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## ***Translation techniques in German-Polish translation of civil mediation terms using AI tools versus human-developed terminology databases – a case study***

In the research paper German civil law terms related to mediation that appear in the *Mediationgesetz* (Act on Mediation) and the *Zivilprozessordnung* (Code of Civil Procedure) were analysed and their Polish equivalents identified. The terms analysed were *incongruent terms* (according to the definition by Šarčević) and legal terms (according to the definition by Morawski). The National Corpus of Polish (*Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego*) was examined for occurrence of equivalents. Firstly, translation techniques used in formulating the Polish equivalents were classified according to a catalogue of techniques used in the translation of incongruent civil law terms from Polish into English, developed in 2018. The second aim of the research was to compare the translation techniques used in formulation of the equivalents present in human-developed databases *versus* the equivalents appearing in AI-generated translations. It was found that the AI tools generated equivalents for all the source terms in question, while the human-developed databases did not include equivalents for all of the source terms.

**Keywords:** translation, translation technique, AI tools, mediation in civil law, legal term, incongruity



**Słowa kluczowe:** przekład, technika przekładowa, narzędzie AI, media-cja w prawie cywilnym, termin prawny, nieprzystawalność

## 1. Introduction

It has always been time-consuming to translate terms referring to institutions characteristic of a specific legal system, that is terms “designating concepts and institutions specific to the reality of a particular legal system or legal systems” (Šarčević, 2000: 233). Translators should amass and update legal knowledge of source and target legal systems and devote time to finding the most accurate equivalents. Furthermore, it is often challenging to find an equivalent for incongruent legal terms that refer to a legal institution similar to the one referred to by the source term (Šarčević, 2000: 233).

While examining German-Polish translation, it should be emphasised that the German legal system is a civil law system, as is the Polish legal system, while legal systems in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereafter referred to as the United Kingdom) are common law systems. As there is no single legal system in the United Kingdom, it should be stressed that the classification of techniques used in the typology of this paper applies to terms that refer to institutions of the three legal systems, i.e. England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, which are referred to as British law terms.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Methods for translating legal terms

Several categorisations of translation methods/techniques applied when translating legal terms have been published globally, including Covacs (1982: 89), Harvey (2003: 1-9), Hejwowski (2007: 77) and Newmark (1988: 81-93). The listed categorisations are classifications of methods of culture-specific items translation and culture-specific items include system-bound legal terms. The classification by Weston (1993: 21) encompasses the translation methods applied when translating legal terms. For the research the typology by Kizińska (2018) was chosen, as it was used when translating civil law terms, and the mediation terms in the present research are also civil law terms.

## 2.2. AI tools in German-Polish translation of legal terms

Communication among professionals in science, technology, and institutional contexts is becoming ever more shaped by the use of AI. Its application is highly complex, not only from an IT standpoint, but also in terms of language and communication (Roelcke, 2026). No published studies yet have directly examined the effectiveness of AI tools for translating legal terms from German into Polish. Four studies have evaluated use of AI translation systems for legal content in other language pairs: from Italian into German (Berta et al., 2019), from English into Polish (Żrałka, 2024), and English to several other languages (Briva-Iglesias et al., 2024). The closest available evidence for this work comes from the English into Polish legal translation study, which demonstrated that AI tools can achieve consistent terminology when configured with domain-specific databases, but struggle with grammatical accuracy in complex legal contexts (Żrałka, 2024). Studies of legal translation in related language pairs revealed several challenges likely to be applicable to German-Polish translation. Legal texts posed difficulties for machine translation due to syntactic complexity, lexical ambiguity, terminology bound to specific legal systems, and structural divergences (Berta et al., 2019: 141). While a multi-task deep learning model achieved BLEU scores of 54.98-67.24 on EU legal documents (Elnaggar et al., 2018), human evaluation revealed that traditional neural machine translation (MT) systems produced translations with fundamentally worse correspondence between source and target text compared to target text meaningfulness (Wiesmann et al., 2019: 142). Large language models showed potential for handling specialized legal terminology, with professional translators rating GPT-4 as comparable to, or slightly better than traditional neural MT, despite lower automatic metric scores (Briva-Iglesias et al., 2024). However, scarcity of data in the legal domain (Elnaggar et al., 2018) and rapid technological evolution affecting study relevance (Briva-Iglesias et al., 2024) limit the generalizability of these findings. Based on Żrałka's (2024) findings, one might expect that terminology management through properly configured translation memories could achieve consistency, but that grammatical accuracy would remain challenging.

In summary, the literature does not directly answer the question of AI tool effectiveness for German Polish legal translation: the available studies of related language pairs and legal translation contexts suggest substantial challenges would be expected, particularly regarding grammatical accuracy and legal system-specific terminology. However, the rapid evolution of AI translation technology between 2018 and 2024, combined with the methodological limitations of existing studies, means that empirical research specifically examining German-Polish legal translation is needed.

### 2.3. Terminological and Conceptual Challenges in translation of German-Polish legal texts

The fundamental challenge in German-Polish legal translation stems from the non-equivalence of legal concepts between the two systems. Multiple studies have identified terms with zero equivalence, requiring translators to navigate concepts that simply do not exist in the target legal system (Siewert, 2014: 143). The Polish Penal Code contains terms such as *czyn zabroniona*, *nawiązka*, *przestępstwo podobne*, *społeczna szkodliwość*, and *występek o charakterze chuligańskim* that have no direct German equivalents (Siewert, 2014: 136).

