

# Correcting Legal Language: Tutor-led Interaction and the Reproduction of Linguistic Norms in Law School

*Alma Bešić\**

## Abstract

Mastery of legal language is essential for aspiring legal professionals, and this process of linguistic socialization begins in law school. While much research has focused on lectures and doctrinal content, less attention has been paid to how law students acquire legal language norms through interactive settings. This study examines how academic tutors at a Dutch law school contribute to students' language socialization during small-group tutorial sessions. Drawing on participant observations and semi-structured interviews, the analysis reveals how tutors correct or reinforce students' language use, and how these correction practices reflect differing language ideologies – ranging from the valorization of traditional legal terminology to the acceptance of more accessible alternatives. These practices shape not only students' understanding of legal concepts but also their acquisition of linguistic capital and sense of professional identity. The study highlights how language norms are reproduced or challenged in early legal education and considers the implications of this for inclusion and access within the legal profession. The study contributes to broader discussions about legal language ideology, including the accessibility concerns raised by the plain language movement.

## Keywords

legal language, law school, legal education, legal socialisation, legal knowledge, linguistic capital, plain language movement, legalese

Submitted: 09.05.2025, accepted: 14.09.2025, published online: 12.11.2025

---

\*Alma Bešić: PhD Candidate at Tilburg Law School, Tilburg University, the Netherlands; [a.besic@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:a.besic@tilburguniversity.edu). A draft version of this article was presented in Utrecht (VSR Annual Conference, the Netherlands 18 January 2024). The author would like to thank the organizing committee and participants for their fruitful comments. The author is especially grateful for the helpful comments of Nina Holvast and Willem-Jan Kortleven. The author would also like to thank Maaïke Geuens and Sofia Ranchordás for their comments. The author is indebted to the students, tutors and other academic staff who agreed to participate in the study. Finally, the author would like to thank the editor and the two anonymous referees for their comments and constructive criticism. All faults remain mine.

## 1. Introduction

To become a lawyer, one must first complete a legal education. In Dutch law schools, as elsewhere, students learn the meaning of the law by dissecting judgments, interpreting case law, and engaging with other legal texts. This process requires proficiency not only in general Dutch but also in the specific discursive norms of legal language. Dutch law schools address this challenge by requiring students to pass general language tests.<sup>1</sup> However, these tests assess students' general Dutch language skills, while overlooking the specific discursive norms that law students must master in order to read, write and talk as legal professionals.

This issue has drawn attention in other national contexts as well. Scholars have noted that learning to think and talk like a lawyer is not a neutral process; rather, learning legal systems and their language is culturally filtered (Mertz, 2007: 221). Other researchers have examined how legal education contributes to elite professional socialization (Granfield & Koenig, 1992; Schleef, 2005) and the exclusionary effects of legal language (Philips, 1982). These insights are relevant to broader debates about legal language and accessibility (Adler, 2012). While this study does not directly evaluate the plain language movement, it uses it as a conceptual backdrop to examine how legal language norms are reinforced or challenged in early classroom interaction.

The process by which students acquire legal language occurs through what is known as language socialization. Law students are socialized not only through lectures (Mertz, 2007), but also through other settings such as internships within law firm and student networks (Philips, 1982: 183–184; Holvast & Kortleven, 2021: 81).

Prior research has mainly focused on how academic staff teach students to read, write, and talk in ways that align with legal norms (Mertz, 2007). Law school is typically the first site where students encounter legal doctrine and begin to engage with the meaning of law, making it a central space for the acquisition of legal language. Here, they learn what it means to 'talk like a lawyer'. Language plays a crucial role in this socialization process: students as novices are socialized implicitly or explicitly into and through the use of language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

In the Netherlands, courts have begun shifting toward more comprehensible language in judgments, signaling a partial departure from traditional legal language which often referred to as *legalese*.<sup>2</sup> This development aligns with the broader plain language movement, which has gained ground in several Western countries and seeks to reduce the communicative distance between legal institutions and the public, acknowledging

---

<sup>1</sup> See e.g., *Taaltoets is serieuze zaak* (2010). *Erasmus Magazine*. Available at [erasmusmagazine.nl/2010/01/07/taaltoets-is-serieuze-zaak/](https://erasmusmagazine.nl/2010/01/07/taaltoets-is-serieuze-zaak/) (accessed 18 Sep 2025).

<sup>2</sup> In this article, I use the terms *legalese* and *traditional legal language* interchangeably to refer to stylized, often archaic legal language forms that are widely used in Dutch legal texts and legal education. While *plain legal language* typically refers to efforts to increase accessibility through simplified phrasing, this study does not treat the two as a strict binary, but rather as points on a spectrum of formal indexing.

that legalese risks excluding outsiders (Posner, 1998: 3–6; De Groot-van Leeuwen, 2011: 257). At the same time, critics argue that simplification could compromise the precision of legal concepts.<sup>3</sup> Despite this tension, courts in the Netherlands have continued to engage with plain language principles through annual initiatives and institutional reflection.<sup>4</sup>

Mastering legal language, however, remains an essential requirement for full participation in the legal profession. Van der Raad (2015: 172–173, 182) demonstrates that success in the legal field depends on acquiring more than legal terminology; it involves mastering language norms tied to social prestige and class-based forms of linguistic capital. Drawing on Bourdieu (1991), one can understand this as a process in which aspiring lawyers must gain access to legitimate forms of expression that are not neutral, but socially and symbolically loaded, or in Bourdieu's terms they must gain linguistic capital: the ability to produce the 'right' kind of language in the 'right' institutional settings. Legal language, in this view, is not a neutral tool but a marker of legitimacy, expertise, and belonging within the legal field.

Focusing on a first-year doctrinal course at Erasmus School of Law, this study investigates the specific role of academic tutors in shaping legal language norms through their correction practices during tutorials. These sessions offer a unique window into how novices are introduced to legal language through peer-guided discussions. The study focuses on a first-year doctrinal course, where students encounter legal concepts for the first time. The central question in this article is: What do tutors teach students, explicitly or implicitly, about the use of legal language?

While situated within broader debates about legal language and accessibility, this study does not evaluate the plain language movement or its implementation in legal education. Instead, the article investigates how legal language is corrected and ideologically framed by tutors in law school tutorials, and how this shapes students' acquisition of linguistic capital and sense of professional identity.

Although the findings are not generalizable beyond this specific institutional and national context, the qualitative approach allows for a detailed, situated analysis of how language norms are enacted, reinforced, or occasionally challenged in early legal education. In doing so, the article contributes to wider discussions of language socialization, linguistic capital, and professional identity formation in legal education.

