

**DEPARTMENT
OF LINGUISTICS**

*Faculty of
Human Sciences*

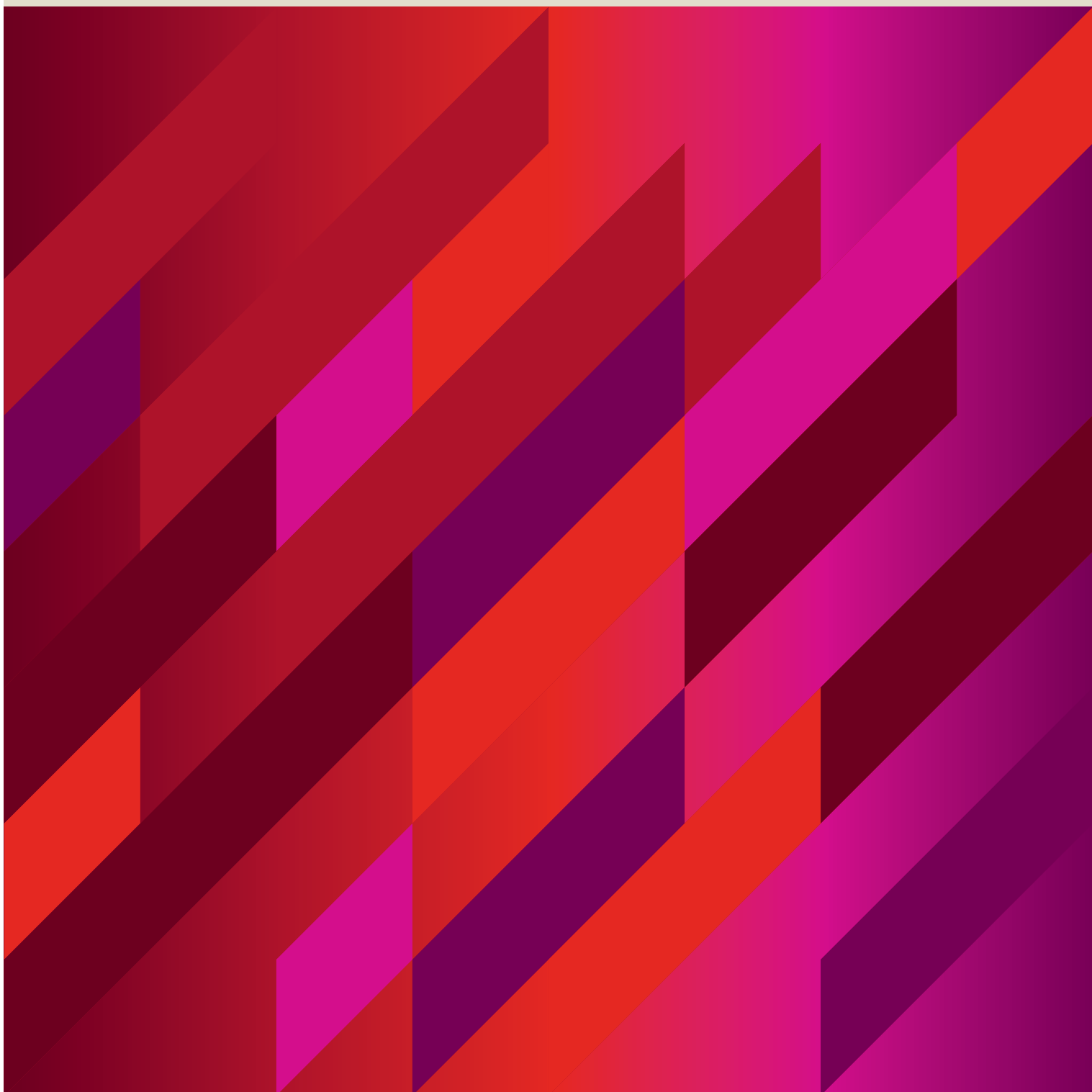


**MACQUARIE
University**

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

LONGITUDINAL STUDY 2011 – 2014: FINAL REPORT

Lynda Yates, Agnes Terraschke, Beth Zielinski, Elizabeth Pryor, Jihong Wang, George Major,
Mahesh Radhakrishnan, Heather Middleton, Maria Chisari, Vera Williams Tetteh



Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

Longitudinal Study 2011–2014:

Final Report

Lynda Yates

Agnes Terraschke

Beth Zielinski

Elizabeth Pryor

Jihong Wang

George Major

Mahesh Radhakrishnan

Heather Middleton

Maria Chisari

Vera Williams Tetteh

Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University

Published and distributed by the Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University,
Sydney, NSW 2109, Australia.



ISBN: 978-0-9942123-0-6 (paperback) ISBN: 978-0-9942123-1-3 (PDF version)

Acknowledgement

This publication was prepared by the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University, with funding from a longitudinal research project funded by the Australian Government departments with responsibility for the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). This includes the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Department of Industry and Science and currently the Department of Education and Training.

© Commonwealth of Australia 2015

This work is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), no part may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised, without the permission of the Department of Education and Training, 50 Marcus Clarke Street, Civic, ACT, 2601.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are those of the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University, and do not necessarily represent those of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, the Department of Industry and Science or the Department of Education and Training. While all reasonable care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, neither the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, the Department of Industry and Science nor the Department of Education and Training shall be responsible or liable (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies.

Writers

Professor Lynda Yates	Mahesh Radhakrishnan
Agnes Terraschke	Heather Middleton
Beth Zielinski	Maria Chisari
Elizabeth Pryor	Vera Williams Tetteh
Jihong Wang	
George Major	

With sincere thanks to the rest of the research team:

Former Chief Investigator:

Ingrid Piller (2011-2013)

Former Researchers:

Charlotte Setijadi-Dunn (2011-2013)

Jennifer Cheng (2013)

Associate Researchers:

Donna Butorac

Kerry Taylor-Leech

Research Assistants:

Tracy Allen

Sally Baker

Victoria Benz

Agnes Bodis

Natalie Brand

Grace Chang

Thushara Gamage

Lori Keenan

Emily Major

Cimi Ross

Shiva Motaghi Tabari

Hanna Torsh

Claire Urbach

Ally Xu

**Many thanks also to the teachers and clients in the AMEP who allowed us
into their lives.**

CONTENTS

Abbreviations

List of tables and figures

Executive summary	1
Chapter 1 AMEP Longitudinal Study	9
1.1 Introduction	9
1.2 Methodology	11
Chapter 2 Employment, education goals and the role of English	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Participants' employment and career goals	27
2.3 Strategies for pursuing long-term goals post-AMEP	34
2.4 Summary	45
Chapter 3 Use of English in everyday life	47
3.1 Introduction	47
3.2 How much English did participants use overall?	48
3.3 Use of English at work	52
3.4 Use of English in public places	64
3.5 Use of English at home	69
3.6 Use of English for socialising	70
3.7 Use of reading and writing skills in English	74
3.8 Summary	76
Chapter 4 Perspectives on the new business model	77
4.1 Introduction	77
4.2 Background to the new business model	77
4.3 Advice and support in the AMEP	79
4.4 Settlement content in the AMEP	82
4.5 Work preparation programs	84
4.6 Exiting the AMEP	87
4.7 Case study: specialised youth classes for under 25s	89
4.8 Summary	90
Chapter 5 Language learning in the AMEP and beyond	92
5.1 Introduction	92
5.2 Experiences and perceptions of the AMEP	93
5.3 Language development during Phase 1 and Phase 2	99
5.4 Participant strategies for ongoing language learning	108

5.5 Summary	109
Chapter 6 Settlement	110
6.1 Introduction	110
6.2 A framework for understanding settlement indicators and outcomes	111
6.3 Social participation and connection to the community	114
6.4 Personal wellbeing and life satisfaction	125
6.5 Independence	133
6.6 Summary	135
Chapter 7 Conclusions and recommendations	137
7.1 Introduction	137
7.2 Employment, education goals and the role of English	137
7.3 Use of English in everyday life	139
7.4 Perspectives on the new business model	141
7.5 Language learning in the AMEP and beyond	142
7.6 Settlement	142
Appendices	145
References	161

ABBREVIATIONS

AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
AMEP LS	AMEP Longitudinal Study
AMES	Adult Multicultural Education Service (Victoria)
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ASRG	Australian Survey Research Group
CSWE	Certificate in Spoken and Written English
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship (currently the Department of Immigration and Border Protection)
ESL	English as a Second Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IPG	Individual Pathway Guide
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program. In July 2013, LLNP was transformed into Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) Program.
L1	First language
LSIA	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia
SEE	Skills for Education and Employment Program (formerly known as the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program)
SLPET	Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training
SPP	Special Preparatory Program
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
YAMEC	Youth Adult Migrant Education Course

List of tables and figures

Table 1.1: Cohort A Centre profiles	12
Table 1.2: Cohort B Centre profiles	13
Table 1.3: Cohort A interview data Phase 1 and Phase 2	16
Table 1.4: Cohort B interview data.....	16
Table 1.5: Classroom materials and social interaction data.....	17
Figure 1.1: Spreadsheet ‘language learning’	19
Table 1.6: Countries of origin of Cohort A and B participants.....	20
Table 1.7: First languages spoken by Cohort A and B participants	21
Table 1.8: Background profile of Cohort A and B participants	21
Table 1.9: Intersection between years of education and CSWE level in Cohorts A and B	23
Figure 2.1: Interviews selected for closer analysis	26
Table 2.1: Cohort B pre- and post-migration employment and goals.....	27
Table 2.2: Cohort A pre- and post-migration employment and goals.....	31
Table 2.3: Post-AMEP English study by cohort and CSWE level	35
Table 2.4: Education planned at Interview 1 while still attending the AMEP	37
Table 2.5: Education planned at Interview 1 by education level and cohort	38
Table 2.6: Preferences for TAFE courses at Interview 1.....	39
Table 2.7: Qualifications gained or in progress at final interviews	39
Figure 3.1: Example of a language map used to record English use in everyday life	48
Table 3.1: Participants’ CSWE level and overall English use.....	49
Table 3.2: Participants’ employment status and CSWE level	51
Table 3.3: Participants’ employment status and overall English use	52
Table 3.4: Common public places where participants used English independently	65
Table 3.5: Reported main challenges in English interactions in public places	67
Table 3.6: Participants who reported using English when socialising	71
Table 3.7: CSWE level and reported use of English when socialising at final interviews	71
Table 3.8: Interlocutors and reported use of English when socialising (at final interviews).....	72
Table 4.1: Contact with/awareness of a counsellor	80
Table 4.2: Cohort B participants, enrolment status at Interview 5 and AMEP entitlement.....	88
Table 5.1: Overall self-ratings by CSWE level	101
Table 5.2: Cohort A and B self-ratings for speaking	103
Table 5.3: Correlation between reported English use and self-ratings for speaking	105
Table 5.4: Cohort A and B self-ratings for writing	106
Table 6.1: Framework for understanding settlement indicators and outcomes.....	112
Table 6.2: Adapted framework and coding categories	113
Table 6.3: Participants’ comments about becoming Australian citizens.....	123
Table 6.4: Participants’ comments about living in Australia	126
Figure 6.1: Cohort A and B living arrangements at final interviews.....	128
Table 6.5: Cohort A and B satisfaction with accommodation at final interviews.....	129
Table D.1: Cohort A participants	153
Table D.2: Cohort B participants	154
Table F.1: Complete list of countries of birth of Cohort A and B participants	158
Table G.1: Complete list of languages spoken by Cohort A and Cohort B participants.....	159

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The AMEP Longitudinal Study 2011–2014 (AMEP LS) is the second phase of a longitudinal qualitative research study conducted nationally in two phases. The findings from Phase 1 were reported in Yates (2010). Both phases investigated language learning and early settlement of migrants in Australia as they studied in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and then moved on to life, work and study in the community. The AMEP LS (Phase 2) followed a subset of 60 of the participants from Phase 1 (Cohort A) who had long since left the AMEP, and a group of 85 new participants who were recruited as they studied in the AMEP from 2012 onwards (Cohort B). By the end of the Phase 2 data collection period Cohort A participants had been followed for a period of approximately 4.5 years, and Cohort B for approximately 1.5 years.

