

Abstract
Edina Vinnai, PhD
University of Miskolc

Plain Language in Law in Hungary

Plain language movement has a long history in the United States of America and in many European countries. However, the situation is worse in Hungary, especially in the field of law. As a researcher in two empirical „law and language” projects since 2000, I will present my experiences during preparing and analyzing tape recordings of police interrogations and court hearings as regards comprehension of legal language. The presentation will focus on understandability of providing information on the rights and obligations of laymen in legal procedures given by legal professionals. It will also summarize latest changes in Hungarian legal regulations providing better understanding of rights and obligations (partly based on the 2012/13/EU directive on the right to information in criminal proceedings). As regards the practice of adjudication, the presentation will compare the way of providing information to laymen before and after the modification of legal norms. Two positive examples will also be mentioned in the presentation: (1) a few years ago a group of legal and linguistic experts prepared a so-called Stylebook with recommendations to improve wordings of court verdicts, and (2) 2017 was the year of comprehensibility at courts, which means that improvement of comprehensible communication was integrated to an obligatory training of judges.