Prosecutor's Resolution On The Cases Of Violence Against Women And Children: A Forensic Linguistic Analysis

Rhodella M. Raniola-Bidal, Riceli C. Mendoza

University of Mindanao PhD in Applied Linguistics
University of Mindanao Professor
Corresponding Author: Rhodella M. Raniola-Bidal

ABSTRACT: Resolutions are issued by the prosecutors on the cases to be dismissed and or filed in the court based on their preliminary investigation. This text is one of the documents which utilizes legalese language. This qualitative content analysis of resolutions on the cases of Violence Against Women and Children aimed to describe the linguistic features and structure of the legal texts. In terms of lexical features, archaic, formal, technical, common words with uncommon meanings are uncovered. Syntactically, the features are nominalization, impersonality, negatives, prepositional phrases, long and complex sentences, passives, and clauses. Pragmatic features include pragmatic discourse markers, prediction categories, and legal syllogism. In the discourse level, informative, interpretative, argumentative-persuasive types discursive structures are found; and the narrative. In the resolutions, the thematic structure follows resolution data, introduction, arguments of the parties, analysis of the prosecutor, decision/conclusion, and the miscellaneous parts. These linguistic features play important functions in the resolutions and contribute to the distinctiveness of this legal text. Moreover, each part of the thematic structure of the resolution contains parts which may be obligatory or not depending on the nature of the case, the available evidence and arguments and the decisions made.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rationale

The issue on violence among women can be traced to men being conventionally marked as leaders and providers as opposed to women who were mere family caregivers and supporters. The views resulted to men perceived as more powerful than women and violence inflicted to women is a form of control and manifestation of power retention expressed by men (Philippine Commission on Women, 2009).

In order to give justice to the victims of the violence, Anti – Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 otherwise known as RA 9262, is promulgated in the Philippines for the protection of women and children from violence and provide relief to those who are victims of abuse (Santiago &Aya, 2014). When this law is violated by a certain individual, evidences must be submitted to the prosecutor's office. Like in other criminal law proceedings, it is the prosecutor office that conducts the initial investigation. The prosecutor after the investigation may either file the case in the court or dismiss the case (National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 2004). The decision to dismiss or file the case in court is conveyed through a resolution (Reyes, 2008).

When legalese documents like resolutions issued by prosecutors are read by non-legal practitioners, they are often difficult to comprehend or even deceptive for those without legal training (Moore, 2010). Unlike ordinary writing, legal writing is aimed at a highly specialized group who uses specialized vocabulary, containing both unusual and common terms masked with technical meanings (Moore, 2010). In addition, Gasiokwu (2010) asserted that laws are expressed in highly specific language to provide details to every aspect of the relationship that law seeks to regulate.

Reyes (2008) explained that in the resolution, the prosecutor decides either to dismiss or endorse the filing of formal charges for trial. For the dismissal of the complaint, the resolution should contain an argument finding supporting the claim: no probable cause is found. If the filing of the charges is recommended, the resolution must

convince a supervising prosecutor that there is a probable cause based from the investigation and that there are grounds to file the charges in court.

With the nature and purpose of resolutions issued by the prosecutors, language plays its crucial role in order to express the message of the document which is to lay the grounds that the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) case should be filed or dismissed due to the presence or absence of the probable cause. How the resolution communicates to both the supervising prosecutor who has legal knowledge and to the complainant and respondents who may not have legal knowledge, is very much interesting to me.

This study attempted to uncover the linguistic features found in the resolutions of the prosecutors. These resolutions resolve for the dismissal and filing of the cases of VAWC. Knowing the fact that the resolution is a legal document, it is expected that it uses a variety of language technically known as Legalese and this must be critically studied to explicate its implication, and to unmask it for easy understanding by the layman (Ashipu&Umukoro, 2014) since the resolution is copy furnished to the complainants and respondents.

Since resolutions are read by non-legal practitioners, I found the pressing need to pursue the study to provide a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on how the document uses the language to serve its purpose of successfully dismissing the case and filing the case to the proper court due to reasons that the prosecutor conveys in the said document. Adding up to this is the limited literature and research outputs that point out the linguistic features of the prosecutor's resolutions.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative research employing content analysis aimed to understand and describe the linguistic characteristics of the prosecutor's resolutions on the cases of violence against women and children. Specifically, it sought to uncover the lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and discourse features and the structure of resolutions.

Research Questions

    1. What are the linguistic features of the resolutions for cases of violence against women and children?
    2. What is the overall structure of the resolution?

Theoretical Lens

This study made use of the theory of Finegan (2008) on Language Structure which pointed out the fundamental function of every language system - to link meaning and expression of which grammar is used for the purpose of expressing meaning and to systematically connect expression and meaning. He explained that the context of the expression or words being used depends on the speaker's intended meaning and this will be interpreted correctly by a hearer or the reader. In the context of how language is used in the legal setting, legal texts bear the contexts, expressions and meanings of their own (Stanojević, 2011). Hence, it is very important to apply the theories of language to determine and understand the said features.

Studying the linguistic make-up of the resolutions as legal text can be seen in the light of Forensic Linguistics (FL), the study of the language of the law; and the interaction in the legal process by Coulthard and Johnson (2010). They pointed out that the study of legal language as a convention encompasses the language of the law and the language used in usual communication which can be in written as well as spoken mode. They viewed legal texts as heterogeneous since it is not just a single discourse but sets of discourses covering all communications in the legal contexts.

Moreover, Coulthard and Johnson (2010); and Cao (2007, 2010) described the legal texts in different communicative purposes. Legal texts can be for normative purposes as utilized in legally factual documents and those that establish rights and obligations; and the legal texts serve informative purposes, usually written in descriptive manner like those legal works, commentaries and advice; communication between lawyers, between lawyers and clients; and documents found in court proceedings.

When studying these legal texts, there are certain linguistic features which can be identified since legal drafting in English has commonalities. These legal texts in different discourses and purposes are considered authoritative after being authenticated in accordance to law (Cao, 2007; Coulthard& Johnson, 2010).

To shed more light on Forensic Linguistics is Olsson (2008) who viewed this field as the application of linguistics to legal questions and issues. He supported the central idea in linguistics applied to legal texts that the speech community agreed for a single meaning of a word; and that there are factors to be accounted such as the illocutors' relationships, the contexts, and the educational level of those involved in the communication process.

Furthermore, Gibbons (2003); Turell (2004) pointed out that legal language are registers or sublanguages of ordinary speech and writing. Viewed as simply a variety of English, legal language can be similar or different to

ordinary languages in terms of pronunciation and spelling, syntax, morphology, lexicon, semantics, style in speech and writing as a whole. Legal language is described as monolithic and behind its being formal, wordy, redundant and archaic, the language is also characterized as innovative and vaguely written for some purposes (Turell, 2004). For instance, researches of Cotterill (2003) and Ehrlich (2001) revealed that lawyers employ various discursive strategies to control the legal process and attempt to shape the outcome.

Significance of the Study
   This study is beneficial to both men and women who are involved as aggressors and victims of violence. For women, understanding the features of the prosecutor's resolutions help them better understand the merit of their evidences when they opt to have the prosecutor assess their complaints. In the same manner, those men who are respondents of the case will be able to gain insights as to the role of the prosecutor in the justice system and when they receive the copy of the resolution, they will be able to comprehend the matters discussed and presented in the document; thereby they can act or respond accordingly.
   In the field of applied linguistics, students and professors will be able to gain access to another body of literature particularly the so called forensic linguistics which deals with the study of language in the legal contexts and resolutions of the prosecutors are among them. The fact that linguistic make-up of the legal texts vary depending on some factors, the findings of the study will significantly contribute another knowledge which may be further checked or verified in another context or through similar legal documents.

Definition of Terms
   For better understanding of the terms repeatedly mentioned and used in the study, the following were the operational definitions:
   Forensic Linguistic Analysis is the application of linguistic knowledge, methods and insights to the resolution, a legal text being studied. The analysis was carried out through qualitative content analysis of the texts.
   Forensic linguistics one of the branches of applied linguistics which focuses on the analysis of linguistic evidence to clarify the ambiguities existing in any judicial process, especially in investigation of crimes and legal issues (Ramezani, Arefeh&Kathayoun, 2016); concerns with the analysis of written languages for legal purposes (House of Parliament, 2015) and in other words how linguistics is utilized in legal issues (Olsson, 2008).
   Linguistic features refer to the linguistic elements which were identified in the analysis. In the legal texts of which this study dealt, these features refer to lexical, syntactic, pragmatics and discourse level features of the prosecutor's resolutions. These features included in the study interact with each other to make up a discourse evident in the structure of the text and the overall content.
   As described, Linguistic features contain the registers of particular genres (Halliday&Hasan, 1989). Azuelos-Atias (2007) explained that the linguistic features of the legal discourse manifest the type of language based on the legal norm. These means there are unique features evident in the legal texts such as the prosecutor's resolutions since they serve a legal purpose of convincing the chief prosecutor to file or not to file the case (Reyes, 2008; Azuelos-Atias, 2007).
   Discourse level features refer to discursive types; and the chronology and causal relations in the narrative of the resolutions. According to Azuelos-Atias (2007), legal documents present informative discourse by reporting the occurrences of the criminal acts; interpretative discourse by discussing the details of the occurrence in relation to the legal points; and persuasive argumentative discourse by using rhetoric to state judicial viewpoints.
   Lexical features include technical terms, archaic textual dialectics, formal, and common terms with uncommon meanings which are found in the resolutions. Presented in the analysis on lexical features are the marked features of the legal register which also serve important purpose in the resolutions.
   For Finegan (2008), lexical categories do not only occur in words but also in phrases, and in most instances, they occur in patterns of inflection and co-occurrence of categories. Both words and phrases as lexical features that are marked or unique in the legal register were presented in this study.
   Pragmatic features in this study encompass pragmatic discourse markers, prediction categories and legal syllogism evident in the resolutions.
   Pragmatics as defined by Finegan (2008) is a branch of linguistics dealing with the structure of the information. He further explained that pragmatics treats the relationship of sentences to their discourse environment containing expression and meaning; and context and interpretation.
   Moreover, my study in the pragmatic features of the resolution also included the discourse markers. These markers perform pragmatic functions in the view of what is explained by Seipman (2005). Discourse markers are the linguistic components with different lengths. They carry pragmatic meanings and facilitate the discourse. Thus, in

this study, these were treated under discourse markers. Botezat (2010) further explained that discourse markers function have discoursal function by signaling previous, current and succeeding discourses; and interpersonal function by expressing the speaker's stance.

Syntactic features refer to the sentence structure (syntax) in the resolution. These specifically include nominalization, impersonality, negatives, prepositional phrases, long and complex sentences, passives and clauses. Syntax features the structure of sentences (Fromkin, Rodman &Hayms, 2009); and the structural and functional relationships of the parts of the sentence (Finegan, 2008).

Overall Structure refers to the organization of the parts of the texts as employed in the resolution. In this study, the contents of each part in the structure are described. The resolution's structure includes resolution data, introductory clause, argument clause, termination phrase and inclusion data.

Prosecutor's Resolution refers to the legal documents written by the prosecutor to recommend the dismissal and filing of the case related to RA 9262. According to Reyes (2008), this document presents reasons to convince the chief prosecutor that based on the pieces of evidence for the initial investigation, there is a probable cause for the case to be filed in the proper court; and in the same manner, it also presents arguments to convince the chief prosecutor to dismiss the case because there is no probable cause found.

Violence Against Women and Their Children (VAWC) refers to the case which the resolution being studied is focused.

