

WHAT MAKES THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN EU LEGAL TEXTS SPECIAL?



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Research Purpose. Language as a powerful communication tool for understanding and showcasing specific features is also important for spreading scientific knowledge, especially regarding global environmental issues. Understanding the language used in policy documents is essential for both academics and improving accessibility to environmental information. The main goal of this research was to identify what typical language features (lexical and syntactic) are used in the document texts about environmental issues and what purpose they serve.

Research Methodology. For the analysis, it was necessary to find and sort out the theoretical background of specialised language and its features. The theoretical insights are referred mainly to the ones described by Gotti (2005), Ratkaine Jablonkai (2020), Fainman and Tokar (2018), Nagy (2015). This analysis helped to have a common understanding of specialised language and what features are identified when it is used in a professional environment. After analysis, the 19 examples were found in the documents on the <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/> website. These examples have been searched on <https://eur-lex.europa.eu> website because it is an official open archive for all European Union documents, and it provides documents and directives for every topic that is discussed in the EU parliament. The main goal of this research was to identify what typical language features, more specifically lexical and syntactic, are used in texts about environmental issues and what purpose they serve. The examples were examined as specific groups. These groups were specialised terminology, lexical productivity, sentence complexity, lexical density, and use of passive.

Results and Findings. The 19 examples were found in the documents on <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/> website. The examples were examined as specific groups, using descriptive linguistic analysis. These groups were specialised terminology, conciseness, use of passive, lexical density, and sentence complexity. The results of the research showed that of 19 examples 10 were lexical features and 9 were syntactic ones. 25 items of specialised terminology, 9 of conciseness, 4 were with the use of passive, 4 of lexical density, and 6 of sentence complexity. This suggests that language patterns in environmental policy documents emphasize the usage of specialised vocabulary and complex syntax. This research shows what typical linguistic features are used to communicate complex messages on environmental issues, and understanding these features helps to increase engagement with environmental issues.

Practical implications. The research is relevant for students studying communication and the English language, as well as for the public as it helps them better understand the language used in scientific discussions and environmental discourses.

Keywords: environmental discourse, linguistic features, specialised English, specialised language