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LANGUAGE OF LEGAL AND BUSINESS ENGLISH DOCUMENTATION: STYLE AND FEATURES

Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of the essential features of such important branches of documentation as business and legal texts, which initiate processes of mutual immersion, capable of covering these valuable spheres of social life of most developing countries. The authors emphasize that the structure of a business or legal document concerns its internal organization. Like any construction, the compilation of legal and business documents must comply with certain rules, the most important of which is the division of the document into separate sections. The authors identify key structural requirements for the content of a business or legal document, which should include: unity and internal logic in the text of the document; consistent placement of legal material in the text of the document; ensuring convenience when using the document. In addition, the authors highlight key features of business and legal documentation: the use of common words with specialized meanings, the emergence of absolute synonyms, unusual word order, the use of atypical pronoun forms, the use of pronouns, the formation of nouns using the endings -er, -or, -ee, the widespread

use of phrasal verbs, precision and concreteness, borrowings from Latin and French, the present tense instead of the future, the active voice. In conclusion, the authors argue that the study of legislative and business texts reveals unique features of legal language, shaped by the historical influences of Latin, French, and Old English.

These documents demonstrate a highly structured style, precise terminology, specialized vocabulary, and formal grammatical constructions, all designed to ensure clarity, precision, and the avoidance of ambiguity.

Despite the difficulties in drafting legislative and business acts, they offer valuable material for philological analysis, which will be the subject of further research by the authors.

Keywords: business documentation, legal documentation, business English, features of the English language, practice of English language, style of legal and business documentation.

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МОВА АНГЛОМОВНОЇ ТА ЮРИДИЧНОЇ ТА БІЗНЕС ДОКУМЕНТАЦІЇ: СТИЛЬ ТА ОСОБЛИВОСТІ

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню суттєвих особливостей таких важливих галузей документації, як ділові та юридичні тексти, які започатковують процеси взаємозанурення, здатні охопити ці цінні сфери соціального життя більшості країн, що розвиваються.

Автори наголошують, що структура ділового або юридичного документа стосується його внутрішньої організації. Як і будь-яка конструкція, складання юридичних та бізнес-документів повинно відповідати певним правилам, найважливішим з яких є поділ документа на окремі розділи. Автори визначають ключові структурні вимоги до змісту ділового або юридичного документа, які повинні включати: єдність та внутрішню логіку в тексті документа; послідовне розміщення юридичного матеріалу в тексті документа; забезпечення зручності під час використання документа. Крім того, автори підкреслюють ключові моменти ділової та юридичної документації: використання загальновживаних слів зі спеціалізованими значеннями, поява абсолютних синонімів, незвичайний порядок слів, використання нетипових займенникових форм, використання займенників, утворення іменників за допомогою закінчень -er, -or, -ee, поширене вживання фразових дієслів, точність та конкретність, запозичення з латини та французької мови, теперішній час замість майбутнього, активний стан. На завершення автори стверджують, що вивчення законодавчих та ділових текстів виявляє унікальні риси юридичної мови, сформовані історичними впливами латини, французької та староанглійської мов. Ці документи демонструють високоструктурований стиль, точну термінологію, спеціалізовану лексику та формальні граматичні конструкції, що розроблено для забезпечення ясності, точності та уникнення двозначності.

Незважаючи на труднощі у складанні законодавчих та ділових актів, вони пропонують цінний матеріал для філологічного аналізу, який буде предметом подальших досліджень авторів.

Ключові слова: ділова документація, юридична документація, ділова англійська мова, особливості англійської мови, практика англійської мови, стиль юридичної та бізнес документації.

Introduction. In the current context of crisis, it is **extremely important** to ensure the coherent formulation and execution of judicial, administrative, business and legal activities. The effectiveness of legislative and judicial activities depends on how well participants adhere to established norms and requirements for drafting normative legal acts, which possess their own structure, style, and linguistic specificity. The analysis of the structure and stylistic features of legal and business language as an independent functional style holds indisputable value for linguists. The style of business and legal writing exhibits particular features, functions, linguistic devices, and a structured system of functional types and genre-situational styles. Specifically, the legal style includes several sub-styles applied in drafting different kinds of documents. Each form of legal writing—such as a legal opinion, a bill, or a contract draft—possesses its own distinct

features and methods of composition. Consequently, drafting a specific type of business and legal document demands adherence to particular requirements concerning its structure and style of presentation.