Property law presents particularly acute terminological difficulties. The Polish concept of *użytkowanie wieczyste* (perpetual usufruct, having perpetual rights) lacks a direct German equivalent (Gościński, Kubacki, 2021: 1469, 1470) and the Polish *księga wieczysta* system differs fundamentally from German land registration approaches. Similarly, administrative law terms like *decyzja*, *postanowienie*, *odwołanie*, and *zażalenie* require careful comparative analysis, because German equivalents like *Bescheid*, *Beschluss*, *Widerspruch* and *Beschwerde* do not map precisely onto the Polish concepts (Zielnik-Kołodzińska, 2017: 43).

Court system terminology reveals systematic challenges across jurisdictions. Translating court names is problematic. For example, *sąd rejonowy* has been rendered variously as *Rayonsgericht*, *Rayongericht*, or *Kreisgericht*, none of which accurately reflects the Polish institution's role (Bielawski, 2018: 82). The German *Oberlandesgericht*, *Oberstaatsanwalt*, and *Amtsgericht* have different structural roles than Polish equivalents, complicating accurate translation (Bawej, 2021: 262).

Cultural references and moral norms that may not align between systems, which makes using most accurate equivalents even more challenging (Kęsicka, 2014: 91). Terms like *zasady współzycia społecznego* (principles of social coexistence) have evolved differently in Polish law following systemic changes, affecting their translation into concepts like German *Treu und Glauben*, which has different semantic content, despite having similar functions (Kęsicka, 2014: 79).

When direct equivalents are unavailable, translators employ functional equivalence strategies. The functional approach emphasizes cultural and legal equivalence, rather than word-for-word translation (Cieślik, et al., 2025: 31). For terms with significant discrepancies between legal systems, translators retain source language terms and provide appropriate explanations (Młodecki, 2018). Adaptation strategies include several specific techniques. When translating terms like *odpowiedzialność nadzorującego*,

translators use functional adaptation, combined with concept modification. Descriptive translation is another adaptation approach taken when exact equivalents do not exist. Translators describe the term concisely, or provide near- perfect definitions of the target concept (Młodecki, 2018: 56).

For binomials and serial phrases in legal texts, translation patterns vary by language pair. Literal translation dominates in English-Polish legal translation, while insertion is more common in German-Polish translation (Kubacki, Więclawska, 2022: 227).

### 3. Methodology

The current paper examines the translation of nineteen terms. These particular terms have been selected since they constitute incongruent terms referring to the mediation procedure in Germany, and they appear in two German legal sources, namely: *Zivilprozessordnung* and *Mediationsgesetz*. This study hypothesised that the translation techniques applied in the Polish-English translation of incongruent civil law terms are also used in the translation of German civil law terms relating to mediation into Polish. In both research situations, the source terms belong to civil law systems (Germany, Poland); however, in the classification of techniques used in the translation of incongruent civil law terms from Polish into English, by Kizińska (2018: 245-251), the target terms belong to a common law system, while in the present research the target legal system is a civil law system. The aim of this study is to check whether the techniques used in German-Polish translation are included in the aforementioned classification, in particular with regard to equivalents generated by AI translation tools.

With regard to the research technique, it should be noted that the terms analysed are “elements characterised by a specific reference within the discipline and constitute terms of that discipline (...)” (Sager, 1990: 19). Further, the source terms examined are legal terms, defined by Morawski as terms appearing in legal texts (1980: 187). Legal texts are understood in this paper in accordance with the definition of the lawyer Gizbert-Studnicki (1986: 95-102) as normative texts. The German mediation terms under analysis were extracted from the *Zivilprozessordnung* (the German Code of Civil Proceedings), and the *Mediationsgesetz* (the Mediation Act) while the Polish equivalents were found in the *Interactive Terminology for Europe (IATE)* and *proz.com*. (translators forum) as well as by using AI tools. The second aim of the research was to compare the translation techniques used to formulate the equivalents presented in human-developed databases, (*IATE* and *proz.com*), with the equivalents appearing in AI- tool-generated translations.

The AI tools that generated the equivalents under the analysis were *DeepL* and *Chat GPT-5 (open access)*. *DeepL* is an advanced translator that uses artificial intelligence algorithms based on neural networks and transformer architecture, dedicated to generating high-quality translations. (<https://www.deepl.com/blog>; Rao, 2025). Table 1 presents an analysis of the capabilities and limitations of AI-based translation systems— *ChatGPT* and *DeepL* with regard to idiomatic fluency of suggested equivalents, context and register adaptation of target texts, terminological precision of suggested equivalents, paraphrasing and stylistic variation of target texts and semantic errors of suggested equivalents.

