood by **them**...(PR23)

...the **victim** was elected as Brgy. Chairman for three consecutive terms. He was elected as ABC President. **He** supported the candidacy of XXX. (PR27)

In the texts, the personal reference used are “*he*” and “*them*” that refer back to the nouns “*victim*” and “*suspects*”. The words “*victim*” and “*suspects*” are someone the writer refers back in the sentence.

Conjunctions

In addition, Conjunctive element is another device distinctive in the corpora. These conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves but indirectly, by virtue of their specific meaning; they are not primarily devices for reaching out into the preceding (or following) text, but they express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse.” There are four types of cohesive devices found in the corpora. These are the Additive, Adversative, Causal and Temporal.

Then, SPO2 XXX brought the CI to PCI XXX.....(**temporal**)(PR15)

Alias XXX was informed of his constitutional rights **and** (**additive**) was physically examined at XXX District Hospital **before** (**temporal**) he was put into XXX lock-up cell for proper custody.(PR23)

...it is concluded that Mr. XXX has been murdered brutally **yet** (**adversative**) the murderer was not yet identified....(PR25)

Purok Chairman XXX requested alias XXX to show any pertinent documents to possess the said 12 garage homemade shotgun **but** (**adversative**) the suspect failed to show any document to possess said firearm. (PR28)

Temporal conjunctions express a subsequent occurrence that is not necessarily causal, additional, or counter to expectations. When two successive utterances or sentences are related by sequence of time, then the conjunction is temporal. In PR15 and PR23 above, the lines presented are examples of a temporal conjunctive element because it is a sequence of a previous utterance.

The lines from PR25 and PR28 above are examples of a conjunctive element that is adversative. It is considered adversative because it communicates information that is contrary to expectations established by a previous piece of text. The expectations can result from the content of the text or from something in the speaker-hearer relationship. In the line, the suspect possessed a handgun but he failed to present documents when asked by the police officers. Hence, there is a contrary of expectations.

Another element is additive conjunction. An additive conjunctive element annexes information to the propositional content of a sentence. This type of conjunction typically links information along a series of points in an effort to contribute to a main proposition

“Alias XXX was informed of his constitutional rights **and** was physically examined...”(PR21)

Further, PO3 also seized his driven motorcycle.(PR29)

In PR21 above, the two actions are connected by the conjunction “and”. The conjunction used shows connection of the two series or points presented.

Substitution

Another device used in Police reports is substitution. This can be regarded as the replacement of one item by another. The use of substitution can avoid redundancy and repetition. In the police reports, the use of the words like “same”, “former” and “latter” are prominent in my corpora. These are used to avoid repetition of the same names in the same paragraph. This process is shown in the example that follows.

“In return, the former handed him the marked money composed of one piece genuine five hundred peso bill buy bust money....After which, the latter alighted from his motorcycle...”(PR6)

Lexical Cohesion

Furthermore, the conjunctive element lexical cohesion is also prominent in the corpora. It is a cohesion through the use of words. Reiteration and Collocation are two main subcategories of Lexical cohesion. Reiteration refers to the repetition of a lexical item, synonym, super ordinate or general word. In my corpora, synonyms are prominent. Some examples are “occurrence and incident”, proper and appropriate, delay and wait and among others. These words are used in the following sentences.

This investigation concludes that in view of the foregoing **occurrence** tighten security would be the key point to prevent the repetition of the same **incident**. (PR10)

...he was put into our lock-up cell and he is now under custody in this station for **proper** disposition for the filing of **appropriate** case in court. (PR14)

Due to the **delay** of the representative from the media and DOJ at that time, they decided to **wait** for them in the office.(PR20)

Overall Structure of the Police Reports

In this study, different comprehensive analysis of the overall structure of the police reports has been taken into account. However, as expected new steps had been found, some of the steps did not appear in the corpus, some steps also overlapped from one model to another while others were interwoven and embedded to another step.

