

CIPL Travel Grant Conference Report

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With the generous support of the CIPL travel grant, I was able to attend and present my research at the *XPrag Fest 2025 - Experiments on the Semantics/Pragmatics Interface*, held from 17 to 19 July 2025 at the Leibniz-Centre General Linguistics (ZAS) in Berlin, Germany. The event, organised by Prof. Nicole Gotzner and her colleagues, brought together a vibrant set of scholars working on the experimental investigation of meaning, focusing on topics such as scalar implicatures, presuppositions, vagueness, alternatives, and theory of mind. The conference offered a stimulating mix of invited lectures and paper presentations, all of which showcased current developments at the semantics–pragmatics interface; particularly, the scholars brought distinctive perspectives on how experimental methods can illuminate questions of meaning processing and acquisition.

On the 19th July, I presented my paper, “*Difficulty in accessing the scalar alternative: What does children’s spontaneous feedback reveal?*”. The talk examined how Bengali-speaking preschool children interpret disjunction and whether their difficulties with deriving scalar implicatures stem from a failure to access stronger alternatives. By analyzing children’s spontaneous verbal feedback in the truth-value judgment task, I provided new evidence that many children do, in fact, access alternatives even when they ultimately interpret disjunction logically/inclusively. This suggests that children’s challenges with implicature derivation may not stem from a lack of access to the alternative, but rather from other less frequently discussed or not yet discussed factors. The presentation sparked a lively discussion, especially on the methodological issues of incorporating spontaneous feedback into experimental pragmatics. Several senior researchers, including Jacopo Romoli, Nicole Gotzner, and Ira Noveck, offered constructive comments on revising and extending this work methodologically and exploring its implications for the current debates on children’s comprehension of implicature. I had some enriching discussions with them. The audience was even more interested in the previously under-explored negation-conditional structure of the disjunction word that I examined in my study.

Participating in this workshop was invaluable for me as a doctoral researcher. First, it gave me the opportunity to disseminate my findings to a highly specialised audience and receive detailed, critical feedback that significantly strengthened my dissertation work. Second, I was able to engage directly with leading scholars whose work I had long studied, and to ask questions that clarified both methodological and theoretical challenges in my own project. Third, the conference allowed me to connect with both established and early-career researchers working on related topics, some of whom expressed interest in possible future collaborations on acquisition and cross-linguistic pragmatics.

In sum, attending XPrag Fest 2025 was a deeply enriching academic experience. It

strengthened my research by giving me detailed feedback on my paper, widened my understanding of current debates in experimental semantics and pragmatics, and expanded my international academic network. I am sincerely grateful to CIPL for making this participation possible through the travel grant. The financial support eased the burden of international travel and allowed me to fully focus on presenting and engaging with the research community.