---

<sup>3</sup> Verburg 2020, but see also the wider discussion by Aiken, Ray J. 1959. Let's not oversimplify legal language. *Rocky Mtn. L. Rev.*, 32, 358–366.

<sup>4</sup> See more on the initiatives by the Dutch judiciary on: [rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact/Organisatie/Raad-voor-de-rechtspraak/Nieuws/Paginas/De-uitspraak-20-de-rechtspraak-en-klare-taal.aspx](https://rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact/Organisatie/Raad-voor-de-rechtspraak/Nieuws/Paginas/De-uitspraak-20-de-rechtspraak-en-klare-taal.aspx) (accessed 28 Sep 2025).

## 2. Language Socialization in Law Schools

Learning the law requires more than acquiring legal knowledge. It also involves adopting the ways of talking, writing, and reasoning that define legal professionalism. In this sense, legal education is not merely the transfer of doctrinal content, but a broader process of language socialization. As Sapir noted, language is a great force of socialization (Sapir, 1933: 159). Language socialization refers to the process in which novices are socialized into the use of language as well as socialization through language itself (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986: 163). This dual perspective encompasses the view that the process of language socialization and the process of language acquisition are interconnected (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986: 167–168). Through language, novices are not only socialized into a certain culture or worldview of a community that uses language as a tool, but also the understandings within the community regarding what is considered appropriate language behavior, which means acquiring social competence by acquiring the appropriate use of language.

Language socialization continues throughout the life course (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011: 17). People experience secondary language socialization when they enter a new environment, such as the workplace.<sup>5</sup> In these environments, individuals become novices again, learning language norms. In educational and professional settings, language has a prominent role in the construction of expert identities by distinguishing between professional and unprofessional ways of speaking (Jacobs-Huey, 2007).

Socialization practices can take many forms: novices can be given reminders, they can be called out, warned, given suggestions, being prompted, given praise, being shamed or teased (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011: 13). Explicit correction, such as through “corrective feedback routines” (Friedman, 2010: 347–348), is relatively rare. More often, language socialization occurs implicitly, through repeated participation in social interactions. These corrections may occur before, during, or after a deviation from expected language use, often without being overtly marked as such (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017: 7).

At its core, language socialization is relational: language is acquired through interaction with others who are already fluent and culturally competent. These socializers guide appropriate language use while also modeling the worldviews, values, and identities associated with a given community (Duff, 2010: 172). However, the process is not strictly top-down. It has been shown to be bidirectional: novices can shape the language practices of socializers, such as when children of immigrant parents help their parents navigate unfamiliar linguistic environments (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002: 346). In educational contexts, instructors, students, and peers may jointly serve as agents of one another’s socialization (Duff, 2010: 186).

The language socialization of law students has been explored in several U.S.-based studies. In her research at the University of Arizona College of Law, Philips (1982)

---

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Duff, 2008: 257.

observed how legal jargon is taught in classrooms and how law school discourse contributes to the inaccessibility of legal language. She argues that legal education often preserves the impenetrability of legal discourse, creating barriers to access, both to legal knowledge and to broader forms of cultural capital (Philips, 1982: 198). Through this process, students learn to use the “right” kind of legal language, which is closely tied to specific forms of legal thinking. Mertz (2007) analyzed how students learn “to think, write and read like a lawyer” throughout the process of language socialization. Drawing on ethnographic data from first-year contracts courses, she found that students are taught to “think, write, and read like a lawyer” in ways that prioritize abstraction, form, and doctrinal logic over morality, context, or social complexity (Mertz, 2007: 133–134). Legal language, she argues, allows for the equal treatment of individuals based on their legal categorization, even when their real-life power or social positions differ (Mertz, 2007: 213–214). However, this abstraction can obscure the moral and contextual dimensions of legal conflicts. The legal-linguistic filter, then, is not neutral but it is ideologically loaded (Mertz, 2007: 221). Early research in the Dutch context suggests similar tendencies: Bruinsma (2008) notes that aspects of morality and context are often downplayed in Dutch legal education. More recently, Kortleven, Holvast, and Besic (2024) have explored how reflective language socialization, where instructors support critical engagement with legal discourse, could foster a more inclusive learning environment.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, these practices can be understood through the lens of language ideology (Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity, 1998). Language ideologies are not simply individual preferences; they are socially situated frameworks that reflect and reinforce power relations. In legal education, they shape which forms of speech are judged, corrected or dismissed, often aligning with broader hierarchies of knowledge, class and authority.

These ideologies intersect with what Bourdieu (1991) called linguistic capital, or the symbolic value attached to particular ways of speaking within a given field. In Bourdieu’s view, professional language norms function as a form of cultural capital: they are learned, legitimized, and unequally distributed. Legal language, especially in its more formal or traditional forms, can be exclusionary (Philips, 1982). Those who master it gain access to professional legitimacy; those who are not able to conform may experience exclusion. Importantly, this process is often invisible: legal language is typically presented as objective and neutral, even when it encodes specific social values and power relations.

From this perspective, the question is not simply whether students are taught to use legal language “correctly”, but rather what counts as ‘correct’ legal language, who defines it, and what ideologies those definitions reflect.



### 3. Setting and Methodology

In the Netherlands, law schools generally offer a combination of classes in which students are relatively passive listeners and classes in which students are more active and engage with legal problems through case studies. At Erasmus School of Law, tutorial group sessions fall into the second category and incorporate problem-based learning. In these small-group classes, students collaboratively discuss and solve legal problems, with one student acting as discussion leader. The tutor supervises this process and may intervene as needed. Tutors typically take on a guiding rather than instructive role, but this role is fluid and varies depending on both the tutor's individual teaching approach and the composition of the group.

Because of their informal and interactive character, tutorials offer a unique opportunity to observe how legal language is corrected, reinforced, or reformulated in real time. Unlike lectures given by professors, which are often monologic and offer limited opportunities for feedback, tutorials allow for spontaneous feedback and provide insight into how legal discourse is modeled and corrected. Tutors were therefore selected because they lead small-group discussions where real-time correction of language use is visible. Tutorials, unlike lectures, enable observation of peer interaction and horizontal correction, revealing socialization practices that are often overlooked in top-down models of legal education. These dynamics make the language socialization of law students at Erasmus School of Law a productive subject of inquiry, one that is not limited to tutor groups alone, but usefully illustrated through them.