Participants from Cohort B studied in the AMEP under a new business model introduced in 2011 in order to encourage greater commitment from AMEP clients and increase settlement-focused learning. Key changes include the introduction of dedicated AMEP counsellors, Individual Pathway Guide (IPG) to document client learning goals and pathways, settlement courses on entering and exiting the AMEP, specialised youth classes and Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) courses.

The following research questions (RQs) were addressed:

- RQ1: What kind of interactions in English (spoken, written and computer-mediated) do contemporary AMEP clients engage in inside and outside the classroom during their time in the AMEP and afterwards?
- RQ2: How are the two (English interactions used inside the AMEP and English interactions used outside the AMEP) related and how can their fit be improved?
- RQ3: How are interactions in English different for different learner groups and how can language training be customised to meet the language needs of different client groups?
- RQ4: What are the settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants?
 - 4a: How do they change with time in the country?
 - 4b: How does ongoing language learning in the long run build on initial language training?
- RQ5: How do findings for RQs 1–4 compare across AMEP business models?

This final research report draws on data collected for both phases and focuses on participants' experiences inside and outside the AMEP.

The key findings are summarised under the five headings of *employment, education goals and the role of English, use of English in everyday life, perspectives on the new business model, language learning in the AMEP and beyond*, and *settlement*. These are followed by our major recommendations for each area.

Employment, education goals and the role of English

For most of the participants, finding appropriate employment in Australia was important, and language learning and post-AMEP study were seen as vital steps towards achieving this goal. Some saw migration as an opportunity to refocus their careers. In both cohorts, and throughout the study, a large number of participants aspired to own and run their own businesses. Most participants had to work towards their goals in stages, some had to revise their goals, and many were still some way from achieving them by the end of the study.

More Cohort A participants were in employment by the end of the study, and more were working at levels commensurate with their previous occupation. This suggests that Cohort A participants had more opportunities to gain work during the (longer) time period since exiting the AMEP. However, managerial and professional level participants worked below their level of skill, at least within the relatively short time period covered by the study. Some experienced this downward occupational trajectory because they were gradually working their way towards their employment goals while also gaining local experience and improving their English. For others, however, short-term employment was less strategic and more of a financial imperative to provide for themselves and their families. These participants ran the risk of becoming trapped in jobs with relatively little opportunity to use and practise English.

In addition to finding short-term work, many participants, in particular those enrolled in higher certificate levels within the Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) curriculum, undertook post-AMEP English study and/or further education, mainly at Technical and Further Education (TAFE), taking a range of courses in order to either re-qualify in their pre-migration occupation or to qualify for a new area of work. While they sometimes found the English demands of further study challenging, particularly the literacy component, most persevered with their studies.

Some participants, particularly those from Cohort B with lower levels of proficiency and education, continued to take English classes directly after they had finished the AMEP. Others returned to formal English study only after they had encountered English-related obstacles at work or on TAFE courses, which helped them to realise that they needed higher levels of English.

A range of factors in addition to English proficiency impacted participants' ability or motivation to pursue their long-term career goals, including age, educational level, family

responsibilities and economic necessity. Original goals sometimes had to be put on hold, revised or even abandoned. However, since it can take migrants many years to achieve their goals, it remains to be seen if the downward occupational trajectory noted above persists.

Recommendations

- In addition to the existing programs such as the AMEP and SLPET, new programs should be developed specifically to assist migrants with low levels of education and skill (e.g. pre-literate humanitarian entrants) transition to the workplace. These new programs could include a formal component of English language learning and workplace skills.
- Initial language training should continue to support migrants to fully understand the role of English proficiency in the achievement of their goals and the potential risks in relying solely on short-term work to improve their English post-AMEP.
- Career counselling services for AMEP clients should continue to encourage the early identification of goals and employment pathways, including the understanding that goals may change and that a long-term perspective may be necessary.
- Initial language training needs to include explicit attention to the nature of the language learning process so that it is understood to be a complex and lifelong process. Initial language training and support services should emphasise the importance of 'learning how to learn' skills so that migrants can take control of their own ongoing language learning.
- TAFE courses specifically designed for migrants should be developed to maximise language learning, including the integration of language and content objectives and the use of team-teaching by content and language specialists.
- In addition to the AMEP, English language training and mentoring programs should be developed for professional migrants wanting to re-enter the workforce (at a professional level). Such support should include more advanced English language instruction (including literacy), information on vocationally specific practices, professional work placements, and self-access online material designed to guide professionals through the specific English language demands of their profession.
- AMEP clients should be referred to already available registered training organisations (RTO) courses that provide support and advice to newly arrived migrants on opening and running a small business in Australia. These courses should include assistance with clarifying goals, drawing up plans, understanding local business practices and identifying relevant further education pathways.
- Study participants should be followed up in a third phase of the longitudinal study in order to track their progress towards their goals and the role of English language proficiency over the longer term.

Use of English in everyday life

Cohort A participants reported using more English than Cohort B participants in daily communications, and more were in paid employment by the end of the study. These results suggest that with time in Australia, migrants are likely to use more English in their everyday lives and enter the workforce, and therefore become more independent and more confident using English. Self-ratings appeared to be associated with levels of confidence rather than with proficiency per se.

In both cohorts, participants at higher CSWE levels consistently reported using more English in both social and work contexts and were more likely to be employed. They also reported reading and writing more in English. This finding suggests that migrants arriving in Australia with a higher level of proficiency may find more opportunities to use and thus practise and learn English, and to find employment more quickly. Moreover, across both cohorts, those in paid work reported using more English and therefore potentially had more opportunity to develop their proficiency.

The majority of employed participants worked in English-speaking multicultural workplaces (i.e. workplaces in which workers are from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and English is the main language used for communication). The opportunity to use English and the quality of interactions varied across job categories. Higher-level jobs required the extensive use of complex language across all four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), whereas lower-level jobs principally demanded simpler language and minimal reading and writing in English. The main challenges participants reported in workplace communication included: (a) understanding people and being understood, (b) talking on the telephone, (c) expressing themselves fully and using complex English, (d) using reading and writing skills in English, (e) understanding and engaging in social talk and humour and (f) the work-specific terminology in their professions. These challenges suggest areas that could be addressed in English language and workplace training programs. Although many participants initially lacked confidence when communicating with colleagues and customers, they generally gained in confidence and made noticeable progress with time, practice and support from co-workers. Participants reported few opportunities outside the AMEP to develop literacy skills.

Recommendations

- In addition to the current AMEP training provided, language training should prepare newly arrived migrants in both job-seeking skills, such as how to write job applications and prepare for interviews, and in the kinds of English interactions required by specific categories of jobs, for example, answering the telephone or giving instructions.
- Initial language training programs should address the following skills identified as problematic by our participants:
 - understand a range of accents of speakers of other varieties of English

- make themselves understood through clear articulation and use of communicative strategies such as paraphrasing
 - conduct telephone conversations
 - construct and understand longer, complex explanations and exchanges
 - read and write in English
 - understand and engage in social talk including small talk and humour
 - understand and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Since language development relies on engagement outside as well as inside the classroom, newly arrived migrants should be supported to:
 - interact with other people in English in a wide variety of contexts both in the classroom and in authentic situations outside class
 - find opportunities to practise social interactions with English speakers in the community beyond simple greetings and social pleasantries.
 - Family members are very important in the development of migrants' English language skills and should be offered explicit support and guidance on how to best assist with migrants' English language learning at home.

Perspectives on the new business model

The majority of Cohort B participants who had received advice from AMEP counsellors under the new business model were less dependent on their teachers for support regarding education and employment than Cohort A participants who studied under the old model. Counsellors also provided valuable support to staff. Settlement content was generally appreciated by participants in both cohorts, but staff had some concerns about offering settlement courses separately. Refugees were more positive in their evaluation of the content of the entry settlement course than migrants on other visa types. Some highly educated, more proficient participants, particularly those who had already spent some time in Australia, found that aspects of the settlement content were not relevant to their needs. Generally, the exit settlement course was not clearly recalled by Cohort B participants and if they did, they tended to regard it as an institutional requirement.

Work preparation programs were viewed positively by staff, and while half of the Cohort B participants who participated in such courses were happy, half raised some issues with the programs. Critical comments most commonly related to the nature and length of the work experience placements and the fact that they did not lead to employment.

Cohort B clients who completed their 510 hours generally felt well supported as they exited the AMEP. Those who withdrew before completion of their hours and the majority of participants in Cohort A often left the program without formal discussion of their post-AMEP options.

Staff and the one participant who studied in a specialised youth class for under 25s found it successful.

Recommendations

- The role of AMEP counsellors should be continued and enhanced.
- Provision should be made for clients with higher levels of education to access online information about study and work prospects for themselves.
- The timing of pathway planning and discussion of the IPG should be responsive to how long clients have been in Australia.
- Settlement content, including the entry settlement course, should be tailored to the needs of different learner groups, such as highly educated participants with family or community support in Australia.
- The purpose of the SLPET program and employment prospects resulting from participation should be made clear to clients.
- Consideration should be given to increasing the length of work experience placements from the current 80 hours.
- The content and delivery mode of the exit settlement course and its relationship with the individual exit interview with a counsellor should be reconsidered.
- Youth classes should be continued.

Language learning in the AMEP and beyond

Participants were overall very positive about the AMEP for providing valuable English language and settlement training and a place where they could learn important independent language learning skills and make social connections in the early days of their settlement.

Participants at all CSWE levels valued topics and skills that enabled them to communicate in their daily lives. More proficient learners also appreciated learning skills that helped them pursue employment and study goals.

Class size and composition sometimes interfered with the quality of delivery. The difficulty of catering for the diversity of learner backgrounds was also mentioned. Aspects of course content and teaching style were not always suitable for all learners, particularly those at the highest level (CSWE III) and lowest level (pre-CSWE). Very low-level learners felt the need for bilingual teaching, and professional and educated participants did not always feel sufficiently challenged. Some less proficient learners felt that they needed more than 510 hours in the AMEP.

Recommendations

- The AMEP should offer a range of classes to cater for the diversity of client needs. When appropriate, these should include faster-paced classes with a workplace focus and/or electives and extension classes for professional and other educated clients, and attention to specific skills as required such as pronunciation or employment-relevant literacy skills.
- Bilingual support and extended AMEP hours should be considered for classes with low-level learners with little experience of formal education.
- Classroom learning objectives should be made very explicit to clients so that those who are more familiar with traditional approaches to learning can very clearly understand the purpose of classes.
- AMEP clients should be supported to use English in community settings. Community links such as the Home Tutor Program should be actively promoted and supported (See Building Confidence Fact Sheet series developed as part of this project).

Settlement

Our analysis of settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants highlighted the dynamic nature of the settlement process.

Owning a home was important but not essential to feeling settled. Overall participants were happy with where they lived by the end of the study.

Participation in a range of community activities was associated with developing a sense of belonging. Other factors such as family, a sense of being accepted and included in the community, having friends in Australia, homesickness, being proficient in English, their sense of identity and their employment status also impacted their sense of belonging. Social participation with their first language (L1) network was important. Participants who were able to participate in community life and find a sense of belonging often settled well, and this impacted their decisions regarding citizenship. Although Australian citizenship was considered an important step, the decision to apply for citizenship was influenced by whether or not dual citizenship was possible. English language proficiency also played a role in participants' success in the citizenship test.

Overall, participants from both cohorts felt more positive than negative about living in Australia. As the study progressed, more participants spoke about aspects of their lives in Australia that they liked. Comments about aspects they did not like also increased over time, suggesting that there may be a 'honeymoon period' for settlement. The likes and dislikes and the sense of comfort they reported fluctuated over time, with the focus shifting to the practical settlement services in the later interviews. Some aspects of their lives in Australia improved over time, while others remained difficult. Although comparisons of Cohort A and Cohort B data present a picture that is cross-sectional rather than strictly

longitudinal, Cohort A participants felt more comfortable about living in Australia, and thus appeared to be further on in the process of settlement.

Many participants were frustrated by a lack of independence, and this was in a large part related to their limited proficiency in English. However, for most, feelings of independence increased over time, often associated with improvements in their English. Proficiency in English was also relevant for most other settlement indicators.

