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Editorial

We are pleased to present the first issue of *Comparative Law and Language* for 2026, which continues the journal's commitment to exploring the dynamic relationships between comparative law, language, and cultural contexts.

The contributions collected in this issue demonstrate the growing importance of language as both an object and an instrument of juridical inquiry. They examine how juridical meaning is formulated, interpreted and translated across different jurisdictions, traditions, and communicative environments. From reflections on legal narrativity and institutional authority to the challenges posed by emojis in contemporary legal communication, from the linguistic and conceptual foundations of Chinese legal thought to the multilingual interpretation of European Union law, and from legal translation to the impact of artificial intelligence on the rendering of culture-bound legal concepts, the articles gathered here reveal the richness and diversity of current research at the intersection of law and language.

Victor Hugo Agapito opens the issue with a thought-provoking reflection on the relationship between legal authority, narrative structures, and public legibility. His contribution, published in Italian, invites readers to reconsider judicial decision-making as a process of constructing social reality through the selection, organization, and interpretation of texts, evidence, and temporal frameworks.

Anne-Sophie Milard addresses one of the most innovative challenges facing contemporary legal systems: the interpretation of emojis in digital communication. By analysing recent developments in Canadian and American case law, she shows how courts are adapting traditional interpretative criteria to new forms of expression that increasingly shape the formation and interpretation of contracts and interpersonal relations.

Gianmatteo Sabatino offers a linguistic and conceptual exploration of the Chinese character *dé* (德) and its role in the notion of the “rule of virtue.” His analysis traces the historical evolution of the concept and highlights its renewed significance in contemporary Chinese legal and political discourse, where morality and governance remain deeply interconnected.

Stefaan Van der Jeught examines the multilingual nature of European Union law and the practical implications of linguistic divergences among equally authentic language versions. Through a careful analysis of the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, he raises important questions concerning legal certainty, legitimate expectations, and the role of national courts.

Alexandra Vinci concludes the issue of CLL review with an essay of legal culture-specific terminology in Crown Court criminal judgments and the challenges posed by its translation. Her contribution also explores the growing role of machine translation and artificial intelligence in legal practice, offering valuable insights into the opportunities and limitations of technological tools in juridical communication.

The issue concludes with a review by Jan Engberg of *The Language of Comparative Constitutional Law: Questioning Hegemonies* (2025), a significant contribution to the fields of comparative law and, in particular, comparative constitutional law. The volume raises questions that resonate closely with the interests of our readership and offers valuable insights into the role of language in constitutional comparison.

Despite their different methodologies and thematic perspectives, all contributions share a common core: understanding how language shapes legal knowledge and how law, in turn, adapts to evolving forms of expression and communication. In an increasingly interconnected and multilingual world, such questions are more relevant than ever.



We thank our authors, reviewers, and editorial team for their valuable work and dedication. We hope that this issue will stimulate further comparative law and interdisciplinary dialogue and contribute to advancing scholarship in the field of comparative law and language.

Elena Ioriatti on behalf of CLL Editorial Board