

Modern Tendencies and Characteristics of Legal Writing in English for Specific Purposes

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Abstract

The article with the title "Modern tendencies and characteristics of Legal Writing in English for Specific Purposes" deals with the study of legal writing and its teaching in professional linguistic contexts, where writing is considered as a means of communication between two communities that have different languages, but share the same knowledge or expertise. The article describes some key features of legal writing as part of Writing for Specific Purposes. The historical background gives a hint on how the legal writing was considered at its beginnings, how it evolved and how it was taught through years. It also discusses the controversial issue whether writing should be taught together with the legal reasoning or not, taking into consideration the fact that the process of writing itself for most students is considered to be of a more complicated nature than the process of the legal reasoning. The characteristics of legal writing describe the specificities and the intricacies that the legal jargon implies, the archaic words, wordiness and the awkward sentence structure. Modern tendencies place emphasis on another aspect of legal writing nowadays; that of writing in Plain English which implies a breaking of the cycle of the complicated writing toward a simplified way of writing, through a tiring and long process of writing where the reader is at the center of it. This means that every writing has been produced having the reader in mind implying that the general public that does not have a legal background should be able to understand it.

Keywords: Legal writing, professional context, Plain English, Legalese, Writing for Specific Purposes.

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