Move 1: Identifying and situating the agency, the Police Report (PR) and its circumstances

This move aims at identifying the institution where the report is produced and the circumstances. In this move, the recipient, subject, and date of the Police Report (PR) are located. The purpose of this move is to inform the circumstances of time and place in which the PR genre was produced and printed. The recurrent main steps through which this move can be realized are three. These are the following:

Step 1: *identifying the institution and municipality/city and the province where the station is located*



Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE
██████ MUNICIPAL POLICE STATION
██████ Davao del Sur

-PR1-30

The example given is common to all corpora used in the study. They only differ as to what police station the PR is written. In the example, the institution, the city or municipality and the name of the province are found on top of the PR.

Step 2: providing the recipient, sender, subject and date of its print.

MEMORANDUM

FOR : The XXX Family
FROM : The Chief of Police
XXX Municipal Police Station
SUBJECT : Investigation Report re: Death of Mr. XXX
DATE : November 22, 2013

-PR29

MEMORANDUM

FOR : The Officer-In-Charge
XXX Norte Provincial Prosecution Office
FROM : Officer-In-Charge
XXX Police Station
XXX, Davao del Norte
SUBJECT : Investigation Report
Re: Buy Bust Operation against Mr. XXX
For Violation of Section 5 and Section 11 R.A. 9165
DATE : February 23, 2013

-PR2

MEMORANDUM

FOR :The Provincial Prosecutor
XXX Norte Provincial Prosecution Office
Hall of Justice
XXX City
FROM :The Chief of Police
Officer-In-Charge
XXX Police Station
SUBJECT :Investigation Report

Re: Thievery Incident at XXX Corporation
particularity situated at Purok B,
Barangay Capungagan, XXX del Norte

DATE : August 10, 2015

-PR4

MEMORANDUM

FOR : The Provincial Director
XXX Prov'l Office

FROM : The Officer-In-Charge
XXX Municipal Police Station

SUBJECT : Investigation Report
Re: Frustrated Homicide committed by
SPO1 XXX

DATE : 29 May 2013

-PR21

In the examples given above, the recipient, sender, subject and the date of the police report are reflected. This step of Move 1 indicates who sends and who receives the document. This step is present in all of my corpora.

Move 2 - Classifying the fact and its circumstances

The police officer who receives the reports has to obtain from the complainant or victim all the facts and their circumstances. After hearing the complainant or the victim, the police officer has to analyze the fact and compare it with the human behavior described in the criminal code as crime. The comparison aims to check if the human behavior reported by the victim matches one of the behaviors established in the criminal code. This move is achieved in three steps.

Step 1: establishing the legal or technical classification by analyzing the reported fact.

. AUTHORITY

Verbal Request of XXX Family

-PR15

AUTHORITY

Verbal Instruction from the Chief of Police PSI XXX and Extract Copy of Blotter Entry No. 0000000 dated May 18, 2014 hereto attached.

-PRI

AUTHORITY

1. Radio Message CN# DSI-05-27-2013-112;
2. Spot Report with cite DGS-05-27-124;
3. Progress Report with cite number DGS-05-28-2013-134;
4. Extract Blotter dated 29 May 2013.

-PR23

The examples given show the legal classification of the reported fact. Most of the corpora consist of verbal request of aggrieved parties for filing in the court. When a police officer receives a report from a person, this police officer has to obtain from the complainant all the facts and details of the incident. This police officer will then analyze the facts and will categorize the incident as criminal or non-criminal.

Step 2: *providing spatiotemporal circumstances of the reported fact.*

To conduct investigation regarding the circumstances of ROBBERY incident that transpired on or about 6:00 o'clock in the evening on May 18, 2013 at XXX Elementary School located at Purok 2, Sulop, Davao del Sur..

To determine and identify the perpetrators.

To file the necessary criminal charges in court against the perpetrators and effect their possible arrest.

-PRI

To know and prove the facts and circumstances behind sickness incurred by SPO1 XXX that led to the surgical operation of the latter.

-PR20

Submitted is the investigation report regarding the buy bust operation and the arrest of of the suspect identified as XXX alias XXX, Male, 25 years old, single, jobless and a resident of Purok 1, XXX Del Norte for violation of Section 5 and Section 11 of Republic Act No. 9165 at Purok 1, XXX del Norte.