Delimitation and Limitation

The study explored the linguistic features and organizational structure of the prosecutor's resolution on the cases of violence committed on women and children. This is related to the law known as RA 9262. The corpora of the study were 32 copies of resolutions for dismissal and filing of the case to the proper court. Utilized in this study were the 16 resolutions for dismissal and 16 resolutions to file the case issued by different prosecutors. This number of corpora is justified through Clarke and Braun (2013) who accentuated that the minimum number of materials for qualitative research is 10.

The analysis was only focused on the linguistic components, and structure of contents, texts and arguments of the resolution. The linguistic features being studied include the lexical, syntax, semantics, discourse level and pragmatics. The features determined in the study may not be generalized and may not be true to all legal texts.

The content analysis employed was purely descriptive by making accounts of the features and that I may not reveal the underlying motives for the observed patterns of linguistics features which may be considered in the parlance of legal analysis. I did not also determine the merit of the evidence mentioned in the documents.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters and herein described.

Section I presents the introduction of the study describing the overall problem situation and laying the foundations about the resolutions issued by the prosecutors. It also provides the purpose why the study was conducted. The research questions that specifically spelled out the direction of the study are also given. The theories for which the study was anchored are included in this chapter. Then, the significance of the study was also pointed out; and the terms used in the study are defined operationally. I also present the parameters of the study in the last part of the chapter.

Section II includes the related literatures of the study taken from various sources. I also describe the nature of resolutions and its structure. It also points out the legal text features which I may come across in the progress of the study. This section also describes how qualitative content analysis must be done.   Section III encompasses methodology which I employed in the study. It specifically includes research design, research materials, data sources, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study, role of the researcher, and ethical consideration.

Section IV presents the results of the study and these are arranged based on the order of the research questions given in Section I.

Section V includes the discussion of the results, implication for further practice and future research and the concluding remarks of the researcher.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section presents the review of literature relevant to the study. Presented in the first part is the literature providing the general picture of the Violence to Women and Children (RA 9262). It is followed with the description of forensic linguistics and the legal text and then the linguistic features.

The Violence Against Women And Children (VAWC) RA 9262

This landscape of cruelty is evident in the reported cases filed in the Philippine National Police (PNP) and not to mention those incidents that are accounted in the barangay level only. In 2013, the number of Violence Against Women (VAW) cases reported to the PNP, the increase was 49.4 percent when the 2012 report was considered (Philippine Commission on Women, 2009). Further, the 2008 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) as cited by PCW (2009), disclosed that 1 in 5 women with the age range of 15-49 has been exposed to violence since 15 years old; and even pregnant women have experienced violence as well.

Taking a look on the Philippine laws relative to violence against women, Guanzon (2008) accounted that reforms in the country's legislation can be traced from the 1987 Constitution with provisions to protect women. Since 1995, there were already a total of 6 VAW laws.

One of the laws is RA 9262 of which when violated, the aggrieved parties may file relief in the family court. Jimeno (2013) explained that victims should seek out help from local police particularly in the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs), a department with staff who are trained and tasked to investigate and handle crimes against women and children. Immediate assistance for the medical examiner and the preparation of the affidavit of complaint against the aggressor will also be part of the services. The complaint who decided to file the case may proceed to the prosecutor's office for the filing of the complaint. The WCPD assists in the preparation of the evidence to be presented to the assigned prosecutor.

Vess (1973) explained that the public prosecutor is the one responsible to impose the law to those who violated them; and thus, he represents the people within his area of authority. The prosecutor upon receiving the complaint will conduct an initial investigation in order to find out the merit of the case and explain to the chief prosecutor that there is a probable cause or there is no probable cause to file the complaints for the violation of RA 9262 (Reyes, 2008).

The resolution can contain arguments for lack of probable cause if the prosecutor does not find any basis sufficient enough to prosecute the respondents and thus move for the dismissal of the complaint. Otherwise, if there is a probable cause, this is the time when the prosecuting attorney believes and finds evidence to file the case (Department of Justice, 1996).

The Legal Register

Matilla (2016) pointed out that law is bound to language, and so since there is a law, then there is also the presence of legal language. The author further added that legal language is a language for special purpose which is clearly differentiated from ordinary language or from any other language for specific purposes; thus, there is a specific legal style, which may not be understandable to the general public.

For Williams (2005) the expression of the language of the law has a specific legal writing, and these are prescriptive texts enclosed by statute law or common law. In addition, Maley (1994) pointed out the four types of legal discourses such judicial discourse, like judicial decisions for example, then courtroom discourse, the language of judges, witnesses, etc., the language of legal documents, such as the language of contracts, deeds, wills, statutes, and the language of legal consultation, the language of lawyers and clients for instance.

The main function of the law is to regulate and to impose order in human relations and restore social order in cases it breaks down (Dámová, 2007) and thus, they are also considered performative and normative (Cao 2007). Additionally, by law, people are informed what acts are allowed and are prohibited; and as it establishes order, relations are also created (Gasiokwu, 2010); and for Trosborg (1997), language is used to preserve and uphold justice when conflicts or disputes arise either between people (civil law) or between a person and the government (criminal law).

Interestingly, according to Shuy (2010), since language causes disputes and is used to resolve them, then language can be analyzed. Also, a language is as a finger print to be studied (Leonard, 2010).

Legalese documents like resolutions, when read by laymen who do not have legal knowledge are often difficult to comprehend and the texts can be viewed as deceptive (Moore, 2010). When one masters the English language, this does not guarantee that he also masters the legal language for these two are not identical; and in fact, legal writing is used and read by highly specialized group using specialized vocabulary with the combination of

unusual, common and technical meanings and multifaceted and lengthy sentences (Moore, 2010; Gubby, 2007; Alcaraz& Hughes, 2002).

What is to be understood as factual calls for a legal writing that is brief and accurate which forms the foundation of a good start towards clarity (Collins, 2013). White (2011) also argued that legal writing necessarily presents the message or an issue in direct and honest manner.

To give formality, Gasiokwu (2010) asserted that laws are expressed in highly specific language providing details of every aspect of the relationship to be regulated. In consonance to this idea, Danet (1985) considers legal language as sublanguage since it makes use of language that is so distinct.

According to Crystal (2004), legal register was affected by the language in the Medieval period when a combination of French, Latin, and English languages was used by lawyers. Research in the field of legal language has been described with complex syntax, and distinct lexical features (Trosborg, 1997).

Hiltunen (1990) pointed out that legal texts have linguistic features characterized in their lexicon, syntax, and discourse. Legal texts have lexical and syntactic uniqueness (Agnoloni, Barrera, Sagri, Tiscorni&Venturi, 2010; Danet, 1985); with hierarchy of structures manifested through embedded and lengthier sentences (Den Dikken&Lahne, 2013); with distinct articles and demonstrative pronouns (Hutton, 2009); and with varied pragmatic and discourse features (Azuelos-Atias, 2007).

Forensic Linguistics

The term Forensic Linguistics is also known as language and law (Gibbons &Turrel, 2008), law and language (Conley &O'Barr, 1998), legal language (Tiersma, 1999), jurilinguistics (Cornu, 2000), legal discourse (Bhatia, 1993) and legal linguistics (Matilla, 2016).

Cheng and Sin (2011) clarified that forensic linguistic is described as the interfacing law, discourse and language. Turell (2004) and Coulthard and Johnson (2007) explained that there are three areas of study and research under FL and these are the language of the law, language of the judicial process and language used as evidence.

Tiersma (1987) argued that employing linguists in the legal arena entails that linguists work for better understanding of how legal language works. He added that linguists can help lawyers by seeing language structure since lawyers are not trained to analyze it.

By considering the kinds of text forensic linguists are tasked to examine, one may be able to conclude that literally any text or item of spoken language has the potential of being a forensic text (Olsson, 2008). He said that almost anything can be a forensic text and clarified that if a text is somehow implicated in a legal or criminal context then it is a forensic text.

Forensic Linguistics is the application of linguistic knowledge to a particular social setting, namely the legal forum. Broadly speaking, Forensic Linguistics is the "interface between language, crime and law, where law includes law enforcement, judicial matters, legislation, disputes or proceedings in law, and even disputes which only potentially involve some infraction of the law or some necessity to seek a legal remedy" (Olsson, 2008 p.3).

Linguistic Features of Legal Texts

Legal text is something different from other types of writing (Tiersma, 2010). Tiersma (1999) pointed out that the legal language shows the practice of old profession which originated in the Anglo-Saxon Period. Legal texts utilized varied linguistic features since they are not monolithic and this is to attain and realize a certain communicative purpose. Veretina-Chiriac (2012) further posited that legal English is altering the common features of language and the claim is evident in various linguistic features shown in many legal texts.

Since resolutions of the prosecutors are legal texts that have distinguishing characteristics or style, this can also be studied through Leech and Short (2000) on the stylistics, the study of style. For Leech and Short (2000), style is a specific custom in language employing certain linguistic features that are frequently found in a sublanguage.

Legal documents can be analyzed through stylistics because of the fact that they have distinct form and features (Gocić, 2012; Ashipu&Umukoro, 2014). In this regard, Leech and Short (2000) proposed a list of stylistic linguistic sets for various text types: the categories can be lexical, grammatical, figures of speech, and cohesion and context.

The legal texts' features which can be studied may include binominal expressions and listing (Gustaffson, 1975); cohesion (Bhatia, 1993); Legal archaisms (Gibbons, 2003; Tiersma, 1999); modality (Zelenka, 2013); passive constructions (Tiersma, 1999; Trosborg, 1997); subordination, qualification and embedding (Gustaffson, 1975; Hiltunen, 1990; Austin, 1984; Bhatia, 1993); and many other researches.

Lexical. Cao (2007) observed that the lexicon is one of the distinct difference of legal language and ordinary language because of its complexity and string of words. Lexical features of legal texts make the legal language more formal. These comprise technical vocabulary (Danet, 1985), common terms with uncommon meanings (Stanojević, 2011); archaic expressions (Hiltunen 1990); and doublets which are frozen words (Danet, 1985).

Adjectives in legal English are often inexact and unclear, nouns are abstract, and verbs are selected (Hiltunen, 1990); technical terms are purely legal in character (Haigh, 2004) with polysemous lexemes (Rylance, 1994); barrowed from Latin and French (Haigh, 2004); and so much repetitions are observed to avoid ambiguity (Veretina-Chiriac, 2012).

Syntax. Syntax contributed to more of the problems for lay persons in understanding the text (Danet, 1985). Danet (1985) identified eleven features which include nominalization, passive construction, prepositional phrases, lengthy and complex registers, unique determiners, impersonality, negative, binomial expressions and whiz deletion.

Nominalization is also a feature in legal texts which makes use of nouns instead of verbs (Urbanová, 1986). Nominalization plays an important role in the legal text (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech &Svartvik, 1985; Chomsky, 1970) and its purpose is to add semantic dimension to attain coherence (Halliday, 1994, 2006); and to make way for textual progression (Gotti, 1991).

Formal documents have passive verb construction to make way for the formality of the text, to portray impersonality and objectivity (Hiltunen, 1990). But this is argued by the advocates of plain English movement since passives hide information and must be avoided (Haigh, 2004).

Prepositional phrases of legal discourse are also commonly used and as observed by Danet (1985), these phrases are often inappropriate and misplaced. They only add to sentence length but for practitioners, they only give as many details as they can.

Gustaffson (1975) noticed that in an average, legal texts contain 55 words and 2.86 clauses in a sentence in inserted clauses. Sentences occupy many lines, and a single sentence can constitute one paragraph, and even one document can only consist of one sentence. Writing lengthy and complex sentence in legal text is done since these words are all important and must be read as well (Resta, 2012). As a whole, syntax of the legal text subscribe to impersonality (Danet, 1985) directing the message to the readers and not to the writer of the text (Resta, 2012).

