

7 Legalese and Legal Latin

Legalese

is a term given to the special technical terminology in a legal document.

Technical terminology

is the specialised vocabulary of a profession or of some other activity of a group of people.

TT = jargon = terms of art

= formal

= informal (slang)

The problems of using jargon

English legalese in the past = Law French

Typical features:

1. long and complex sentences with many clauses
2. Latin expressions, expressions of Latin origin
3. expressions with different meaning in legal context
4. use of archaic, old-fashioned words
5. use of Law French with no meaning for non-lawyers
6. formal style

7.

Tendencies in current English

the legal historic terms are to be replaced by simple English

plaintiff --- claimant

writ --- claim form

pleading --- statement of case

give leave --- give permission

Be careful ! „False Friends“

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalese>

<http://www.worldwidewords.org/articles/probono.htm>