Materials and methods

Disscussion

Outstanding linguists (V. Artemenko, N. Artikutsa, V. Baranov, N. Vlasenko, M.L. Davydova, V. Kovalsky and others) devoted their studies of style to the specificity of business and legal language. P. Tiersma in the work “Legal Language” compared the business and legal documentatuion, underlying that legal texts are more complicated [7]. L.M.Solan (The Language of Judges) and B. Garner (Legal Writing in Plain Ebglish) analysed the claritry and precision of legal and business documents [7], which was suppored by the Ukrainian scientist R.Stefanchuk.

R. O. Stefanchuk in his work "Legal Writing" and others analyzes in detail the official-business style of legal texts, in particular laws, regulatory acts, diplomatic and administrative documents, business documentation [9]. The author makes stress on the informative and instructional function of business and legal documentation. In our research we support the most contemporary theories which are based on the works of Mary Ellen Guffey [5], who described business and legal communication as a socially conscious and functionally determined, internally cohesive set of methods for choosing, using, and combining linguistic means within a specific public or national language, corresponding to other forms of expression that fulfill different functions in the speech practices of a given community. (Business Communication: Process and Product).

That’s why **as the goal** of our article we can state the representation of the key points and requirements which must be take into accout by the personalities who deal with the spere of business of legal communication. The relevance of the scientific study comprises the description of the similarities which occur and emerge within modern digitalized world which tends to be rapid and fast developing.

According to John M. Swales, business and legal documentation play an essential role in professional communication, administration, and management. It ensures accuracy, transparency, and legal reliability in all business interactions. Peculriaties of the legal documentation also include a variety of linguistic means that are specific to this particular sphere of social life and somewhat differ from other varieties of the same language in fundamental aspects – phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

We support the ideas of P. Tiersma, who emphasizes that style is not merely a linguistic term but also a key cultural concept which is able to immerse within the certain spheres. Therefore, they style of business and legal documents reflects

not only the needs of individuals but also the cultural awareness of society within the framework of the. It is determined by specific topics or communication contexts (typical speech situations) and is defined by a particular set of linguistic means.

A business or legal text can be viewed as a communicative-cognitive unit, which is highly relevant in today's world. From this perspective, legal documents convey communicative relationships that emerge from the normative-legal interpretation of various texts, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal forms. According to Yu. Stepanov, a functional style is distinguished by a precise logical structure.

The structure of a business or legal document refers to its internal organization. Similar to any construction, the drafting of legal documents must follow specific rules, the most important of which is dividing the document into distinct sections. The key structural requirements for the content of a business or legal document include: unity and internal logic in the text of the document; consistent placement of legal material in the text of the document; ensuring convenience when using the document. The templates of the business letter could be found via the web.

https://templatearchive.com/business-letter/

The analysis of the templates, business documents with the open access, we have created the Word Cloud for the Business documentation (Fig, 1.).



Fig. 1. Word Cloud for the Business documentation

We'd like to represent some features which characterize business documentation: the use of formal and neutral language. precise and objective vocabulary along with refusal from emotional expressions and colloquial words. The tone of the document remains impersonal and professional. For example, the sentence "*We regret to inform you that your invitation has been declined*" sounds formal and respectful, while "*Sorry, guys, we really can't accept your invitation*"

would be too personal. The next feature is the standardization because the business documents should comprise strict templates which are proposed by the international business and organisations. The business letter starts with a heading with the information about the company, the date, a salutation e.g. "*Dear Mr. Drake*". After the main message you should write the closing remark "*Sincerely*," the writer's name and position.

The next feature is the clarity and accuracy which could be described as the fundamental chracteristics of business documentation. Each sentence must be formulated strictly and supported by facts. For example, the phrase "*The payment for this should be prepared as soon as it is possible*" may cause misunderstanding, while "*The payment must be made by March 10, 2026*" is understandable and clear.