Pragmatics. In analyzing the linguistic elements of the legal text, pragmatics should be included since for Finegan (2008), it carries meanings which cannot be apparent with the absence of other parts of the texts. It is on this premise why I would like to include discourse markers in the pragmatic point of view.

Discourse Markers as applied in the written text carry pragmatic meaning because they show relationships of the texts and they make way for people to create mental pictures about how the text presents the message (Seipman, 2005). For Schiffrin (1987, 2001), discourse markers as linguistic device signal how the incoming unit of text relates to the current discourse.

Owing to the fact of inferential pragmatics in legal discourse which states that certain meaning can be inferred by the audience on the basis of the evidence provided (Wilson &Sperber, 2008), legal syllogism can be also studied in the light of pragmatics. Legal syllogism is a reasoning that consists of three parts: the major premise or the statement of general applicability; the minor premise containing the applicability of the situation to the major premise; and the conclusion stating the logic from the premises.

Structure of the Legal Texts

Azuelos-Atias (2007) argued that human beings have propensity to understand and or interpret concurrent expressions and in fact, meanings of any expression cannot be secluded from other elements in order for the meaning to be unfolded. Additionally, for Reed (1999) explained that text should be arranged appropriately and accordingly since there is a relationship between two events and that is the first makes way for the realization of the next and to comprehend the succeeding events.

The most noticeable feature of the construction of legal texts is its being formulaic. Though there are some structures which may be elaborate but most of the time, the legal documents are preformed and these are changed depending on the facts or information to be included (Tiersma, 2010). For example, a law or decree follows the same parts and structure. Contracts also have permanent structure and that templates can be used; wills are of the same purpose and so the format and organization are fixed (Baker, 1990). The introductory parts, the body, concluding statements and the miscellaneous parts are the same.

In relevant concept, the term move analysis is applied when determining the moves and steps of the texts. In genre analysis, the moves and steps are crucial. Accounting Swales (1990) work, there are steps that encompass

the moves, the unit of semantics linked to the purposes of the writer (McKinlay, 1983), and also referred as the structural organization of the text to communicate a message (Bhatia, 1993).

When examining the legal cases, Bhatia (1996) determines the four move structures: Identifying the case; Establishing facts of the case; Arguing the case; Stating history of the case; Presenting arguments; Deriving ratio decidendi; Pronouncing judgment. The Identifying the case (Move 1) can be in versions such as: the case for training law students, argumentation, and decision making. Establishing facts of the case (Move 2) is the description of the case such as the facts of the case. Arguing the case (Move 3) can be of sub-moves: Giving a history of the case, Presenting arguments and Deriving ratio decidendi. Move 2, establishing facts of the case is carried out to the conclusion and creates a sub move, presenting arguments. The third sub move, deriving ratio decidendi makes use of the principle of law that the judge utilizes with the current case to succeeding similar cases. Pronouncing judgment (Move 4) is when pronouncing the judgment us done.

Content Analysis

Content analysis which is done qualitatively concentrates on the communicative features of language in terms of content or contexts of the text (McTavish&Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990). 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 (Kondracki& Wellman, 2002).

As one of the qualitative methods, qualitative content analysis is useful in analyzing data and understanding its meaning (Schreier, 2012). The method call for a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Schreier, 2012) and doing it successfully entails conversion of the data into concepts that label the research phenomenon (Elo&Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005); and creation of categories, models, (Elo&Kyngäs, 2008; Morgan, 1993; Weber, 1990). The research question of the study that calls for qualitative content analysis specifies what to analyze and what to create (Elo&Kyngäs, 2008; Schreier, 2012).

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 (Krippendorff, 2004).

Systematically, content analysis compressed larger corpora into lesser content groupings through the coding principles (Krippendorff, 2004; Weber, 1990). This is done by the analyst through sorting and sifting voluminous data (Stemler, 2001) and making inferences from the symbolic data after corroborating the various methods of data collection (Weber, 1990; Krippendorff, 2004). The process is tedious and so much time should be given.

Generally, the content analysis can be done in inductive and deductive way. When applying the inductive approach, the grouping includes open coding, creating categories, and abstraction (Elo&Kyngäs, 2008); while in deductive way, the steps involved are: categorizing matrix development by coding the data and explaining them through categories (Polit& Beck, 2012). The categorization matrix can be concepts (Schreier, 2012) and results are described by the content of the categories describing the phenomenon using a selected approach (either deductive or inductive).

When making reports for the content analysis process, Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001) emphasized that the application of the self-critical thinking at each phase of the analysis must be clearly explained for the integrity and validity of the data. It is also important that the researcher should also openly discuss the limitations of the study. Creswell's (2013) emphasized that trustworthiness of a study should defined with a set of criteria that are followed logically. Creswell (2013) recommended that authors must clearly explain the validation terms like how trustworthiness, verification, and authenticity are done.

Previous studies banked on different concepts and theories in order to study the uncommon linguistic features of the written texts. The foregoing literature reviewed in this study helped me in formulating sound analysis of the corpora – the Prosecutor's Resolutions.

Linguistic elements of the resolutions may be labeled similar to other English texts but these there are unique features which must be studied to shed light on how language is used in different discipline. The sources mentioned in this study also make way for a better understanding why legal documents like resolutions should be analyzed despite overwhelming descriptions of the how linguistic elements play their roles in the written texts.

The present study may be a replication of the previously studied legal documents but since the corpora is a resolution of prosecutors specifically written for cases of violence inflicted to women and children, this makes the study more distinct. While the present published studies, theories and analyses are used as springboard for the

present analyses of the resolutions, expectedly, the study will bring out the so called highly formulaic and stereotyped language expressed through the use of certain linguistic elements not commonly used.

In performing content analysis of the legal texts, linguistic characteristics are unfolded, marked features are given more attention, and the structure though most are pre-determined are still analyzed since they constitute the whole content of the texts; thus, meanings must be inferred. Pragmatic strings and how they are utilized for the purpose of conveying the message of the resolution is another exciting avenue which is facilitated by the recent studies being reviewed here.

The pieces of literature reviewed in this paper are essential in understanding the linguistic make-up of the resolutions as legal document. As mentioned, legal language is distinct and it has features which are marked and carry specialized meanings mostly comprehended only by legal practitioners and those who know about the law and its language.

III. METHOD

This chapter provides a description on how the research process was conducted. The discussion is confined to research design, research materials, data sources, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the study and ethical consideration.

Research Design

This study made use of the qualitative content analysis research design. Qualitative research is descriptive in nature and data are collected through interviewing, making observation, analyzing documents and visual and performing analysis (Vanderstoep& Johnston, 2009; Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research involving the thorough collection and in-depth exploration of the documents (Polkinghorne, 2005; Bowen, 2009) are crucial for types of studies which cannot be presented quantitatively (Hancock, Ockleford&Windridge, 2009).

This research design entails using a number of data source (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Walker, 2013; Morrow, 2005; Baxter; 2009; Yin, 2011) and it is necessary that the researcher must have background knowledge pertaining to the chosen topic to ensure that analyses and presentation of findings are done appropriately (Creswell, 2013).

Furthermore, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) also explained that a qualitative research method is done through subjective elucidation of the content of text and this is done through the methodical coding and documentation of the themes and patterns, then examining those patterns to distinguish meanings (Morgan, 1996; Sandelowski, 2010).

The descriptions provided about the qualitative research design are premises which prompted me to utilize the same in my research. I dealt with resolutions which are legal documents and I aimed to explore how language was used and how the document was structured. These aspects in exploring data can be more worthwhile when not quantified; instead, thorough description is presented.

However, there are specific types of qualitative approaches, but this study specifically utilized content analysis and this is done by focusing my attention in the meanings of the texts in terms of its content and context, the methods as explained by McTavish and Pirro (1990) and Tesch (1990, 2013). Also, for Mayring (2004), doing this analysis entails doing it in a systematic manner and that analysis should follow distinct rules and models on how this is done in a step by step manner.

According to Hsieh and Shannon, (2005), the content analysis is done in systematic, conventional and collective manner to infer meanings from the content of text data with its inert and predefined paradigm. In this study, the said design was specifically utilized in the prosecutor's resolutions on the cases of the violence against women and children since the study was focused on the written text itself even if I used varied samples of the same type (resolution on VAWC cases). I also employed the processes and techniques involving content analysis.

Giving more weight to my decision of using content analysis was Downe- Wamboldt (1992) who accentuated that qualitative content analysis is characterized with validity and practical applicability and has significant use in the interaction among humans.

Role of the Researcher

Background, credentials and experiences of the researcher are all necessary in the qualitative study since the researcher is a tool in the collection of data and in performing the analysis (Lincoln &Guba, 1985). My roles as researcher included data gathering, analyzing, verifying and reporting of the result. These are the tasks of the researchers in qualitative designs as articulated by Brinkman and Kvale (2008).

For the source of my data, I sought permission from the Prosecutor's Office where the corpora were accessed. A friend introduced me to his aunt who happens to be one of the prosecutors in our province. She gave me

the access to the documents when I justified the purpose of my study. I personally selected the documents to be utilized in the study so I was able to have varied samples of resolutions for dismissal and filing of the case.

In the analysis, I served as the interpreter of the selected texts. It was also my role to describe the texts based on the working framework, in order to distinguish the relevant language features found in the corpora. From there, I sufficiently explained and substantiated the findings from a linguistic point of view.

Research Materials

The resolutions for the dismissal and filing of the cases on the violence against women and children served as the corpora of my study. The prosecutor's resolutions were obtained from the Provincial Prosecutor's Office. These were resolutions for dismissal and filing of the RA 9262 (VAWC) cases. Since I need 30 or more corpora for my data analysis, I randomly selected 16 resolutions for dismissal and 16 resolutions for filing of VAWC case in the court. This summed up to 32 corpora which I have utilized in the content analysis of resolutions.

I specifically used resolutions which were issued in the year 2014 to 2016. Generally, there are only two types of resolutions (dismissal and filing of the case), so I included both types. However, the case was only specific to violence against women and children or the complaints on the violations of RA9262. Though this case includes children as victims, the resolutions I have worked on were focused on complaints of women violence.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from the files of resolutions in the Provincial Prosecutor's Office. I purposely chose resolutions on the violations of VAWC or RA9262. I collected 16 resolutions for dismissal and filing of the case. These were the data which I thoroughly read for several times. In order to undergo content analysis, after thoroughly reading each resolution – I made brief notes when interesting or relevant information was found. I reread through the lists and labeled them according to the linguistic feature categories which I found in the framework of my study. After I was done labeling or coding those features, and categorizing them accordingly, I carefully analyzed the functions of these words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs in the resolutions. These enabled me to discuss the relevant forms and functions of the features and for me to come up with the structure of the resolution.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using the framework of Finegan (2008) on language structures; various forensic linguistic accounts of the linguistic features and structure of legal texts as posited by Cao (2007); Gibbons and Turrell (2008); Coulthard and Johnson (2010).

I employed content analysis in analyzing the resolutions. The steps I followed in the analysis included: identification of the data which are considered relevant to answer the research questions of my study; labeling, coding and categorizing the data based on the framework; analysis of data through forensic linguistic analysis; labeling of the linguistic features and determination of the structure of the resolution.

Specifically, in the coding and labeling of linguistic features and structure of the resolutions, I used highlighter pens and used legends as my guide to categorize the data lifted from the texts. When the labeling was done, I used tables where I tabulated all the coded features so that I would be guided in the interpretation of the data. This idea was from Anderson and Spencer (2002) who made use of matrix to exhibit noteworthy statements and formulated meanings.

Trustworthiness

There are four criteria which are considered to ensure the trustworthiness of the study: credibility - confidence in the 'truth' of the findings; transferability - showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts; dependability, showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated; confirmability, a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not based on the researcher's bias, motivation, and interest (Lincoln &Guba, 1985).