Recommendations

- The provision of English language training for migrants without functional English should continue to be supported as English proficiency is crucial for successful settlement.
- Initial English language training and support services should target priorities of everyday life likely to assist migrants to develop a sense of independence.
- Language training and settlement services should maintain a focus on participation in community life, as a means of fostering feelings of belonging and acceptance.
- Support services should assist migrants to become more aware of local services, community groups and neighbourhoods, and more familiar with local places of interest.
- The community should be supported to become more culturally aware and cognisant of their role in helping migrants to feel more accepted.
- Further studies should explore settlement and indicators of settlement success over a longer time period than was possible in this study.

CHAPTER 1

AMEP LONGITUDINAL STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is the Australian Government's largest settlement program. It provides eligible new migrants and humanitarian entrants with up to 510 hours of free English language tuition in their first five years of settlement in Australia. The *AMEP Longitudinal Study 2011–2014* (AMEP LS) is the second phase of a longitudinal qualitative research study conducted nationally in two phases. Both phases investigated language learning and early settlement of migrants in Australia as clients of the AMEP and as they moved on to life, work and study in the community.¹ Phase 1, *Language training and settlement success: Are they related?* followed 152 newly arrived migrants over a 12-month period from 2008 to 2009 (see Yates, 2010). The AMEP LS, conducted from 2011 to 2014, followed a subset of 60 participants from Phase 1 (Cohort A) who had left the AMEP, and a group of 85 new participants who were recruited as they studied in the AMEP from 2012 onwards (Cohort B). By the end of the Phase 2 data collection period, Cohort A participants had been followed for a period of approximately 4.5 years, and Cohort B for approximately 1.5 years.

The inclusion of both cohorts allowed us to follow participants who studied in the AMEP under different business models. Cohort B studied under a new business model introduced on 1 July 2011. Two of the overarching aims of the new model are:

- to encourage greater commitment from AMEP clients
- to facilitate continuous, coherent, settlement-focused learning.

(Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC], 2012a, p. 247)

To promote these goals, new features were incorporated into the AMEP program and existing aspects were expanded. Key changes of particular relevance to this study include:

- the introduction of dedicated AMEP counsellors to provide increased support to AMEP clients
- the introduction of Individual Pathway Guides (IPG) which are completed by an AMEP counsellor and which document client learning goals and pathways
- the introduction of settlement courses for clients entering and exiting the AMEP

¹ Both phases of this longitudinal research project were funded by the Australian Government departments with responsibility for the AMEP. This includes the former Department of Immigration and Citizenship (currently the Department of Immigration and Border Protection), the Department of Industry and Science, and currently the Department of Education and Training.

- the delivery of specialised youth classes
- the replacement of previous work preparation programs with the Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) courses (see Chapter 4 for details).

The following research questions (RQs) were addressed in the AMEP LS:

- RQ1: What kind of interactions in English (spoken, written and computer-mediated) do contemporary AMEP clients engage in inside and outside the classroom during their time in the AMEP and afterwards?
- RQ2: How are the two (English interactions used inside the AMEP and English interactions used outside the AMEP) related and how can their fit be improved?
- RQ3: How are interactions in English different for different learner groups and how can language training be customised to meet the language needs of different client groups?
- RQ4: What are the settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants?
- 4a: How do they change with time in the country?
- 4b: How does ongoing language learning in the long run build on initial language training?
- RQ5: How do findings for RQs 1–4 compare across AMEP business models?

The collection and compilation of data from multiple sources and the longitudinal qualitative approach taken by the study has allowed the exploration of a range of factors that impact on migrants' language learning and settlement experiences. This final report draws on data collected for both phases and focuses on participants' experiences both inside and outside the AMEP.

1.1.1 Background and approach

In studies of settlement in Australia, English language proficiency emerges as crucial to migrants' level of social and economic participation, including access to employment, education, training, housing, government services, and information about available subsidies and training courses (FECCA, 2013; Fozdar & Hartley, 2012). It also impacts their level of social participation in the wider community and their sense of belonging (DIAC, 2013a; Hugo, 2011), and lower levels of language proficiency can seriously limit opportunities for employment (AMES, 2011; FECCA, 2013; Fozdar & Hartley, 2012; Hugo, 2011). The AMEP provides English language and settlement-relevant classes to eligible migrants who arrive in Australia without basic functional English, and thus provides not only basic language skills that lay the foundation for ongoing learning, but also information about life in Australia (AMES, 2011; Department of Industry, 2014).

The qualitative longitudinal study explored the perspectives of AMEP clients and their experiences learning and using English. It was found that a complex interplay of factors

influenced their English language learning. In line with contemporary approaches, language learning is seen as a non-linear, dynamic and complex process that takes place in a wide range of contexts, including but not restricted to the classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; van Lier, 2004). This study explores the relationship between English language learning and settlement for various groups of migrants, and the role of the AMEP in providing them with a foundation for ongoing language learning and language use in the community.

1.2 Methodology

Qualitative data from and about participants were collected from multiple sources as detailed in Section 1.2.1.3. Interviews were conducted with a number of AMEP teachers, counsellors, administrators and managers in order to gain a full picture of the impact of the new business model on the experiences of AMEP clients.

The qualitative approach taken by this study has allowed consideration of both overall patterns and individual cases. Since qualitative research is explorative in nature (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005), it is ideal for analysis of the complex web of factors and variables that impact on migrants' language learning and their experiences of settlement. While quantitative measures can reveal patterns across large datasets, qualitative approaches are able to explore these patterns by focusing on the participants' perspectives without the need to rely on preconceived categories or variables (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The qualitative research methodology adopted in this study provides insight into migrants' perceptions of their experiences of learning English in the AMEP and how this learning impacts on their future language learning and settlement. We use these data to explore the complexity of factors that impact the experiences of different groups of migrants and illustrate these using case studies that provide more personal insight into the language learning and settlement trajectories of individual participants.

1.2.1 Data collection and analysis

1.2.1.1 Cohort A participant recruitment

Phase 1 participants were recontacted and invited to join the AMEP LS. Researchers first explained the purpose of the study and outlined what would be required of participants. In accordance with ethics guidelines, researchers stressed that continued involvement in the study was voluntary and that participants would be free to withdraw at any time (see Appendix A and Appendix B for a copy of the participant consent form and the ethics approval letter).

Sixty Phase 1 participants who had attended AMEP classes in New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (VIC), Tasmania (TAS), Western Australia (WA) and Queensland (QLD) agreed to continue their involvement with the study and were interviewed up to three times (each)

between the end of 2011 and the end of 2013. This group of re-recruited Phase 1 participants is referred to as Cohort A. As shown in Table 1.1, the 60 Cohort A participants were AMEP clients in 2008, and were drawn from all four Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) levels (pre-CSWE, CSWE I, CSWE II and CSWE III). Participants in Cohort A were predominantly at CSWE III or CSWE II level (46) and predominantly from urban centres such as Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane (45).

Table 1.1: Cohort A Centre profiles

Centre number	State	Centre location	CSWE level	Number of participants
Centre 01	NSW	Parramatta	CSWE II	7
Centre 02	NSW	Blacktown	CSWE III	7
Centre 05	NSW	Randwick	CSWE III	6
Centre 06	QLD	Southbank	CSWE III	7
Centre 08	VIC	Preston	CSWE I	11
Centre 09	VIC	Flagstaff	CSWE III	7
Centre 10	TAS	Hobart	CSWE III	7
Centre 11	WA	Perth	Pre-CSWE	3
Centre 12	WA	Perth	CSWE II	5
Total				60

1.2.1.2 Cohort B participant recruitment

In order to recruit the new group of participants (Cohort B) we identified AMEP centres and classes that matched as closely as possible the CSWE levels and student profiles of Cohort A participants. This process started in 2011 following ethics approval from Macquarie University (see Appendix B). Suitable AMEP centres and classes were approached either directly or through the AMEP provider regional management. All the AMEP centres contacted agreed to support the study, and this allowed us to work with six centres in three different states: New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. The two Melbourne centres and the centre in Blacktown were the same as the Cohort A centres in those locations, but have been assigned different centre numbers to avoid confusion.

Each centre was asked to nominate a teacher scheduled to teach a class matching the selection criteria. The selected teachers were invited to Macquarie University to find out more about the study, meet the researchers and develop with them a strategy for recruiting participants. The recruitment of Cohort B participants began at the start of the second AMEP term in April 2012. With the support of the teachers, the researchers visited the AMEP centre to which they were assigned, attended the relevant class and introduced the study to the students, who were then invited to participate. Following ethics guidelines, great care was taken to ensure that no pressure was exerted on the students, and that they understood they were entirely free to decide whether or not they wished to participate.

They were invited to communicate directly to the researcher rather than to the teacher in order to further differentiate the study from their language classes.

This research design meant that the participants were recruited from the same class in each centre and had therefore been assessed as being at the same CSWE level. The only exception to this is Centre 24, where we were able to recruit three additional participants who were related to those attending the selected class. They also attended AMEP but at a different CSWE level.

Overall, 85 students agreed to participate. As in Cohort A, the majority of students in Cohort B were recruited at CSWE III level (46 of 85). Table 1.2 gives an overview of the levels and centre locations for Cohort B. A detailed description of all centres, including their location, size and client base is provided in Appendix C.

Table 1.2: Cohort B Centre profiles

Centre number	State	Centre location	CSWE level	Number of participants
Centre 21	NSW	Sydney Central	CSWE III	10
Centre 22	NSW	Parramatta	CSWE III	8
Centre 23	NSW	Blacktown	CSWE III	16
Centre 24	TAS	Launceston	Pre-CSWE CSWE I CSWE III	16 2 1
Centre 25	VIC	Flagstaff	CSWE III	11
Centre 26	VIC	Preston	CSWE I	21
Total				85

As noted above, participants' CSWE level related to the level of the class they attended when they joined the study. While this usually reflected the level at which they had started classes, a few participants had already been studying in the AMEP for some time before the start of the study and so had progressed to a higher level. For example, Ben² (Cohort A, c22p001,³ CSWE III, from China) is classified as CSWE III because this was his level when the study started. However, he had studied at both CSWE I and then CSWE II before progressing to CSWE III. By the time of the first interview, his AMEP hours were nearly finished and he left the class at the end of that term. His case, however, is atypical.

1.2.1.3 Data collected

The following data were collected:

- regular semi-structured interviews with participants
- participant self-assessment of their language skills

² All names used in this study are pseudonyms. For a complete list of participants see Appendix D.

³ Participant numbers consist of the centre number (Centre 22) and participant number within that group (participant 1).

- language maps of where and how participants used their languages
- classroom observations
- recordings of social interactions involving participants
- samples of teaching and assessment materials
- samples of writing and assessments
- interviews with AMEP teachers and managers on the new business model.

Semi-structured interviews yielded the largest dataset. Cohort A was interviewed four times (once every 3–4 months) during Phase 1, and three times (once a year between 2011 and 2013) in Phase 2. Cohort B participants were interviewed on five occasions, approximately once every 3–4 months between the beginning of 2012 and the end of 2013. Interviews lasted between half an hour and 2.5 hours, depending on the participants' availability and their willingness to talk. Interpreters were used with participants with lower levels of English where required. Interpreters were briefed prior to the interviews on the purpose of the interview and, where possible, provided with an outline of the kinds of questions that would be asked.

Interviews covered a range of topics, such as participants' perspectives on their time in the AMEP, their lives in Australia, their language use in different domains and any language or settlement issues they encountered. Participant interviews typically used the following format (see Appendix E for a detailed list of questions):

- greetings
- catching up about what participants had been doing since the last interview
- completion of a language map and questions about language use in the identified domains
- question prompts designed to elicit longer language samples
- questions on their settlement experiences
- participants' self-rated language assessments
- questions probing participants' approaches to learning English
- specific questions to probe participants' experience in the AMEP under the new business model
- closing.

A language map is completed by the researcher in consultation with the participant. This is a diagram that captures the language(s) that they used in their daily lives in the weeks preceding the interviews. Areas of language use included, for example, attending the AMEP, interacting around childcare, visiting the doctor, meeting with friends and so on. It provides a snapshot of participants' social networks and their engagement with the wider Australian society at a particular moment in time (for a sample of a language map, see Chapter 3).

