

# CIPL GRANT- CONFERENCE REPORT

Vu-Thi-Phuong Quynh

## 1. Title and Basic Information

*Conference Name:* The 19th International Pragmatics Conference

*Date:* 22-27 June, 2025

*Location* The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia |

*Organized by:* The International Pragmatics Association

## 2. Purpose of Attendance

I attended this conference to present my research on the discourse of the Vietnamese manosphere, engage with current discussions in hate speech, cultural appropriation, and polarizing language in digital space. I also hoped to explore opportunities for international collaboration through the conference.

## 3. Overview of the Conference

The conference focused on “Pragmatics in Action”, which aimed to reinvigorate the concept of action in pragmatics by highlighting how language use shapes social reality and impacts people's lives. The conference seeks to reassert action as a core theme, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and emphasize the real-world relevance of pragmatics.

## 4. My Participation

*Title of presentation:* The language of ‘toxic’ masculinity in the Vietnamese manosphere: A case study

*Author:* Vu Thi Phuong Quynh

*Panel 5:* Toxic language across time and space (hosted by Lucien Brown and Xi Chen)

*Summary of presentation:* This study analyzes toxic masculinity in Vietnam’s Red Pill-inspired manosphere. Using Corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis, it reveals how hypermasculine, misogynistic and anti-feminism discourses are legitimized through nature, tradition, and savior topoi. The rhetoric reflects internalized racist misandry, polarized gender roles, and paradoxical ideologies of simultaneously embracing and resisting Western influence within the Vietnamese manosphere. The study has implications for media literacy programs as well as censorship policies of online platforms.

*Audience reception:* I was delighted that the audience was very interested and curious about this study on the Vietnamese manosphere. Various questions were made regarding the localized, culturally embedded phenomenon of the manosphere in Vietnam, as well as Vietnamese masculinity. Professor Sun Hee Lee from Wellesley College made a very important suggestion on how I should incorporate keyword analysis into my study. She also mentioned that one of her students was going to conduct a study in the Korean manosphere, and hoped to replicate my study using Korean data so that we could have cross-cultural understanding of the Asian manosphere. I felt truly honored to receive her feedback. In addition, Asst. Prof. Xi Chen, the co-host of the panel, was also interested in my presentation and talked about how she could integrate my findings into her Language & Gender course at Nanyang Technological University. It was absolutely encouraging to realize that my research holds potential for further exploration and relevance beyond its original context. Asst. Prof. Tsung-Lun Alan Wan from National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University in Taiwan stayed after the presentation to discuss with me potentials for collaboration in gender and language, as he also conducts research on the Vietnamese language and culture. It really felt like a dream come true.

## **5. Key Takeaways**

The conference not only offered exceptional opportunities for international collaboration but also enriched my understanding of current research in pragmatics. In particular, Professor Lucien Brown's workshop on multimodal pragmatics deepened my knowledge of gestures, indexicality, and their communicative roles, as well as introduced me to essential analytical tools like ELAN. Another standout session was delivered by the distinguished Professor Yoshiko Matsumoto from Stanford University, who presented on the pragmatics of "care." Her insights were both groundbreaking and transformative as it highlighted communication in care work as a continuous, socially constructed process. She discussed the concepts of communication coherence and dissonance, explaining that communication in care work functions like an improvisational duet, relying more on the ongoing effort to understand each other than on fixed structures of language or communication. In addition, the presentation of Professor Kerstin Fischer from the University of Southern Denmark highlights the concept of robots as social actors, emphasizing that human-robot interactions are best understood as social and continuously evolving processes. Central to this perspective is the willingness of participants to engage with robots as active partners in interaction, treating these exchanges as meaningful social events. Overall, the conference has provided really invaluable insights that will significantly inform and inspire my future research in linguistics.

## **6. Reflections**

The conference has been a life-changing experience for me. The discussion on hate speech and language in digital spaces has challenged me to rethink the concept of "toxic" language in my current project. I have also learnt a great deal about multimodal pragmatics, pragmatics of care, and human-robot interaction. I have also connected with scholars that have far more experience

and broader expertise than me, which both humbles me and inspires me to never stop learning. The opportunities for international collaborations from this conference are also incredibly promising, opening up potential joint projects, cross-cultural research, and long-term academic partnerships that I had only hoped for before. The CIPL travel grant has made all of this possible and truly turned my long-held academic dream into reality, and I am sincerely grateful.