To gain insight into this topic, this study adopts a qualitative research approach. Data collection and data analysis took place between January and June 2021. First, participant observations were conducted during the final three sessions of the first-year course *Introduction to Civil Law*, specifically in its property law component. This course was selected because it introduces first-year students to core doctrinal concepts in property law, such as owner, holder, and possessor and the like. First-year students were chosen because they are at an early stage of language socialization and are less likely to have fully internalized legal terminology.

Three tutorial meetings were observed for each of four distinct student groups, all conducted via Zoom, totaling approximately 24 hours of material. In total, five tutors were observed, one of whom served as a substitute during one session. Group sizes ranged from six to eleven students, although attendance varied between meetings. An observation checklist was created based on insights from the literature (discussed in the theoretical framework), but the design allowed for flexibility in capturing emergent themes. During a second round of observations, transcripts were manually coded using Microsoft Word.

Following the observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five tutors and the course coordinator. These interviews aimed to provide insight into tutors'

perceptions of their educational role, particularly with respect to language use and correction. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including consent for recording the interviews. An informed consent form detailed the study's purpose and data usage. The interviews were conducted via Zoom, and a topic list was prepared in advance, drawing from both relevant literature and themes that arose during observation. However, flexibility was maintained during the interviews to allow for further exploration of emergent topics. After transcription, the interview data were coded using Atlas.ti.

Importantly, this specific course does not include written assignments for tutor assessment, nor is written feedback part of the tutorial structure.<sup>6</sup> As such, the tutorial sessions constitute the primary setting in which students receive correction or feedback on their language use. While this is a limitation in terms of scope, it reflects the actual structure of the course and not a methodological omission.

Notably, as a researcher, it is important to become aware of the implications that might arise from positionality during qualitative research; this awareness is referred to as 'reflexivity' and it is an ongoing part of the research process (Berger, 2015: 220).

While observing the Zoom tutorials, I kept my microphone and camera off and refrained from speaking or intervening, which likely minimized the influence of my presence. Although this cannot be definitively confirmed, there is little indication that the behavior of students or tutors was significantly affected. Some tutors expressed curiosity about the research, typically when students were in breakout rooms. In such cases, I would briefly explain that I would be happy to share results after the study concluded.

All data, including tutorial transcripts and interviews, were originally in Dutch. All translations presented in this article are my own; where necessary, clarifications have been added to enhance understanding of the quoted material.

### 3.1. Methodological Implications

This study offers an in-depth look at how language socialization unfolds in tutor-led classroom interaction. While the dataset is small, it provides a close analysis of the language used and the language ideologies reflected in legal education. The primary aim is to investigate how academic instructors, tutors in this case, contribute to the language socialization of law students.

Each tutorial session was observed twice, and insights from these observations informed the development of the interview topic list. This recursive approach helped align the two data sources and enhance the internal validity of the findings. Methodological

---

<sup>6</sup> See socialization studies that do include written feedback: Moraitis, Peter & Murphy, Helen (2013); Hafner, Christoph. A. & Yu, Cindy (2020).

triangulation, through the combined use of two qualitative data sources being participant observation and interviews, served to strengthen the reliability of the study by offering multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon. This study employed abductive reasoning (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014), an iterative process that moves between empirical findings and theoretical insights to generate a nuanced understanding of correction practices and their ideological dimensions. All interview participants were invited to comment on the interview transcript, which enhanced the reliability of the interview findings (Bryman, 2016: 518).

## 4. The Differences Between Legalese and Plain Legal Language

Legal language, or “legalese”, has been widely studied and debated in both legal scholarship and applied contexts (Adler, 2012). In his seminal study of English legal language, Mellinkoff (1963) provided a systematic treatment of the nature and origins, making nine categorizations: frequently used words with specialized legal meanings, rare words from old and middle English, Latin words and phrases, French words not in the general vocabulary, terms of art, professional argot, formal expressions, words with flexible meanings, and attempts at extreme precision (Mellinkoff, 1963: 11–12). These features continue to shape the perception of legal language as highly specialized and inaccessible.

Many of these characteristics also apply to Dutch legal language. For instance, Dutch legal texts similarly rely on older lexical items whose meanings are tied to a specific legal conceptual framework (Verburg, 2020).<sup>7</sup> Other characteristics of language in legal professions include meanings that differ from everyday usage, the use of overly precise definitions, lengthy sentences, long run-ups to sentences, passive voice, and the use of double negatives. This characterization of legalese resonates with the findings of Van der Raad (2015) explaining that these linguistic forms do not simply reflect a technical need for precision but are also embedded in a particular tradition and in what is perceived as professional language.

By contrast, plain legal language is typically associated with shorter sentences, familiar vocabulary, clearer structure, and explicit definitions of legal terms (Bruggeman, 2020).<sup>8</sup> While proponents argue that this approach improves accessibility, it has faced sustained criticism. Some legal professionals and institutions have expressed concerns that simplifying language leads to what has been called “legal impurities”, potentially

---

<sup>7</sup> Examples of these Dutch words are ‘zien op’, ‘betreffen’, ‘derhalve’, ‘reeds’ and ‘onderhavig’.

<sup>8</sup> See also [rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact/Organisatie/Raad-voor-de-rechtspraak/Nieuws/Paginas/De-uitspraak-20-de-rechtspraak-en-klare-taal.aspx](https://rechtspraak.nl/Organisatie-en-contact/Organisatie/Raad-voor-de-rechtspraak/Nieuws/Paginas/De-uitspraak-20-de-rechtspraak-en-klare-taal.aspx) (accessed 18 Sep 2015).



undermining the conceptual clarity and precision needed in legal contexts.<sup>9</sup> However, scholars such as Verburg (2020: 214) challenge this claim, arguing that legal language is not inherently precise and that simplification does not necessarily compromise legal meaning. Importantly, these debates are not unique to the Netherlands and echo similar tensions observed in other Western jurisdictions.<sup>10</sup>

Yet beyond the question of communicative efficacy lies a deeper tension: the extent to which legalese functions as a symbol of professional identity and epistemic authority. The appreciation for this has been challenged before by several scholars and has been critiqued as a form of symbolic capital, reinforcing professional privilege and social exclusion (Larson, 1979; Abel, 2003; Posner, 1998: 2–6). While plain legal language may not always deliver on its promise of accessibility or clarity,<sup>11</sup> its normative value lies in its potential to question dominant language norms and open space for alternative communicative practices.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the distinction between legalese and plain language is not merely stylistic but ideological. Both forms of legal language are embedded in broader power structures that shape who is seen as a legitimate member of the legal community and who is not.