Question prompts were used to elicit longer language samples, and involved four questions asked in the same way at every interview (see Appendix E for the interview schedule and questions). These were introduced after the first interview with Cohort A participants (Interview 5) and before the start of data collection for Cohort B. They were therefore used in Interviews 6 and 7 for Cohort A and all interviews for Cohort B.

Self-rated language assessments were collected in order to provide insight into how participants viewed their own English language development. Assessments were captured on a four-point scale (*not good enough, okay, good, very good*) at every interview for Cohort B, and for Interviews 6 and 7 for Cohort A. These served as a basis for conversation with participants about their language learning and learning goals during the interview.

The use of semi-structured interviews enabled us to capture participants' reflections and opinions of their experiences in the AMEP and their settlement in Australia or, more accurately, the version of it that they wanted to present. As with any reported data, the interviews provided participants' views, recollections and descriptions of the impact and interaction of different factors on their experiences. Interviews were often shaped by what was important to the participant at the time and were not therefore always able to strictly follow the intended format. At times it was simply not possible or appropriate to pursue a particular line of questioning. This approach allowed for the exploration of areas of crucial interest to the participant, and in some cases resulted in interviews that covered a range of areas not initially anticipated. This also meant that interviews with different participants may have covered different issues, and that the same topic may not have been tackled in the same way with each participant. As a result, a particular topic, for example, difficulty with phone conversations, was raised in most but not all interviews. In the analysis, we specify the number of participants who addressed any particular topic as it is discussed where appropriate (e.g. 50 out of 85 participants commented on their experience with talking on the phone).

The analysis presented in this report draws on data collected in both Phase 1 and Phase 2. For Cohort A participants, this includes four quarterly interviews conducted between 2008 and 2009 from Phase 1, and three annual interviews between 2011 and 2013 from Phase 2. As is common with longitudinal studies of this kind, there was some attrition towards the end of the study. Table 1.3 presents the numbers of interviews with Cohort A participants first in Phase 1, and later in Phase 2. The seven interviews cover the period of their AMEP study plus about three years post-AMEP, and a total of up to five years. It should be noted that the participants listed for Cohort A constitute a subset of those followed in Phase 1 and that some of those re-recruited for Phase 2 had missed some of the previous interviews. This explains why the number of Cohort A participants who started in Phase 2 is higher than the number of this cohort who took part in the last interview of Phase 1.

Table 1.3: Cohort A interview data Phase 1 and Phase 2

State	Phase 1				Phase 2		
	Int 1	Int 2	Int 3	Int 4	Int 5	Int 6	Int 7
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
NSW	20	19	16	18	20	18	15
VIC	18	1	15	18	18	14	12
TAS	7	7	7	7	7	6	6
QLD	7	7	7	4	7	4	1
WA	8	7	8	8	8	6	4
Total	60	58	53	55	60	48	38

The data collection period for Cohort B spans about 18 months and covers the time of their study in the AMEP and afterwards. Table 1.4 lists the number of participants from each state who took part in each interview.

Table 1.4: Cohort B interview data

State	Int 1	Int 2	Int 3	Int 4	Int 5
	n	n	n	n	n
NSW	34	22	22	22	25
VIC	32	23	18	20	21
TAS	19	17	16	16	16
Total	85	62	56	58	62

By the end of Phase 2, 12 Cohort A participants and 21 Cohort B participants were marked as having withdrawn from the study, either because they had informed us of this or because we had been unable to make contact with them. Participants were marked as withdrawn if they could not be contacted for at least two consecutive interviews. Only two participants returned to the study for the final interview after missing two or more interviews.

Participants withdrew for a variety of reasons, including permanent relocation overseas and time constraints due to employment or other responsibilities. The overall attrition rate was 22.5% (20% for Cohort A and 24.5% for Cohort B), similar to that of other longitudinal studies involving large participant samples, such as the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) (Khoo & McDonald, 2001) and others (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001; Suarez-Orozco, Pimental, & Martin, 2009). A certain degree of attrition is unavoidable in longitudinal research, particularly with mobile populations of this kind, as participants move locations, travel overseas and their life circumstances change (Thomson & Holland, 2010). Numbers at each interview varied, as some participants were unavailable for a particular interview.

In addition to regular semi-structured interviews conducted in Phase 2, we also observed AMEP classes attended by Cohort B in order to record classroom activities and how the participants engaged with these. Teachers were asked to provide samples of the teaching materials they used in class, and, where possible, samples of participants' writing and

learning outcomes. We further collected social interactions involving both Cohort A and Cohort B participants. Table 1.5 provides an overview of additional data collected. We also interviewed eight AMEP staff from four different centres, including centre managers, a teacher and a counsellor, on their thoughts about the implementation of the new business model. One email submission on this topic was also received.

Table 1.5: Classroom materials and social interaction data

Data collection item	Cohort	NSW	VIC	TAS	QLD	WA	Total
		n	n	n	n	n	n
Classroom observations	B	1	–	10	–	–	11
Teaching materials	B	4	1	2	–	–	7
LO ^a samples of individual participants	B	4	19 spoken 10 written	–	–	–	33
Writing samples	B	1	–	10	–	–	11
Social interactions	B	22	43	13	–	–	78
	A	14	5	13	0	1	33

^a LO = Learning outcome, i.e. language assessments AMEP clients have to pass to complete each CSWE level.

This report draws largely on the interview data from both phases, and also additional data collected for Phase 2 where relevant.

1.2.1.4 Data analysis

All interviews were recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service. The transcripts were subsequently checked for accuracy by the research team and then analysed for recurring themes. This involved distillation of the data to a manageable size in order to examine it for general patterns and trends (Cools, 2006). The analysis focused on both cross-sectional and longitudinal perspectives (Kirkman, Harrison, Hillier, & Pyett, 2001) in order to identify relevant issues and points across learner groups and across time. To this end, we devised a system of detailed thematic spreadsheets that allowed researchers to summarise and synthesise information and consider findings across time. For the previous research report on Cohort B participants (Yates et al., 2013), eight themes were identified, namely language learning, public places, AMEP, employment, education, family, social networks, and settlement. These were revised to four main themes for the current report: goals and aspirations, language use (including language use at work, at home, in public places and with friends), language learning and AMEP, and settlement.

These categories were then further refined into subcategories. For example, 21 subcategories were identified for 'language learning and AMEP'. These are as follows:

1. Whether an interpreter was needed
2. Participants' previous English study
3. Descriptions of participants' language learning goals

4. Participants' assessments of their English language skills – what can they do, what they have difficulty with and so on
5. Participants' comments on positive changes to their language skills (i.e. things they can do now that they could not do before)
6. Participants' comments on negative changes to their language skills
7. Accounts of the language strategies they employ outside the classroom
8. Notes on any other language learning beliefs they may hold
9. Details of participants' enrolment in the AMEP (how they found out about it and the processes they went through to enrol)
10. A summary of their journey throughout the AMEP (e.g. Did they finish their entitlement of hours? Did they take a break from AMEP classes? etc.)
11. What they liked about the AMEP
12. What they did not like about the AMEP
13. What they learned in class
- 14–18. Detailed questions on the new business model, for example, interactions with the adviser, distance courses, and the exit process
19. Information on the English courses participants undertook post-AMEP
20. Notes on participants' self-ratings
21. Researcher field notes on each participant.

These categories were then used to organise data for closer analysis using a spreadsheet as shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Spreadsheet ‘language learning’

Alias	language learning goals	language assessment/ issues&challenges	Positive Changes	Negative Changes	Language learning strategies
Li Ming	Would like to buy a business with 10000 (Irene) but with current level of E, was told she could do cleaning only (QUOTE: "with our English level you know we couldn't do any other jobs apart from cleaning"), but could only have lessons at night.	Difficulties with language learning because of age (QUOTE: "just that our memory is just not as good anymore because we are older"). Would like to improve speaking skill, communicate in whole sentences not just words. Can get by in Australia with the E skills she has (QUOTE: "but generally speaking"), but needs interpreter in more serious situations, (QUOTE: "but says she needs an interpreter in more serious situations, like in hospitals (QUOTE: "more professional organisation").	Researcher comments on easy communication even though participant's husband had said "she can't speak E", and says she understands most of her questions.	not mentioned	Tries to communicate with locals to practise listening.
Leo	Wants to make more friends, be able to have more in-depth conversations	Finds grammar and word order the most difficult aspects of speaking, says wrong word order may distort the meaning of his message, but also says that "conversational skills" would be more important to learn than grammar	Got basic foundations at AMEP to learn E.	not mentioned	Talks to neighbours who are from various countries. Sometimes talks to son in English too, asks him for help with studies. Chinese friends teach him some E too. Watches children's programs on tv to learn E. Neighbours correct him. Goes over old AMEP materials.
Yin Yin	Would like to learn E to get a good job (9 to 5 so not night shift), for example receptionist. Would like to be able to make phonecalls without having to rely on an interpreter.	Finds it hard to express what she wants to say in English (finding words). She only uses English for shopping. (QUOTE: "But it's very hard for her to just, er, find the words to describe the thing"). Only sometimes does she understand what people say to her, when she sometimes does, she cannot answer. Husband speaks for her usually when going out and uses telephone interpreter.	Felt she learnt a lot in AMEP as she started with no E abilities at all.	not mentioned	Admits not doing anything actively to improve her E.

Researchers identified those interviews that were particularly relevant to the research questions and analysed them closely. For example, Chapter 5 draws in particular on Cohort A Interviews 1, 3, 5 and 7, since these capture participants' time in the AMEP in Phase 1 (Interviews 1 and 3) and their experiences with and approaches to language learning at two-yearly intervals in Phase 2 (Interviews 5 and 7). The other interviews were also consulted where necessary. Notes made for each subcategory used in the spreadsheets were then compared within and across interviews. This provided an impression of development over time and allowed for the exploration of the differences between participants and groups of participants, for example between the experiences of CSWE III and those of pre-CSWE participants. Any patterns identified were further explored by returning to the original interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of what these meant for individual participants. The detailed descriptions that resulted from this process are used to illustrate trends in the data. The analysis conducted in this way forms the basis of this report.

1.2.1.5 Cohort A and Cohort B background profiles

As Table 1.6 shows, at the start of Phase 2, Cohort A comprised 60 participants from 31 different countries, principally China (16). Four came from Thailand and three from Colombia. All other national groups were represented by only one or two participants. Cohort B draws on 27 source countries, most prominently Bhutan, Iran and China. Table 1.6 lists the countries of origin for participants in both cohorts. Only those countries that provided three or more participants are named. Those providing fewer than three are listed under 'other'. Full details can be found in Appendix F.

Table 1.6: Countries of origin of Cohort A and B participants

Country of birth	Cohort A	Cohort B
	n	n
Bhutan	0	17
Colombia	3	3
India	2	7
Iran	2	15
PR China	16	11
Somalia	0	4
South Korea	2	5
Thailand	4	1
Other	31	22
Total	60	85

For most participants, their country of origin was the one with which they identified most closely. For some, however, this was not the case. Svetlana (Cohort B, c25p011, CSWE III), for example, was born in Germany to Russian parents who moved frequently with her father’s job in the Russian military. They moved ultimately to Kazakhstan. However, she identified as neither German nor Kazakh but as Russian, and listed her first language as Russian. The 17 Cohort B participants from Bhutan also did not identify with the majority Bhutanese culture. They had grown up as part of an ethnic Nepalese minority in Bhutan and had escaped to a refugee camp in Nepal following persecution by the Bhutanese Government, entering Australia on humanitarian visas. Throughout the report, they are referred to as ethnic Nepali Bhutanese.

Overall, Cohort A participants listed 44 different first languages (L1) and Cohort B participants listed 35. Since bilingualism is common in many regions of the world, several reported having more than one first language. Samba (Cohort A, c08p014, CSWE I, from Guinea), for example, listed four languages: Susu, Malinke, Kakabe and French. A number of participants from China claimed native speaker competence in both their local dialect and the national language Mandarin; for example, Li Ming (Cohort A, c08p001, CSWE I, from China) listed Shanghainese and Mandarin. Table 1.7 lists those first languages that were spoken by more than three participants in either cohort (see Appendix G for full details).

