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## ***TEACHING LEGAL ENGLISH TO UNDERGRADUATES: CHALLENGES FACED BY LEGAL ENGLISH LECTURERS IN A UNIVERSITY LEGAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME***

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Legal English, among all the other areas of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become one of the most complicated type of English due to the difficult terminology, differences in law systems and the difficulty in interpreting and describing legal concepts, terms and legal procedures. Majority of Sri Lankan university Legal English lecturers find teaching Legal English challenging as they are used to teach General English or English for Academic Purposes. Also, they do not have sufficient content knowledge of legal professions and law fields to satisfy the learner and other stakeholder needs. The aim of this study was to find out the challenges faced by five Legal English lecturers in a university Legal English programme. Semi structured interviews were conducted to identify the lecturers' views on the nature of learning and teaching, training and support given by the employer, confidence in teaching, professional identity and visions for the future. The results of this study include the efforts that the lecturers make to create learning opportunities to the law undergraduates to use legal concepts and vocabulary that would enable the learners to be competent in both the learning and target situations in law. Most of the lecturers consider their learners as subject specialists from whom they learn the content knowledge of law. The lecturers consider themselves as negotiators: the lecturers are more familiar with teaching English for Academic Purposes whereas the law undergraduates are familiar with Legal English. The lecturers develop themselves by self-studies on reading Legal English text books and much support should be given by the authority of the university. This study suggests that the lecturers should be given adequate knowledge of Sri Lankan law and Legal English teaching methodology that would uplift their identities as lawyer- linguists.

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