

Plain English: On the acceptability of plain language in Philippine legal texts

Isabel Pefianco Martin

Ateneo de Manila University

mmartin@ateneo.edu

This presentation reports on a study about the acceptability of “Plain English” among Philippine legal professionals. While campaigns for simplified language continue to gain significant headway in many countries, the Philippine legal system persists in producing written documents that readers claim to be unintelligible to them. Legal professionals believe that such writing is necessary because of the nature of legal discourse. Others argue, however, that complex legal language may be avoided without sacrificing the legal substance of the written texts. This study on the acceptability of “Plain English” among legal professionals hopes to provide valuable insights that would ultimately inform legal education in the country.