

Conference report for the CIPL Travel Grant 2024: Attending the 21st International Congress of Linguists

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Congress Overview

The 21st International Congress of Linguists (ICL) took place from September 8-14, 2024 in Poznań, Poland. It was organized by the *Comité International Permanent des Linguistes* (CIPL), hosted by the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and carried out at the Poznań Congress Center. I was one of 657 linguists attending the congress, which was under the guiding theme “Languages - Communities - Technologies“. The congress was split up into sections, focus streams and workshops and included twelve plenary lectures from eminent linguists. Next to the numerous presentations throughout the week, the ICL also included an extensive social program with events such as concerts or city walks on almost all evenings.

The ICL provided a meeting place for linguists from all different sub-areas of linguistics and thereby created a space in which topics could be discussed interdisciplinary. Especially interesting to me were the presentations from the field of psycholinguistics, phonetics and language acquisition. Especially the talks on child language during make-believe play sessions, on within-word pauses and on iconicity stand out to me. Through interactions during the coffee breaks and during the poster sessions I not only got to know experienced linguists, but also young researchers like myself who are also just starting their career in academia.

My contribution

My poster presentation was part of the workshop “Child language data as a challenge to language acquisition theories“, which was chaired by Natalia Gagarina. The poster with the title “It’s my turn! Older siblings’ influence on the turn-taking skills of toddlers“ included the results of a study conducted as part of my master’s thesis. To investigate whether 1-2-year-old toddlers with older siblings develop differently regarding their turn-taking behavior compared to only-children, I recorded two groups of families in dyadic and triadic settings during free play sessions. The results of the study, which were presented on the poster, indicate that toddlers with older siblings show significantly shorter turn gaps than only-children, indicating

a more adult-like turn-taking behavior. Additionally, quicker turn-taking is independent of whether the older sibling is present in the conversation. This implies developmental differences between only-children and later-born children regarding the acquisition of their turn-taking abilities.

The feedback from the congress participants was overly positive and encouraging. Most of the questions were focussed on the method, but also on the implications on language acquisition processes both for children in general and also for later-born siblings compared to only-children in particular. Many researchers were interested in the upcoming steps and in where the project was going next. Some have even recommended turning the study into a paper, which strongly encourages me to continue on my path to become a PhD candidate and pursue a career in academia.

I am grateful to the CIPL for providing me with the opportunity to participate in the congress. During this week at the ICL in Poland, I networked with many amazing researchers and heard lots of enriching talks on linguistic research. These interactions as well as attending talks and discussions on various topics will surely contribute to my academic career. I am very much looking forward to my next conference.