-PRI4

This step in Move 2 includes the spatiotemporal circumstances of the fact. Spatiotemporal means the space and time of the incident. The two of the four samples are different in structure of the other two because they come from different investigation sections. They differ in structure but the contents are still the same.

Move 3 - Narrating (reporting) the facts

This move is considered the main move of the PR genre. It refers to the history of the facts. In here, the witness, the victim or the complainant narrates to the police officer what happened in the incident. This police officer then produces a detailed summary of the whole event based on what is told by the person who gives the information. This move generally offers a narrative of the behavior of each participant (victim, witnesses, suspects) of the criminal event with its causes and consequences. Usually, the PR presents the victim's and sometimes the perpetrator's (if present) preliminary version of the facts. Both versions will eventually have to be included in the procedure.

Step 1: *emphasizing the victim or complainant attendance.*

That on or about 3:00 PM of October 16, 2012 **XXX**, 47 years old, married and a resident of XXX del Sur has been found dead on ("sic") the comfort room of their residence by his son **XXX**, 23 years old, single.

-PR4

That on or about 6:15 PM **XXX** 52 years old, married, teacher by profession and Principal of XXX Central Elementary School personally appeared in this office and requested to put on the record that allegedly the principal's office was ransacked which resulted to the lost ("sic") of three (3) flat monitor computers, computer AVR, one (1) set microphone, five (5) bulb light and two (2) wall fans.

-PRI

As alleged on the afternoon of August 7, 2015 (Friday) at about 12:45 PM, **SG XXX and SG XXX** conducted a roving patrol at Purok 7B. Upon reaching the farm owned by XXX, which was contracted to XXX, at about 1:00PM of same date, they caught in the act one (1) male person hauling one (1) big box of cigarette casing with marking outside the box "MARK" coming from inside the said farm and was loaded by the same person into his motorcycle.

-PR4

In the examples, the words written in bold are the names of the victim or the complainant are indicated. This indicates the first step in the narration of the facts that happened in the incident.

Step 2: *restating circumstances*

The latter believed that his father was just suffering from cardiac arrest knowing that he had hypertension

in (“sic”) a long period of time. His weep caught the attention of their neighbors who extended their help to put the victim in a suitable portion of their house. The victim upon discovery was believed to be dead for almost 11 hours according to the doctors as evident of his body which his skin has already been discolored, this was the mean (“sic”) reason why his son did not recognize (“sic”) the head and neck injuries sustained by his father, and did not even bother to check (“sic”) other body injuries which was (“sic”) not apparent during that time. Picture revealed that the injuries were (“sic”) indeed not noticeable and that if no effort would be exerted to examine the whole body of the victim such injuries could not be revealed.

-PR29

While they were conducting check-point at the above said place, PO1 XXX and PO1 XXX flagged down one (1) approaching Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) bearing plate number LWE 432, color silver, for verification. Thereupon, while the two police officers were verifying the vehicle, they found out that it was loaded with undetermined species of good lumber.

-PR18

In this step, the details of the incident are narrated by the police officer or the investigator. All necessary details are described and reported to the reader of the report as if the latter is present during the incident.

Step 3: *describing the perpetrator’s behavior (criminal or non-criminal fact).*

The issue in this case is ***whether XXX (the victim) has been killed or not. Based on our in depth investigation the latter has been killed by more than one person considering the body structure and height of the victim which reached approximately more than 6 feet tall.*** For that reason he has the capability to retaliate and even posed danger to the perpetrators and with that it rises (“sic”) the presumption that the suspects plan (“sic”) before they kill.

-PR8

Thereafter, ***the two requested the driver and his helper to show any pertinent document to possess or transport the said lumber. Unfortunately, they were not able to show any documents.*** Thus, aforesaid police officers effected their arrest and informed them of their constitutional rights in a dialect known to them.

-PR18

A narrative is a method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred. Hence, the PR narratives recapitulate past events in terms of criminal and non-criminal incidents and police officers report these events in the same order based on the narration of the victim, the complainant or the witness.