Credibility is about employing the principle of referential adequacy (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which means, the practice of identifying a portion of data to be archived, and to be analyzed. Further, it also deals about establishing the idea that the result of the research is believable. To ensure credibility, I made sure that the linguistic corpora used in this research were credible. I sourced my data from a reliable office, the Provincial Prosecutor's Office. Then I conducted the data analysis on the remaining data scrapped from the corpora and developed initial findings. Moreover, triangulation and member checking were also employed. Triangulation in this study involved

using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding. I also consulted a lawyer for terms which I had difficulty of understanding the contexts.

Transferability or external validity, as defined by Denzin (1970), is applied when the results of one study can be practical and useful in other studies or related studies. In this study, I made sure that the research process was described clearly and accordingly to enable a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), dependability ensures that the research findings are consistent and could be repeated. I also made sure that steps were undertaken to help guarantee, as far as possible, that the work's findings were the results of objective analysis. I also provided a thorough description of how the research was done. Dependability was also done through external audits which involved having a researcher not involved when the research process and product of the research study are examined. These were made possible with the series of consultations with the experts in linguistics and with the presentation of the paper in the institutional review board like the ethics review committee and advisory committee. Further, the results were also communicated to a public audience composed of linguists and language professionals for the purpose of evaluating the accuracy of the results and evaluate whether or not the findings, interpretations and conclusions are well supported with enough evidence from the data.

The concept of confirmability as stressed by Miles (2004) is the adherence to objectivity. Further, I emphasized the role of triangulation in promoting such confirmability in this context to reduce the effect of investigator bias. In this study, peer review was also done. I consulted experts who gave me guide in the analysis and suggested ways to improve my study.

Ethical Considerations

In the conduct of this research, I made certain that ethical standards were followed. This paper was submitted to the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee to appraise the ethical component of the study.

Primarily, this research did not employ participants; instead, I made use of resolutions for the analysis. Based on research ethics, the individuals, organizations, and institutions involved in the reports should be made anonymous. Since the documents mentioned some names, organizations and other identities, I ensured that these were concealed in the presentation of results. All information that would link to offices and individuals were blackened and were never mentioned in the study; and in all instances I used codes.

Before the data were gathered, I obtained consent from the Prosecutor's Office for me to be given access to the documents. In the permission letter, I specified the purpose of the study, and stipulated that identities of the parties involved should never be disclosed.

Moreover, plagiarism check through Turnitin software was utilized to provide evidence that this study was not copied from any sources. This paper passed the university standard of 15% and below on the matching report. This paper got 9% Turnintin matching results. However, there are ideas presented herein which were taken from various reading but authors were given due credit in the in-text citations and their names were listed in the reference section of this paper.

IV. RESULTS

Presented in this section are the findings based on the linguistics and the structure analyses of prosecutors' resolutions for complaints of Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) known as RA 9262. The results are described based on the order of the research questions posed in the beginning of the study.

Linguistic Features OfProsecutors' Resolutions

Based on the analyses of the prosecutors resolutions on the complaints for VAWC cases, there are a number of lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and discourse features that are noticeable.

Lexical Features

In terms of lexical features, observable are technical terms, archaic textual dialectics, formality, and common terms with uncommon meanings found in resolutions. These are shown in Table 1.

Table 1*Linguistic Features (Lexical Features) Of Resolutions*

Lexical Features	Resolutions
Technical Terms	Respondent $_{PR19}$; Warrant Of Arrest $_{PR28}$; Counter-Affidavit $_{PR30}$;
Archaic Textual Dialectics	Aforegoing$_{pr25}$; Aforecited$_{pr12}$; Herein $_{PR13}$;Thereof $_{PR33}$; Wherefore $_{PR5}$
Formality	…Proper Court $_{PR27}$; RESOLUTION $_{PR24}$; …The Revised Rules Of Criminal Procedure $_{PR6}$; …The Proper Court $_{PR20}$;
Common Terms With Uncommon Meanings	Without Prejudice $_{PR1}$; Provision $_{PR29}$; Vehicle $_{PR6}$; Action $_{PR10}$; Parties $_{PR19}$

Technical terms are evident in the resolutions. There are words which are not ordinarily used in the daily conversations such as respondent, warrant of arrest and counter-affidavits as few examples. Respondent for the layman term refers to the person being accused of the crime. However, technically, in the resolution, they are termed as respondent to mean that they are not accused but he is the one who needs to respond to a certain petition. In Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases which have been filed in the prosecution for preliminary investigation, respondents are subpoenaed so they will be able to answer the allegations of the complainants.

Evidently, archaic texts come in words such as aforegoing, aforecited, herein and wherefore in the resolutions. Archaism is usually utilized in the legal document in order to project formality. In the resolutions, these old terms usually appear in textual dialectics. These are native expressions that are not also commonly used in other types of texts. Aforegoing is used instead of "the following"; aforecited instead of "mentioned"; and thereof and wherefore are used in the place of "thus" or "therefore" as commonly used.

Moreover, in the premise of formality, lexicon that manifest formality such as Court in the phrase proper Court by capitalizing the first letter of the word to refer to no other courts in the place but the court that is referred in the resolution. Observably, there are words with all capital letters in the heading such as "RESOLUTION" which appear in all resolutions since it is the title of the document. The capitalized letters also connote formality of the document. Similarly, the names of the documents like "The Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure" are also in bigger font in the beginning of the words to express formality since it is a name of an important reference or document of legal practitioners.

The legal lexicon in the resolutions also carries common words with uncommon meaning like for example without prejudice (the complaint can still be filed again), provision (condition), vehicle (instrument/agent), action (decision) and parties (to mean different individuals or entities).

Syntactic Features
The syntactic features evident in resolutions are presented in Table 2. These features are more distinguishable in legal lexicons. In the resolution, these syntactic features are nominalization, impersonality, negatives, prepositional phrases, long and complex sentences, passives, and clauses.

Table 2
Linguistic Features (Syntactic Features) of Resolutions

Syntactic Features	Resolutions
Nominalization	…complainant suffered humiliation $_{PR1}$; evaluation of the foregoing undisputed facts…$_{PR4}$; After careful scrutiny of the evidence $_{PR10}$;
Impersonality	…the complainant $_{PR15}$; the parish secretary PR14; undersigned prosecutor $_{PR35}$; Subpoena was sent $_{PR12}$
Negatives	…no other evidence $_{PR11}$; no probable cause PR9; uncontroverted evidence at hand $_{PR16}$; …VAWC DOES NOT serve as shield…$_{PR10}$
Prepositional Phrases	***With*** regard to the violation of RA 9262 ***for*** alleged lack ***of*** financial support, the evidence ***on*** record is sufficient to warrant the finding ***of*** probable cause. $_{PR6}$ ***For*** this, she filed a complaint ***against*** respondent xxx ***for*** violation ***of*** RA 9262 based ***on*** the repeated emotional, psychological, and economic

	abuses and **for** violation of article 334 **of** the Revised Penal Code against xxx. $_{PR6}$
Long and complex sentences	After clarificatory questions were propounded to the complainant and the police apprehending officers and the careful evaluation…. the respondent is probably guilty thereof and should be held for trial. (consisting *81 words-1 sentence paragraph*) $_{PR21}$ He stated that he never abandoned his family as it was the complainant who transferred residence; that he never denied support…present during… (*84 words*) $_{PR3}$ In resolving, it is worthy to note that the purpose of preliminary investigation is in effect a realistic…to order an acquittal. (*60 words*)$_{PR16}$
Passives	…be dismissed and be filed in the office (*be*) $_{PR4}$; … is barred of claiming that she was…(*is*) $_{PR6}$; … are substantiated by sufficient proof (*are*) $_{PR7}$; …hearing was conducted (*was*)$_{PR8}$
Clauses	…land *which* he developed (*relative*)$_{PR9}$; After careful evaluation of the uncontroverted evidence at hand,…(adverbial) $_{PR16}$; Notified by mail on July 20, 2012… (adverbial) $_{PR17}$; …alleges that she and the respondent started living together…(*nominal*) $_{PR30}$

Nominalization is the conversion of lexical categories to noun. In the resolutions, examples of its appearance are in the following:

    (1) … complainant suffered *humiliation* (instead of the writing, the complainant is humiliated) (PR$_1$)

    (2) *evaluation* of the forgoing undisputed facts (the foregoing undisputed facts are evaluated) (PR$_4$)

    (3) after careful *scrutiny* of the evidence (after the evidence was scrutinized) (PR$_{10}$)

In example (1), the drafter was successful of ensuring parallelism in the resolution since the series words are all in nominal forms. Besides, the word *humiliation*, together with the word ridicule and emotional suffering is commonly mentioned in the resolutions since this is one of the elements in the context of psychological violence of which the victim can file a case or relief in the court.The prosecutor should convince the chief prosecutor that indeed there is a "probable cause" for psychological violence. The result of the action (humiliation) should be given emphasis. The word *humiliation* as a nominal, is more powerful and more convincing because it carries a distinct meaning in the VAWC law.   Examples (2) and (3) showed how the prosecutor who drafted the resolution has used nominalization in order to achieve concision in the legal writing. These nominals in the resolutions referred to where the examples were taken, are used to introduce dependent clauses; thus, limiting the number of sentences in the text and show relationship to the next phrases or clauses.

Impersonality in the legal texts are used to reduce or even conceal the identity of the doer instead, actions are emphasized. In the resolution, impersonality is manifested; and words such as the *complainant*, the *parish secretary*, the *undersigned prosecutor* and *subpoena* was sent (by unknown sender). These syntactic features successfully carry the impersonality of the legal documents like the resolutions since the proper nouns which are identified in the encoding of the resolution are not written as they are. The *complainant, the Parish Secretary,* and *the undersigned prosecutor* are words used instead of real names; and the subpoena as receiver of the action becomes the subject of which case, impersonality is achieved using passive voice.

In the resolutions, *negatives* are also apparent. For example, the prevalence of the words that carry negatives:

    (1)…no other evidence

                       (PR$_{11}$)

(2) no probable cause

<div align="center">(PR₉)</div>

(4)   uncontroverted evidence at hand

<div align="center">(PR₁₆)</div>

(5)   …VAWC DOES NOT serve as shield…

<div align="center">(PR₁₀)</div>

Example (1) has distinct syntactic feature of being negative in order to mainly tell that options are of no avail; for (2), there is not enough evidence; example 3 multiple negative is not used but negation is shown with the use of prefix –un to modify the words *evidence at hand*.

Divergent syntactic features also come in the form of *prepositional phrases* (strings of prepositions embedded in longer sentences) used in the resolutions. Let us consider the following examples of with highlighted prepositions:

(1)   **With** regard to the violation **of** RA 9262 **for** alleged lack **of** financial support, the evidence **on** record is sufficient to warrant the finding **of** probable cause.

<div align="center">(PR₆)</div>

(2)   **For** this, she filed a complaint **against** respondent xxx **for** violation **of** RA 9262 based **on** the repeated emotional, psychological, and economic abuses and **for** violation of article 334 **of** the Revised Penal Code against xxx.

<div align="center">(PR₆)</div>

The first example shows 6 prepositions constituting six prepositional phrases of a sentence with 27 words. Second example appears similar with 7 prepositions in a single sentence consisting 36 words. These series of prepositional phrases establish relatedness of the elements in the texts. When taking number (2) example:

For this, (*has reference to the previous text*), she filed a complaint **against** (*to point out the respondent that appear next to the preposition*)respondent xxx **for** violation (*to introduce a noun, in this sense the reason of the complain*) **of**(*to introduce another noun, the violated act*) RA 9262 based **on** the repeated emotional, psychological, and economic abuses and **for** violation of article 334 **of** the Revised Penal Code against xxx.

