

Legal English in Practice

Course Design for the International Legal English Certificate (ILEC)

TransLegal

Overview

- Introduction
- ILEC promotes good teaching practice
- How lawyers use English
 - major false preconceptions
 - what lawyers do
- Course design
- Classroom tips
- Materials

ILEC promotes good teaching practice

- Provides the language, skills and topics
- Lawyers need
- Is inherently motivating
- Lots of support material available
- Further training sessions under development
- Puts the student at the centre

How lawyers use English

Major misconceptions

- lawyers spend a lot of time in court
- lawyers can rely on translation and interpreters
- legal English is tied to Anglo-American legal systems
- lawyers need an in-depth knowledge of Anglo-American legal systems

What do lawyers do?

- first, ask “What is the context? What do business people do”
- ➔ **if business people do it, then lawyers have to be proficient in the English needed to assist them.**
- lawyers prepare and analyse documents for business clients
- lawyers work to avoid disputes (and try to settle out of court when they do occur)

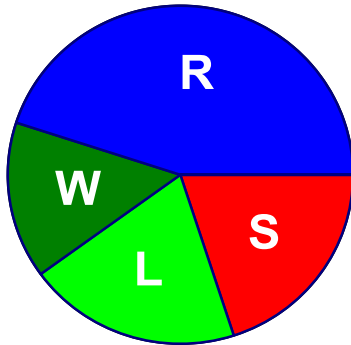
What is Legal English?

- Law is language!
- Legal English is different from General English or Business English
 - Technical vocabulary
 - (Cross-discipline) technical vocabulary
 - Semi-technical vocabulary
- Generally: legal English has these common attributes:
 - very long sentences
 - archaic expressions
 - providing for all possible contingencies
 - greater tendency to use formulaic expressions
- Nuances and shades of meaning can have huge consequences
- Language teachers can teach these nuances and shades

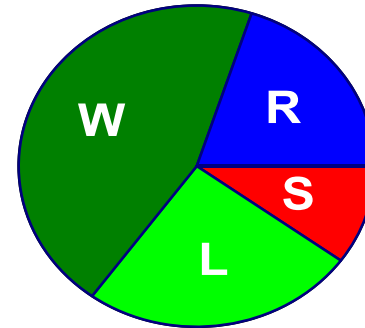
English in Practice

- lawyers use English in a wide variety of tasks, depending on:
 - their position/seniority in the firm
 - their area of practice
 - the size of the firm
 - the importance of the client/case

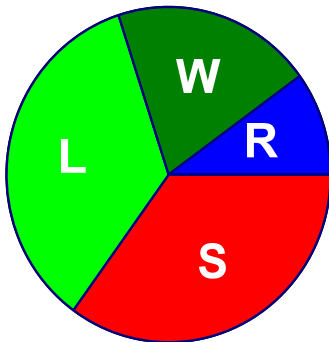
English in Practice



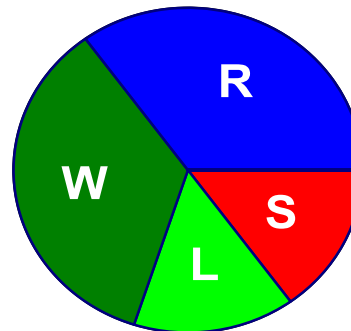
Senior
Competition
Lawyer



Junior
Competition
Lawyer



Senior Corporate
Lawyer



Junior Corporate
Lawyer

English in Practice

What do lawyers read?

- correspondence
- memoranda
- contracts and contract clauses
- statutes and case law
- law-related articles
- regulatory filings
- corporate documentation

www.LegalEnglishTest.org

English in Practice

What do lawyers write?

- letters/email
- memoranda
- contracts & contract Clauses
- legal opinions
- court filings & legal memoranda (briefs)
- regulatory filings
- corporate documentation

English in Practice

In what situations do lawyers speak and listen?

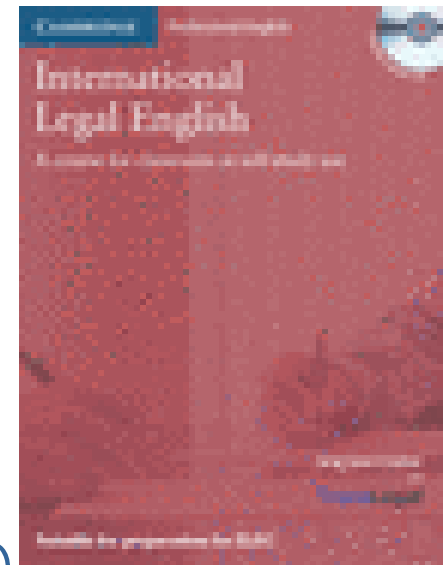
- firm meetings
- client meetings
- seminars and conferences
- negotiations
- informal settings
- phone conversations
- judicial proceedings

Classroom Tips

- make your role clear from the start
- think about what the students need
- prepare thoroughly for each class
- be armed
- be confident
- learn from the students
- watch the ego

Materials

- “International Legal English” course book (CUP)
- “International Legal English” teacher’s book (CUP)
- “Success with ILEC” Summertown publishing
- “Oxford Handbook of Legal Correspondence” (OUP)
- “Professional English in Use: Law” (CUP)
- “Market Leader Intermediate: Business Law” (Longman)
- www.LegalEnglishTest.org
- www.translegal.com – Legal English Teaching Support (LETS)
 - Law summaries
 - Practice summaries
 - Sample documents
 - FAQ
 - Important teaching resources and research links



Thank You!