The overall structure of narrative in Move 3 is divided into five sections. These are orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda. In the orientation part, the reader is given the information on the person involved, place, time, and the behavioral situation. However, not all narratives contain the orientation section. But not all the four mentioned elements are found in the orientation section. The complication section comes after the orientation and before the evaluation sections. In this section, the complicating action of the incident is present. It is the narrative itself. Hence, among the five sections of the narrative, this section is mandatory. Without this, there would be no narrative at all.

Moreover, the evaluation section is located at the break between the complication and the resolution of the incident. It also signals that the narration of the complicating action is about to end and a possible resolution of the incident is offered. So, the evaluation part reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative units as compared to others. In addition, the resolution section is the portion of the narrative that follows the evaluation. It offers the finalization of the sequence of events of the complicating action. Furthermore, the coda is the last section of the narrative. Hence, this signals the end of the narrative.

It is important to note that the narrative structure varies from one police report to another in accordance with its degree of complexity, the number of structural elements and the variety of its functions.

Move 4 - Identifying the participants (victims and/or complainant, witnesses, suspects).

The purpose of this move is to identify, if possible, all the main participants of the narrated event in Move 3, such as complainant and/or victims, witnesses and suspects. This move can be divided into three steps, one for each participant, as follows:

Step 1: *identifying the victim and/or complainant*

Based on the foregoing facts and circumstances, it is concluded that **SPO1 XXX's** rendering of duty for almost 30 years, 17 years as traffic officer exposed himself to some hazardous change of nature, body exhaustion caused by unprecedented incident which a traffic officer usually encountered, could be attributed to the sickness that he was suffering.

-PR26

Based on the foregoing facts and circumstances, it is concluded that SPO1 XXX incurred his sickness Diabetes Mellitus 2 with untraceable origin and that it has been worsen ("sic") by nature of his designation as Desk Officer and other circumstances beyond his control.

-PR28

Step 2: identifying the perpetrator (suspect, culprit, defendant, adolescent lawbreaker) by providing his/her personal data.

Acting upon the said report, PNP personnel of this station together with the duty investigator and the above-mentioned reporter, under the direct supervision of PCI XXXX, COP, proceeded to the reported place to verify the veracity of the report. As a result, at about 1:20 AM of December 7, 2015, the reporter and the police authorities caught in the act the wife of the afore-cited reporter and her lover who were undressed and having a sexual intercourse inside their room, who were identified later as namely: **Mrs. XXXXX, 28 years old and her lover Mr. YYY, male, 29 years old, single, jobless and a resident of Purok XXX, Barangay XXX, of XXX del Norte.**

-PR17

Suspects were identified as **XXX, 24 years old, single, driver** and a resident of Purok XXX, XXX Village, XXX City and **YYY, 20 years old, single, helper** and a resident of Purok XXX, Barangay XXX, of XXX del Norte.

-PR18

Said purok chairman effected the arrest to "**Alias XXX**" whose real name is **XXX, of legal age and resident of Purok XXX, of XXX del Norte.**

-PR19

Step 3: identifying the action done to the incident/circumstance

Thus, police authorities effected the arrest upon the suspects and informed them the cause of their arrest and their constitutional rights thru Miranda Doctrine in a dialect known and understood by them. Afterwards, they were brought to XXX District Hospital for medical and physical examination before they were endorsed at XXX Police Station for proper disposition and for filing of appropriate charges in court.

-PR17

Move 5 - Identifying the personnel responsible for the report

Step 1: identifying the police officer who typed the PR.

PREPARED BY:

[REDACTED]
Investigator

-PR1-30

PREPARED BY

[REDACTED]
Police Officer 3
Asst. Investigator
Officer-on-case

-PR2

Step 2: identifying the head of the police station.