<div align="center">(PR6)</div>

Showing the same function characteristics in the resolutions are the *long and complex sentences*. Below are the examples:

(1)   After clarificatory questions were propounded to the complainant and the police apprehending officers and the careful evaluation…. the respondent is probably guilty thereof and should be held for trial. (consisting *81 word-1 sentence paragraph*)

<div align="center">(PR₂₁)</div>

(2)   He stated that he never abandoned his family as it was the complainant who transferred residence; that he never denied support…present during… (*84 words*)

<div align="center">(PR₃)</div>

Passives also appear in high frequency. In order not to specify the agents, passive voice constructions used in the following examples are found in the resolutions:

…be dismissed and be filed in the office (*be*)

<div align="center">(PR₄)</div>

… is barred of claiming that she was…(*is*)

(PR$_6$)

… are substantiated by sufficient proof (*are*)

(PR$_7$)

…hearing was conducted (*was*)

(PR$_8$)

In the above examples of passive constructions, expectedly the subjects are the receiver of the action; however, unlike other forms of writing, agents are not mentioned in these examples even at the last portion of the sentence. Besides, using the objects as subject of the verb means giving more emphasis to the information thus, they are used as the theme in the sentence.

Accounting to legal text's longer and complex sentences are the different types of *clauses* used in the resolutions. The following are examples of clauses with the label of its kind:

(1)…land *which* he developed (*relative*)

(PR$_9$)

(3) *After* careful evaluation of the uncontroverted evidence at and,…(adverbial)

*(*PR$_{16}$)

(4) *Notified* by mail on July 20, 2012… (adverbial)

(PR$_{17}$)

(5) …alleges *that* she and the respondent started living together…(*nominal*)

(PR$_{30}$)

Relative clause in example (1), nominal clause in (2) serve as syntactic discontinuities with the purpose of providing more information in the text; similarly, adverbial (2) and (3) are used to introduce and describe other elements in the text.

Pragmatic features

The pragmatic features covered in the analysis of the resolutions are pragmatic discourse markers, prediction categories and legal syllogism. These features and their examples taken from the resolutions are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Linguistic Features (Pragmatic Features) Of Resolutions

Pragmatic Features	Resolutions
Pragmatic Discourse Markers	
Referential	He Did Not Wish To Marry Her, Reneged On Her On His Promise, **But** Promised To Support To Their Child Which To Date Never Materialized.(*Contrast*) PR20
	Respondent Xxx Patched Things Up **And** Even Went To The Complainant's House With His Mother Respondent Yyy. (*Coordination*) PR14
	Finding Probable Cause, Let **Therefore** Two Separate Informations Be Filed Against Xxxx For The Violation Of Section 5 (A)… (*Consequential*) PR30
	This Office Is Constrained To Dismiss This Case **Since** It Is Left With No Other

	Evidence To Prove The Guilt Of Herein Respondent Beyond Reasonable Doubt Should A Trial Ensue. (*Causal*) PR11
Structural	It Is ***Therefore*** Recommended That Informations For The Same Offenses Be Filed Against The Respondent Xxx In The Proper Court. So Resolved.(*Closing*) PR21

…Destroyed Their Things In The Kitchen, Struck Her With The Piece Of Wood, Twisted Her Arm, And Grabbed Her Watch; ***Then*** The Respondent Got A Bolo And Said… (*Sequential*) PR23 |
| Cognitive | …The Undersigned Prosecutor Finds Sufficient Evidence To Engender A Well-Founded Belief That A Crime Of Violation Of Section 5 (I) In Relation To Section 6(F) Of RA 9262 Otherwise Known As The Anti-Violence Against Women And Their Children Act Of 2004 *Was Committed*, And ***That*** Respondent Is Probably Guilty And Should Be Held For Trial. PR24

In Resolving, It Is Worthy To Note That The Purpose Of Preliminary Investigation Is In Effect A Realistic Judicial Appraisal Of The Merits Of The Case; Sufficient Proof Of Guilt Of The Criminal Respondent Must Be Adduce ("Sic") So If The Case Is Tried, May Not Be Bound, As A Matter Law, To Order An Acquittal.(Citation Supplied) ***It Is Just As Well*** For The Purpose Of Securing The Innocent Against The Hasty, Malicious And Oppressive Prosecution…PR16 |
| Prediction Categories | …That The Following Offenses Were Committed To Wit:
1. For Complainant…
2. Violation Of… (*Enumeration*) PR35

He Told Her That She Does Not Have The Right On The Land. (*Reporting*) PR28

PrescindingThe Foregoing, Undersigned Prosecutor Finds Probable Cause That The Respondents May Have Violated …v. Let Therefore An Information For The Said Offense Be Filed Against Xxxx In The Proper Court. D(*Advanced Label*) PR24 |
| Syllogism | *Subpoena Issued Was Returned With A Notation That Nobody Wanted To Receive The Same.* MINOR PREMISE Hence, This Case Is Resolved Conclusion**pursuant To Sec. 3(D), Rule 112 Of The Revised Rules Of Criminal Procedure**. MAJOR PREMISE Section 5(A) Of Republic Act No. 9262 Punishes The Act Of Causing Physical Harm To The Woman And Her Child. MAJOR PREMISE The Respondent's Act Falls Under This Provision When He Physically Harmed The Private Complainant. MINOR PREMISE This Office Finds The Respondents Probably Guilty For The Violation Of Section 5(A) Of RA No 9262. Therefore, An Information For The Violation … Be Filed Against The Respondent. CONCLUSIONPR29 |

Pragmatic discourse markers specificallyreferential discourse markers include those that are indicating relationships, consequences, contrasts, comparison, disjunction and coordination. The examples herein appear are taken from the resolutions.

(1) He did not wish to marry her, reneged on her on his promise, ***but*** promised
to support to their child which to date never materialized.(*contrast*)
(PR20)

(2) Respondent xxx patched things up and even went to the complainant's
house with his mother respondent yyy. (coordination)
(PR14)

(3) Finding probable cause, let therefore two separate informations be filed
against xxxx for the violation of Section 5 (a)… (consequential)
(PR30)

(4)   This office is constrained to dismiss this case since it is left with no
other evidence to prove the guilt of herein respondent beyond reasonable doubt
should a trial ensue. (causal)

<div align="center">(PR₁₁)</div>

Example (1) shows the two conflicting ideas being marked by the word **but**; example (2) tells about the series of events and thus additional event is connected through **and**; example number (3) talks about previous action that begets the consequence that "information for the violation of Section 5(a) be filed" marked by the word **therefore**; and (3) shows the reason to dismiss the case and the word **since** tells the reader that a reason is to be given. Looking at the words, they are actually conjunctive elements which function as discourse markers signaling the readers what idea is to be introduced next; and predicting what comes next the discourse markers can only be successfully done when the context (other elements of the text) is known to him.

When it comes to structural discourse, sequencing and closing discourse markers are observable in the resolutions. Structural category of the discourse markers link the transition between topics and indicate that the discourse is in progress.

Resolutions are also narrating events; hence, this type of discourse markers is useful as they are used in the examples below:

(1) It is **therefore** recommended that informations for the same offenses be
filed against the respondent xxx in the proper court. So resolved.(*closing*)

<div align="center">(PR₂₁)</div>

(2)…destroyed their things in the kitchen, struck her with the piece of wood,
twisted her arm, and grabbed her watch; **then** the respondent got a bolo and
said… (*sequential*)

<div align="center">(PR₂₃)</div>

The discourse markers **therefore** and **then** as they are used in (1) and (2) respectively take the role of opening a topic which may not be necessarily out of context. In the example (1), it opens the argument leading to the decision about the issue. The second one (*then*) signals series of events which means the marker there signals that the discourse is in progress.

Interestingly, all resolutions that served as corpora of this study have distinct discourse marker when closing the entire argument of the resolution regardless of the recommendation to file or dismiss the case. They all write: **"SO RESOLVED."** – all in bold and capital letters. This marker always ends the resolutions. Readers who are reading the text will no longer expect for more argument to be added when these words are read.

Another type of discourse marker belongs to cognitive category to elaborate and clarify the meaning of the proposition. These descriptions can be found in the resolution. Consider these markers that appear in the texts:

(1)…the undersigned prosecutor finds sufficient evidence to engender a well-
founded belief that a crime of violation of Section 5 (i) in relation to Section 6(f)
of RA 9262 otherwise known as the Anti-violence Against Women and their
Children Act of 2004 *was committed*, and **that** respondent is probably guilty and
should be held for trial.

<div align="center">(PR₂₄)</div>

(2) In resolving, it is worthy to note that the purpose of preliminary investigation
is in effect a realistic judicial appraisal of the merits of the case; sufficient proof
of guilt of the criminal respondent must be adduce so if the case is tried, may not
be bound, as a matter law, to order an acquittal.(citation supplied) **It is just as
well** for the purpose of securing the innocent against the hasty, malicious and
oppressive prosecution…

<div align="center">(PR₁₆)</div>

Discourse marker, **that** in (1) directs the reader to think ahead of the decision of the writer. Before the marker is used, there are already series of premises being presented. In the example, it has been mentioned already

that violation was committed; the use of ***that*** signals the decision and in this case, the reader will have the understanding that the decision is really to file a case.

Another cognitive discourse marker is used to clarify and to show that the writer is trying to elaborate the idea. The marker, "***it is just as well***" signals that another explanation or more explanation will be provided. Elaboration is available for better understanding on the part of the reader and to better convey the message of the writer.

In the resolutions, the use of cognitive discourse marker is important since arguments and analysis of the prosecutors are prime features of the text. They need to let their readers understand the points to be laid and being laid.

Prediction categories as evident in the resolutions are exemplified in the foregoing examples. Enumeration is one of the prediction categories which can be noticed in the resolutions when giving emphasis to the important details as it used below. Line one $_{(1)}$ makes way for the readers to predict that items are to be enumerated because of the cataphoric items *following* and *to wit:*.

> …that the following offenses were committed to wit: (1)
>
> 1. for complainant…
>
> 2. Violation of… (*enumeration*)
>
> (PR$_{35}$)

Since resolutions present arguments and stories of the parties involved, reporting is commonly used. It lets the readers predict the involvement of the writer to the proposition. In resolutions, prosecutors deal with second hand information, those that are only reported by the complainant or the respondents and or the witnesses. Hence, the prosecutor may opt to detach from the propositions by attributing them to the source. In the given example, "he" is given the attribution of the utterance.

> He told her that she does not have the right on the land.
>
> (PR$_{28}$)

On the other hand, advance labeling as prediction categories are shown in the example:

> Prescinding the foregoing, undersigned prosecutor finds probable cause that the respondents may have violated …**V**. Let therefore an information for the said offense be filed against xxxx in the proper court. **D** (*Advanced Label*)
>
> (PR$_{24}$)

On the above example, when the prosecutor states that there is a probable cause, it is already expected that the decision is to file the complain in the court. The V membership $_{(v)}$ is labeled as prospective discourse of the D member $_{(D)}$.

The resolutions as a legal narrative which bear arguments and reasoning also have elements of syllogism. Consider the texts below:

> *Subpoena issued was returned with a notation that nobody wanted to receive the same.* $_{MINOR\ PREMISE}$ Hence, this case is resolved $_{CONCLUSION}$***pursuant to Sec. 3(d), Rule 112 of the Revised Rules of Criminal Procedure.*** $_{MAJOR\ PREMISE}$
>
> (PR$_{20}$)

In the example, the major premise which appears at the end of the argument mentions a particular law or rule; the circumstances or the situation is considered as the minor premise because it cites the facts to support the law is violated; and the conclusion or the application of the law is manifested with the decision to resolve the case. It is noticeable that the order of the premises and the conclusion should follow a strict pattern – major premise – minor premise – conclusion. For as long as the three parts are utilized as discursive elements, legal syllogism can be successfully presented.

