Developing legal writing materials for English second language learners: Problems and perspectives.

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Abstract

Although in recent years we have seen a significant increase in the development of resources for legal writing, very few of them are targeted at second language learners. This article reviews currently available legal writing books in terms of their suitability for use in EALP writing contexts. It concludes that, although certain aspects of the available books can be useful, most are generally unsuitable for use in such contexts. Three approaches are then offered for developing legal writing materials that will meet the criteria of suitability. First, the materials can be customized in various ways to meet the needs of second language users studying law in the medium of English. Second, the materials can adopt a more language and discourse-based approach. Third, rather than packaging materials exclusively in book form, they can be made available as a computer-mediated resource bank. This article derives from ongoing work in a 3-year, university-

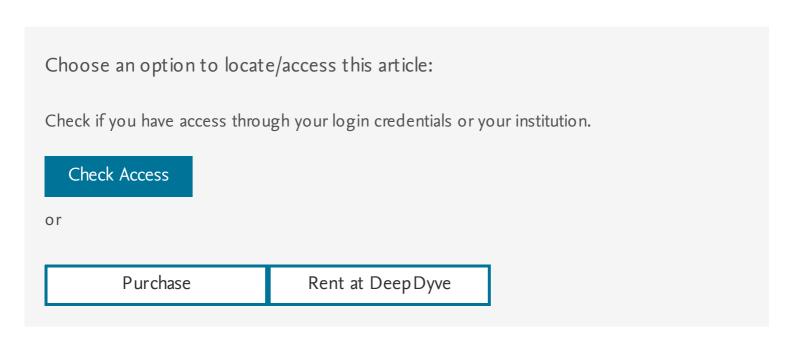
funded project entitled "Improving Legal English: Quality Measures for Programme Development and Evaluationâ€, based at the City University of Hong Kong.



Keywords

Recommended articles

ESP; EALP; Law; Legal English; Legal writing; Legal writing materials



Christopher N. Candlin is Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics and Director of the Centre for English Language Education at the City University of Hong Kong. He was previously Executive Director of the Australian National Centre for English Language Teaching & Research and Professor of Linguistics at Macquarie University, Sydney. He has managed a range of research projects in ESP, especially in workplace and professional communication, and published widely in these and other areas of Applied Linguistics. He is currently President of the International Association of Applied Linguistics.

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Vijay Bhatia a professor at City University of Hong Kong, is well known for his work on *ESP*, and *Genre Analysis* of language use in legal, academic, business and newspaper settings. His book "Analysing Genre – Language Use in Professional Settings†is widely used internationally. He is on the editorial boards of *English for Specific*

Purposes and World Englishes.

Christian H. Jensen is a Senior Research Associate on the project "Improving Legal English: Quality Measures for Programme Development and Evaluation†at City University of Hong Kong. He was previously a visiting professor in the Institute of Foreign Language Studies in the Law School at Korea University. He is a lawyer who is licensed and has practiced in California.

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