Listening and speaking inside and outside the classroom

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Language proficiency findings at wave 2 of LSIA 3:

1. Very little movement in English Proficiency wave 1- wave 2.

2. Migrants rated their reading proficiency as being slightly better than their written and spoken proficiency.

3. Approximately one in six Family stream PAs still had poor English reading, writing and speaking skills

What’s going on?

What can the LTS data tell us about the opportunities for speaking practice and the development of speaking?

What do our participants say about speaking/listening in the AMEP and out in the community?
• Speaking is something that learners feel is very important (Yates 2003)
• Many find speaking harder than they thought
• Many find it scary
• Many don’t get many opportunities to speak

The importance of speaking at all levels
At CSWE1....

Int(p005): Because ahh the listening and ah the speaking is much harder than writing.
c07TR: Yeah.
Int: And reading.
c07TR: Yeah.
Int: So
c07TR: Yeah.
Int: The- much harder in listening and ah speaking.
[....]
Int: Ah he hopes that- if he’s …the English study here ah it’s better to spend more time on speaking and listening for the students yeah
And at CSWE 3....

**Lucia:** I’m just - ah feeling totally like stuck. Like- like when I know- you know it’s like I’m feeling like I’m expressing myself always in the same way or always- [.....] Using the same words and using the same-

**AR:** Yes, so it’s a restricted range of things-that you can say and do and you want to expand that, yeah.

**Lucia:** Exactly because I feel like robot, you know?

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**Speaking is a scary business .....**

**CSWE1 c07p12:** Yeah. Sometime when ask me ah was I don’t understand some word, ah I'm upset

**CSWE1 c07p13:** I can speak when I'm relaxed because sometime shy when I speak the – to the people - Australian. And I shy say the words – the sentences so, yeah I can't understand

**CSWE2 c01p10:** But some- but when I can- when I can’t understand - I feel upset I feel so oh is it difficult we never learn English at all

**CSWE3 c05p4:** I'm not joking you can find my hand was cold and I’m feel ...

**c05AR:** Really?

**c05p04:** Yeah I’m panic I very very panic before
Sense of inadequacy

In class:
(CSWE3) c05p01: I want to speak a lot in the class but ahh - but you - sometimes you are frighten maybe your answer is not correct so you will be shy and you are not - you are not speak loud in class yeah

And outside class:
(CSWE2) c01p10: And ah sometimes when I think about learning English and what - I’m when I want to speak good correctly fluently I scared – Oh! It's impossible!

In class

The AMEP is a safe place:
(CSWE1 Q1 c8p5) Class the only place where I don’t feel lost

Although, in some cases they feel they need more:
(CSWE1 Q1 c11p10) We never learn; we never practise
Many have few social networks outside AMEP

- Social isolation
  - more extreme at lower levels (c.f. Bremer et al 1996; Norton 2000; Perdue 1993)
- Many had little social contact outside the AMEP.
- The AMEP - often only place for regular contact with English (native) speakers
  - (CSWE1 Q1 c08p03) English has stood still since I left class
  - (CSWE2 Q3 c01p10, c01p12) They say their English is getting worse due to lack of practice.

So .... little opportunity to practise

- (CSWE 1 Q1) c03p13Int: I rarely go out by myself and if I have to go out by myself I just use some very basic English

- (CSWE1 Q2 c03p16) Opportunities to learn/practise are limited by the lack of a social network
The AMEP: important in many ways for new arrivals

Across the levels - AMEP source of:
- learn English
- a safe place to try to speak English
- social support
- friendship
- social networking
- information about local social and community services

After the AMEP: social networks dwindle and even disappear....

(CSWE2 Q3 c01p01) Participant has less opportunity to speak English because more isolated
And so they may start to lose their English.....

c01p10: Because you know - because I always stay at home - and don’t ahh have a relationship with other language - people you know and I don’t have - I didn’t have any practice ...
c01AR: Mmm
c01p10: So I think my English gets worse than before.

[C1p10 has recently had a baby].
Little awareness of language learning strategies

- little use inside or outside the AMEP.
- largely unaware how strategies could help:
  - independent language learning
  - extend their social contacts
  - enhance their communicative competence.


Strategies are important for independence in language learning

“Language learning strategies are [...] especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence.”

Oxford (1990b, p.1)
What strategies did they use?

- How did participants talk reflect their attitudes to oral/aural skills development?
- How did their talk reflect the conscious or unconscious, independent and non-teacher directed use of language learning strategies to improve their listening and speaking?
- What type of learning strategy did they use through all levels?

Strategy use

- Use of LL strategies slightly higher for most well-educated, but low/no use of strategies not only among those less educated.
- No obvious pattern of strategy use and L1, cultural background, age, gender or marital status.
- Those using LL strategies inside the AMEP also used them outside the AMEP.
Strategy types

- **Socioaffective**: How learners to manage their feelings, motivations and attitudes towards language learning; how they facilitate interaction with others.


- **Metacognitive**: Help learners exercise control of their learning by planning and evaluating their own learning and learning needs.

- **Memory**: Aid in committing information to long-term memory and assisting learners with information retrieval.