## 4.1. Language Norms in Legal Education

Law schools play a central role in defining and reproducing linguistic norms within the legal profession. Bourdieu (1991) offers a valuable framework for understanding this dynamic: the educational system functions as a “scholastic market”, governed by the guardians of legitimate language, where linguistic capital is unevenly distributed and systematically reinforced:

As a linguistic market strictly subject to the verdicts of the guardians of legitimate culture, the educational market is strictly dominated by the linguistic products of the dominant class and tends to sanction the pre-existing differences in capital [...] The initial disparities therefore tend to be reproduced since then length of inculcation tends to vary with its efficiency: those least inclined and least able to accept and adopt the language of the school are also those exposed for the shortest time to this language and to educational monitoring, correction and sanction (Bourdieu, 1991: 62).

What students learn, then, is not simply how to express legal reasoning, but how to do so in a way that is recognized as legitimate within the legal field. The language that is

---

<sup>9</sup> As an example, Bruggeman refers to a court case in which the judge kept referring to ‘municipality’, instead of its ‘administrative bodies’.

<sup>10</sup> Hager, 1959 and Aiken, 1959.

<sup>11</sup> Whether the use of plain language in fact leads to more inclusion regarding its communication with its citizens, is another discussion (see van der Bruggen, 2020; Jones & Williams, 2017; Assy, 2011; Turfler, 2015).

taught and expected in law school communicates more than meaning. It signals familiarity with the values, expectations, and status markers of the profession.

Studying how law schools present and prioritize particular norms of legal language helps us understand how inclusion and exclusion can take shape within legal education. It also highlights how language becomes a gatekeeping mechanism, structuring access to the profession not only through knowledge but through the perceived legitimacy of one's expression. Therefore, language in legal education is not simply a pedagogical matter,<sup>12</sup> but a site where professional legitimacy is produced and contested. From Bourdieu's perspective, the legal language taught in law schools is not value-neutral: it reproduces existing social hierarchies by rewarding those already familiar with more elite modes of expression. In this sense, legal linguistic capital is a double-edged sword. While it allows for access to the profession for those who master it, it simultaneously excludes those unfamiliar with these codes.

## 5. Correcting Usage of Legal Language in Tutor Groups

In tutorial group sessions, students engage in structured discussions of legal material, typically led by a peer acting as discussion leader.<sup>13</sup> A tutor – usually a recent graduate or junior academic staff member – guides the discussion to ensure comprehensive coverage of the legal content. These sessions center on fictional case studies resolved using legal doctrine, including legislation, case law, and relevant literature. Within these doctrinal discussions, correct use that shows understanding of legal concepts is essential. This becomes especially evident when students use legal terminology incorrectly and the tutor intervenes, as illustrated in the following example:

Student: Not in good faith [...]

Tutor: Bad faith is also allowed.

Student: Oh right, bad faith.

Here, “not in good faith” does not equate to “bad faith” in legal doctrine, and the tutor's correction highlights the importance of precise terminology. The student acknowledges the correction by repeating the correct term. This example illustrates a substantive correction, one that is necessary to maintain doctrinal accuracy.

A similar intervention occurred in another group, where the distinction between “having” something and “having possession” was at stake:

---

<sup>12</sup> See Friedman, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> This article is based on the same observational and interview data collected for the author's master's thesis and which were also used in a co-authored publication: Kortleven, Holvast & Bešić (2024). *Legal Ethics*. However, the present article develops an independent analysis focused on language correction and linguistic norm transmission, which were not addressed in the earlier study.

Tutor: What has that possessor become?

Student: Holder, so then he has sold it, but then, so to speak, he still has it.

Tutor: Has possession of it.

Again, the tutor's correction was grounded in legal doctrinal distinctions. The incorrect usage of everyday language ("has") was replaced with the doctrinally precise "has possession", underscoring how misused terms can have unintended legal implications. These examples show how error correction, when related to doctrinal meaning, serves a pedagogical function that ensures students understand the substantive content of the law.

However, not all interventions were triggered by doctrinal misstatements. In some cases, tutors engaged with students' use of legal language even when the usage did not affect accuracy in the legal doctrinal sense.

## 5.1. Appreciation of Plain Language

In several tutor groups, legalese – especially Latin terms – was not enforced. Some tutors even encouraged students to use simpler alternatives, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

Student: And we say, yeah I didn't quite understand that: detention instead of holdership. And when applied, we call someone a detentor. But I find that detention and detentor are a bit vague.

Tutor: We'll just say holdership, guys. It's exactly the same. Holder is fine. Student: Yes, detention, that is the Latin term for it, because in the law it does not exactly say holdership. But you can continue using holdership.

Here, the tutor signals that the Latin-derived terms are not required, affirming the legitimacy of plainer alternatives. In doing so, the tutor lowers the valorization of traditional terminology and demystifies legal language, without compromising legal accuracy. This reflects a more accessible language ideology. These views were echoed in interviews with tutors. One tutor described legal language as potentially exclusionary, noting:

I think it [legal language] is important, but it leads to a select group of people [...] And I also think that letters from authorities of the municipality or tax authorities, etcetera, should rather be written in 'Jip and Janneke' language,<sup>14</sup> so that everyone understands it, and not that someone thinks how weird it is written down.

Although this tutor did not reference the plain language movement explicitly, their comments reflect shared concerns about accessibility in legal communication. The language ideology here is implicit: legal language is seen not only as a professional tool but also as a potential barrier to public understanding. What tutors here seem to promote, is a more flexible stance towards the use of plain alternatives while preserving legal accuracy.

---

<sup>14</sup> Jip and Janneke language has been widely used to express very simple language, referring to the Dutch children's books 'Jip en Janneke'.

## 5.2. Various Ways of Demystifying Legal Language

In other groups, tutors demystified legal language but did so in different ways. For instance, when a student confused “detentor” with “tenor”, the tutor responded with humor:

Student: Then, in the book it said something like, detenor or something. Yes, the other is immediate detenor, and the tenant of the house is indirect detenor.

Tutor: Well, you are not a tenor if you keep something, (*tutor laughs*), because that has something to do with music, but a detentor. Alright.