**Table 1. Capabilities and limitations of AI-based translation tools: comparison of ChatGPT and Deep**

Aspect	DeepL – capabilities	DeepL – limitations	ChatGPT – capabilities	ChatGPT – limitations
idiomatic quality and fluency	high quality idiomatic output in European language pairs	performs better in European pairs than global ones	very natural and fluent translations	no guarantee of factual accuracy
context and register adaptation	handles formal and technical registers well	struggles with colloquial or literary language	strong in adapting tone and register	may produce inaccurate or hallucinated content
terminological precision (e.g., legal/technical)	High precision, but sometimes flattens nuance	lacks full legal precision or validation	variable – depends on prompt design	no built-in term memory or validation
paraphrasing and stylistic variation	limited – mostly direct translation	does not offer stylistic alternatives	excellent at paraphrasing and rewording	no control over literalness vs. creative phrasing
semantic risk/errors	low, but simplifications can occur	does not interpret user intent	can interpret context and adjust meaning	does not detect logical errors in source

Source: own work.

The analysis presented in Table 1 shows that both *DeepL* and *ChatGPT* offer high-quality translations of single equivalents as well as texts, although they achieve it in different ways. *DeepL* focuses on faithfully reproducing the source content, making it particularly effective in technical and formal translations, while *ChatGPT* excels at paraphrasing, stylistic adaptation, and adjusting tone to context. Despite these advantages, both tools have significant limitations — *DeepL* offers less linguistic flexibility and supports a limited

number of languages, whereas ChatGPT may generate inaccurate or fabricated content and requires carefully crafted prompts. Neither solution is suitable for certified translations or legal responsibility without human involvement. In practice, the most effective approach combines the strengths of AI tools with expert post-editing, ensuring both linguistic fluency and terminological accuracy.

The stages of the research analysis included:

- a) defining the specific German mediation term in question,
- b) defining the Polish term used in the translation,
- c) checking if it appears in Polish legal sources, or law-related online sources
- d) checking whether the proposed equivalent appeared in the *Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego* (NKJP) ([njkp.pl](http://njkp.pl)).<sup>1</sup>

As a result of carrying out the above steps, it was possible to determine which translation technique according to the classification by Kizińska (2018) was applied when formulating a given equivalent. The *translation technique* is understood according to Hejwowski, as “the choice of a specific solution to a particular problem encountered during the translation process and the translation solution itself, which can be directly assessed in the translation text” (2007: 76).

Identification of the techniques applied in the translation of German source terms was followed by the verification of the hypothesis that German-Polish translation techniques appear in the classification of translation techniques used in the Polish-English translation of incongruent civil law terms. The aforementioned classification (Kizińska, 2018: 247-251) includes:

- 1) Hejwowski’s functional equivalent technique, which “involves replacing the name (or allusion to) a phenomenon better known in the source culture with the name (or allusion to) a phenomenon better known in the target culture” (Kizińska, 2018: 247);
- 2) the hypernym technique, involving “replacing a hyponym in the source text with a hypernym in the target text” (Kizińska, 2018: 248);
- 3) the hyponym technique, which consists in “replacing a hypernym in the source text with a hyponym in the target text” (Kizińska, 2018: 248);

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<sup>1</sup> The NKJP [National Corpus of Polish] list of sources for the corpora contains classic literature, daily newspapers, specialist periodicals and journals, transcripts of conversations, and a variety of short-lived and internet texts. For a corpus to be reliable, not only it is necessary for it to contain a large number of words, but it also needs a diversity of texts with respect to the subject and genre. The conversations ought to represent both male and female speakers, in various age groups, from various regions in Poland (<http://www.njkp.pl>)

- 4) Krzysztof Hejwowski's descriptive equivalent technique, which involves "replacing a term with a description or definition" (Kizińska, 2018: 248);
- 5) the technique of partial semantic shift, which consists in using a phrase (or expression) in the target language that appears in the source texts of the target language, whose meaning partially overlaps with the meaning of the phrase (or expression) in the source language that appears in the source texts of the source language. In addition, the phrase (or phrases or expressions) of the source and target languages appear in source texts from the same field of law. The result of applying this technique is a partial change in the meaning of the phrase or phrase or expression of the target language in the target text (Kizińska, 2018: 249);
- 6) the technique of complete semantic shift, which consists of using in the target text a phrase (or expression) of the target language that appears in the source texts of the target language, the meaning of which is completely different from the meaning of the phrase (or expression) of the source language that appears in the source texts of the source language. The result of applying this technique is a complete change in the meaning of the phrase (or expression) in the target language in the target text (Kizińska, 2018: 249);
- 7) the technique of terminologisation, which consists in using a phrase (or expression) in the target text that occurs in the target language but is not a legal term. As a result of applying this technique, the phrase (or expression) of the target general language becomes a legal term in the target text (Kizińska, 2018: 250);
- 8) the transposition technique, which includes Newmark's shift or transposition technique, the transposition technique of Vinay and Darbelnet, and Chesterman's transposition and level shift techniques. The technique consists of "replacing one part of speech with another part of speech" (Kizińska, 2018: 250);
- 9) translation doublet ("dublet tłumaczeniowy") which constitutes "a translation solution consisting in the use of one or two translation techniques, resulting in the presentation of two equivalents at the same time" (Kizińska, 2018: 250);
- 10) Newmark's recognised official translation technique (Kizińska, 2018: 251).

It should be emphasised that the technique called *functional equivalent* is defined differently in the literature on the subject, for example by Newmark (1988: 233) or Hejwowski (2007: 86).