Also we must take into account the standardized expressions that convey typical intentions, plans or instructions. Phrases such as "*We are writing to inform you that…*", "*Please find attached…", "The touch base woill be" and "According to the agreement signed on…", "the win-win solution"* are widely used because they save time and maintain a professional tone. These clichés are not a sign of bad language skills but the linguistic requirements and demands in formal communication.

The logical structure is crucial for the business documentation because the information must be logical, characterized by the clear sequence, along with the linking words such as "*therefore, consequently, or in accordance with" which will allow the reader* to grasp the message correctly. For example, "*The firm will update the volume of the production next month. Consequently, additional employees will be required*" demonstrates logical structure.

The next characteristics is connected with the grammar aspects, such such as the

passive constructions which make stress on the action more than the person who is responsible for it. For examplee, "The agreement was approved by the 1st department" sounds more official than "We have approved the contract."

We tend to consider the business documents as those which have also the legal force. Many of them, such as agreements, contracts, or reports, could be the official records and can be implemented as evidence in administrative or legal processes.

Various business documents realise specific purposes e.g. organizational documents comprise instructions and policies; administrative documents have orders, memos; informational documents involve business letters, reports and emails; contractual documents comprise invoices and agreements.

In conclusion, business documentation is a crucial part of modern digitalized life. It ensures legal protection, reflects the professionalism. The

formal style, standardization, clarity, objectivity and accuracy of business documentation differs it from other types of documentation.

All legal documents consist of at least three parts: introductory, main, and final. However, the structure may vary depending on the type of document. Let us focus on the most characteristic types of legal structures. Legal acts, in particular, have a complex organization. The structure of a law includes the following mandatory elements: Name, Preamble, Chapthers and parts of chapters, Final provisions. Besides, the text of the legal document. Let's analyse the structure of the Law, which can include paragraphs, the text of an international treaty, transitional provisions, applications, sections, subsections, chapters, the text of the official translation of an international treaty. The Code may consist of general and special parts. The general part of the Code may contain: provisions, the effect of which extends to the entire sphere of relations regulated by the code; tasks, principles, definition of concepts, main institutions; special legal provisions (presumptions, prejudices); other general normative provisions. The subordinate legal act must contain: paragraphs, preamble, titles, names.

Additional elements of a subordinate regulatory legal act may be: transitional provisions; - items, sub-items; - sections; - applications; the text of an international treaty of the country (approval, acceptance, resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers, Parliament, Counsil, etc), the source of official publication of the act to which changes are made, with the exception of acts that, according to the law, are not subject to publication.

The Court Decision typically consists of four main elements: motivational, and resolutive introductory, descriptive. The structure of a Lawsuit includes some elements such as the subject, basis, and content. The subject of the Claim refers to the part that contains the legal demands of both the plaintiff and the defendant, reflecting a request to the court to carry out specific actions which are oriented on the protection of a violated right. The Claim must include the name of the court to which it is submitted; the names of the plaintiff and defendant, ; a list of attached documents; the plaintiff's na,e, along with the postal code, the value of the claim in property-related cases, address, and contact information; the content of the claims; a statement of circumstances supporting the claims; evidence for each circumstance, including any grounds for exemption from proofthe signature of the plaintiff or representative, the date of filing.

The style of legislative and regulatory acts is a sub-style of the official business style. Some scholars argue that the style of legislative acts should be considered separately; however, most researchers follow the general characteristics outlined in the Draft Law "On Regulatory Acts." Accordingly, drafters of such documents must avoid mottos, appeals, abbreviations, expressive language, idioms, metaphors, synonyms, hyperbole, and similar stylistic devices.

Words in foreign languages should not be used if an equivalent exists in Ukrainian. Additionally, personal thoughts, considerations, opinions, or attitudes are not permitted in the text of normative legal or legislative documents. [1, p. 66].