In this instance, the student pronounced ‘detentor’, meaning a holder as in the case of property law, as ‘the tenor’ (as in the vocal register between ‘baritone’ and alto or ‘countertenor’). Here, the tutor corrects the mispronunciation while playfully pointing out the mistake. In this way, legal language is not presented as a gatekeeping tool but rather as learnable concepts that can be gradually mastered. Despite their doubts about the necessity of complex legal terminology (as expressed in interviews), the tutor nonetheless positioned themselves as a facilitator of students’ acquisition of legal language:

If they use a term or a word wrong, then I sometimes have to say yes, this word is not right. I help them. Of course I don’t teach them to write annotations or what’s that called, one of those other legal things, write a declaration. So in that sense I don’t teach them to write good legal documents, but I do teach them the legal language, how to use that, which steps do you have to take. So I think I’m just one step before all that.

In another group, when a student struggled with the Latin term “constitutum possessorium”, the tutor acknowledged the difficulty and suggested a widely used abbreviation:

Student: In sub a, the constit-... titum... posse-...-se..sorium.

Discussion leader: Yeah.

Student: Yes, they are very difficult words.

[...]

Tutor: And the first sub a, you can also just say, delivery c.p. I think that will be said that way in the lecture, so those are indeed difficult Latin words, so you can also just say delivery c.p.

The tutor validates the student’s struggle and offers an alternative that is both institutionally recognized and more manageable. These examples illustrate how tutors, through humor or empathy, can ease students’ engagement with legal terminology, highlighting that legal language is not always taken for granted as natural or necessary.

## 5.3. High Valorization of Legal Language

In contrast, other tutors placed greater value on legalese. For these tutors, such language was not only doctrinally useful but also professionally desirable. They emphasized its ability to enable precise formulation and convey nuance, as one tutor explained:

I think a lot of people underestimate how important it is, to formulate with care. [...] Because we are here to keep things clear. And well, that also has a kind of pride attached to it, that you know how it is, and that you like to do it completely right.

In these groups, tutors were attentive to fine distinctions in phrasing, word choice, and pronunciation:

**Excerpt 1:**

Student: Only that undo thing, I don't quite get it, the article [...].

Tutor: [...]. Hey, the obligation to undo, where is it indeed.

**Excerpt 2:**

Student: Then you can say that you can claim breach of contract again.

Tutor: Right, then you can make a claim based on breach of contract.

**Excerpt 3:**

Discussion leader: I think that that extin...extin...

Tutor: Extinctive prescription.

In each case, the tutor intervened immediately to model a more precise or formally correct legal phrasing. These corrections may appear minor, but they contribute to a broader discourse in which legal language is treated as a marker of professional competence (Larson, 1979: 263; Abel, 2003; Posner, 1998: 2–6). This ideological stance also surfaced in interviews, where tutors emphasized clarity and form as a matter of professional identity.

At times, correction focused less on doctrinal accuracy than on stylistic fidelity to legalese. In the following example, a student was corrected not for factual inaccuracy but for using a more plain expression instead of a more traditional legal term:

Student: No compensation was expected.

Tutor: It is no different than no *quid pro quo*, because it is no *quid pro quo*.

Student: Right.

The tutor's insistence on using "*quid pro quo*", a traditional Latin phrase from legal texts, reflects a preference for legalese, even when the more accessible phrase ("no compensation") conveys the same substantive idea. This contrasts with the earlier examples, where corrections were tied to doctrinal meaning. Here, the correction reinforces a normative preference for legalese.

These examples illustrate that language correction in tutorials serves multiple functions: some corrections ensure doctrinal precision, others reflect preferences for traditional language forms. Together, they form part of a broader process of socialization into legal discourse, one in which students not only learn legal content but also the linguistic forms that mark professional legitimacy.



## 5.4. Implications of Error Corrections within Tutor Groups

The different types of error correction observed in the tutor groups align with practices identified in language socialization literature (Friedman, 2010: 347–348; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011: 13),<sup>15</sup> reflecting broader language ideologies embedded within legal education. These interventions do not merely serve pedagogical ends; rather, they shape students' perceptions of what constitutes 'proper' legal language and, by extension, legitimate participation in the legal field.

As demonstrated in Section 4.1., certain corrections addressed doctrinal misunderstandings: instances where a student's phrasing altered the legal meaning of a concept. Such corrections were typically straightforward, with students often adopting the corrected terminology immediately. These moments can be seen as core components of legal training, in which the precise use of legal language is essential for mastering doctrinal content.

However, many corrections could not be explained solely in terms of doctrinal clarity. In these cases, the tutor corrected phrasing that did not change the legal substance but diverged from traditional or expected legal terminology, for instance, replacing "no compensation was expected" with "there is no *quid pro quo*". Such interventions suggest a normative dimension, in which language correction serves to promote certain norms of legal language, even when no conceptual confusion arises from the student's original formulation.

Because student perspectives were not collected, it remains unclear how students interpret or internalize correction practices. How students perceive these 'corrections' thus remains open to debate. The extent to which tutor corrections are taken up by students may depend not only on their doctrinal or linguistic content, but also how the tutor is perceived in terms of linguistic authority. Notably, students often immediately repeated or adopted corrected phrasing during the same session, particularly in response to corrections involving doctrinal terminology.<sup>16</sup> This was most clearly observed in corrections involving the use of doctrinal concepts, such as extinctive prescription. In language socialization studies, uptakes of correction are important to recognize because they show that students have clearly immediately adapted to their 'language errors'. This was most clearly seen when, for instance, the tutor interrupted a student stuttering on the word 'extinctive prescription', following which the student and the others kept using the term correctly.

By correcting students, tutors show how lawyers should talk, socializing them into using legal language. These corrections do not necessarily originate from pedagogical

---

<sup>15</sup> I could not verify whether students had recognized and took up the corrections later, except when students would react to the correction almost instantly. For that reason, I mostly referred to 'corrections' rather than 'language socialization practices', although it is possible that every correction had been picked up and internalized by the students.

<sup>16</sup> Uptake here refers to immediate repetition, incorporation of corrected terms into subsequent discussion, or visible alignment with the tutor's phrasing.

notions (Friedman, 2010) but reflect a broader cultural background of language ideology. By enforcing specific phrasing, tutors implicitly communicate which linguistic forms are valued in the legal field, and thus worthy of replication.

Some corrections occurred in more implicit forms, aligning with what Ochs and Schieffelin (2011: 13) describe as the subtler end of the language socialization spectrum. While explicit corrections include overt interruptions and reformulations, implicit socialization may occur through praise, repetition, or modeling. One such case involved a tutor praising a student for speaking “very nicely”, and then repeating the student’s complex legal phrasing. This implicitly valorized legalese and reinforced it as the desired standard.