The research paper analysed all mediation-related terms that appear in the two mentioned sources of German law. Two out of the nineteen terms were found to be congruent with their Polish equivalents. Thus, the study determined the translation techniques applied to produce the equivalents of the seventeen German terms that were defined as *incongruent terms* according to Šarčević (2000): “Due to the conceptual incongruity of the terminology of different legal systems, it is sometimes very difficult to choose an equivalent that will guarantee a uniform interpretation and application of the proposed content of a legal norm” (2000: 232). The concept of *equivalence* is closely related to the phenomenon of incongruity of terms, i.e. their semantic fields do not overlap. Legal terminology characteristics of different legal systems are largely incompatible (2000: 232). Furthermore, Jopek-Bosiacka, a linguist and lawyer, emphasises that the multitude of legal systems is the source of the lack of equivalence of legal concepts or the non-coincidence of the semantic fields of the terms (2008: 47).

#### 4. Analysis

In the analysis the equivalents excerpted from two human-generated databases, proz.com and IATE, are discussed, along with the equivalents appearing in the translations produced by *DeepL* and *Chat GPT*.

**Table 2. German terms from the field of civil law mediation and their Polish equivalents**

German term	Polish equivalent <i>Chat GPT</i>	Polish equivalent <i>deepl.com</i>	Polish equivalent <i>IATE</i>	Polish equivalent <i>proz.com</i>
Zivilprozessordnung				
Methoden der Konfliktbeilegung	metody rozwiązywania konfliktów	metody rozwiązywania konfliktów	---	---
Güterichter	sędzia ds. mediacji (sędzia pojednawczy)	sędzia pokoju	---	---
Verweisung an den Güterichter	skierowanie do sądowego rozjemcy	skierowanie do sądowego rozjemcy	---	---
außergerichtliche Gütestelle	pozasądowy punkt/ instytucja pojednawcza	pozasądowa instytucja pojednawcza	---	---

German term	Polish equivalent <i>Chat GPT</i>	Polish equivalent <i>deepl.com</i>	Polish equivalent <i>IATE</i>	Polish equivalent <i>proz.com</i>
außergerichtliche Konfliktbeilegung	pozasądowe rozwiązywanie konfliktów	pozasądowe rozwiązywanie konfliktów	---	---
gütliche Streitbeilegung	polubowne rozwiązanie sporu	polubowne rozwiązanie sporu	---	---
Versuch einer Mediation	próba mediacji	próba mediacji	---	---
Vergleich	ugoda	ugoda	ugoda	ugoda
gerichtlicher Vergleich	ugoda sądowa	ugoda sądowa	ugoda sądowa	ugoda sądowa
Vergleichsvorschlag des Gerichts	propozycja ugody przedstawiona przez sąd	propozycja ugody sądu	projekt ugody przedstawiony przez sąd	propozycja ugody sądu / propozycja ugody przedstawiona przez sąd
anderes Verfahren der außergerichtlichen Konfliktbeilegung	inne postępowanie procesowe	inne postępowanie pozasądowe	---	---
Mediationsgesetz				
Zertifizierter Mediator	certyfikowany mediator	certyfikowany mediator	---	---
Mediator	mediator	mediator	---	mediator
Mediation	mediacja	mediacja	mediacja	mediacja
Mediationsverfahren	procedura mediacyjna	procedura mediacyjna	---	---
Abschlussvereinbarung	umowa końcowa / umowa końcowa mediacji	umowa końcowa	---	---
Verschwiegenheitspflicht	obowiązek zachowania poufności	obowiązek zachowania poufności	---	---

Source: own work.

The first term under analysis is *Methoden der Konfliktbeilegung* which names, according to its definition in the dictionary *duden.de*, all procedures, techniques and strategies aimed at achieving an amicable settlement of an existing dispute; these include, for example, mediation, facilitation/moderation, conciliation, evaluation, negotiation procedures, and

similar approaches designed to help the parties reach an agreement. The equivalent in the AI-generated translation is *metody rozwiązywania konfliktów*, while in the databases *IATE* and *proz.com* no source language equivalent is given. The equivalent in question was defined as: “various ways of resolving a dispute between parties, such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration or litigation, which lead to an agreement or a resolution of the dispute” (*Słownik Języka Polskiego, sjp.pwn.pl*). Having analysed the definitions of both the source element and the equivalent, it may be assumed that the source element names a different list of methods compared to the Polish legal phenomenon, thus the terms are incongruent. Both legal ideas, however, aim at the settlement of a dispute, thus the suggested equivalent is probably a functional equivalent of the source term. Although it does not appear in the NKJP, *metody rozwiązywania konfliktów* is included in the Dictionary of the Polish *Słownik Języka Polskiego* and on the governmental website: *zpe.gov.pl*.

The second term under analysis is *Güterichter* which names, according to the definition in the German civil proceedings code (§278 Section 5 *Zivilprozessordnung*), a civil judge without decision-making powers, who uses various techniques of conflict resolution, including mediation: “The court may refer the parties to conciliation proceedings and to further attempts at reconciliation before a judge appointed for this purpose who has no decision-making powers (a conciliation judge). The conciliation judge may use all techniques of conflict resolution, including mediation” (§278 Section 5 *Zivilprozessordnung*). The suggested equivalent, *sędzia pokoju* appeared in the AI-generated translation, but there was no source language equivalent present in the databases *IATE* and *proz.com*. The equivalent in question does not appear in the Polish legal sources. Thus, presumably the equivalent was formulated as a result of the application of a descriptive equivalence technique. Moreover, the Polish phrases *sędzia ugody* or *sędzia pojednawczy* may serve as descriptive equivalents for the source term in question. The first of these equivalents appeared in the research paper by Derlatka (2025: 199) “*Sędzia rozjemca czy sędzia ugody* (Güterichter) – refleksje na temat pozycji sędziego w mediacji”.