Summary

- Strategy use not very high or consistent inside or outside class
- Strong reliance on social strategies
- Interview data suggests their use:
  - Largely unconscious
  - Socially rather than language-learning oriented
- Education may encourage strategy use, but not necessarily
- How can we:
  - increase the active use of strategies
  - increase the range of strategies
  - make them more conscious and motivated
CSWE 1: A low or no strategy user

Quarter 1:
c03AR: What do you do at home for example to learn English or to study by yourself?
c03p13: Mmm...
c03Int: (L1 long exchange).
c03p13Int: At home yeah she doesn’t do anything no homework - and she doesn’t speak to anybody in English.

Quarter 2:
c03p13Int: Yeah - only in - in class she has to speak English.
c03AR: She ha-
c03p13Int : Otherwise outside a class she didn’t.

And Quarter Four Outside AMEP

c03p13Int: It’s very difficult to - to listen and to understand and also they speak too fast to me.
c03AR: Okay. And right, they speak quite – yeah sometimes they do most of the time. Okay it - have you ever tried to tell them to repeat?
c03p13Int:(L1 exchange).
c03p13Int: No.
CSWE 3: A very good strategy user
(Inside AMEP)

Quarter One

c05p04: Yeah but in class I - I don’t have - I - I’m not speaking to any Arabic people in this class ...
c05AR: So that’s the first thing ...
c05p04: Yeah that’s the first thing yeah for me it’s very important And second thing I feel more confident and I can speak to all of them and speak with the teacher and - and have fun I feel myself now I can feel myself because in my country ahh I’m easy going person I can - I always have jokes with others but when I came here I’m not confident even to speak...
c05AR: So just confidence was the problem...
c05p04: Well the most problem for me.

Also inside AMEP

Quarter Two

c05p04: It’s normal it’s more- more freedom but at the same time that here they are looking for my English so I have to take care. When I start taking care I s- taking care I start thinking...
c05AR: Mhm.
c05p04: When I start thinking I- I start talking slowly and feel that I’m not- I’m not talking as easily as outside...
c05AR: Mhm.
c05p04: Which is totally opposite to the beginning...
c05AR: OK...
c05p04: It was hard to speak outside but easy to speak inside...
c05AR: Yeah.
c05p04: Now it’s opposite...
c05AR: OK.
c05p04: I’m speaking good outside but hard inside.
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Outside AMEP

Quarter Three

c05p04: So the job ga- gave me like confidence because I HAVE to speak with people I - I’m not like sitting at home or with my friend that understand my same language...
c05AR: Mhm.
C05p04: So there’s some situations that I have to speak. There’s some situation that I have to talk to people. Some issues I have to do so- some problems some things. So my job help me like give- ga- gave me like the opportunity to- to be confident of myself. I- it- it didn’t add anything to my language...
c05AR: Mhm....
c05p04: But it gave- it gave me like confidence.
Quarter Four

c05AR: Is there anything new?
c05p04: Anything new? Yeah I started to work a lot on myself, like - like I told you I'm in TAFE, at work, with my brother, with any - just like - I always try to find a situation like that so I can go out and speak in English, you know...
c05AR: Mm...
c0504: All the time I'm trying to find a place that I can speak English in.
Some positive strategies

- **CSWE1:**
  - Reads aloud to her daughter who corrects her (c8p12).
  - Speaks to NESB neighbours (c3p16).

- **CSWE2:**
  - Watch TV and listen to radio to practise listening (c01p08, c01p012)

- **CSWE 3:**
  - Joined the ‘Huggies Club’ for parents to talk about baby care. (Got good advice for breastfeeding, too!!) (c2p9).
  - Watches TV every night with her husband, he asks her about the news afterwards and they have discussions about it (c6p14).
  - Makes up sentences to try out with her husband (c9p2).
So why aren’t more participants using strategies to help with speaking and listening?

Some questions for consideration

- What can we do to increase speaking opportunities? Should we teach strategies more?
- What types of LL strategy can be taught and discussed from beginner level?
- Are learner conceptions of language learning the same as ours? If not, what can we do about this?
- What simple measures of personal progress could be devised?
- How can teachers use students who are good strategy users as models?
- How can teachers help learners have a go? What can we do to reduce social isolation and sense of powerlessness?
- How can we increase awareness in the community of the issues faced by migrants?
Community notice for the workplace in Copenhagen....

In case your Danish is a little rusty.....

1. Imagine what it feels like to be in their shoes
2. Involve your colleagues in conversation
3. Take time to listen
4. Look at the person you’re speaking to
5. Say it in a different way if you are not being understood
6. Help find the missing words
7. Speak in simple language
8. Speak at a suitable tempo
9. Speak clearly
10. Give only a few instructions at a time
Thanks are due

To the inspiring migrants and refugees who told us so much about language learning.

To the dedicated teachers who gave their time so generously.

To the research team.

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Interactions and transactions

Findings, wave 2 of LSIA 3:

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

• More than 70 per cent in wave one and 85 per cent in wave two participated in at least one of the following activities:
  – Religious activities
  – School activities
  – Activities arranged by people from their home country
  – Local community activities
  – Activities involving sports or hobbies