This variation in explicitness raises broader questions about consistency in the learning experience. Some students, exposed to more accessible or demystified legal language, may feel more comfortable participating, while others, subjected to stricter enforcement of legalese, may internalize a more rigid and normative view of acceptable speech. This uneven terrain of socialization can shape students’ relationships to legal discourse in divergent ways. For some, correction may be experienced as supportive scaffolding; for others, it may act as a gatekeeping mechanism, potentially resulting in self-exclusion (Bourdieu, 1991: 62).

In sum, the practice of error correction within tutor groups carries layered implications. It signals the linguistic expectations of the legal profession, shapes students’ self-monitoring of language, and reinforces ideological boundaries between plain and legalese. While often subtle or incidental, these corrections are central to how students learn to “sound like a lawyer”, a process that involves not only mastering legal knowledge but also performing a culturally appropriate legal identity.

## 6. Other Agents: Joint Responsibility in Socialization

Language socialization in legal education is often conceptualized as a top-down process, where instructors or tutors correct and model appropriate language use for students. However, this study found that tutorials also provide a space for horizontal socialization, in which students themselves act as agents of one another’s linguistic development. This aspect is often underexplored in literature, which tends to focus on professors or formal instruction settings (e.g., Philips, 1982; Mertz, 2007). The interactive nature of tutorial sessions makes them uniquely suited for observing this collaborative aspect of language learning, which is less visible in lecture-based formats. Language socialization in the context of legal education is not limited to the tutor-student dynamic. While tutors often take the lead in correcting and modeling appropriate language use, students also play an active role in reinforcing linguistic norms. Indeed, as Duff (2010:

186) argues, language socialization is a process of “joint responsibility”, in which instructors, students, and peers all act as agents in one another’s socialization.

This joint responsibility was evident in the interactions within tutorial groups. Throughout the sessions, students were seen ‘correcting’ one another, asking clarifying questions, seeking reassurance with phrases like “I’m not sure if I phrased that answer right”, or affirming a peer’s formulation when it demonstrated correct use of legal jargon. In this way, students actively participated in reinforcing group language norms and served as socializing agents for one another. Peer corrections reflect not only emerging competence but also the internalization of language ideologies, with students aligning themselves with the linguistic expectations of the legal community.

Moreover, socialization can operate in a bottom-up direction. In one tutor group, a student repeatedly used the phrase “in principle” when making legal arguments. Although the tutor did not use this phrase during the first two sessions, it was gradually adopted by other students. By the final session, the tutor consistently used “in principle” as well. While this may be coincidental, the tutor later described the student in question as someone likely to succeed in the legal profession, particularly due to their precise and careful use of language. This suggests that tutors, too, may be influenced by student language use, especially when it aligns with professional ideals. It reinforces the idea that socialization is not purely top-down, rather, novices can also shape the linguistic practices of those in authority (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986: 165; Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002: 346).

An additional factor that emerged from the interview data is the importance of perceived authority in shaping how students respond to corrections. When asked whether the tutors corrected on the use of Dutch language mistakes in general, one denied and explained: “maybe in the beginning they see you as an authoritative figure, and as time goes by and later on in the studies they don’t anymore”. This suggests that students may initially accept corrections more readily due to the tutor’s perceived institutional authority, which gradually diminishes as students become more confident and autonomous in their legal education. Such temporal shifts in authority could influence the effectiveness and reception of language socialization practices over time.

These examples demonstrate that language socialization in legal education is dynamic and interactional. Students are not merely passive recipients of institutional norms; they actively shape the linguistic landscape of the tutorial space.

## 7. Thinking Through Legal Language

As Mertz said: “it is through language that social problems are translated into legal issues” (Mertz 2007: 12). While this article primarily investigates how tutors correct stu-

dents' legal language and enforce linguistic norms, observations revealed that some tutors also encouraged students to engage with the normative and societal dimensions of legal rules. These moments suggest that tutors do more than facilitate linguistic correctness. They also influence how students learn to reason and argue within a legal frame.

In several tutorials, students spontaneously raised questions about fairness, justice, or the implications of legal provisions. In one discussion on the restitution of stolen goods, a student questioned whether it was just to require someone who had unknowingly purchased an item in good faith to return it without compensation. The tutor responded by highlighting the moral complexity of the situation and praised students for empathizing with both the buyer and the original owner. In another group, a tutor prompted students to consider how long someone should possess land before a claim to ownership might feel legitimate. Rather than citing codified thresholds, students proposed normative timeframes and debated what would be socially reasonable.

These examples show that language correction is not always limited to formal phrasing. In these settings, tutors corrected and guided student contributions in ways that also opened up space for discussion of the purpose, fairness, or societal stakes of legal rules. As Ochs and Schieffelin (1986: 163) argue, language socialization occurs both into language and through language, as a vehicle for learning to think within a given institutional framework.

This contrasts with Mertz's (2007) influential study, which observed that legal education tends to shift students' focus away from morality and social context, emphasizing form, doctrinal logic, and authority. Bruinsma (2008: 2454) similarly found little student engagement with meta-legal issues. However, in this study, tutors occasionally encouraged such engagement and even identified it as beneficial in interviews. As one tutor stated:

Eventually you'll have to deal with it yourself someday, so do you agree with the rule or are you against it? Why do you agree? The first question is: why is something the way it is?

Another remarked that reflecting on why certain legal formulations exist can actually enhance students' grasp of legal language.

These moments of tutor-facilitated reflection were not uniformly present across all groups, and doctrinal precision remained the dominant concern. Still, the data suggest that some tutors deliberately broaden the boundaries of legitimate legal discourse to include emotional, ethical, or societal dimensions. In doing so, they socialize students not only into talking like a lawyer, but also into particular ways of thinking like one, in which language is a tool not just for stating law, but for interpreting, questioning, and imagining its application.

## 8. Discussion and Limitations

By focusing on language socialization practices in tutor groups, this article contributes to existing research on legal education by highlighting how linguistic norms are conveyed and enforced through interactional tutorials. It focuses on how tutors at a Dutch law school correct students' use of legal language during tutorials, and how these correction practices reflect divergent language ideologies, namely shared beliefs about what constitutes legitimate legal speech (Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity, 1998).

Combining observational data with interview insights, the findings show that tutors, as academic instructors, actively socialize students into the discursive norms of legal practice. These practices align with prior research documenting how legal education trains students not only in doctrine but also in talking and thinking like lawyers (Mertz, 2007; Philips, 1982).