As the figures in Table 1.7 show, the largest language group among Cohort B was Nepali (17), followed by Mandarin (14) and Farsi (Persian) (14)⁴ and among Cohort A the most commonly spoken L1 were Mandarin (15), Arabic (7),⁵ Thai (5) and Spanish (5). The inclusion of a large number of Nepali speakers followed consultation with AMEP providers who requested that we include this newer group of ethnic Nepali Bhutanese refugees in the study. The

⁴ Persian and Farsi are generally considered to be the same language. For the remainder of this report, the language will be referred to as Farsi (Persian).

⁵ This category includes all regional varieties of Arabic.

prominence of Mandarin in both cohorts is in line with the overall AMEP client profile over the last few years (DIAC, 2010, 2013a).

Table 1.7: First languages spoken by Cohort A and B participants

First language	Cohort A		Cohort B	
	n	%	n	%
Arabic	7	15%	5	8%
Farsi (Persian)	3	7%	14	21%
Japanese	1	2%	4	6%
Korean	2	4%	5	8%
Mandarin	15	32%	14	21%
Nepali	0	0%	17	26%
Somali	0	0%	4	6%
Spanish	5	11%	5	8%
Thai	5	11%	1	2%
Vietnamese	3	7%	0	0%

Table 1.8 provides an overview of participants' profile with regard to CSWE level, gender, marital status, age, number of children, visa categories, years of schooling and the number of years that they had already lived in Australia at the time of their first interview. Both cohorts were predominantly female (46 participants or 77% in Cohort A and 60 participants or 71% in Cohort B), a gender breakdown also seen in AMEP classrooms where females average 64% (DIAC, 2013a).

Table 1.8: Background profile of Cohort A and B participants

	Cohort A		Cohort B	
	n	%	n	%
CSWE level				
Pre-CSWE	3	5%	16	19%
CSWE I	11	18%	23	27%
CSWE II	12	20%	0	0%
CSWE III	34	57%	46	54%
Gender				
Female	46	77%	60	71%
Male	14	23%	25	29%
Marital status				
De facto	2	3%	4	5%
Married	43	72%	65	76%
Separated	3	5%	2	2%
Single	8	13%	13	15%
Divorced	3	5%	0	0%
Widowed	1	2%	1	1%
Age group	Age in 2008		Age in 2012	
	n	%	n	%
16–24 years	10	17%	10	12%
25–34 years	24	40%	44	52%
35–44 years	18	30%	20	24%
45–54 years	5	8%	9	11%
55+ years	3	5%	2	2%

	Cohort A		Cohort B	
Children	Since 2008		Since 2012	
	n		n	
Children at start	42		89	
New children	27		11	
Expecting at final interview	2		2	
Visa class	n	%	n	%
Family	46	77%	40	47%
Skilled	4	7%	18	21%
Humanitarian	10	17%	27	32%
Years of schooling	n	%	n	%
0–7	6	10%	22	26%
8–12	14	23%	25	29%
13+	40	67%	38	45%
Years since arrival	In 2011		In 2012	
	n	%	n	%
0–1	0	0%	71	84%
2–3	24	40%	9	11%
4–5	30	50%	3	4%
6–7	4	7%	1	1%
8+	2	3%	1	1%

In line with the general AMEP client profile, most participants had arrived on family visas (including spouse, de facto and family reunion visas), followed by humanitarian entrants and skilled migrants. Most were married, about half in each cohort had children, and during the study 38 babies were born. In line with the overall profile of AMEP clients in the financial year 2012–2013, at the start of the study the majority of participants were between 18 and 44 years (i.e. at the start of Phase 1 in 2008 for Cohort A and at the start of Phase 2 in 2012 for Cohort B), and 25–34-year-olds represent about 40% in Cohort A and 50% in Cohort B.

According to the most recent student profile (DIAC, 2013a), 61.5% of all AMEP clients had attended school in their first language for more than 10 years, and 13% for 0–5 years. About 45% of Cohort B and 67% of Cohort A participants had attended school for 13 years or more and 29% and 23% respectively for 8–12 years. Thus Cohort A has on average higher levels of education than the general AMEP profile, while Cohort B matched the general AMEP profile more closely. Relatively few (3% in Cohort A and 22% in Cohort B) had attended school for only three years or less or not at all. Most of those with no or very little education (0–7 years) were refugees (although not all refugees fell in this category), and those with education of eight years or more can be found in all visa streams.

With a few exceptions, participants studying English at higher CSWE levels generally had more education, as those with eight or more years of schooling were at CSWE II and III at the start of the study, while those with little or no education were studying in the pre-CSWE and CSWE I courses. Table 1.9 gives an overview of the intersection between educational background and CSWE level.

Table 1.9: Intersection between years of education and CSWE level in Cohorts A and B

Years of schooling	Cohort A					Cohort B				
	Pre-CSWE	CSWE I	CSWE II	CSWE III	Total	Pre-CSWE	CSWE I	CSWE II	CSWE III	Total
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
0–7	1	2	3	0	6	16	5	0	1	22
8–12	1	4	3	6	14	0	10	0	15	25
13+	1	5	6	28	40	0	8	0	30	38
Total	3	11	12	34	60	16	23	0	46	85

One exception to this connection was Ludmilla (Cohort A, c08p015, CSWE I). Ludmilla is from Russia and arrived in Australia in 2006 when she was 70. Her entire schooling, including her PhD, was conducted in Russian. She learned basic English in a six-month course, which was enough to allow her to understand advanced texts with the help of a dictionary, but she could not use it to communicate in day-to-day interactions.

It should be noted that the vast majority of participants were recent arrivals (see Table 1.8). Determining the exact time of arrival was not always straightforward. Some participants had entered Australia multiple times on tourist or other visas prior to becoming permanent residents, and this gave them the time to become familiar with aspects of Australian life before joining the AMEP. There were also occasional discrepancies between what participants told us and official listings. The time of arrival used here is either based on the date provided by the participants in their interviews or, where this date is unclear, the date of issue of their permanent residency visa. Most Cohort B participants had been in Australia for less than a year at the start of the study in 2012, while most Cohort A participants had been in Australia for between three and five years in 2011. However, there are a number of participants in both cohorts who had lived in Australia for many years before starting the AMEP.

In Cohort B, the participants who had been in Australia the longest before starting AMEP classes include Ying (Cohort B, c26p007, CSWE I, from China), Tania (Cohort B, c23p015, CSWE III, from Iran) and Teresa (Cohort B, c21p009, CSWE III, from Colombia), who had been in Australia for 11, nine and six years respectively. For Cohort A, Li Ming (Cohort A, c08p001, CSWE I, from China) and Lyn (Cohort A, c09p005, CSWE III, from the Philippines) had been in Australia for eight and seven years respectively. They had delayed their AMEP studies for various reasons. Teresa, for example, arrived in Australia on a student visa in 2006, first in order to study English and then to undertake professional training at a private institute. She eventually married an Australian citizen and became eligible to start the AMEP in early 2012. Li Ming, on the other hand, had started in the AMEP for three months in 2000 before she dropped out because of her pregnancy. She then worked in first her family's and later a friend's milk bar for a number of years, but decided to return to the AMEP in 2008 as she felt her English was not improving. She has now completed her AMEP hours.

In the following chapters, we explore the English language learning and settlement experiences of these two cohorts. A focus on the experiences of the two cohorts allows examination of the impact of their language learning at different stages of their migration trajectory and of the AMEP under different business models. Where relevant, the data are considered with reference to participants' background profiles as outlined in Table 1.8 above, and the similarities and differences between groups are highlighted and discussed where appropriate.

Chapter 2 investigates the impact of English language proficiency on participants' employment goals. This is followed by consideration of participants' experiences using English in their day-to-day lives at home, work, and when interacting with members of the general public in Chapter 3. The new business model is the focus of Chapter 4. This chapter reports on the perspectives of both participants and AMEP providers. Chapter 5 explores the role of AMEP in participants' language learning inside and outside the classroom. Chapter 6 examines participants' perspectives on their settlement in Australia, and conclusions and implications are discussed in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 2

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION GOALS AND THE ROLE OF ENGLISH

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we explore the paths taken by participants after they have left the AMEP and the role of English language proficiency and learning in the achievement of their goals. The primary focus is on their long-term goals for employment and further study as a step towards entry into the workforce. We will also explore, where appropriate, the impact of employment and study on participants' more general settlement goals.

In examining the interaction between employment, education and language learning we address the following research questions:

- RQ1: What kind of interactions in English (spoken, written and computer-mediated) do contemporary AMEP clients engage in inside and outside the classroom during their time in the AMEP and afterwards?
- RQ4: What are the settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants?
 - RQ4a: How do they change with time in the country?

Gaining employment is regarded as a major indicator of settlement success (Bloch, 2002; Colic-Peisker, 2005, 2009; UNHCR, 2004; Valtonen, 2001, 2004; VandenHeuvel & Wooden, 2000). In terms of the DIAC (2012b) framework of settlement indicators discussed in Chapter 6, employment and education are significant contributors to social participation and economic wellbeing. However, we know from studies in Australia and overseas that migrants tend to be underemployed relative to their pre-migration skills, education and experience (Chiswick, Lee, & Miller, 2003; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Duff, Wong, & Early, 2000; Holmes et al., 2009; Syed & Murray, 2009). Humanitarian entrants in particular tend to have a much higher unemployment rate than either the resident population or other migrant categories (Castles & Miller, 2003; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006). Even migrants with considerable professional expertise can find that the path to regaining their previous levels of employment is not straightforward (AMES, 2011; Green, Kler & Leeves, 2007). Initial goals may change, and educational opportunities may open the door to career change or formal qualifications and the possibility of long-term job security.

Challenges to the achievement of employment goals include under-recognition of pre-migration qualifications, the unexpected need for further English study or vocational education, and the need to defer long-term goals in favour of short-term economic goals (Hawthorne, 1996; Inal, Ariss, & Forson, 2013; Richardson, Robertson, & Ilsley, 2001). English proficiency can be a barrier to finding employment at an appropriate level or to finding employment at all (e.g. ABS, 2007; AMES, 2011; Richardson et al., 2001), and a growing awareness of the level of English proficiency demanded by a profession can lead to the revision of initial goals (Cooke, Zhang, & Wang, 2013). English proficiency may be more of an issue at the far ends of the employment spectrum, however, that is, while migrants with very low levels of English proficiency often find (typically low-skilled) employment through their nationality networks, those with higher levels of English proficiency and more ambitious goals can have less success in finding appropriate levels of employment (Junankar & Mahuteau, 2005).

Other factors, including the demands of home and family life, social networks, and personal motivation, can also limit migrants' ability to re-enter the workforce at a level that fully utilises pre-migration skills and qualifications. This is particularly the case for women (Ho, 2009). In addition, as Pearson, Hammond, Heffernan, and Turner (2012) found, not all migrants necessarily want to find skilled employment of the kind they had pre-migration. While the primary focus of this chapter is the relationship between English learning and employment and education goals, other intersecting factors are also considered and illustrated with examples throughout.

In order to investigate the complex role of English language learning in the achievement of participants' goals during the period of the study, we compare their initial employment and education goals and investigate the steps they took towards achieving them, including further English study, education, and short-term work. In order to maintain a longitudinal perspective, we focus in this analysis on the 127 participants (60 from Cohort A and 67 from Cohort B) who had participated in at least three interviews. Where data from other participants are used, this is explained in the text. Interviews at the beginning, middle and end of the data collection period were selected for closer analysis in order to track participants' long-term goals, how they changed, and the role of English in how far they managed to achieve them (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Interviews selected for closer analysis

<p>Cohort A Interview 1 Post-AMEP interview (mostly Interview 2 or 3) Interview 5 Final interview (mostly Interview 7, but sometimes 5 or 6)</p>
<p>Cohort B Interview 1 Post-AMEP interview (a mix of Interview 2, 3, and 4) Final interview (mostly Interview 5 but sometimes 4)</p>

We first compare participants' pre-migration occupations with their career goals and occupations immediately post-migration and at the final interview across the two cohorts. We also consider individual cases in order to illustrate the different pathways that they took towards (or away from) these. This sets the scene for addressing how participants moved towards their goals, the obstacles they faced, and the strategies they developed along the way. Throughout the chapter, we highlight the intersection of post-AMEP English and vocational study with the other factors that impacted on the achievement, development, deferral, or abandonment of their initial career goals.