*Sędzia ugody* is not an arbitrator or a justice of the peace, but a procedural authority, a professionally active judge working in a given court district, appointed by the presidium of the court to perform the role of a conciliation judge. He does not conduct court proceedings in a case referred to mediation, and the purpose of his action is to conclude a settlement within the framework of ongoing court proceedings (Derlatka, 2025: 199).

Another equivalent, *sędzia rozjemca*, appeared on the website of the Regional Court in Gdańsk defined as: “a judge whose task is to conduct settlement negotiations or further conciliation hearings with the parties, without the power to resolve the legal dispute”. This definition may presumably serve as a reliable source to form a descriptive equivalent when translating the term under analysis into Polish (<https://gdansk.so.gov.pl>).

The last equivalent (generated by ChatGPT), *sędzia ds. mediacji (sędzia pojednawczy)*, is an example of the application of a translation doublet, as it consists of two descriptive equivalents (*sędzia ds. mediacji* and *sędzia pojednawczy*). The equivalents applied do not appear in the NKJP but, to some extent, they convey the semantic field of the German source term.

The third term under analysis is *Verweisung an den Güterichter* which names a judicial procedural order by which the competent court directs the parties within a pending proceeding to a judge specifically appointed for this purpose – the *Güterichter*. The *Güterichter* may then conduct a conciliation hearing and apply all appropriate methods of conflict resolution, including mediation, without issuing a decision on the merits of the case. The referral does not alter the subject matter of the litigation, but simply entrusts a phase of consensual dispute handling to the settlement judge ([duden.de](http://duden.de)). The equivalent suggested is *skierowanie do sądownego rozjemcy*. As stated above *sędzia rozjemca* was defined as: “a judge whose task is to conduct settlement negotiations or further conciliation hearings with the parties, without the power to resolve the legal dispute” ([gdansk.so.gov.pl](http://gdansk.so.gov.pl)). On the other hand, however, the term *sędzia rozjemca* may also refer to *arbiter* in the Polish arbitration procedure, where a judge called an *arbiter* resolves the dispute between the parties and the ruling given is, as a rule, final, but may be appealed against, as long as a given set of requirements has been met (Article 1206 of *the Polish Code of Civil Procedure*). *Skierowanie do sądownego rozjemcy* is probably a descriptive equivalent as it does not appear in the NKJP, but does partially constitute a recognised equivalent with regard to the translation of *Verweisung* with the Polish word *skierowanie*.

The fourth term under analysis is *außergerichtliche Gütestelle*, which names “procedures for resolving disputes outside state courts in which the parties seek an agreement with the assistance of a neutral third party or through other alternative methods” ([duden.de](http://duden.de)), has been translated with two Polish equivalents *pozasądowy punkt/instytucja pojednawcza* suggested by the AI- tools. The first equivalent *pozasądowy punkt pojednawczy* does not appear in the Dictionary of Polish, or the NKJP, thus it may be assumed that it serves as a descriptive equivalent for the German name – it provides a reader with information about the aim of the legal institution in question, an institution that aims at settling a dispute out of court. The second

equivalent is *pozasądowa instytucja pojednawcza*, defined on the basis of the definition of *mediation* as an out-of-court conciliation mechanism, as it enables a dispute to be resolved without a court ruling. The equivalent supposedly serves as a descriptive equivalent as it does not appear in the Dictionary of Polish, or the NKJP, but conveys information on the function of the German legal institution in question.

The term *außergerichtliche Konfliktbeilegung* names “procedures for resolving disputes outside state courts in which the parties seek an agreement with the assistance of a neutral third party or through other alternative methods” (duden.de). The only equivalent, and again suggested by AI-tools, is *pozasądowe rozwiązywanie konfliktów*, defined as various ways of resolving a dispute between parties, such as negotiation, mediation, arbitration or litigation, which lead to an agreement or a resolution of the dispute (www.bisou.pw.edu.pl). The definition of the equivalent is more detailed and one of the source elements is more general. Additionally, the equivalent does not appear in the NKJP, thus it may be assumed that a descriptive equivalent has been applied.

Another term is *gütliche Streitbeilegung* defined as: “amicable settlement of a dispute means the consensual resolution of a legal dispute through a solution accepted by the parties, reached without a contentious court decision” (duden.de). The only equivalent, and again suggested by only by AI-tools, is *polubowne rozwiązanie sporu*, defined as an amicable resolution of a dispute that involves the parties settling a conflict by mutual agreement, most often by reaching a settlement without the need for a court judgment, on the basis of Article 10 of the Code of Civil Procedure: “In civil cases, the court should, at every stage of the proceedings, seek to resolve the matter amicably”. This term appears in the NKJP. The definitions quoted indicate significant overlap of the semantic fields of the terms in question. Thus, it may be assumed that the suggested equivalent serves as a functional equivalent: both terms name a legal institution whose function is to resolve a dispute amicably.