CONCURRED BY:

[Redacted]
Police Senior Inspector
Chief of Police

-PR23

NOTED BY:

[Redacted]
Police Chief Inspector

-PR2

IV.
DISC
USSI
ON
Linguis
tic
Featur

es in Police Reports

Mattila (2006), William (2005), Sarcevic (2000) and many others describe legal language, and its distinct features and each kind provide different functions in the legal field. Language in police reports plays a very significant role in solving cases in prosecution. Language is essential in describing the facts of the incidents. How language is manipulated and used to express the facts of the incidents was analyzed in my study by uncovering the linguistic features and structure found in my corpora. As a legal document, results revealed that there are three linguistic features prominent in the police reports. These are the lexical and syntactic features and cohesive devices. For the lexical level, findings reveal that there are six features that emerged from the corpora of the study. They are the technical terms, archaic expressions, doublets, formality, the frequency of any and derivational morphemes.

Danet (1985) stated that lexical aspects constitute the distinct character of legal texts and documents. The vocabulary is formal and standard complying with the norms of the style to the highest degree. Danet also pointed out lexical features of legal texts with uncommon meanings. In my corpora, the common technical terms are *buy-bust operation*, *Miranda Doctrine*, *prima facie* and many others. These terms are often included in police reports and other documents, in the social media, and in the online community discussions. Technical terms are purely legal in character. Legal terms are full of Latin and French words (Haigh, 2015). Moreover, Tiersma (1999) also stated that Latin is continued to be used as a legal language. It was known as "Law Latin," and it included various legal terms of French origin and English words if cases clerks did not know the Latin. Legal maxims are often in Latin, which gives them a sense of heightened dignity and authority. Names of writs and terminology for case names are still in Latin; this is a reflection of the use of Latin for writs and court records until the early 18th century.

Another lexical feature is the use of archaic expressions like *aforesaid*, *hereto*, *herein*, *herewith*, and among others. These old and antique expressions are used in reference to a particular document or some part of a document or to some party. Mattila (2006) reasoned that archaism is used in many legal texts because of the conservative mentality of lawyers who adhere to the ancient tradition of legal writing. Also, Melinkoff (2004) stated that in the world of written legal discourse, there is nothing new. Words created many years ago have survived to the modern day. Hiltunen (1990) further stressed that these archaic terms add to the degree of formality of legal documents. Police officers often used archaic terms to refer to a particular person or an object involved in the incident or crime. Haigh (2015) also said these words are used in legal English primarily as a way of avoiding the repetition of nouns of things in the document. While Tiersma (1999) also argued that these terms should be preserved because they are more precise than ordinary language.

The use of doublets is one of the linguistic peculiarities of English legal language. Haigh (2015) defined doublets as standard phrases consisting of two or more words. These phrases couple terms which are similar in meaning. In English grammar and morphology, *doublets* are two distinct words derived from the same source but by different routes of transmission. They are also known as *lexical doublets* and *etymological twins*. When the two words are used together in a phrase, they are called *coupled synonyms* or *binomial expressions*. Tiersma (1999) supported that these doublets were used since Anglo-Saxon times. One reason for using them is making

the text more comprehensible and for emphasis. Moreover, Danet (1985) commented that these pairs are frozen expressions which are irreversible.

For formality, the use of “*shall*” is explained by its double possibility of expressing both obligation and futurity. Gotti (2003) explained that in legal texts, *shall* is used to express obligations and prohibitions. This modal can also be used in qualifying phrases, specifying the essential features of the elements involved in the legal process and the parties involved. Without this modal, the understanding of the legal document would be impossible. Gotti further added that *shall* in other cases is used in specifications added to objects, places or time. *Shall* is also used in hypothetical clauses, which have the function of foreseeing the cases in which the legal act will be applied. However, Tiersma (1999) stated that *shall* also is used in an unusual sense in legal language. It is commonly said that legal use of *shall* does not indicate the future, but the imposition of obligation. But *shall* also functions in promises or declarations. In reality, the modal *shall* seems to mark that the phrase in which it occurs is part of the content or proposition of a performative phrase. Thus, in a contract the parties perform the act of promising by signing the contract; the content of their promises is indicated by *shall*. The use of *shall* indicates that the document in which it occurs is legal, which may help explain its pervasiveness in legal language.

The pronoun “any” is frequently used in a legal text. Tiersma (1999) added that the use of “any” is to deal equally with men and women using gender-neutral language. He further stressed that gender-specific language should not be used in legislation, instead, the gender-neutral words with the same meanings should be used. For the derivational morphemes, suffixes are added to change the lexical categories of the word. A derived noun forms a verb by adding the suffix “-tion” to the verb exam making it examination. Another is adding the suffix -ance to the verb thus making it “accordance.”