Legal syllogism also appears herein with the citation of the law (major premise) comes in the beginning and being followed with the statement of facts (minor premise), then the conclusion which defines the decision of the prosecutor to file the case is presented.

> Section 5(a) of Republic Act No. 9262 punishes the act of causing physical harm to the woman and her child. ***MAJOR PREMISE*** The respondent's act falls under this provision when he physically harmed the private complainant. ***MINOR PREMISE*** This office finds the respondent probably guilty for the violation of Section 5(a) of RA No 9262. Therefore, an information for the violation … be filed against the respondent. **CONCLUSION**
>
> (PR$_{29}$)

Discourse Features

The discourse level features of the resolutions include types of discourse such as informative, interpretative and persuasive-argumentative; and the aspects of the narrative employing the principles of chronological order and causal presentation.

Resolutions are not purely argumentative in nature. There are other discourse types which are also commonly manifested and these are informative, interpretative and argumentative discourses.

In resolutions, there are short narrations of what have transpired to attest that indeed the crime was committed, and information that led to the commission of the crime and or that pushed the complainant to file a complaint. Example (1) reports the background information of filing the case. It has time elements, circumstances such as places and situation descriptions making way for richer information.

> (1) Complainant alleged that she is the legal wife of the respondent and they begot two (2) minor children. On July 2009, respondent abandoned them in Brgy. Xxx and the complainant heard that he is living with another woman.
>
> (PR$_{22}$)

Example (2) still gives some information that may lay the foundation of the case and to give an information that there has been no sufficient support since the mentioned time even if the respondent is capable of doing so.

> (2) Being an employee of xxx corporation, respondent had been religiously giving financial support not until 2010 up to the present except for three instances in the same year where in the respondent was able to send Five Hundred Pesos (500.00).
>
> (PR$_{19}$)

Another example here is on (3), an informative discourse that tackles the violation, the decision and the reason of the decision. Argumentative in character, but since facts are given and narrated as in the last sentence, the discourse can also be characterized as informative.

> (3) This resolves the complaint for the Violation of RA 9262 filed against xxxx and yyyy. Notified of the crime, they opted not to submit any countervailing evidence.
>
> (PR$_{31}$)

If informative discourse narrates events and gives facts in resolutions, interpretative discourse gets in-depth by examining if the details in the narrative bear significance. In resolutions, this kind of discourse is apparently used since the prosecutor has to examine the evidence presented by the parties involved to find out if there is merit to dismiss or file the case. To illustrate:

> After going over the entire records attached on file, the complainant never bothered to make a reply/rebut the allegations of the respondent and his witnesses and that there had never been an abandonment and denial of financial support. As to the allegation of non-support during the hospitalization of their common child, the complainant neither submit any proof of the amount due nor any receipt proving her payment thereof.
>
> (PR$_{3}$)

The above example shows how the prosecutor interpreted the acts of the complainant of not submitting additional evidence as rebuttal to the response of the respondent. Further, the prosecutor also gives comment about the allegations. These contexts characterized the use of interpretative discourse in the resolution.

Similarly, interpretation is also evident in the example below when the prosecutor writes:

> It is further submitted that in view of the uncooperativeness of the complaining witness, this case losses a leg to stand on and that it will necessarily fail even if filed in court.
>
> (PR$_5$)

The view by the prosecutor on the uncooperativeness of the witness is further used to express an opinion that the case may fail. Further, interpretative discourse is also utilized in the resolution when the prosecutor interprets the situation based on the foregoing facts. In the preceding extract of a resolution, the absence of the proof for marital infidelity as self-serving or has no bases at all. The prosecutor further opined that since the parties have no child, they are responsible for themselves. The way this is written clearly manifests that the discourse applied is interpretative.

> After careful evaluation of the record at hand, this office finds no probable cause for the filing of Violation of RA 9262 against the respondent. Absent any proof, the allegations of the complainant especially that of the marital infidelity of the respondent shall remain self-serving. Further, considering that the complainant and the respondent have no child, each of them is responsible for their own respective sustenance.
>
> (PR$_9$)

The resolution is ended with the prosecutor's recommendation to dismiss or file the case. Here, the prosecutor is burdened to give conclusion through an argument based on qualified premises. In this case, argumentative or persuasive discourse is applied.

This discourse is clearly applied in these examples:

(1) Based on the foregoing, this office finds no jurisdiction to file this case, hence it is recommended to be dismissed and be filed in the office where there is jurisdiction to file the same.

(PR$_4$)

(2) Respondents stand charged for the Violation of RA 9262. Subpoena was issued for them to submit countervailing evidence… thus, we are restrained to resolve the case based solely on the evidence submitted by the complainant pursuant to Section 3(d), Rule 112…

(PR$_6$)

(3) Uncontroverted evidence showed that there is probable cause to indict respondent for violation of Sec. 5(i) in relation to Sec. 6(f) of R.A 9262 to which he must stand to trial.

(PR$_{19}$)

Examples (1), (2) and (3) are concluding arguments after the interpretation of the facts. It can be observed that the prosecutor conveys the decision to file or to dismiss the case. In presenting the arguments, premises are mentioned to support the decision or conclusion.

The *narration* of the resolution employed combination of principle of chronological order and principle of causal presentation. When the chronology of events is cited, this is considered as background and a reason to file or dismiss the case; and in some instances, the reason why the complainant complained and/or has sought relief, which eventually a conclusion is given.

The prosecutors are tasked to explain why they believe the crime is committed or the law is violated and why they believe otherwise. In the example given below, (1) tells about the series of events in chronological order

which lead to the situation in (2). The events mentioned in (1) are causes of psychological pain or mental anguish of the woman (the complainant) which in turn is a violation of the law cited. The last part signals another event in the text, the recommendation that the case be filed.

> …while there have been heated argument ("sic"), until the respondent pushed the complainant to the ground and forcibly brought her to their ("sic") house. In his room, he forced the complainant to have sex with him but the complaint refused until a Brgy. Kagawad came to rescue her. (1)
>
> Sec. 5(i) of the RA No. 9262 punishes the act causing psychological pain or mental anguish to the woman and her child. (2)
>
> …this office finds the accused probably guilty…let therefore an information for violation of Sec. 5(i) of the RA No. 9262 be filed against the respondent. (PR$_{25}$)

The same is articulated in another example but in different context since here the narration of events led to the dismissal of the case. However, still, the chronology of events begets the cause of dismissing the case due to the mentioned events.

> After careful perusal of all documents submitted, the complainant had already executed an Affidavit of Desistance dated June 4, 2015 stating among others that she is no longer interested in pursuing the prosecution of this instant case. (1)
> Apparently, there is no evidence to prove the guilt of herein respondent beyond reasonable doubt should a trial ensue.(2)
>
> Thus, foregoing considered, this case is hereby recommended DISMISSED. (3)
>
> (PR$_{15}$)

The Structure OfProsecutor's Resolutions
      The structure of the resolutions as employed by the prosecutors begins with the presentation of the resolution data, introduction clause, argumentation clause, prosecutor's analysis, conclusion or decision, termination phrase, and inclusion data.

Resolution Data
      The resolution data appear right after the letterhead which identifies the office where the resolution is released. These data include name/s of the complainant/s; name/s of the respondent/s; case number; offense charged; and document title. The resolution data are important details about the resolution which capture the parties involved; the identification of the case which comes as unique number that is recorded and indexed in the log book of the prosecutor's office; and the offense charged which mentions the law being violated. This information formatted in the resolution as:
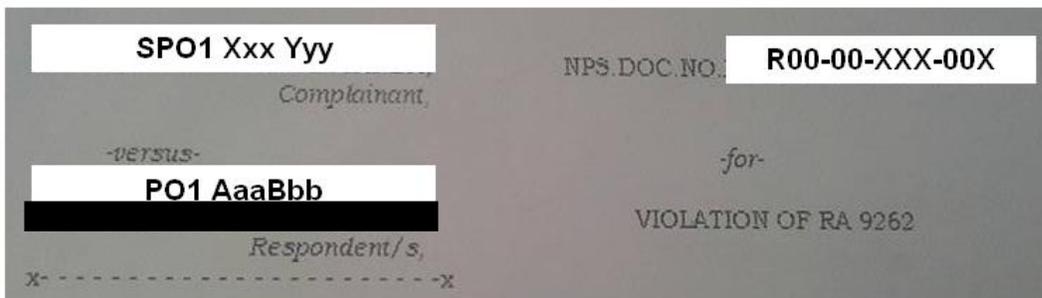
It is the complainant's name that should appear first like the illustration above. It is noticeable that the person accused of the violation of the act is not labeled as the accused or defendant just like other legal criminal documents, instead the term respondent/s is used.

The case number bearing NPS DOC NO. R00-00-XXX-00X (*not the exact case number taken from the document*) is a unique identification. Hence, it cannot be divulged in this study because this can be traced and the persons involved can be identified. The series of the case numbers is determined in the prosecutor's office during the time the resolution is made.

As to the offense charged, the specific Section of the Law being violated or the Law itself is mentioned. The exact section being violated as complained appears in the body of the resolution.

Introductory Clause

The introduction clause communicates the nature of the case. As observed, there are several ways this part is presented. From the corpora four ways constituted the introduction clause of the resolution:

First is through statement of the nature of the case based on the evidence offered by the plaintiff like in PR3 when the prosecutor stated the circumstances why the case is filed and the evidence presented by the complainant. Notably, names of the respondents and complainant do not appear since the terms of reference are used. This is common in the resolutions.

> Complainant alleged that her respondent husband abandoned her and their minor child and denied them financial support. To strengthen her claim, she attached their Certificate of Marriage, Certificate of Live Birth of their daughter and Medical certificates reflecting dates of confinement of their common child.
>
> (PR$_3$)

Second, the introduction states the nature of the case by citing the charges or the accusations and the alleged violation of the law:

> Respondent stands charged for the Violation of Republic Act 9262.
>
> (PR$_{10}$)

Third, it states the background information about the case by stating who, who did what, and what is done to whom just like this illustration below:

> This resolves the complaint filed by xxxx xxx xxx against her husband, xxxxxxxx for Violationof RA 9262.
>
> (PR$_9$)

Fourth, the resolution's introduction describes what the case is all about, and the summary of the contents of the resolution containing arguments, analysis and the decision of the prosecutor. Here is an example:

> Perusing to the records of the case, it appears that parties herein are husband and wife. That several complaints had been filed involving the same parties such as but not limited to two (2) VAWC cases which were already dismissed there being a compromise between them. Thus, the undersigned deemed it to be moot and academic to dwell on the facts relating to the two previously filed VAWC cases.
>
> (PR$_{10}$)

As presented in PR10 above, the prosecutor states facts about the case at the same time gives comment of which the readers could predict the decision to be spelled at the end of the document. The phrase, "*deemed it to be moot and academic to dwell on the facts…*" implied the decision of the prosecutor to dismiss the complaint although you can still find in the other parts of the documents the detailed narration of the arguments of both parties and an elaboration of her analysis towards the statement of facts.

Argumentation Clause

The argumentation clause of the resolution is considered as the context of the case where arguments of both parties are recounted. First part is the narration of the arguments of the complainant followed by the argument in the next part which may constitute one or more paragraphs. However, there are also resolutions wherein only the

arguments of the complainant are presented since the respondent did not reply to the subpoena or notice to file counter affidavit. In the same manner, there are resolutions also wherein the arguments of the complainant are not mentioned and exemplified.

