

CIPL Travel Grant Report

Recipient Name: Songjun He

Institution: University of Oxford

Conference Name: The 22nd Old-World Conference in Phonology (OCP22)

Conference Date & Location: 5–7 February 2025, University of Amsterdam

Satellite Workshop: Vowel Harmony Workshop, 4 February 2025, Leiden University

Report Submission Date: 14 February 2025

With the generous support of the CIPL travel grant, I had the privilege of attending the 22nd Old-World Conference in Phonology (OCP22) at the University of Amsterdam, where I presented my research. This experience provided me with valuable insights into current phonological discussions, and the feedback I received on my presentation was incredibly helpful in refining my analysis, playing a crucial role in the development of my thesis.

OCP22 featured keynote talks and presentations that covered various topics in phonology. The satellite workshop on Vowel Harmony (VH) at Leiden University provided an additional opportunity to focus on a specific phonological phenomenon, facilitating in-depth discussions with researchers specialising in this area. The width and depth of the discussions regarding VH are highly beneficial for my ongoing research, particularly in advancing my understanding of how vowel harmony operates in Manchu.

I had the privilege of presenting my research titled “A Metrical Phonology Analysis of Manchu Stress” at OCP22. In my presentation, I outlined my analysis of stress patterns in Manchu using a metrical phonology framework and explored the interaction between morphology and phonology in relation to stress patterns. The audience was engaged and provided insightful feedback, particularly regarding the possibility of simplifying my morphological analysis. This feedback was enlightening and will help refine my research. Additionally, I received very positive responses, affirming the relevance and potential impact of my study within the broader field of phonology.

Attending OCP22 and the satellite workshop provided several important takeaways that will significantly contribute to my academic progress. The conference offered a comprehensive overview of the latest trends in phonological theory, highlighting the most recognised frameworks and analysis methods currently being used in the field. This has deepened my understanding of contemporary debates and methodologies. During the satellite workshop, one of the keynote speakers introduced a recently published handbook on vowel harmony.

This resource will be immensely helpful for my upcoming research on Manchu vowel harmony, offering new perspectives and analytical tools. A presentation on Mongolian vowel harmony was particularly inspiring, as it shares structural similarities with Manchu. Moreover, the conference provided an excellent opportunity to connect with researchers from various institutions. These interactions have led to ongoing discussions that will extend beyond the conference, potentially leading to future collaborations and academic exchanges.

I am deeply grateful to CIPL for providing the travel grant that enabled me to attend this conference. This experience has been invaluable in advancing my research, enhancing my understanding of current phonological debates, and expanding my academic network. I also extend my gratitude to the organizers of OCP22 and the Vowel Harmony Workshop for creating an intellectually stimulating environment that facilitated meaningful discussions and learning opportunities.

In summary, attending OCP22 and the satellite workshop has been an enriching experience, offering critical insights and valuable academic connections. The conference has played a key role in helping me develop my thesis and navigate the evolving landscape of phonological research. I look forward to applying the knowledge and feedback gained from this experience to my ongoing studies and future academic endeavours.