Another term is *Versuch einer Mediation*, which refers to the parties’ prior efforts to resolve their dispute in a structured mediation process outside of court, either before or during litigation. Under § 253(3) of the German Code of Civil Procedure, this attempt should be indicated in the statement of claim and demonstrates whether and to what extent the parties have tried to settle the conflict through mediation (duden.de). The equivalent suggested by the AI tools is *próba mediacji*, defined as a formal effort by the parties to initiate mediation, or another out of court dispute resolution method, as indicated in the statement of claim under Article 187 the Polish Code of Civil Procedure. This does appear in the NKJP. Again, the

definitions quoted indicate significant overlap of the semantic fields of the source and target terms. Thus, it may be assumed that the equivalent serves as a functional equivalent – both institutions name the formal action taken in order to solve a dispute in an amicable manner out of the court. On the other hand, the terms in question are not congruent, as the attempt may be interpreted differently within litigation, even in Poland. The Code of Civil Procedure (Articles 183<sup>1</sup>–183<sup>15</sup>), which sets out the rules governing mediation, does not explicitly define the *attempt to initiate it*.

Another term is *Vergleich* – a contract by which the parties resolve an existing dispute, or uncertainty about a legal relationship, by mutual concessions. It may be concluded either outside court, or in the context of court proceedings (duden.de). The equivalent suggested in all the sources is *ugoda*, defined as “an agreement between the parties to a civil dispute, entered into with a view to resolving the dispute, which, depending on its form, may have the same legal force as a court judgment if it is concluded before a court or approved by a court” (sjp.pwn.pl). In the *Civil Code*, Article 917 the term is defined as “a legal act in which the parties make mutual concessions with a view to resolving the dispute”. Both terms name a type of act in law. The act in law here names the conclusion of the “agreement to solve a dispute”. Thus, the equivalent is a functional equivalent. The terms under discussion are incongruent, as in Poland the only way for an *ugoda* to be binding is issuing a court ruling, while in Germany it is also possible for a notary to approve the agreement.

Another mediation term that appears in the *Zivilprozessordnung* is *gerichtlicher Vergleich*, defined as “a settlement concluded within pending court proceedings. It terminates the litigation and is recorded in the court record” (duden.de). The equivalent suggested is *ugoda sądowa*, which is the synonym of *ugoda* defined above: “A court settlement is a settlement within the meaning of Article 917 of the *Civil Code*” (zawarcie-sip.lex.pl/procedure-ugody-sadowej-w-toku-sprawy-1610612958). On the basis of these definitions, it may be assumed that the semantic field of the source element is less extensive when compared to the equivalent, as the equivalent names both the settlement entered into, both in and out of court. Thus, the equivalent is a hypernym.

*Vergleichsvorschlag des Gerichts* is defined as a proposal put forward by the court during the conciliation process, or amicable dispute resolution, in which the court suggests to the parties a consensual resolution of their dispute. According to § 278(6) of the *Zivilprozessordnung*, a judicial settlement may be concluded if the parties accept this written or court recorded proposal in writing before the court (duden.de). The equivalents *propozycja ugody sądu* / *propozycja ugody przedstawiona przez sąd* (proz.com),

*propozycja ugody przedstawiona przez sąd* (chatGPT), *propozycja ugody sądu* (deepl.com) and *projekt ugody przedstawiony przez sąd* (IATE) are synonyms and to a certain extent define the German legal institution. They do not appear in the Polish legal sources, or the NKJP. Thus, it may be assumed that they constitute descriptive equivalents. In Poland, on the basis of the Code of Civil Procedure, regulations courts do not formally draw up an agreement proposal.

Another German term analysed is *anderes Verfahren der außergerichtlichen Konfliktbeilegung*, defined as a non-judicial mechanism for resolving a dispute aside from mediation, for example, conciliation procedures, expert arbitration (*Schiedsgutachten*), facilitation or other forms of ADR (*Alternative Dispute Resolution*) that assist the parties in reaching an amicable settlement without formal litigation (duden.de). The equivalents suggested are *inne postępowanie pozaprosesowe* and *inne postępowanie pozasądowe*, (suggested by AI-generated tools), and constitute terms used in legal practice and doctrine specifically to refer to procedures for resolving disputes, or settling matters outside the ordinary courts or judicial bodies — as opposed to traditional court proceedings (zpe.gov.pl). The equivalents are not in the NKJP. Thus, they serve as general descriptive equivalents, conveying a limited meaning of the German source term. The above terms are all mediation terms that appear in the *Zivilprozessordnung*. All the terms are incongruent terms.

The first source term under analysis that appears in *Mediationsgesetz* is *zertifizierter Mediator* defined as:

anyone who has completed at least 120 hours of classroom training in mediation and, no later than one year after completing the training, has handled a practical mediation case and reflected on it in a supervision session (...). In the following two years, a further four mediations must be carried out and supervised, and further training comprising 40 hours is required at four-year intervals (<https://dgsf.org>).

