



Peer-Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Syntactic Patterns in Local Government Executive Orders: Evidence from Philippine English
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript tackles an important area of applied linguistics by examination of syntactic choices in municipal documents. The author attempts to link grammatical structures to World Englishes and institutional authority. However, the current iteration suffers from severe theoretical disconnects, methodological limitations, and syntactic errors of its own. My feedback follows below.

<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
Title The title specifies syntactic patterns and evidence from Philippine English. It lacks precision. Local Government Executive Orders is an excessively broad category. Specify the exact locale or scope to provide readers immediate context. Provide a clear temporal scope in the title since the data relies exclusively on documents from the year 2025.
Abstract The abstract introduces Koopman and World Englishes. However, it fails to explicitly state the actual methodology beyond a qualitative descriptive design. The sample size of five digitally archived orders from 2025 is too small for broad claims about Philippine English. The abstract



claims the study demonstrates structural conservatism and endonormative stabilization. Five documents cannot prove macro level stabilization of a national language variety. Temper these claims.

Introduction

The author cites Executive Order No. 335 from 1988 and the 1987 Constitution Article XIV. The transition from general constitutional mandates to the specific syntactic analysis of local documents feels abrupt. The author references a study by Dimaculangan and Sarmiento from 2025 about thesis grammar. The connection between student theses and legal executive orders is weak. Justify this comparison or remove it entirely. Furthermore, the introduction claims humans unconsciously construct linguistic input based on Koopman. This cognitive perspective clashes with the sociolinguistic World Englishes framework introduced earlier. Reconcile this theoretical clash.

Objectives

The objectives match the research questions exactly. This repetition wastes space. Consolidate these sections. Objective three seeks to examine how patterns reflect documented features of Philippine English. This objective assumes the features found in five documents automatically represent the entire national variety, a methodological leap that requires careful moderation.

Research Questions

The three research questions are identical in function to the objectives. Delete this section to avoid redundancy and streamline the manuscript.

Review of Related Literature

The literature review jumps sporadically between impersonality in science by Livant 2010, nominalization by Qianbo 2017, and syntactic theory by Valin 2001. The Livant 2010 source focuses on scientific articles, not legal texts. The author must synthesize literature specifically related to legal or bureaucratic discourse, not just hard sciences. The section on Philippine English cites Collins, Yao, and Borlongan from 2014 about relative clauses and verbs. Connect these historical observations directly to the anticipated syntax of local government documents.

Methodology

The author justifies a qualitative descriptive design with a citation from Sandelowski 2000. The reliance on only five documents from 2025 is a critical flaw. A sample of five texts is insufficient to establish syntactic patterns of a recognized World English variety. The methodology mentions a substitution test and a constituency test. Provide the exact rubrics or analytical procedures used. Table 1 outlines a syntactic analysis instrument. Elaborate on who validated this instrument. A robust peer review requires proof of methodological rigor to pass quality assurance benchmarks.

Analysis and Discussion

In section 4.1, the author points out a uniform reliance on declarative clause structures. This observation is elementary. Executive orders are inherently declarative. Dig deeper into the syntactic trees. Section 4.1.1 highlights modal verbs and passive auxiliaries like must be conducted and shall be charged. The analysis here is highly superficial. The author identifies the passive voice but fails to provide a deep structural diagram of the verb phrases. Section 4.1.2 discusses Extended Determiner Phrases. The examples provided, such as All costs pertaining to the operation of the EMB, lack rigorous syntactic breakdowns. Break these noun phrases down into their ultimate constituents to prove the Koopman framework application. Section 4.2 claims that passivization omits the agent to create an objective requirement. This is standard English grammar, not a unique feature of Philippine English. Distinguish between standard legal English and localized Philippine syntax. Section 4.3.2 introduces the concept of the repeal clause as an archaic legalism. A repeal clause is a standard legal necessity



worldwide, not a localized syntactic template unique to this region. Reevaluate this claim heavily.

Conclusion

The conclusion merely restates the findings from the analysis sections. Elevate this section. Explain the broader implications of these syntactic choices for public administration and legal clarity. Address the limitations of the five document sample size. Propose concrete future research directions to expand the corpus.

References

The reference list contains only seven sources. Seven references are completely inadequate. The literature lacks recent studies on forensic linguistics and legal syntax published between 2020 and 2025. Expand the bibliography to reflect current global scholarship.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
☐	Accept the manuscript for publication.
☐	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
☐	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript has an interesting focus and the linguistic data can have value, especially because LGU documents are not commonly examined in Philippine English research.
<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
The claim about most frequently used syntactic structures is not supported by the analysis presented. The first research question directly asks what syntactic structures are most frequently used, but the methodology does not give the total number of sentences, clauses, verb phrases, passive constructions, modal verbs, or other units coded. The results then use terms such as uniform reliance, prominent, frequent, and recurring without showing any actual frequency distribution or denominator. This is a major mismatch between the research question and the evidence. At present, the paper can describe structures that were observed, but it cannot establish which structure is most frequent. This affects the validity of the first major finding and also several conclusions built from it.
The actual documentary corpus is not sufficiently traceable, making the analysis difficult to verify. The methodology only states that five Executive Orders issued in 2025 were selected because they were digitally archived, but the paper does not clearly identify the five LGUs, Executive Order numbers, titles, issuing authorities, document links, number of sentences per document, or which examples came from which specific order. This becomes very serious because the analysis depends entirely on selected sentence excerpts. A reader cannot independently check whether the examples are representative of each document, whether other contrary constructions exist in the same orders, or whether the claimed patterns truly



occur across all five sources. The data source itself remains almost invisible, so the entire analysis becomes difficult to audit and reproduce.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.			
Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			