The study reveals that tutors engage in varying forms of linguistic correction – ranging from explicit interventions to more implicit valorization of certain phrasings. These practices communicate what is considered 'proper' legal language and, by extension, legitimate participation in the legal field. In some groups, an emphasis on traditional legal phrasing was especially salient, reinforcing the exclusive character of such language. This mirrors patterns found in issues of elite socialization found in elite legal institutions (Granfield & Koenig, 1992; Schleef, 2005). In other groups, it was notable that although no tutor explicitly promoted plain legal language, moments where tutors tolerated or accepted less formal phrasing suggest a degree of flexibility in language norms. These practices may reflect, however subtly, alternative ideologies of legal professionalism.

This study, as such, does not assume a binary opposition between legalese and plain legal language. Rather, the data suggest that tutors position themselves along a continuum, ranging from strong reinforcement of traditional phrasing to more flexible or accessible alternatives, depending on their underlying language ideologies. Moreover, this study does not treat correction as always consciously intended. Some tutors might correct students with a clear intention for pedagogical reasons. But, consistent with Bourdieu's theory of habitus, tutors are more likely to reproduce dominant language ideologies as part of routinized professional behavior. Whether driven by a focus on clarity, pedagogy, or perceived professionalism, these correction practices reflect competing language ideologies – some aligned with maintaining legal prestige, others with accessibility. And at the same time, in Bourdieu's terms, both approaches shape how linguistic capital is distributed among students: here is the double-edged sword.

Following Mertz (2007), one could hypothesize that repeated exposure to abstract, formalized legal language, especially when reinforced by correction, might shape how students conceptualize legal problems. Over time, such exposure contributes to habitus: an embodied disposition that frames the world through doctrinal categories. This pro-



cess may contribute to a professional identity that prioritizes legal form over social complexity or moral nuance, though the extent to which this shapes students' conceptual frameworks remains a question for future empirical study. In this way, language correction practices may have epistemological consequences beyond linguistic inclusion.

However, the data also reflect heterogeneity. Not all tutor groups corrected students in the same way, and some tutors appeared to accept more accessible or demystified language. These variations complicate assumptions about legal socialization as a uniformly conservative or exclusionary process. Instead, they suggest that students' exposure to legal language may differ substantially depending on the tutor's approach, raising questions how linguistic capital is taught amongst different groups.

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study focused exclusively on tutorial sessions and did not take into account the larger lecture components of the course. Future studies could also focus on the role of the professor in this context, for instance. However, multiple tutors mentioned that they themselves do not always follow these lectures, which suggests their influence on language socialization within tutorials may be limited. Second, the course does not include written feedback, so this avenue for language correction and reinforcement was not available for analysis. Third, while course textbooks were not examined in detail, the fictional case from the course book, which was discussed during the tutorials, was reviewed but it did not contain any particularly notable features regarding legal language use. As such, the analysis is restricted to spoken interactions in tutorial settings.

A further limitation is that the study was not longitudinal. It remains unclear whether and how students internalized corrections over time. In addition, the analysis focused predominantly on tutor behavior; students' own perspectives on these corrections, including whether they perceived them as authoritative or meaningful, were not captured. Further, the extent to which students carry these norms into other educational or professional contexts remains uncertain. For this reason, the term "corrections" was often preferred over "socialization", to avoid presuming outcomes that cannot be empirically confirmed. Finally, given the ethnographic nature and limited scale of the study, findings cannot be generalized across institutions.

Despite these limitations, this study offers a detailed examination of how legal-linguistic norms are practiced and policed in everyday academic settings. Future research might build on this by exploring language socialization across a wider array of teaching formats, conducting longitudinal studies on students' evolving use of legal language, or comparing institutions to identify broader trends in professional language acquisition. Given that language norms are central to ideas of competence and authority in legal practice, the stakes of these socialization processes are high, not just for students' academic success, but for their future roles within the legal profession.

## 9. Conclusion

This study examined how legalese and legal language norms are reflected and reinforced through tutor-led interaction in small-group tutorials, using debates on legal accessibility as a conceptual backdrop. The findings suggest that the valorization of legalese differs depending on the academic tutor. These differences have implications for students' acquisition of linguistic capital and for the transmission of beliefs about professional language norms within the legal community.

The data reveal significant variation in how tutors engage with legal language. While some correct students' phrasing only when it affects doctrinal meaning, others promote more legalese even when the meaning remains unchanged. Overall, the valorization of legal language is reflected and reinforced in tutor groups through correction practices. Although academic staff may show different degrees of appreciation for legal language, there is a shared recognition that mastering legal terminology is an important part of becoming a lawyer. Using traditional legal language, or legalese, is widely viewed as a marker of expertise. As a result, correction practices may not only contribute to differences in students' linguistic capital but also socialize students into different understandings of what counts as legitimate legal expression.

Legalese has been heavily criticized in literature for protecting the status and privileges of the legal profession and for contributing to the exclusion of outsiders (Larson, 1979; Abel, 2003; Posner, 1998). Empirical research confirms that those who do not conform to the norms of traditional legal language, or legalese, can be excluded from the legal profession in the Netherlands (Van der Raad, 2015). Tutors, to varying degrees, act as upholders of these norms. On the one hand, this can be beneficial because it helps students acquire the linguistic capital required for professional success. These corrections support students in learning how to speak in a way that is recognized and accepted within the legal field.

On the other hand, an emphasis on legalese may also hinder inclusion and diversity within tutor groups. Tutors who reinforce these norms may unintentionally preserve the inaccessibility of legal language, potentially contributing to exclusion within the classroom, as described by Philips (1982). As shown in this study, tutors correct students' language in various ways – ranging from praise to immediate interruption or subtle modeling – which reflects patterns described in the language socialization literature (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011). However, the implications of these different approaches in the legal education context remain open to debate. It is possible that certain correction styles lead to student confidence and participation, while others may contribute to self-exclusion. Future research should explore how these styles affect students' sense of belonging in the legal learning environment.

Furthermore, tutors may transmit particular attitudes toward legal language to students. As such, future studies could examine how tutors' attitudes are formed, whether students adopt them, and what kind of collective identity students are being socialized

into. These findings raise the possibility that, in the absence of explicit engagement with plain legal language, students may internalize traditional legal terminology as the only legitimate form, potentially limiting their ability or willingness to communicate effectively with non-lawyers. Similarly, students' perception of tutor authority, especially in early stages of education, may influence which language norms they adopt most strongly.