No equivalents were found in the databases *IATE* or *proz.com*. The one available equivalent is *certyfikowany mediator*, suggested by *deepl.com*, as well as *Chat GPT*. The equivalent does not appear in the NKJP, but does appear on the *Komisja Nadzoru Finansowego (Polish Financial Supervision Authority)* website (knf.gov.pl). Thus, it has probably been formed as a result of the application of the terminologisation translation technique, as the term *mediator*, in the Polish legal system, names a person who meets the formal requirements: being at least 26 years of age, having full legal capacity and no criminal record for intentional offences. It may be assumed that the most accurate functional equivalent for the German term under analysis is

*staly mediator*, which is a phrase used to refer to a Polish mediator who has been formally entered into the list of *stali mediatorzy* (“registered mediators”) maintained by regional courts in Poland (<https://www.biznes.gov.pl>). The mediator mentioned must have met the formal requirements listed above, and been approved by the court to be entered into the register of mediators.

The second term under analysis is *Mediator*, defined as an independent and neutral person without decision making authority who guides the parties through a mediation process (*duden.de*). The only equivalent suggested is *mediator* defined in Article 183<sup>3a</sup> of the *Code of Civil Procedure* “The mediator conducts mediation using various methods aimed at reaching an amicable resolution of the dispute, including by assisting the parties in formulating settlement proposals; or, at the joint request of the parties, may suggest ways of resolving the dispute which are not binding on the parties”. Although the role of mediators under the Polish and German legal systems is similar, they are still incongruent as, for example, according to the definitions of *zertifizierter Mediator* and *mediator* mentioned above, it is necessary to complete a training to become a mediator in Germany, while in Poland this is recommended, but not required.

Another term under analysis is *Mediation*, defined as a confidential and structured procedure in which the parties, with the assistance of one or more mediators, voluntarily and responsibly seek an amicable resolution of their conflict (*duden.de*). The only equivalent is *mediacja*, defined as a manner of reaching a mutually satisfactory resolution to a dispute through voluntary and confidential discussions; discussions are facilitated by a mediator – an impartial and neutral third party; during the mediation process, the mediator’s role is to facilitate communication, alleviate any tension or stress, and assist in reaching an agreement ([www.gov.pl/web/sprawiedliwosc/mediacje](http://www.gov.pl/web/sprawiedliwosc/mediacje)). The equivalent in question serves as a functional equivalent, as the aim of the mediation proceedings in Germany and in Poland is to solve a dispute and reach a resolution of conflict with the assistance of a neutral agent. The source and target terms may be considered incongruent, on the basis of the analysis of the mediation-related terminology presented here.

*Mediationsverfahren* refers to the actual procedural and organizational model of mediation, i.e. the structured process for amicable conflict resolution based on the statutory characteristics of mediation (*duden.de*). The equivalent suggested by AI-tools is *procedura mediacyjna*. *Procedura mediacyjna* does not appear as a formal synonym of *mediacja* on reliable websites, but is practically used as such. The equivalent does not appear in the NKJP. It may be assumed that it serves as a descriptive equivalent, as it specifies the meaning of the German source term.

Another term under analysis is *Abschlussvereinbarung*, which in the context of mediation refers to the binding agreement concluded by the parties as the outcome of the mediation process; is formulated by the parties themselves in a consensual and responsible manner and, if necessary, recorded in writing for enforcement purposes (duden.de). The suggested equivalents are *umowa końcowa* and *umowa końcowa mediacji* (suggested by AI-tools) defined as: a document setting out the agreements reached by the parties during mediation; most often corresponds to a mediation settlement (excelraport.pl/index.php/2025/12/16/najczestsze-wyzwania-pracy-zdalnej-w-it-i-sposoby-ich-pokonania). The equivalent *umowa końcowa* does appear in the NKJP. Thus, taking into account the semantic fields of the terms, it may be assumed that it has been formed with the application of the technique of functional equivalence: they both name an agreement concluded within the mediation proceedings. The equivalent, *umowa końcowa mediacji*, presumably constitutes a descriptive equivalent, as it does not appear in the NKJP, but still conveys information about the German legal institution.

The term *Verschwiegenheitspflicht* is defined as the duty that obliges the mediator and all persons involved in the mediation process to keep confidential everything that becomes known to them in the course of their work, unless otherwise instructed by law. Exceptions include disclosure necessary for implementing an agreement, or to protect overriding public interests (duden.de). The equivalent *obowiązek zachowania poufności*, suggested by the AI-tools, is the duty of confidentiality in mediation, meaning that the mediator, the parties and any other persons involved in the mediation must not disclose any information they have learned in the course of the mediation, unless the parties release them from this duty (Article 183<sup>4</sup> §1 of the *Code of Civil Procedure*). The terms are incongruent as there are different conditions stated in the German and Polish regulations under which it is possible to be released from the obligation of confidentiality. It may be assumed that the equivalent is a descriptive equivalent, as it does not appear in the NKJP and, at the same time, explains the aim of the German legal institution.

## 5. Conclusions

In Table 3 are presented the equivalents discussed above, along with the translation technique(s) that has/have probably been applied in formulating the specific equivalent. In addition, the appearance of the given suggested equivalent in the NKJP is verified. Appearance of an equivalent in the NKJP has been indicated with a plus sign and lack of its appearance with a minus sign.