2.2 Participants' employment and career goals

In this section we consider the participants' pre-migration employment and their occupations and aspirations at the beginning and at the end of the study, a period of 1.5 years for Cohort B participants and 4.5 years Cohort A. This allows insight into different stages of settlement. Occupations and employment-related goals were coded using the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) (ABS, 2013). Where participants mentioned having two long-term employment goals (for example, wanting to either be a nurse or work in childcare), the higher status job was coded.

2.2.1 Cohort B employment and goal trajectories

Table 2.1 presents the findings for Cohort B participants. The table lists the number of participants per category and the percentage in relation to the overall dataset. Pre-migration employment captures their major occupational experience, and therefore does not necessarily index their employment immediately prior to migrating. For example, while most humanitarian entrants had been employed at some point, they had not necessarily undertaken any paid work in refugee camps directly before coming to Australia.

Table 2.1: Cohort B pre- and post-migration employment and goals

ANZSCO category	Pre-migration employment		Interview 1 long-term goals		Interview 1 employment		Final interview long-term goals (approx. 1.5 yrs)		Final interview employment (approx. 1.5 yrs)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Managers	10	15%	8	12%	0	0%	14	21%	1	1%
2. Professionals	18	27%	17	25%	0	0%	7	10%	2	3%
3. Technicians and trade workers	8	12%	9	13%	2	3%	5	7%	0	0%
4. Community and personal service workers	1	1%	3	5%	2	3%	5	7%	7	10%
5. Clerical and administrative workers	6	9%	0	0%	1	1%	2	3%	4	6%
6. Sales workers	2	3%	1	2%	1	1%	0	0%	4	6%
7. Machinery operators and drivers	4	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	
8. Labourers	12	18%	0	0%	1	1%	2	3%	2	3%
N/A or not mentioned	6	9%	29	43%	60	90%	32	48%	47	70%
Total	67	100%	67	100%	67	100%	67	100%	67	100%

As Table 2.1 shows, most participants in Cohort B were employed before coming to Australia (61 out of 67, or 91%), and almost half of these were working as managers or professionals (28 out of 61, or 46%). The cohort also included 12 (18%) labourers, all of whom were humanitarian entrants, and 11 of these belonged to the group of ethnic Nepali Bhutanese from Centre 24 in Launceston, who were previously farmers (see Chapter 1). Only a small number of participants had never been in paid employment (6 out of 67, or 9%). These were all female, mostly in their early 20s, and had done unpaid work at home (e.g. homemaker, mother) or had been students before migrating to Australia.

In terms of employment after migration to Australia, Table 2.1 shows that participants in this group experienced a clear downward occupational trajectory. Given that most had only been in the country for a few months and had other priorities, it is not surprising that at the first interview only seven participants were employed. However, at the final interview, only about one-third of all participants (20 out of 67, 30%) were working. Although 10 had been managers and 18 had been professionals pre-migration, only one had found work that could be categorised as managerial by the time of the final interview, Fish (c21p006, CSWE III) who had just bought a newsagency with her husband, and only two had achieved professional status, Marimar (c25p003, CSWE III, from Venezuela) and Svetlana (c25p011, CSWE III, from Kazakhstan), who were working as a software programmer and photo retoucher respectively.

Of those who were working at the time of the final interview, the highest number (7) had jobs in community and personal services such as aged care, childcare, hospitality and security, although only one participant had worked in this area pre-migration. Four were working in administrative positions and four in sales positions. The majority of participants, however, were not in employment. Their reasons for this included retirement, ill health and the demands of family responsibilities. A number of participants from the ethnic Nepali Bhutanese group suffered from ongoing health issues such as deteriorating vision and chronic joint pain, and therefore either had no plans to work or undertake further study, or their plans were very vague and not pursued during the study period. Others from this group had carer responsibilities looking after elderly and sick family members. Indira (Cohort B, c24p017, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan), for example, was looking after her youngest daughter, who has hearing, speech and mental disabilities.

It is important to note that participants did not always aspire to work in the field in which they had worked or studied pre-migration. For example, although 18 Cohort B participants had worked in sales (2) or as labourers (12), drivers or machine workers (4) pre-migration, only one aspired to work in sales long term, and none told us they wanted to work as labourers, drivers or machine workers. However, as shown in Table 2.1, by the final interview, six participants did work in these areas: four as sales assistants in clothes shops or supermarkets and two as labourers (in housekeeping and in a factory).

In the final interview, the largest proportion of participants (14 out of 67, or 21%) aspired to work at a managerial level, with most wanting to own their own, usually small, business. There was one exception however, Ryoko (Cohort B, c21p007, CSWE III, from Japan), who wanted to be a director in a large company. This trend towards self-employment among migrants is also noted in the literature (ABS, 2010; Hammarstedt, 2001; Miller, 2010; Van Tubergen, 2005). It also reflects pre-migration employment for this cohort, since 10 out of these 67 Cohort B participants (15%) had run their own businesses such as a computer repair company, a mobile phone shop and an internet café. Although not directly articulated, it nevertheless seems likely that, for some participants at least, running their own businesses and thus having some control over their own work situation was an appealing alternative to becoming an employee in an English-dominant workplace (see Inal et al., 2013). Winnie (Cohort B, c25p008, CSWE III, from China) had originally wanted to work as a translator, or perhaps in tourism, but at Interview 5 was working in a short-term job as a waitress and explained that her difficulties with English were leading her to consider running a business back in China instead:

I have heard some people is starting the travel ... school, the TAFE and it requires two year study and needs English pretty good and a lot things to learn. And maybe for me now is not easy ... maybe in future I cannot work in here very good ... I can go back China do my own business. Maybe not big, just a smaller coffee shop.

[Winnie, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

Plans to own and run businesses in Australia were often vague. Akbar (Cohort B, c26p016, CSWE I, from Somalia), for example, reported at Interview 1 that he wanted to start a business because his family owned a range of businesses in Somalia, but he did not know what type of business he would like to own. Others were clearer in their goals from the beginning. For example, Shan (Cohort B, c26p003, CSWE I, from China) aspired to own a café or restaurant and did not waver from this aspiration (see Section 2.3.1) during the course of this study. These numbers suggest that support and advice for migrants planning to open a small business in Australia could be useful in early settlement.

As noted above, some participants adapted their expectations to their new life situation or reoriented their career, so that their long-term goals were not always the same as their occupation or field of study before migration. In order to investigate the relationships between their occupations pre-migration and post-migration and their employment ambitions in Australia, we explored in more detail the employment trajectories of those 20 Cohort B participants who were in paid work at the time of the final interview. Of these, eight had aspired to work in the same field as pre-migration, eight to work in a different field, and four were undecided. At the time of the final interview, we found that most (17 out of 20, 83%) were working in jobs classified at a different ANZSCO category post-migration, and that for 14 (82%) of them, this was at a lower level. Participants had also

revised their employment goals over the course of the study, as we describe in further detail throughout the remainder of this chapter.

Of the eight participants (40%) who had wanted to start a new career in Australia, only one had reached her goal by the end of the study (to be a commercial cook), and she wanted to find a job in a better restaurant (Mary – Cohort B, c23p003, CSWE III, from Iran). Two others were still pursuing their original goals and also working in other jobs in the meantime, while the remaining five had revised their employment goals for various reasons. This was the case for Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III, from South Korea).

At Interview 1 Nina told us that she wanted a change from her pre-migration employment as a fashion designer to become a nurse. In Interview 2, however, she realised that it might be difficult to go into nursing, as she had no experience. By Interview 3 she had enrolled in an IT course at TAFE in order to move into graphic design. While working casually in retail, however, her interest in fashion design was reignited, and at the final interview she was planning to study and work again in that field in Australia.

In Section 2.3 we explore in greater detail how English proficiency can influence and motivate such changes in migrants' professional and educational goals.

Of the eight participants who originally told us that they wanted to return to their pre-migration occupations, only Marimar (Cohort B, c25p003, CSWE III, from Venezuela) had succeeded by the end of the study, having secured a job as a software programmer (see Section 2.3.3). While three were still working towards their original goals, four had revised them. Madhoosh (Cohort B, c23p006, CSWE III), a pharmacist from Afghanistan, was working towards his original goal, but was still some way from reaching it by the final interview 1.5 years later.

Madhoosh had his own pharmacy business before migration, and from the beginning of his time in Australia had a clear five-year plan: to do a degree in pharmacy, to re-enter his profession and to buy a house. While still in the AMEP, he enrolled in a tertiary preparation course at TAFE and he also trained in security so he could secure part-time work while he studied. Madhoosh's long-term plans did not change, but were delayed by the need to provide for his growing family. By Interview 4 he had put his studies on hold in order to work in security while his wife was at home with their baby. He felt the loss of status working in this role and did not tell his family in Afghanistan what work he was doing, saying that 'Poor people work like this' [Int 4]. He was clear that working in security was a temporary step along the way to fulfilling his long-term goals.

Such examples remind us that, for a variety of reasons, migrants may take many years to realise their goals, and that the downward employment mobility (see e.g. Duff, Wong, &

Early, 2000; Ho & Alcorso, 2004) they experience does not necessarily entail the abandonment of their early goals. The question of how far these goals can be achieved and how long they take merit further exploration in future studies. In Section 2.2.2 we examine the goals and employment trajectories of Cohort A participants who had been in Australia for longer.

2.2.2 Cohort A goals and employment trajectories

Cohort A participants had longer to pursue, revise or realise their professional ambitions as their final interview took place some 4.5 years after their initial interview.

Table 2.2: Cohort A pre- and post-migration employment and goals

ANZSCO category	Pre-migration employment		Interview 1 long-term goals		Interview 1 employment		Final interview long-term goals (approx. 4.5 yrs)		Final interview employment (approx 4.5 yrs)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. Managers	7	12%	7	12%	0	0%	12	20%	1	2%
2. Professionals	19	32%	17	28%	3	5%	12	20%	5	8%
3. Technicians and trade workers	4	7%	5	8%	1	2%	4	7%	3	5%
4. Community and personal service workers	10	17%	5	8%	7	12%	9	15%	10	17%
5. Clerical and administrative workers	8	13%	2	3%	0	0%	2	3%	2	3%
6. Sales workers	2	3%	0	0%	4	7%	1	2%	4	7%
7. Machinery operators and drivers	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
8. Labourers	1	2%	0	0%	8	13%	0	0%	10	17%
N/A or not mentioned	9	15%	24	40%	37	62%	20	33%	24	40%
Total	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%

As Table 2.2 indicates, the pre-migration employment background of those Cohort A participants for whom we have data from at least three interviews differs slightly from that of Cohort B. Ten Cohort A participants were employed as community and personal service workers (17%) compared to one in Cohort B, and there was only one labourer, as opposed to 12 (18%) in Cohort B. However, like Cohort B, half of the Cohort A participants employed pre-migration (26 out of 51, or 51%) had previously worked at a managerial or professional level, and they included a shop owner, the owner of a furniture design company, an accountant, a lawyer and a doctor.

Table 2.2 also shows that more Cohort A participants were working at the end of the study (36 out of 60, or 60%) compared to Cohort B (20 out of 67, or 30%), and at a higher level. Thus, while two participants worked as professionals by the final interview and no one worked as a technician from Cohort B, five Cohort A participants were working at a professional level by the final interview (graphic designer, interpreter, musician, teacher and

furniture designer) and three as technicians (tailor, cook and dog groomer). As in Cohort B, only one participant in Cohort A had achieved work that could be coded at a managerial level by the time of the final interview. Abrar (Cohort A, c06p009, CSWE III), a trained doctor from Iraq, was leading a team of community health workers as a workforce development manager. Only one Cohort A participant, Suleman (Cohort A, c10p001, CSWE III, from Ethiopia), was working in a role that fell into the category of machine operator or driver, as he was working as a part-time taxi driver at his final interview. A greater number of Cohort A participants found employment post-migration as labourers of some kind (e.g. fast food cook, cleaner, factory worker), and this was the case both at the first interview (8 out of 60, or 13%) and approximately 4.5 years later at the time of the final interview (10 out of 60, or 17%).