In his book, Finegan (2008) explained that these morphemes could change the lexical category of a word. Examples are the morpheme “-ous.” When a morpheme -ous is attached to the end of the word “danger,” it changes the lexical category of the noun “danger,” it changed the lexical category of the noun, having the adjective “dangerous” in English. Derivational morphemes are also known as suffixes which are added to the ends of the words. Badea (2016) supported the idea that derivational morphemes represent a highly productive category of word-forming morphemes. The suffixes -or and -ee appear as prolific elements in coining legal terms in English, and their use illustrates and highlights certain ways of expressing the terminology of the specialized domain of the law. Legal terms such as *administratrix*, *executrix*, *inherrix* still occur in legal documents.

For the syntactic features, Danet (1985) described them as more prominent than the lexical group. The evident features are the use of passives, sentence length and complexity, unique determiners and parallel structures. The passive voice allows a writer to depersonalize information. Hence, the passive construction in police reports is frequently used to allow one to omit the agent placing emphasis on the action or procedures of the incident. Danet also added that using passive voice has the effect of depersonalizing the information and thus making the tone more professional thus making the statement more objective. Legal documents have passive verb construction. Sometimes an active sentence may be suitable but the use of passives makes it formal. But in some cases, the use of active voice is not possible because there is no specific agent in a sentence. Thus, the passive is preferable to use. This type of structure puts emphasis on the action rather than the actor. Passive structures are frequently used when the agent of the sentence is not explicit. Kurzon (1989) also hypothesized that the passive form is the unmarked voice of legal English than the active voice. While Hiltunen (1990) pointed out that passive is preferable to achieve impersonality, objectivity, and non-involvement. Most importantly, impersonality and passives are utilized for the writers let the audience focus their attention on the action committed and not to the alleged person. Passives in the police reports agree with Hewings (2005) on reasons why these passives are used in English. These reasons are: to omit the agent when it is obvious; to describe procedures and process; to amplify what has been done and not the one who has done the action; and to portray some degree of formality and thus, agents are not mentioned. Tiersma (1999) added that legal language used passives for strategic reasons. It is to deliberately de-emphasize the actor. It also shows impersonality, objectivity, and authority.

Several studies and overviews have concentrated on considerable sentence length and complexity. Gustafsson (1975) stated that an average sentence consists of 55 words and 2.86 clauses per sentence. In legal English, a complete sentence contains both coordinate and subordinate clauses. Gustafsson further added that it is common to find all types of subordinates embedded in one sentence. These patterns add extreme formality and complexity to legal texts creating texts composed of very long sentences. Galdia (2009) stressed that simple sentences are rarely found in legal English, which will have its consequence in frequent clausal coordination. Tiersma (1999) mentioned that sentences in a legal language are longer than other styles, and also have more embeddings, making them more complex. Another unique feature found in the police reports is the use of a string of prepositions in sentences. Danet (1985) claimed that legal discourse is high in the incidence of this feature. A prepositional phrase can string out one after another, and she further claimed that prepositional

phrases are often misplaced. Haigh (2015) added that prepositions normally come before a noun or pronoun and give information about how, when or where something has happened. He further stated, the main problem for the non-native speaker remembers which preposition to use. There are no clear rules to follow in this respect.

Haigh (2015) stressed legal drafters used unique determiners to avoid ambiguity in cases where it is unclear to which noun the pronoun might refer if some parties are mentioned in the document. Kurzon (1989) also commented, the use of “said” and “such” is also distinguished in legal English. He further stated, instead of the usual “this” and “that” as determiners in cases of noun repetition, the adjective “said” may occur. Furthermore, parallel structures are also evident in the corpora. Parallel structures refer to the balance between two or more similar words, phrases or clauses. It also presents awkwardness, promotes clarity and improves writing style and readability.