**Table 3. List of source elements, equivalents and its sources, presence in NKJP and translation techniques**

Source element	Equivalent and its source	NKJP	Ttranslation technique
Metho- den der Kon- fliktbeilegung	1. metody rozwiązywania konfliktów (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	+	functional equivalent
Güterichter	2. sędzia ds. mediacji (sędzia pojednawczy) (ChatGPT)	-	two descriptive equivalents
	3. sędzia pokoju (deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
Verweisung an den Güte- richter	4. skierowanie do sądowego rozjemcy (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent including recognised equivalent (skierowanie)
außergerichtliche Gütestelle	5. pozasądowy punkt pojednawczy (ChatGPT)	-	descriptive equivalent
	6. pozasądowa instytucja pojednawcza (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
außergerichtliche Konfliktbeilegung	7. pozasądowe rozwiązywanie konfliktów (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
gütliche Streit- beilegung	8. polubowne rozwiązanie sporu (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	+	functional equivalent
Versuch einer Mediation	9. próba mediacji (ChatGPT and deepl.com)	+	functional equivalent
Vergleich	10. ugoda (all sources)	+	functional equivalent
gerichtlicher Vergleich	11. ugoda sądowa (all sources)	+	hypernym
Vergleichs- vorschlag des Gerichts	12. propozycja ugody sądu (deepl.com and proz.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
	13. propozycja ugody przedstawiona przez sąd (ChatGPT and proz.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
	14. projekt ugody przedstawiony przez sąd (IATE)	-	descriptive equivalent
anderes Verfahren der außergerichte- lichen Konfliktbeilegung	15. inne postępowanie pozaprocusowe (ChatGPT)	-	descriptive equivalent
	16. inne postępowanie pozasądowe (deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
Zertifizierter Mediator	17. certyfikowany mediator (ChatGPT and proz.com)	-	Terminologisation including functional equivalent (mediator)
Mediator	18. mediator (ChatGPT, deepl.com and proz.com)	+	functional equivalent
Mediation	19. mediacja (all sources)	+	functional equivalent

Source element	Equivalent and its source	NKJP	Ttranslation technique
Mediationsverfahren	20.procedura mediacyjna (ChatGPT, deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent
Mediationsverfahren	21.umowa końcowa (ChatGPT, deepl.com)	+	functional equivalent
Abschlussvereinbarung	22.umowa końcowa mediacji (ChatGPT)	-	descriptive equivalent
Verschwiegenheitspflicht	23.obowiązek zachowania poufności (ChatGPT, deepl.com)	-	descriptive equivalent

Source: own work.

As a result of the analysis, it can be preliminarily assumed that the published classification of translation techniques used in Polish-English translation of incongruent civil law terms, (Kizińska, 2018), encompasses the translation techniques applied here in German-Polish translation of incongruent civil mediation law terms, because, while formulating the equivalents in question, as many as six out of ten techniques from Kizińska's classification (2018) were used. Seven equivalents (31%) were formulated as a result of applying the functional translation technique (e.g. *umowa końcowa*, *mediator*, *metody rozwiązywania konfliktów*, *polubowne rozwiązanie sporu*), one equivalent (4%) via the terminologisation technique (*certyfikowany mediator*). One equivalent (4%) constituted an example of the application of the hypernym technique (*ugoda sądowa*), fourteen (61%) exemplified the descriptive equivalent technique (e.g. *pozasądowa instytucja pojednacza*, *procedura mediacyjna*, *umowa końcowa mediacji*, *inne postępowanie pozaprocesowe*, *sędzia pokoju*) and there was one example (1%) of the doublet translation technique (*sędzia ds. mediacji* (*sędzia pojednawczy*). It may be presumed that at least three equivalents constituted recognised equivalents, as they were included in a printed dictionary nineteen years ago (*ugoda*, *mediator*, *mediacje*) (Oźga, 2007).

What is more, it should be emphasized that among the sources of equivalents only the AI databases (*deepl and ChatGPT*) provided equivalents for all the source terms in question. With regard to the comparison of translation techniques applied, it may be stated that the AI tools generated twenty-two different equivalents for incongruent terms. Most often applied by the AI tools were descriptive equivalents (59%), the functional equivalent technique (31% of the equivalents,) the terminologisation technique (5%), and the hypernym technique (5%).

The human-developed databases include 6 different equivalents in total, three of them (50%) of them being functional equivalents, one

(20%) being a hypernym, and two (30%) – descriptive equivalents). To conclude, the human-developed databases produced mainly functional equivalents, while the AI tools mainly generated descriptive equivalents (59%) with 31% of functional equivalents. The rationale behind the conclusions may be the supposition that AI tools have not yet begun to “rely on” legal target language texts to the extent that practicing translators have.

Moreover, the AI-tools offered a noticeably higher number of equivalents and suggested at least one equivalent for each incongruent term under analysis, while in the human-developed databases the equivalents for as many as twelve out of seventeen incongruent terms were not included. The reason for this is probably the fact that the AI-generated tools extracted their equivalents from a multitude of sources.

The doublet translation technique was applied in producing one equivalent which has been suggested by the AI-tool.

What is more, in the paper, one functional equivalent for *stały mediator* and a translation doublet for *Güterichter – sędzia ugodowy* or *sędzia pojednawczy*, have been suggested, which are not yet included in the terminology sources mentioned.

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Received: 17.12.2025

Revised: 07.05.2026

Accepted: 15.05.2026