In terms of their long-term goals, Cohort A participants expressed similar aspirations to Cohort B, as many sought to work in managerial positions, and most of these hoped to run their own businesses. Through time, fewer Cohort A participants aspired to work at a professional level (from 17, or 28% at the first interview, to 12, or 20% at the final interview); although, as with Cohort B, there was an increase in the number wishing to run their own small business. April (Cohort A, c02p005, CSWE III, from China), for example, said she wanted to be an accountant in the first interview, but by the final interview hoped to open her own business, such as a hair salon or laundromat. As with Cohort B, while no one from Cohort A had initially aspired to work in sales, as a driver or machine operator, or as a labourer, by the final interview four were working in shops or supermarkets, and 10 were working as labourers. Details of how goals were pursued, and sometimes changed, are explored in more depth below.

Of the 36 Cohort A participants who were in paid employment at the final interview, most (75%, 27 out of 36) were working in a job classified in a different ANZSCO category from their occupation pre-migration, and 17 of these 27 (63%) were working at a lower level, while for Cohort B this figure was 82%. This suggests that while downward employment mobility is certainly a feature of migration, it may become less severe with time (ABS, 2009).

Of those employed at the time of the final interview, most (22 out of 36, or 61%) modified their goals during the course of the study. These rates are very similar to the findings for Cohort B. However, more Cohort A participants (10 out of 36, or 28%) did not have clear employment goals at Interview 1. As discussed in Chapter 4, these participants studied in the AMEP before the introduction of enhanced counselling services designed to provide clients with career advice and guidance with the new business model.

Of the 15 out of 36 (42%) Cohort A participants who had wanted to continue with their pre-migration occupation, four had reached their goals by the final interview or earlier. One such participant was Charles (Cohort A, c05p007, CSWE III, from Colombia):

Charles worked as a furniture designer in his native Colombia, and by the end of the study was finally starting to establish himself as a successful self-employed consultant in his field. Part of his success in achieving this goal involved the development of sophisticated workplace and business communication skills, including mastering technical vocabulary and the skills for negotiation and discussion (see Chapter 3).

Seven participants revised their long-term goals by Interview 5; three of these were studying towards their new objective, two were working in a job in a lower ANZSCO category and two were both studying and working at a lower level, like Emma (Cohort A, c05p006, CSWE III, from Brazil).

Emma had been a dietician in Brazil, and had previously used English at university (e.g. attending lectures in English and reading academic articles in English), but she was not confident communicating in English when she arrived in Australia. She quickly improved her English by studying at the AMEP and working as a waitress, and was soon proficient enough to be accepted first into a postgraduate degree program in nutrition and then into a PhD program in the same area. Throughout her studies, Emma kept working as a waitress as a means to an end rather than as a career.

As the examples of Emma and Madhoosh (see Section 2.2.1) illustrate, participants' paths towards their long-term goals can be long and complicated and include periods working at lower levels.

The 11 participants who wanted a career change post-migration did not always tell us why, although a few saw migration as offering them new opportunities. Kamran (Cohort A, c05p010, CSWE III), for example, a computer repair company owner from Iran, initially wanted to become a hairdresser in Australia for a "new experience" [Int 1], but later completed a course in hospitality in a bid to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a flight attendant. Like Kamran, all of these participants had changed their long-term goals by the final interview. Interestingly, three wanted to return to their pre-migration occupation by their final interview even though all three were doing well in their new jobs. While seven of the 10 Cohort A participants who were undecided about their long-term career goal at Interview 1 were able to define a goal by the final interview, three remained undecided.

In summary, our analysis of the employment status, long-term career goals, and participants' trajectories towards (or away from) these goals has highlighted the complexity of factors influencing their decisions, and the opportunities available to them. For the majority, the route towards their long-term goals in Australia was indirect, involving a number of steps, some changes in plans, and some revision of goals, and there were clear differences between the cohorts. More Cohort A participants were in employment, and at proportionally higher levels than Cohort B, suggesting that time in Australia is a crucial factor in the pursuit of employment goals. As discussed in Chapter 3, Cohort A participants

reported using more English and were more confident of their English skills than were Cohort B. Thus while the findings discussed above are in line with the general trend noted in the literature of a downward employment mobility post-migration, the story is more complex and changes over time. The remaining sections of the chapter explore how participants pursued their goals, particularly in relation to improving their English proficiency after the AMEP, accessing further education and increasing their employability.

2.3 Strategies for pursuing long-term goals post-AMEP

In this section we examine the steps participants took in pursuit of their employment goals, some of the problems they encountered along the way, and the reasons they gave for revising them. Our analysis identified proficiency in English as a crucial, although not the only, factor influencing their progress towards their goals. Below we consider the role of English and English language learning together with other factors such as family life, economic necessity and health issues where relevant for specific individuals.

In the initial interviews, some participants – particularly those at the lower CSWE levels – were vague about their plans. For example, Krishna (Cohort B, c24p009, pre-CSWE), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese participant from Centre 24, explained that she and her sister-in-law would like to work in the future, although such plans depended on their ability to improve their English proficiency:

If we be able to speak. And if we get a job, we like to work ... I don't think we will be able to work in farm or something like that. We can – we may work if we get a gardening or something like that ... if we know how to speak we can do that.

[Krishna, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 1, interpreted]

Others had a clearer idea about how to achieve their goals after they had left the AMEP. These principally involved further English study, further education (mainly vocational) and short-term employment. These are described in turn below, with a focus on the types of study they planned, the challenges they faced, and the impact on their employment trajectories.

2.3.1 Further English study

The types of post-AMEP English study undertaken by participants during the course of this study included TAFE, the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program (previously known as Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program [LLNP]) currently funded by the Department of Education and Training, VicSkills, classes in a small range of private institutions such as the Centre for Adult Education (CAE), and community-run classes. Some participants did more than one at the same time. For example, Krishna (Cohort B, c24p009, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan), mentioned above, continued her post-AMEP studies at TAFE and also took English classes run by a church group.

Table 2.3 shows a breakdown of post-AMEP English study according to cohort and CSWE level. This analysis included all participants who went on to study English at some point after the AMEP, and not only those who attended at least three interviews (see Section 2.1), so totals will be slightly different from those used for Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

Table 2.3: Post-AMEP English study by cohort and CSWE level

Cohort B			Cohort A		
CSWE level (n)	n	% ^a	CSWE level (n)	n	% ^a
Pre-CSWE (16)	5	31	Pre-CSWE (3)	1	33
CSWE I (23)	11	48	CSWE I (11)	3	27
CSWE II (0)	0	0	CSWE II (12)	4	33
CSWE III (46)	6	13	CSWE III (34)	17	50
Total (85)	22	26	Total (60)	25	42

^a Percentage is out of the total number of participants at that CSWE level in that cohort.

As Table 2.3 shows, more Cohort A participants, particularly those at CSWE III, decided to pursue further English study post-AMEP at some stage. Among Cohort B, it was mostly the lower-level participants who continued with formal English classes. These were predominantly refugees with low levels of education from Centre 24. This was the case for Nakula (Cohort B, c24p012, CSWE I), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese refugee who lived in Launceston with his wife and four children.

Nakula had worked as a farmer in Bhutan, and as a builder's labourer at the refugee camp. He arrived with very little English, and although he found the AMEP very challenging, he enjoyed it. Throughout he was keen to find employment, and indicated that he would take any job he could. By his final interview he was studying English at TAFE, and although he wanted to find a long-term job he still felt that his level of English would prevent him from getting the qualifications that he needed to work in such areas as construction. He was not sure if he would be able to work in the future, but he very much wanted to.

Cohort B CSWE III participants, on the other hand, had the lowest rate of post-AMEP English study, at only 13%. A relatively large proportion of this cohort (6) had become stay-at-home mothers and three were at home awaiting the birth of their babies at the time of the final interview (altogether 13% of the cohort). There appears to be a tendency for participants to return to English language study once they realise over time that this is what they need to do in order to pursue their goals. Since Cohort B participants have only been in Australia for a relatively short period, we might expect some of them to return to more English study in the future. Yuna (Cohort A, c10p012, CSWE III) is an example of this. She took a relatively direct route to regaining work in her pre-migration profession, but returned to English study later.

Yuna is from South Korea and is in her early 30s. She began learning English at a young age, had a fine arts degree, and worked as a freelance graphic designer for 10 years. She first came to Australia in 2006 on a working holiday visa, at which time she met her future husband. She was able to find some voluntary and freelance graphic design work, but also told us that she thought her English was not very good at this time. She returned to Australia in 2007 to marry and live with her husband, and enrolled in the AMEP. After about six weeks in the AMEP she left to work for a design and marketing company. Although she was able to communicate well at work, she later found that she needed further English in order to advance, and so she enrolled in part-time evening English classes. By Interview 4, Yuna had moved to freelance graphic design work and was slowly building up a client base. She was very happy to be doing freelance work, and found this particularly ideal when she started a family.

Similarly, Shan (Cohort B, c26p003, CSWE I) realised that she needed more English in order to pursue her long-term dream:

Shan is from China, where she previously owned a women's fashion store business. In the first interview, Shan articulated her long-term plan of opening her own restaurant or café in Australia, and she did not waver from this goal throughout the study:

I want to find a job. Finish – built, build a restaurant. Same – simple this café and some cakes and little bit the shop. I want to sell in the future, yeah ... I want to find some employee – build restaurant maybe – because I want to know Australia people, which food they really want. What are things it's really popular. So after I think I have confidence, after maybe I find some area have this in.

[Shan, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 1]

As a first step, she planned to gain some experience working in a local restaurant. At Interview 2, she was still in the AMEP, had been moved to CSWE level II, was enjoying the faster pace, and felt that her English was improving. By Interview 3, Shan had a part-time job in a fast food restaurant, which she had taken strategically to practise her English and gain local experience. However, she quickly noticed a huge difference between the relative safety and comfort of speaking English in the AMEP and at home, and the demands of working in an English-speaking environment, particularly the challenge of understanding and being understood by customers. She told us that repeated misunderstandings with customers had made her lose confidence in her English, and so she left her job to return to full-time English study in the (at that time) LLNP. She was considering study in hospitality or aged care after finishing her English course as a means of moving towards her ultimate goal of owning her own café or restaurant.

Section 2.3.2.4 provides further examples of participants who returned to English study after encountering English-related obstacles once they had left the AMEP.

At their final interview, three Cohort A participants were still studying English; these had started at CSWE I. A larger number (23) of Cohort B participants were still studying English at the final interview: eight were still studying in the AMEP, seven at TAFE, seven in the LLNP/SEE; and one at a free community-run class.

2.3.2 Further education

2.3.2.1 Further education planned at first interview

Table 2.4 shows the plans that participants from both cohorts had for further study at the time of their first interview while they were still in the AMEP. Approximately half of each cohort planned to undertake further study, and this was largely vocational education at TAFE. For example, in Cohort A, 30% participants planned to study in TAFE; 4% wanted to undertake undergraduate study; 11% planned to undertake postgraduate study; and 6% aspired to take professional exams. More Cohort A than Cohort B participants planned to pursue postgraduate education (A: 11%, B: 6%), since they had higher levels of education pre-migration, but more Cohort B participants wanted to study in TAFE (B: 42%, A: 30%).

Table 2.4: Education planned at Interview 1 while still attending the AMEP

Education plans	Cohort B		Cohort A	
	n	%	n	%
Study in TAFE	28	42%	17	30%
Undergraduate study	4	6%	2	4%
Postgraduate study	4	6%	6	11%
Professional exams	0	0%	3	6%
No plans	31	46%	32	50%
Total	67	100%	60	100%

Table 2.5 shows participants' education goals at Interview 1 according to their level of education pre-migration (see Chapter 1), classified into three groups: 0–7 years, 8–12 years and 13 or more years (13+) of education. The totals represent the number of participants in each education group and the percentages were calculated in relation to these numbers. The data from both cohorts suggest that mainly participants with higher levels of prior education (8–12 years, and 13+ years) planned further education. Thus, half of Cohort A participants with 13+ years education (20 out of 40) and nearly half (6 out of 14) of those with 8–12 years of education intended to engage in some form of study post-AMEP. This is only slightly lower than the 57% (16 out of 28) and 65% (13 out of 20) respectively among Cohort B participants. Roughly one-third of participants with 0–7 years of education in each cohort planned to take a TAFE course. Across both cohorts, all the participants who planned to undertake postgraduate study were those who already had tertiary-level education.

