What Do Law Students Really Need?  
On Tertiary Legal English Courses. 

Dr Aleksandra Łuczak 
Foreign Languages Centre 
Kozminski University, Warsaw

They come unprepared to the study of law, since it is qualitatively different from the study of other subjects. 
S.I. Strong (2003:2) How to Write Law Essays and Exams. LexisNexis

I. Polish Law Students

1. do not speak English as their native language
2. do not yet possess a vast knowledge of law (either common or civil)
3. will have to sit British legal skills exams
4. will not work/study within English law environment
5. are not sure of their target needs
6. they want a good job in Poland
7. will read/debate/write/give advice within Polish or EU law context
8. are not motivated to study Business or General English
9. want LEGAL English as soon as possible

II. Legal English Course Stakeholders

Students

School authorities

Law firms (future employers)

Teachers

III. Legal English Needs

Present students’ needs, wishes, lacks, likes and dislikes, weaknesses

Study skills (EAP)

Overall studies curriculum

International Legal English Certificates: TOLES, ILEC

Target needs: What do law firms need?

IV. Summary

Polish students need:

1. Great academic qualifications
2. Practical skills:
   • excellent English (accuracy: prepositions, collocations, articles, countable/uncountable nouns)
   • plain English drafting
   • knowledge of common law concepts
3. Commercial awareness to be able to give advice to foreigners
4. Communicative skills in the local (Polish) context

V. Recommendations. Developing Communicative Competence – an Example of Procedures

Translate an indemnity clause from a commercial contract, please.

What is wrong with the sentence: “your e-mail from 25 May”?

Please, advise a client on how to start a business in Poland...

References


