

Citizens often complain that the language of court proceedings and rulings is incomprehensible. Recognizing the importance of good communication in a court situation, **many scholars study the language used during court proceedings** in order to identify bad communication practices of courts and propose good practices instead. In turn, some **courts, acting on their own initiative, are beginning to simplify the language they use** to make it more accessible to the public. While such actions are certainly praiseworthy, **they do not solve the problem completely, and, what is more, they create new ones.**

The problem is that the use of comprehensible language in a court situation should not depend only on the individual linguistic style of a particular judge, or her or his goodwill to communicate in a clear and unambiguous manner. Likewise, uncoordinated implementation of so-called "good practices" in court communication (introduced in individual courts rather than nationwide) might lead to a situation in which a citizen's ability to participate fully and with understanding in court proceedings will depend on whether a judge adheres to good communication practices or not. Meanwhile, everyone should have equal access to justice, also with regard to communication.

The starting point of this project is the observation that the intelligibility of court proceedings is practically non-existent in purely legal discussions. The purpose of this project, therefore, is to establish the currently existing rights and obligations of citizens in court proceedings, as well as the court's obligations regarding communication in trials. **The project aims to determine the extent to which the law imposes rules of communication on the court and trial participants, and the extent to which it leaves them freedom of action.** Thus, the project will make it possible to distinguish between the non-legally regulated judicial communication practices (which depend on the judge's choices and habits) and the legal communication obligations incumbent on courts. These research problems might then be solved by **formulating a model of the minimum standard of understandable court proceedings, i.e. the minimum communication guarantees that the law provides to citizens during trials.** This model, which functions under the name of the *Right to a comprehensible court proceeding*, will then help to identify the fundamental communication obligations of the court as well as the communication rights and obligations of citizens that are provided by the law, and the manner in which they may be enforced.

The project is divided into six research tasks. Task 1 will serve as the basis for the execution of all other tasks. It consists of an analysis of types and models of court proceedings that exist in theory, and the examination of their realization in practice (in specific countries), as well as the literature on the communication in courts in different countries. It is assumed that the scope of communication rights and obligations in court proceedings is largely the result of the adoption of a particular model of proceedings in a particular state. Countries with similar models should therefore represent a similar level of procedural communication rights and obligations. Task 2, in turn, addresses the court communication practices identified in Task 1. The Principal Investigator will analyze these practices from a legal perspective to determine how the use of particular practices affects the capability of citizens to participate in trials. As for Task 3, it involves comparing the communicative rights and obligations and judicial practices identified in different types and models of proceedings in different countries. This comparison will determine whether the aforementioned assumption is true or not. Task 4 concerns the construction of the *Right to comprehensible court proceeding* model. The principal investigator will use the data collected in the course of the previous tasks for this purpose. Task 5, on the other hand, involves the testing and evaluating the adopted model. Finally, Task 6 will involve disseminating the results of the project through publications in English (2), French (2) and Polish (1) and participation in 3 international conferences.

Given the ambition to produce results that apply not only to Polish law, but to all legal orders sharing similar legal values, it is necessary to conduct the project both at home and abroad. The research tasks will therefore be carried out in Poland, France, Hungary and Canada. The choice of the countries has been determined by the efforts made by their respective courts to increase the comprehensibility of court proceedings (France) and advanced research on communication during court proceedings or on legal aspects of this communication (Poland, Hungary and Canada).

The project will be carried out through a review of Polish and foreign literature, as well as the use of the formal dogmatic method (interpretation of the law) and the comparative method consisting of comparing legal solutions that exist in the selected countries.