Instead, it is recommended to use established legal-language formulas, clericalisms, and standard legal expressions. Legal phrases are mandatory, and their proportion should be significant compared to the general vocabulary used in legislative and normative acts. The legal variety of language is largely based on traditional English; however, the language of law retains several distinctive features, primarily specialized terminology, sentence structure, and punctuation.

The development of legal language in Britain was influenced by various peoples who conquered English lands. Initially, legal matters were conducted in the Celtic language. Following the Roman conquest, Britain adopted Roman legal traditions, and Latin was used in legal contexts. After the Romans left, the Anglo-Saxon tribes brought their own legal traditions, which were expressed in a Germanic dialect (Old English). With the arrival of the Normans, Anglo-Norman French became the official language of jurisprudence. Each stage of this historical development left its mark on English legal language. Among its most notable features is the extensive use of specialized terminology and professional jargon. Like other fields, jurisprudence employs terms that are often unclear to the general public. For example, *waiver* refers to the relinquishment of a right or a document effecting such relinquishment; *restraint of trade* denotes restrictions on professional activity or freedom to conduct business; and *promissory estoppel* signifies the loss of the right to object based on a prior promise.

In his works, V. Kovalsky emphasizes that the style of these documents is marked by official-business vocabulary and the absence of rhetorical questions. The use of scientific and technical vocabulary, however, is permissible.

Legal English has roots in both Latin and French. For approximately 600 years, French served as the official language of England, even though the majority of the population spoke English. French was primarily used in legal proceedings, while Latin was employed for official records. Many Latin terms are still retained in legal documents, such as *de facto* (in fact, in reality), *de jure* (legally, according to the law), *status quo* (the existing state of affairs), *de novo* (anew, from the beginning), and *a priori* (self-evident, obvious).

With the death of his brother, he became the de facto heir to the throne. - In fact, with the death of his brother, he became the heir to the throne.

French words have also taken root, such as a *trespass (assault*), a parole (parole from prison) and a mortgage (mortgage). As well as French suffixes like -ment (an agreement - agreement), -ance (acceptance - acceptance, approval), -or (a contractor - contractor).

We have an agreement that the $20,000 mortgage will be paid in full by 2027.

We have an agreement that the $20,000 debt will be paid in full by the end of 2028.

In addition to French and Latin, English legal terminology also incorporates words from Old English. For example, *hereby (thus), hereinafter (hereinafter), it (because of this), whereas (taking into account [in the preambles of official documents]), hereto (to this [document]). I hereby declare that the information is correct.*

The analysis of the templates, legal documents with the open access, we have created the Word Cloud for the Legal documentation(Fig. 1.).

https://legaltemplates.net/

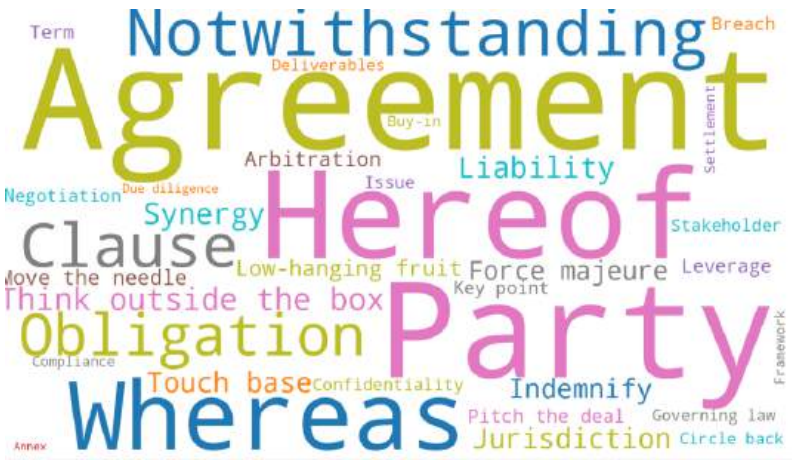


Fig. 1. Word Cloud for the Legal documentation

We'd like to underline certain similarities which could be considered as the immersive context of legal and business documentation because both of them have a formal structure shaped by its content, the logical precision of reasoning and the level of applied frame technique. Proper organization of the text must ensure that the document is clear, complete, logically consistent, coherent, and easy to understand.