Finally, there is a possible implication that repeated exposure to certain correction practices may not only influence how students express legal reasoning but may also shape how they conceptualize legal problems, based on the observed data. This aligns with prior sociolinguistic work (e.g., Mertz, 2007), which suggests that language socialization can affect thought patterns. This study therefore raises the hypothesis that correction practices may condition how students approach legal knowledge and professional identity. While no explicit promotion of plain legal language was observed, variation in correction practices points to underlying differences in tutors' professional language ideologies, an area deserving of further empirical attention. At the very least, the role of academic staff in the language socialization of law students should not be underestimated.

## Acknowledgments

This article draws on data originally collected for the author's master's thesis, submitted at Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. The interpretations and theoretical framing presented here are original to this article.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research and publication of this article.

## Funding

No funding was used for this research, authorship or publication of this article.

## Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants in the study.

## References

- Abel, Richard L. (2003). *English Lawyers Between Market and State: The Politics of Professionalism*. New York: Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Adler, Mark (2012). The plain language movement. In Tiersma & Solan (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Law*. Oxford: University Press.
- Aiken, Ray J. (1959). Let's not oversimplify legal language. *Rocky Mtn. L. Rev.*, 32, 358–366.
- Assy, Rabeea (2011). Can the law speak directly to its subjects? The limitation of plain language. *Journal of Law and Society*, 38(3), 376–404.
- Berger, Roni (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(2), 219–234.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Harvard: University Press.
- Bruggeman, C.W.C.A. (2020). Klare taal of kleutertaal?. *De Gemeentestem*, 152, 7515–7516.
- Bruinsma, Freek (2008). Wetenschap of woordkunst: Het werkgroeponderwijs als toets. *Nederlands Juristenblad*, 39, 2451–2455.
- Bryman, Alan (2016). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: University Press.
- De Groot-van Leeuwen, Lenie E. (2011). Staat de autonomie van juridische beroepen op de tocht?. In Hertogh & Weyers (Eds.), *Recht van Onderop. Antwoorden uit de Rechtssociologie* (pp. 253–268). *Ars Aequi Libri*.
- Duff, Patricia A. (2008). Language socialization, higher education, and work. In Duff & Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 257–270), New York: Springer.
- Duff, Patricia A. (2010). Language socialization into academic discourse communities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 30, 169–192.
- Friedman, Debra A. (2010). Speaking correctly: Error correction as a language socialization practice in a Ukrainian classroom. *Applied Linguistics*, 31(3), 346–367.
- Garrett, Paul B. & Baquedano-López, Patricia (2002). Language socialization: Reproduction and continuity, transformation and change. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31(1), 339–361.
- Granfield, Robert & Koenig, Thomas (1992). Learning collective eminence: Harvard law school and the social production of elite lawyers. *Sociological Q.*, 33, 503–520.
- Hafner, Christoph. A. & Yu, Cindy (2020). Language socialization in digitally mediated collaborative writing: Evidence from disciplinary peer and teacher feedback. *ReLC Journal*, 51(1), 14–32.
- Hager, John W. (1959). Let's simplify legal language. *Rocky Mtn. L. Rev.*, 32, 74–88.
- Holvast, Nina & Kortleven, Willem-Jan (2021). De transformatie tot jurist: Socialisatie en diversiteit in de rechtenstudie. *Ars Aequi: Juridisch Studentenblad*, 1, 79–85.
- Jacobs-Huey, Lanita (2007). Learning through the breach: Language socialization among African American cosmetologists. *Ethnography*, 8(2), 171–203.
- Jones, Natasha N. & Williams, Miriam F. (2017). The social justice impact of plain language: A critical approach to plain-language analysis. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 60(4), 412–429.
- Kortleven, Willem. J.; Holvast, Nina & Bešić, Alma (2024). From adaptive to reflective law school socialization: A theoretical and empirical contribution from the Netherlands. *Legal Ethics*, 1–21.
- Larson, Magali S. (1979). *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mellinkoff, David (1963). *The Language of the Law*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

- Mertz, Elizabeth (2007). *The Language of Law School: Learning to “think like a lawyer”*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moraitis, Peter & Murphy, Helen (2013). Language, law and identity: a language and learning response to the challenges of widening participation of students in law subjects. *The Law Teacher*, 47(2), 159–191.
- Ochs, Elinor & Bambi B. Schieffelin (2011). The theory of language socialization. In Duff & May (Eds.), *Language Socialization. Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 1–27). New York: Springer International Publishing.
- Ochs, Elinor & Bambi B. Schieffelin (2017). Language socialization: An historical overview. In Duff & May (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 3–15). Cham: Springer.
- Philips, Susan (1982). The Language socialization of lawyers: Acquiring the ‘cant’. In Spindler (Ed.), *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling: Educational Anthropology in Action* (pp. 176–209). Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.
- Posner, Richard A. (1998). Professionalisms. *Arizona Law Review*, 40(1), 1–16.
- Sapir, Edward (1933). Language. *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York), 155–169.
- Schieffelin, Bambi B. & Ochs, Elinor (1986). Language socialization. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 15(1), 163–191.
- Schieffelin, Bambi B.; Woolard, Kathryn A. & Kroskrity, P. V. (1998). *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*. Oxford: University Press.
- Schleef, Debra J. (2005). *Managing Elites: Socialization in Law and Business Schools*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Tavory, Iddo & Timmermans, Stefan (2014). *Abductive Analysis: Theorizing Qualitative Research*. Chicago: University Press.
- Turfler, Soha (2015). Language ideology and the plain-language movement: How straight-talkers sell linguistic myths. *Legal Comm. & Rhetoric: JAWLD*, 12, 195.
- Van der Bruggen, Geerke (2020). Klare taal in uitspraken: Meer dan stijl alleen. *Nederlands Juristenblad*, 2020(28), 1808–2036.
- Van der Raad, Sylvia (2015). *Othering and Inclusion of Ethnic Minority Professionals: A Study on Ethnic Diversity Discourses, Practices and Narratives in the Dutch Legal Workplace* (dissertation Vrije Universiteit). Amsterdam: VU University Press.
- Verburg, Andre (2020). Begrijpelijke taal en juridisch correcte taal samen op één kussen? De duivel zit in de details. *RM Themis*, 5, 208–222.

Note: JLL and its contents are Open Access publications under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



Copyright remains with the authors. You are free to share and adapt for any purpose if you give appropriate credit, include a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.

Publishing Open Access is free, supports a greater global exchange of knowledge and improves your visibility.