Here are some of the examples to be considered:

(1) ...complainant alleged that she and the respondent live together as husband and wife sometime on February 2003 and as a result of their relationship they had two children. That sometime on July, 2015, respondent who was drunk, punched her on the face and shouted at her…and these incidents were repeated several times.

…the respondent filed a counter-affidavit where he denied that he physically and verbally abused the respondent.

(PR$_{30}$)

(2) …complainant alleged that on July 1, 2010, respondent mauled her in their house at xxxxx which caused hematoma in both eyelids which will heal from ten (10) to fourteen (14) days.

Despite notice, respondent failed to submit controverting evidence.

(PR$_{24}$)

(3) Having been notified of the complaint against him, the respondent filed an unverified Motion to Dismiss with an attachment in lieu of a counter affidavit moving for the dismissal of the instant complaint on the basis of an Affidavit of Desistance dated January 18, 2016 executed by the private complainant.

A clarificatory hearing was conducted on xxxx wherein both the private complainant and respondent appeared before the Office of the undersigned.

(PR$_8$)

Sample (1) presents both the arguments of the complainant and the respondents. The allegations of the complainant are presented first and followed with the contents of the counter-affidavit of the respondents. Since it is considered a counter, expectedly, the respondent denies the allegations and presents his arguments.

In sample (2), only the allegations of the complainant are presented since as stated, the respondent failed to respond and submit controverting evidence despite the notice given.

On the contrary, sample (3) shows that a resolution may also bear only the arguments of the respondent since the complainant has executed desistance on the case. In PR8, the resolution states that the respondent responded on the case filed against him and brought with him the necessary documents like the described "*unverified motion to dismiss with attachment*"$_{PR8}$. This leads to the action of the prosecutor which is also explained in the same resolution: "*a clarificatory hearing was conducted on August 5, 2016 wherein both the private complainant and respondent appeared before the office of the undersigned*"$_{PR8}$. This means there is no need to present the arguments since the prosecutor has verified the desistance and found out that indeed, the wife has executed it.

Prosecutor's Analysis

The prosecutor's analysis contains the comments, interpretation, appraisal and application of the law to the facts of the case or to the arguments of the complainant and the respondent. This part has premises and contains legal syllogisms. The prosecutor presents his or her analysis by citing the relevance of the complaint to the violations of the law cited.

In PR7, the prosecutor finds the complaint as purely allegations due to insufficient proof by citing that the documents available are not enough to support the allegations. Expectedly, in this example, the decision of the prosecutor is to dismiss the complaint.

(1) The only documents attached on file are the Affidavit-Complaint and the Certificate of Marriage. The allegations for abandonment and financial abuse are unsubstantiated by sufficient proof. Verily, what were stated in the complaint are bare allegations of the complainant.

(PR$_7$)

Similarly, the analysis of the prosecutor elaborated in the resolution PR12, analysis is given on the issue of support. Observably, the prosecutor provides the proposition on how and when the insufficient financial support can be punishable by law and states,

Deliberate giving of insufficient financial support to be punishable, presupposes that the respondent was capable of giving sufficient support but nonetheless give ("sic") insufficiently. Otherwise stated, non-satisfaction of financial support given, does not give rise for the violation of RA 9262.

(PR$_{12}$)

To exemplify the above statement of the prosecutor, based on PR12, the complainant alleged that the respondent gave insufficient support to their three (3) children but the facts presented by the parties make way for the prosecutor to analyze the complaint that way. The prosecutor cited the application of the law that was allegedly violated. In that particular resolution, as stated, the complaint is dismissed.

Conclusion or Decision

Conclusion or decision part of the resolution usually appears in the end before the final remarks "SO RESOLVED". The decision or conclusion primarily bears the linguistic elements: "*dismissed*", "*dismissed without prejudice*", "*be filed*", and "*be filed in the proper Court*". The decision is also introduced by any of the phrases and words: "*thus*", "*foregoing considered*", "*accordingly*", "*let therefore*", "*for the reason aforesaid*", "*hence*"; "*for want of probable cause*", all of which are conclusion markers. This part is usually written in few words and in shorter sentences than other sentences in the resolution since it captures the most important message of the document. The following are the samples of the concluding parts:

(1) Thus, foregoing considered, this case is hereby recommended DISMISSED.

(PR$_{15}$)

(2) Accordingly, let the instant Complaint be dismissed.

(PR$_2$)

(3) Let the Information for the Violation of RA 9262 be filed against respondent in the proper court.

(PR$_{18}$)

To clarify, as mentioned earlier, the resolutions in some instances have introductions that spell out the decision about the case and some contexts also convey the decisions. But although this happens, still, the concluding remarks which explicitly state dismissal or filing of the complaint is found in all my corpora. Here is one of the examples:

($_{Para\ 1\text{-}Intro}$)Perusing to the records of the case, it appears that parties herein are husband and wife. That several complaints had been filed involving the same parties such as but not limited to two (2) VAWC cases which were already dismissed there being a compromise between them. Thus, the undersigned deemed it to be moot and academic to dwell on the facts relating to the two previously filed VAWC cases.

(Conclusion) Foregoing considered, for want of probable cause this case is hereby recommended DISMISSED without prejudice.

(PR$_{10}$)

Paragraph one takes the role spelled out in the introduction and the content of PR10, paragraph 1 does not just state the nature of the case but it can be also implied that the decision is to dismiss the complaint; however, the decision to dismiss is still stated in the concluding part.

Termination Phrase

Termination phrase consistently bears the phrase "**SO RESOLVED**" which is written in capital and bold letters. This signals that the arguments and the decisions of the prosecutor have been presented and no other information and further discussion about the case follows.

Inclusion Data

Miscellaneous data in the resolutioncontain the signature, the dates and some end notes of the resolution as the miscellaneous parts. These are not left blank in all the resolutions. These include the date when the resolution is crafted and signed by the authorized signatories such as the prosecutor who investigated the case and signature of approval of the supervising prosecutor's or in my corpora, it is the Provincial Prosecutor. Names and address of the individuals and the institutions like the Police department are also written if they are furnished with the copies of the resolution. It also contains the date when the copy of the resolution is mailed to the complainant and the respondent. Such are illustrated as follows:
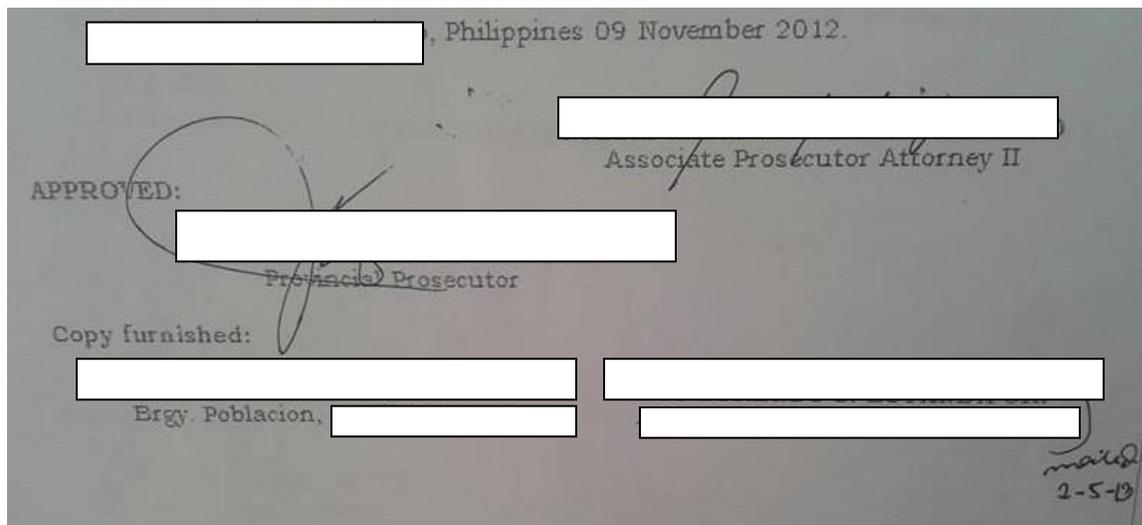
V. DISCUSSION

The resolution of the prosecutor is a legal document which is very crucial before the trial will be set for the respondent. As argued by Vess (1973), the prosecutor represents the people against the person who is believed to have violated the law at the same time ensures that the defendant and the complainant are given equivalent treatment based on the proofs and preliminary investigation.

The resolution is a fundamental document to trial when it recommends filing of the case (Reyes, 2008; Vess, 1973). However, even if resolution is submitted by the prosecutor, there is a pressing need to convince and get the approval of the chief prosecutor; in the same way, the complainant upon the dismissal of the complaint and the respondent upon the recommendation to file the case in court can still file a petition on the decision of the prosecutor (Department of Justice, 1996; Reyes, 2008; Jimeno, 2013).

Matilla (2016), Williams (2005), Sarcevic (2000) and many others become interested in describing legal language because it has distinct features and each kind provides different function in the legal field. With such purpose the resolution serves in the justice system, I also believe language plays a very critical role. The prosecutor uses the written text in order to convince the parties involved that her recommendation is based on causes which may either be probable or not probable and that his decision is based on the merits of the evidence presented. How language is manipulated and used to express the message the resolution carries were investigated in my study by uncovering the linguistic features and structure exhibited in my corpora, the resolutions.

Linguistic Features

As one of the legal documents, resolution also reveals linguistic features which are commonly used in all other written legal texts. In my study, I focused in finding out the lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and discourse features of the resolution. Indeed, these features and many other features are commonly and uniquely used in the resolutions. My findings can draw support from the views on legal language as highly formulaic and arbitrarily-bounded (Dámová 2007), differentiated (Danet, 1985; Charrow, Crandal&Charrow 1982); and pulled by different directions (Crystal & Davy, 1969, 2013).

In the resolutions, there are lexicons which are also described by Lazarevic (2013) in confidentiality agreements; Azuelos-Atias (2007) on Legal Proofs; and generally, those that are enumerated by Danet (1985). Distinct lexical features in the resolutions are technical terms, archaic, formal words, and common terms with uncommon meanings (Neumann, 2001; Mellinkoff, 1963).

Technical terms in legal language are used with specific use the legal parlance (Veretina-Chiraic, 2012) and are not used or may be used differently in other discourse. For instance, the term *warrant of arrest* is a legal term and is not used in other discourse for the same function or meaning. Respondents and defendants are synonymous at first glance but technical they are not for the law give boundary on both terms depending on the context of use. Respondents are used when the case is not yet filed and the complaint is still in the prosecutor's office and thus, the resolution uses the term; on the other hand, defendant is used when the case is filed in the court since the term respondent means the person or entity who needs to reply on the petition (West Encyclopedia of American Law, 2008).

These technical terms carry definite meaning. When the term "*Affidavit of Desistance*" is used, it refers to only to one document containing the desistance to the case and such term does not apply to any other document. Similarly, the term subpoena is characterized legal form of invitation which may have connotative meaning to the laymen. This implies that when one deals with legal text, there is a need to understand the context; and the meaning should be discovered in the light of legal discourse; but to be safe, a legal dictionary can help deduce the meaning or the assistance of a legal expert will do.

Aside from technical terms, archaic terms are commonly used in resolutions though evidently, these are just bits of words like *aforegoing*, *herein*, *hereto* and the like. Matilla (2016) articulated that archaism is used in many legal texts because of the conventional mentality of lawyers who strictly follow the ancient tradition of legal writing.

Words that are used in daily language are also used in resolutions but these words carry different meaning such as "*without prejudice*", "*party*", "*vehicle*". These words are not only used in resolution but in other legal texts as well. But when these are used in daily conversations they carry different meanings. Attributing to the fact that legal documents are not easily understood by readers who do not have legal background (Ashipu&Umukoro, 2014; and Tiersma, 1999), these uncommon meanings that common words have and are used in resolutions also contribute to the complexity of the text.