The study also made use of Halliday and Hassan’s (1976) work on cohesion in English. They emphasized that cohesion occurs where the interpretation of any items in the discourse is realized. They also pointed out that cohesion is a semantic relation between one element and another in the context and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation. Baker (1992) stated that conjunctions signal the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what has been said before. To realize cohesion, cohesive devices should be utilized. Halliday and Hassan categorized these devices into five types: Reference, Conjunction, Lexical Cohesion, Substitution, and Ellipsis. In the corpora, they are only four out of five devices that emerged.

In the analysis, anaphoric referencing is evident which is according to Halliday and Hassan (1976) is the most relevant as it gives a link with a preceding portion of the text. Functionally, there are three main types of cohesive references. These are the personal, demonstrative, and comparative. In the corpora, the use of personal pronouns (pronominals) is discovered. This result is in congruence with that of Besma (2009) who stated that personal pronouns are the most common linguistic element as referring devices in a textual environment.

The next type of cohesion is a conjunction. Some conjunctions that are evident in the Police reports are additive, temporal, adversatives, and causal function. These conjunctions are used to express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse. Baker (1992) stated that conjunctions signal the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what has been said before. To achieve cohesion, one must find the logical relationships between ideas so that the readers can easily understand the relationship between the parts of the texts. Andersen and Poole (2001) stated that the logical relationships between clauses, sentences, and paragraphs are usually expressed by a conjunction. In writing the police reports, conjunctions are used to provide a comprehensive description as to how the procedures of narrating the incident are realized. This includes enumerating the events, persons involved where additive conjunctions are used, detailing procedures where temporal conjunctions are used, and providing a background of the procedure where causal are utilized and contradicting statements where adversatives are employed.

It is observed that some police reports have cohesion. The sentences are related from the other that makes them easier for the readers to read and understand the whole process of the sentence. Crane et al. (2006) disclosed that cohesion in texts created a kind of texture through the ties that coordinate ideas and experience; and this texture aids in creating meaning within the language. Regarding lexical cohesion, this is realized through the use of vocabulary. This could be realized through synonym and antonym. Based on the examples, the police officers used both word choice and grammar to express their messages this is what Halliday and Hassan (1976) called “wording” or lexicogrammatical structure is chosen or used by the investigators. In this sense, vocabulary and grammar go together. In language, grammar manifests the general meanings while vocabulary shows the specific meaning. Same goes to cohesive relations whereby part of a text is expressed through grammar and the other the vocabulary. In legal English, lexical cohesion is used instead of pronouns in most of the cases where the antecedent of the pronoun cannot be figured out easily because pronouns can have an ambiguous reference (Tiersma, 1999).

And the two last cohesive devices are substitution and ellipsis. They are almost similar in terms of their usage. In my corpora, only the substitution is evident. Substitution can be regarded as the replacement of the item by another. This avoids the use of redundancy and repetition. Halliday and Hassan (1976) pointed out that substitution is a relation between linguistic items, such as words or phrases, while reference is a relation between meanings.

Many scholars have observed unusual cohesive devices in the language of law, e.g. *said*, *such* in pre-modifying function, and specific coordination and subordination (Melinkoff, 1983; Danet 1985; Hiltunen, 1990). It shows that formed fixed strings in the legal language.

Overall Structure of Police Reports

To reveal the moves and steps present in the police reports, the framework of Swales’ (1990) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) have been taken into account as the backbone of the analysis. The results from the analysis of the corpora indicate that there are certain differences in the extent of occurrences of moves and steps in the corpora. The corpora vary from one another. The moves and steps of one corpus can be absent in the

other. Some of the samples have overlapping moves and steps. Meaning, step one and step two of a certain move can be found in one paragraph only. Based on the findings, the study concludes that the frameworks proposed by Swales (1990) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) are not usually consistently applied, that is, certain moves and steps tend to be different in particular case or incident (Duenas, 2007). The findings of this study indicate that the rhetorical structure of the police reports is to some extent dependent on the type of case or incident.