Within business and legal documentatiom, ordinary words often acquire specific legal interpretations. For example, *prefer* generally means "to prefer," but in legal contexts it can be translated as "to declare" (such as a protest or demand) or as "to grant an advantage" or "a preemptive right."

The emergence of absolute synonyms. The influence of various languages has resulted in the use of double and triple synonyms in legal or business practice, where different terms carry the same meaning and have equal legal force. For example, *terms and conditions* simply means "conditions," and *perform and discharge* refers to "fulfill (an obligation)."

Unusual word order. Complex structures and difficult-to-read sentences in legaland business English are inherited from French. For example: "*Subject to and in accordance with the terms and conditions hereof, the owner agrees to sell to the distributor, and the distributor agrees to buy from the owner, the Product at the prices set forth in Schedule 'A' hereto.*"

The use of atypical pronominal forms. Certain pronominal forms, such as "*the said* or *the same"*, are used specifically in legal or business texts. They do not replace nouns but function as adjectives or participles. For example, "*the said building"* means "*the above mentioned building*."

The use of pronouns. Words such as "*hereof, it"*, and "*hereinafter"* are uncommon in everyday speech but frequently used in legal language and sometimes is used in business english. They help avoid repetition of names and entire phrases.

Formation of nouns using the endings -er, -or, -ee. In legal texts, paired designations such as *employer–employee* and *lessor–lessee* are commonly employed to denote corresponding roles or relationships.

Phrasal verbs are commonly used in legal or business language to describe actions and procedures (*contracts,* write off *debts,* carry out obligations, *bring about* ***changes,*** *set aside* ***agreements, or*** *take over* ***responsibilities).***

In general business and legal texts often contain very **long sentences**, sometimes with an entire paragraph consisting of a single sentence. As a result, readers may lose track of the meaning by the end and need to reread the passage several times to fully understand it. For example: the warning from "Booking.com"

"By making a reservation through us with service providers, you accept and agree to the action of cancellation and refund policy of that certain service provider, and to any additional (delivery) terms and conditions of the service providers that may apply to your reservation or during your stay, including for services rendered and/or products offered by the service providers" =

"By making a booking through our application, you agree to the respective provider's cancellation and refund policies".

Accuracy and specificity

Lawyers avoid ornate language and metaphorical expressions, steering clear of double meanings and ambiguities, and strive to convey information in an emotionally neutral manner. eatures of Business Documentation

Present instead of future

A notable feature of legal documents is that actions required to take place in the future are often expressed in the present tense.

Incorrect: The mortgagee will agree to lend the sum of $20,000.

Correct: The mortgagee agrees to lend the sum of $20,000. The mortgagee agrees to lend the sum of $20,000.

Active Voice

The active voice is generally preferred over the passive voice in legal writing, as it conveys certainty and allows for more concise phrasing. This is important because lawyers value precision. Compare:

Passive voice: *It was decided by the court that mistakes were made by the defender.*

Active voice: *The court decided that the defender made mistakes. — The Arbitration Board decided that the supervisory authority had made mistakes.*

In active voice, the subject performs the action, as in "the supervisor made" or "the supervisory authority allowed it." In passive voice, the subject is affected by the action, as in "mistakes were made." The passive is formed using the appropriate tense of *to be* plus the past participle of the main verb.

The law is adopted.

The law has been passed.

The law was adopted in 2024.

The law will be adopted in 2025.

The order will have been passed by the next week

In conclusion we'd like to mention that the study of legislative and business texts reveals the unique features of legal language, shaped by historical influences from Latin, French, and Old English. These documents demonstrate a highly structured style, precise terminology, specialized vocabulary, and formal grammatical constructions, all designed to ensure clarity, accuracy, and the avoidance of ambiguity. The use of active voice, standard legal expressions, and consistent stylistic conventions highlights the functional and communicative purpose of legal writing.

Despite the challenges in drafting legislative and regulatory acts, they offer valuable material for philological analysis, which will be the focus of our research.

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