If lexicon of resolutions is considered difficult because of the principle of formality, archaism and technicality employed, this idea supports the argument of Dave (2002) that lawyers have their own language use and style and they do not converse in plain language. Interestingly, Crystal (2013) asserted that lawyers' opt to use formulaic language already worked in the court and thus, use those which they can trust on. In this case, these lexical features evident in resolutions are legal words which have been used long before with the same form and function and those who are in the field have common understanding on its use and meaning.

Adding up to the complexity of legal language are the word patterns and structures or the so called syntactic features that Danet (1985) described as more noticeable than the lexical group. Nominalization, impersonality, negatives, prepositional phrases, long and complex sentences, passives, and clauses are among of the syntactic elements.

Notably, in the resolutions, nominalization has various linguistic functions and these include but not limited to cohesion, maintain parallelism, portray abstractness and introduce a theme. These observations on the use of nominalization are similar to Bhatia's (1996) and that indeed, it is one of the traditional characteristics of the language of law (Garzone&Sarangi, 2008; Williams, 2005).

Moreover, impersonality in resolutions is evident because of the functions they serve – for the drafter to detach his personality from the text and to magnify the action and the object and not the doer. This is also attained with the excessive use of passive voice especially when the prosecutor gives analysis to the case and when arguments are presented. Most importantly, impersonality and passives are utilized for the writers let the audience focus their attention to the action committed and not to the alleged person.

The use of passives in the resolution agrees to what have been posited by Hewings (2005) on reasons why passives are used in English. First is to omit the agent when it is obvious. Second reason according to Hewings

(2005) on the use of passive is to describe procedures and process. This purpose is also served in the resolution when the prosecutor writes: "*Careful investigation has been done*", to amplify what has been done and not the one who has done the action.

Lastly, Hewings (2005) claimed that passives are used in order to portray some degree of formality and thus, agents are not mentioned. In this case, since resolutions are formal document, then the use of passive can be justified further.

However, it is very much interesting to note how Wydick's (1998) list of concise rules in the use of passive in a legal text: when the action is more vital that the doer; when the doer is unknown; when the agent is at the end of the sentence for emphasis; and when concept should be emphasized. Identical lists on the use of passives are also offered by Enquist and Oates (2001); but they added that passives are used when there is a need to make stronger connection of the previous and succeeding sentences.

Unique syntactic feature of the resolution is the string of prepositions in the sentences. Surprisingly, there are sentences with 7-8 prepositions connecting different elements in the sentence for the purpose of supplying many information. Prepositions are among of the prominent features in the long and complex sentences of the resolutions.

In addition, different types of clauses also contribute to longer sentences. Resolutions have noun clauses, relative clauses and coordinating clauses in order to present more facts and to present chronology of events.

As a result of pragmatic analysis, discourse markers, prediction categories and legal syllogisms are determined in the resolutions. The discourse markers play a pragmatic function according to Schiffrin (1987) since they provide signals to the readers on what to assume in the text they are reading and the readers will only successfully understand the message conveyed when they are able to connect other parts of the texts. In other words, the narration has coherence (Van Dunne, 1996). The markers will help achieve this. Indeed, these are noticeable in the resolutions. For instance, referential discourse markers show relationship of the sentences of the texts to another. Resolutions provide narratives, arguments and analysis and these markers are really helpful.

Structural and cognitive discourse markers are other types. The former signals the beginning, the end and the discourse in progress. Transitions and conjunctions are used in the resolutions to present the starting and ending points of the discourse. But the ending linguistic feature on resolution is: "SO RESOLVED". This means, the case has been investigated preliminarily, thus, the case be filed or be dismissed. Both types of the resolution are ended with such linguistic marker.

Taking similar function of the discourse marker are the prediction categories that are illustrated by Coulthard (1994). When analyzed thoroughly, the resolutions employ prediction categories like enumeration, reporting and advanced level. These are all materialized in different context. Enumeration is used in the resolution when there are series of information to follow the precious discourse. Reporting is usually used when presenting the argument of the parties involved; and the advanced label is exhibited when the previous texts made the reader infer or predict what is next to happen like when the introduction part of the resolution implies the decision at the end.

Conversely, resolutions being the document that presents arguments of the parties involved and the arguments of the prosecutor about the merit of the actions, legal syllogism is taking the role in the pragmatic analysis. There are premises involved in the arguments; and these premises are bases for the resolution to contain a certain decision. Since series of arguments are presented in one resolution, it is expected also that a single resolution bears several premises to convey syllogism.

Legal discourse like resolutions also exhibit discursive types such as informative discourse, interpretative and persuasive-argumentative types of discourse. Distinctly, these three are integrated in the resolutions I have analyzed. Informative is used when the prosecutor narrates the background of the case; interpretative when the reports of what have happened are interpreted based on the law and the personal opinion (based on facts) of the investigating prosecutor; and persuasive-argumentative discourse is evidently used when the prosecutor relates the law and provides decision at the same time persuade the head prosecutor that the investigating prosecutor's decision is based on original reasoning (Ramee, 2003).

In consonance to the use of different types of discourse in the resolutions, the narrative technique is also worth analyzing. It must be pointed out that prosecutors rely on the narration of the parties involved in the petition and that the resolution should carefully retell the story in the point of view chosen by the investigating prosecutor after thoroughly reviewing the complain with the evidence presented. The decision must be established based on probable and probable cause. The narration is structured based on the chronology of the events and consequence of the events. To illustrate the point, PR25 clearly shows how the prosecutor presents the events which cause the violation of the law. This is how the law is violated or not.

Structure of the Resolution

The second focus of the study is on the structure of the resolution. Using the framework of Bhatia as guide, I was able to come up with the list of parts typically applied in the resolution. Like other legal texts, I have observed that resolutions are formulaic and the elements are kept unmodified even if they are written by different authors. Obligatory elements include the resolution data and the miscellaneous parts. The content structures also vary but the obligatory contents specifically the analysis and the decision of the prosecutor are essentially presented.

The parts that are observed in the resolutions are the *resolution data* which contain the names of the complainant and the respondent the case number, and the violation; *introductory clause* contains the nature of the case; the *argument clause*; the *prosecutor's analysis*; *conclusion/decision,* and the *inclusion data* which contain the signatures and the names of the persons and offices with their corresponding addresses where the resolution copies are also sent or mailed. These are essential but there may be resolutions without some of the mentioned parts for some reasons which are also mentioned in the resolution.

Implications for Practice

Resolutions on the cases of Violence Against Women and Children have linguistic features such as lexical, syntactic, pragmatic and discourse that are considered marked and or distinct in legal documents. Specifically, resolutions contain archaic, technical and common words with uncommon meanings, nominal, passives, long and complex sentences, discourse markers, prediction categories, syllogism, informative, interpretative and persuasive-argumentative discourse types, and narratives.

Apparently, these linguistic features that I considered marked in my corpora contributed to difficulties in understanding the texts. I have read the resolutions for several times. Some words to me are not familiar and if familiar, I need the context to better understand the text.

However, these words could not outnumber other elements in the text and that with careful and a more focused reading plus with the use of context, these words would not crowd understanding. But lawyers and also prosecutors should explain in layman's term the contents of the resolution for better understanding.

In the law school, language teacher may opt to introduce new and understandable words which can be used in lieu of archaism but of course, technical words may not be replaced since these are law terms with specific, distinct and formulaic meanings that are commonly understood in their own field (Crystal, 2013). With due respect to register and style, it is worth realizing that every profession has its own jargon that sets them apart from the rests and these terms that facilitate communication among people within their expertise (Justeson& Katz, 1995)and if one wants to learn their language, then mindful effort must be made.

In the light of syntax, what is noteworthy in my research is how words, phrases and clauses are arranged in making up the entire sentences with unusual length. The issue of dangling modifiers may come in and the series of prepositions which disrupts the continuity of the narrative or information given would be another.

My findings may inform the readers what syntactical elements can contribute to complexity of the texts in the resolutions and how they are used for a certain function. In this sense, English language teachers may also take part of training the students how to segment longer sentences to facilitate better understanding. Once they have the skills, reading long legal texts may no longer be that tiring and confusing.

Pragmatic analysis of the resolution makes way to an observation that resolutions have elements that should be understood in the perspective of the context and other parts of the text. Discourse markers, prediction categories and syllogism are not only useful and applicable in the legal discourse but in everyday conversations as well. The practice in determining the functions of the discourse markers and finding out how prediction categories can help will have value since the application of this knowledge can be wider in scope.

Types of discourse such as informative, interpretative and persuasive-argumentative are employed in the resolution. These types of discourse are not new since they are used and practiced in different situations both in speaking and writing. Hence, identifying these types of discourse from any text and narrative must also be practiced not to master the legal language but to ensure understanding and practice about their uses.

Similarly, in syllogism, one would be able to find out what arguments and decisions are based on sound premises and if the interpretation is in accordance to the premises. This means, when one reads the resolution, one knows the message of the entire text and may be able to check if the arguments are based on sound reasoning. In daily conversation, syllogism is also helpful so one can detect arguments that are defective. This can be taught to develop logical reasoning and improve critical reasoning.

The structure of the resolution includes the resolution data, introduction, arguments of the parties' involved, analysis of the prosecutor, decision/conclusion, termination phrase and inclusion data. The results show that there are important elements in the resolutions and when some are missed, it will not serve the purpose. The resolution

narrates, interprets and presents decisions; hence, these elements project coherence in legal writing. These are elements that laymen and non-legal practitioners would be able to identify when reading a resolution.

Implication for Future Research

My study was only centered on linguistic analysis with further interpretations on the functions of those linguistic elements I have found marked in the resolutions. Legal analysis was not part of the scope of the study hence, I would like to recommend that future studies on resolutions would go into investigating the arguments presented in the resolutions in order to find out what reasons are usually pointed out why complaints are dismissed or filed in the court.

Another study may be centered on various moves in the introduction part of the resolution. This may be investigated along with the linguistic features that are used in the introduction and the functions of these features identified. The output of this study make prosecutors realize how effective their introductions are in the resolutions.

In line with VAWC case, that language constitute verbal abuse would also be worth exploring. This would inform men what words should be kept unspoken or else they will be charged with the violation of RA 9262.

The VAWC law can also be studied in terms of descriptive words that are used to describe the offenses so men will be charged with the violation of RA 9262. These descriptive words may have been interpreted differently and studying them could better facilitate understanding.

If researchers are interested they can use the findings of this study as a guide in finding out the linguistics features of other legal texts.

Concluding Remarks

Beyond the research questions posed in the beginning of the study is the aim to investigate on the least studied area of linguistics – the forensic linguistics. My study was centered on the analyses of the linguistic features found in the resolutions and how language is used to convey the message of the prosecutor. Resolutions on Cases of Violation Against Women and Children (VAWC) has become my point of interest since I am more curious about how the prosecutor decides for the dismissal and filing of the compliant in the court. However, pursuing to such kind of study entails thorough legal analysis and a background in law could better help. Hence, I am confined with the present study.

The use of content analysis in language research may have freed me from strenuous ethical reviews unlike those with human subjects; however, this kind of research has caused me many sleepless nights. At first, I was befuddled   on what linguistic features to look for and when the submission of the full paper has pressured me a lot due to tight deadline, I came across the idea of doing genre analysis. But this was not materialized. I focused on the first plan and got confused again on what linguistic elements to look for since I want to focus on the arguments presented in both types of resolution.

However, with the list of linguistic features I have found distinct in the resolution, distinct in the functions they serve, I realized that language indeed has wide applications in law and should be explored more. There are numerous legal texts other than resolutions, and there are more features in the resolutions which can be studied. Hence, future researchers on language may check on my recommendations for future research.

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