Move 1 in Police reports consists of two steps which are obligatory in the said documents. These two steps identify the police station and its location and also the recipient, sender, subject, and the date of its print. Labov and Waletzky (1967) emphasized that the purpose of this move is to inform the readers of the time and place of the incident. Move 2 includes the fact and its circumstances. It involves two steps also. Labov and Waletzky (1967) supported that this move establishes the legal or technical classification of the fact and establishes the spatiotemporal circumstances of the said fact. This result finds support from The Pensions Ombudsman (2016) that the facts of the case should be established in the investigation process. Moreover, Move 3 in the Police Reports involves the narration of the facts. The investigator narrates the fact by stating the victim or the complainant of the case, restates circumstances; and describes the perpetrator's behavior. Labov and Waletzky (1967) supported that narrating the facts offers an account of the actions of the persons involved in the incident. Move 4 accounts the addressee of the police reports. Labov and Waletzky (1967) further stressed that the police report is made depending on where the event occurred or what type of the matter was reported. A police report on murder must be sent to a special unit of homicides. Lastly, Move 5 identifies the personnel responsible for the result. Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Swales (1990) that the writer of the report must be acknowledged for accountability purposes.

Implications for Educational Practice

This content analysis study conveys practical implications to those college professors teaching grammar and technical writing to criminology students. In terms of grammar, the criminology students will have an awareness on the correct usage of grammar in writing police reports. They will also be guided on the structure of the police reports.

The results of this study are parallel to the study of Ang (2015) that police narratives serve many communicative functions. In this study, the linguistic features help convey the intended meaning of the message. Well-written police reports can be useful as investigative aids in solving cases during prosecutions. Using inappropriate words or missing information in the said documents may cause the cause to be dismissed by the judge. Passives are evident in the corpora. This implies that police investigators prefer to use this sentence construction because they want to emphasize the subject being the receiver of the action.

Another implication of this study is on the teaching of writing. The college professors will have an idea on what strategies to use to teach writing to criminology students who will soon become the police investigators. English teachers of criminology students may introduce the framework of Swales' (1990) and Labov and Waletzky (1967) in writing police reports. Hence, the students will be guided on the different elements that must be included in the report. The linguistic features present in the analysis of the corpora may be helpful to college students, students in the police academies or even the police officers in terms of police report writing. Hence, they will be able to produce accurate, clear and factual reports. Moreover, the models created in this study can be utilized by the academe in training and in educating criminology students in this type of text. Furthermore, understanding the rhetorical move structure of police reports will enable novice writers to organize their work accurately. The template also provides a foundation for less experienced police officers to write in such a manner that conforms to the expectations of the discourse community.

Recommendation for Further Research

This content analysis study focuses on the linguistic features and rhetorical moves of police reports. Since it was found out from the result that only three linguistic features are present in the corpora, further research can be conducted using Special Written reports or Progress reports as corpora of the study. There might be other linguistic features that will emerge in this kind of corpora. This study will somehow examine if there are similarities and differences in terms of the linguistic features and rhetorical moves in both types of police reports. Another research can also be explored using police blotters, spot reports, incident reports and other types of police reports to understand further the linguistic features and rhetorical moves of these kinds of reports.

Concluding Remarks

My study was supposed to be on Code-switching inside the classroom where English is the medium of instruction. I switched a topic after my classmates, and I attended a conference on Forensic Linguistics in Manila. Then, I realized that doing a content analysis like this is not an easy one. I waited for six months before I finally got all the corpora needed in my study.

Doing a study like this brings me awareness on how to ideally construct Investigation Reports that would be used as evidence in the prosecution in courts. This kind of police report will not be written if there will be no case filed against the suspects of the crime. Hence, this investigation report should be accurate, clear and factual. I encountered a lot of challenges in gathering the corpora. I asked the help of my friends who are police officers. They introduced me to their Provincial Directors and Chief of Police for me to get approval that these Investigation Reports be scanned and photocopied. They were afraid that these cases would be revived if the folders be given to someone else. So, I made an assurance that the folders would be kept in a safe place.

In the course of this study, I realized that language is very important to convey a message. Students, criminology interns, and police officers should know that they should convey messages or write reports in a way that the readers will understand the message or report.

I believe that the school or police academies are avenues for the students and police officers to learn how to write accurate, clear and factual police reports.

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