Table 2.5: Education planned at Interview 1 by education level and cohort

Cohort A	0–7 years		8–12 years		13+ years		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
TAFE	2	33	6	43	9	23	17	28
Undergraduate study	0	0	0	0	2	5	2	3
Postgraduate study	0	0	0	0	6	15	6	10
Professional exam	0	0	0	0	3	8	3	5
No plans	4	66	8	57	20	50	32	53
Total	6	100	14	100	40	100	60	100
Cohort B								
TAFE	7	37	11	55	10	36	28	42
Undergraduate study	0	0	2	10	2	7	4	6
Postgraduate study	0	0	0	0	4	14	4	6
Professional exam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No plans	12	63	7	35	12	43	31	46
Total	19	100	20	100	28	100	67	100

As shown in Table 2.5, the intention to study at TAFE was not restricted to those with lower levels of education. Many highly educated participants in both cohorts opted for vocational education rather than university study, at least as a first step. For example, of the 28 Cohort B participants with more than 13 years of education, 10 said at Interview 1 that they wanted to study TAFE courses – more than those who planned to study at university undergraduate (2) or postgraduate level (4).

Participants at higher CSWE levels in both cohorts had more plans for further study than those studying at lower CSWE levels. To take Cohort B as an example, while only three pre-CSWE participants (20%) had plans for further education at the initial interview, the majority of CSWE III participants (21, or 66%) planned to undertake further study. Of the 16 participants across both cohorts who planned to pursue tertiary education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, 15 were at CSWE III.

The TAFE courses nominated by participants are shown in Table 2.6. As this shows, participants were interested in a range of courses, but accounting or business and childcare were the most popular. Additionally, participants expressed an interest in courses on aged care, customer service/retail, building trades, and nursing or allied health.

Table 2.6: Preferences for TAFE courses at Interview 1

TAFE course	Cohort A	Cohort B
	n	n
Accounting or business	4	4
Childcare	3	4
Aged care	1	4
Customer service/retail	2	2
Building trades	1	3
Nursing or allied health	1	2
Design or fashion	1	1
Commercial cookery	0	2
Hairdressing or beauty	1	1
Other or not specified	4	5
Total	18	28

Note: Several participants planned to study more than one course so the numbers given in the table do not necessarily correspond to the number of participants who wanted to study.

2.3.2.2 Further education achieved or in progress

Table 2.7 indicates the formal education qualifications gained by participants, or in progress, at the final interview across both cohorts.

Table 2.7: Qualifications gained or in progress at final interviews

Type of qualification	Cohort A		Cohort B	
	Completed	In progress	Completed	In progress
TAFE certificate or diploma	13	5	4	8
University undergraduate degree	0	0	0	1
University postgraduate degree	2	2	0	0
Recognition of professional qualifications through exam	1	0	0	0
Other	2	0	1	0
Total	18	7	5	9

As Table 2.7 shows, Cohort A participants had completed more qualifications than Cohort B by the end of the study period. This is not surprising since Cohort A participants had been in the study for longer (4.5 years compared with 1.5 years). The qualifications were mainly vocational, although Emma (Cohort A, c05p006, CSWE III, from Brazil) completed a master's degree in diet and nutrition (see Section 2.2.2), and Xiao Mei (Cohort A, c10p006, CSWE III, from China) had completed honours in Chinese studies even before she did the AMEP. At the final interview, similar numbers of participants from both cohorts were studying for (mainly TAFE) qualifications: seven Cohort A participants, and nine Cohort B participants. The higher levels of education and English proficiency on arrival of Cohort A (see Tables 1.8 and 1.9), and the inclusion of a number of pre-literate Centre 24 ethnic Nepali Bhutanese refugee participants in Cohort B may also have impacted these results. None of this latter group either gained or attempted qualifications during the study.

2.3.2.3 Motivation for further education

Participants in the study planned further education for a variety of reasons:

- to pursue higher level study
- to fulfil a lifelong ambition or dream
- to enter a new field of employment
- to improve employment prospects in general
- to improve their English.

Emily (Cohort B, c22p006, CSWE III), who had previously worked in purchasing in Slovakia, also explained that she thought short (that is, TAFE) courses might be “more valued” in Australia:

Maybe my university degree will be not recognised here or I know here it's sometimes it's more important to do just few weeks course and maybe it's more valued.

[Emily, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 1]

In some instances, participants viewed study at TAFE as a first step towards a long-term goal or re-entry into a field in which they already had expertise. Faith (Cohort A, c02p009, CSWE III, from Sri Lanka), for example, had previously worked as an administrator for a multinational company, and wanted to remain in this field. She therefore planned to study administration or business management at TAFE. For others, TAFE study was seen as the first quick step towards gaining short-term employment, usually in occupations with skill level and English language requirements that were low, or at least less demanding than those required in their previous professions. Qian (Cohort B, c26p006, CSWE I, from China) had been an accountant pre-migration, a career she hoped to continue in Australia. At Interview 1 she reported plans to study childcare at TAFE so that she could get a short-term job in childcare while undertaking further study towards accounting. Hawa (Cohort B, c23p010, CSWE III, from Liberia) had never been in paid employment but had managed her mother's shop in the refugee camp in Guinea and had looked after her siblings. She explained to us at Interview 1 that she planned to do an aged care course at TAFE after completing the AMEP, so that she could get a job in that field. Lily (Cohort A, c01p003, CSWE II, from China) realised that the level of her business studies course at a private institute in China had not given her the level of skill she needed to be successful in Australia, and so she planned to study business at TAFE.

Some participants saw further study and professional training – be it at TAFE, university or other training courses – as an opportunity to engage with English and improve their language skills in more specialised domains. Kristina (Cohort A, c01p008, CSWE II, from Lithuania), for example, felt that her TAFE course in event management was a good way of

improving her English post-AMEP, as it combined language learning with training in an area she was interested in:

It's better to do something, you know ... I did events management and then you, you studying events management in English and then you ... you're learning cause you're studying like already in English so it's the same, I think ... it's better, so you can just do two things in once.

[Kristina, CSWE II, Cohort A, Int 7]

2.3.2.4 English and further study

Most participants did not perceive the language requirements of their courses as causing insurmountable problems, and most felt that they managed to overcome the linguistic challenges with time. In this sense, the challenging environment pushed them to improve their English. One of these participants was Kinjal (Cohort B, c22p003, CSWE III, from India), who did a Certificate III in pathology at a private institute immediately after leaving the AMEP. In her second interview she described how at first she struggled to understand some of her teachers and classmates, who came from many different countries. However, after a few weeks, she had got used to the variety of accents, and by the end of the course felt that she could communicate with anyone – even people with accents she used to find impossible to understand.

Lourdes (Cohort A, c02p003, CSWE III, from the Philippines) listed a range of issues with English she had encountered during her studies in Certificate III in disability work and Certificate IV in community services. Most of these related to English writing. She generally needed a long time to write relatively short assignments, and also struggled to understand the assignment questions and writing conventions of her field. Thus, she was asked to rewrite her final assignment, a report on a project she ran at a charitable organisation, as she was not able to frame her report appropriately. However, after consultation with a support person at TAFE she was able to pass her assignment.

Only a small number of participants dropped out of their courses and reassessed their employment goals because of language challenges. This was the case for Akbar (Cohort B, c26p016, CSWE I) a 50-year-old migrant from Somalia who completed his AMEP hours and then continued studying English at LLNP/SEE before starting a Certificate II course in carpentry at TAFE. Even though he was good at the practical aspects of the course, he could not pass the certificate as he struggled with the more theoretical components of the course in English. Similarly, his classmate, Yuan (Cohort B, c26p005, CSWE I, from China) was also advised that her English was not good enough to complete the practical aspects of her Certificate III aged care course, and so she decided to drop out of the class.

Will (Cohort A, c05p011, CSWE III), a human rights lawyer from Iraq, is an example of a participant with high aspirations to return to his former profession and ambitious study plans. However, issues with English proficiency – particularly academic writing – made studying much more difficult than he had expected:

In Iraq, Will had 16 years of education including a degree in law, and had worked as a human rights lawyer before coming to Australia. After finishing the AMEP, he took a series of TAFE courses, seeking to qualify for entry to a university law school. He undertook a tertiary preparation certificate course but was unable to complete the essay-writing component, and was advised to take further English classes. He did this, and also embarked on a bachelor's degree in law, but failed the majority of his subjects and again was advised to do a course in academic writing. As a well-respected professional in his home country, Will struggled with his lack of progress in regaining entry to his former profession. By Interview 6, he had dropped out of study to care for family members with health issues, and was considering a return to the Middle East.

Other participants with aspirations to very high levels of employment that demanded high levels of English language skills were not always able to access the necessary English language instruction.

Wen (Cohort A, c06p017, CSWE III, from China) had practised as a gynaecologist. Her long-term goal in Australia was to again work as a gynaecologist, and she did not waver from this goal throughout the entire study. She knew at the first interview, however, that she would first need to improve her English. By Interview 2, Wen had finished her AMEP studies and was working full-time as a teacher aide at a private childcare centre, a job that gave her opportunity to practise her English. By Interview 5, almost 1.5 years later, Wen had completed a Certificate III in childcare services, and was working in a childcare centre (see Chapter 3). She recognised that her English was not good enough to work in her field – she needed an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) 7 in all four skill areas – and was thinking of enrolling in the LLNP evening courses to work on her English. She wanted a work placement at a hospital, even in a junior position, to help her improve her English. By her final interview she had not yet achieved her goal, nor undertaken further English classes, and was still working at the childcare centre. She was clear that she did not want to take the IELTS test until she was sure she was ready, because she could not afford to pay for repeat tests if she failed to achieve the required grade. She was starting to consider the possibility of returning to China after her daughter had finished university in Australia.

2.3.3 Short-term employment: motivations, traps and the role of English

As discussed in Section 2.2, participants in both cohorts undertook short-term jobs, which were often lower in status than their pre-migration occupations and unrelated to their long-term career aspirations. These included work experience undertaken as part of the AMEP SPELT program, as well as ongoing, often casual, employment found independently. Thus Lyn (Cohort A, c09p005, CSWE III, from the Philippines), who had been a human resources officer pre-migration, took a job in a fast food outlet; Madhoosh (Cohort B, c23p006,

CSWE III), a pharmacist from Afghanistan, worked as a security guard (see Section 2.2.1); and Nymph (Cohort B, c23p014, CSWE III), who had worked as an IT professional in India, found employment as a checkout operator.

While participants in our study often felt that their English proficiency left them no choice but to look for employment at much lower levels than they would have liked, we found that they often tried to be strategic about taking on temporary work that would help them improve their English and help them take a step closer to their long-term goals. In this section, we explore some of the reasons participants gave for taking on short-term work, and discuss the impact that this had on their English and long-term employment plans.

Participants gave the following reasons for planning and undertaking short-term work:

- in order to be financially independent (often these were jobs within their own first language community, or in settings where little English was required, such as cleaner or factory worker – see Chapter 3 for further discussion)
- in order to gain local work experience, a common requirement for employment in Australia (Richardson, Robertson, & Ilsley, 2001), as overseas experience is often not recognised in the Australian labour market (Green et al., 2007)
- in order to use and practise English with a view to applying for more appropriate employment or undertaking further study later.

Many participants told us that they thought working would enable them to build on the English they had learned in the AMEP, although not all of these participants actually found paid employment during the course of the study. Sunil (Cohort B, c24p004, pre-CSWE), for example, an ethnic Nepali refugee participant from Bhutan, reported in early interviews that his English was not yet good enough to either undertake further study or to get a job. At the same time, however, he believed that working would be a very good way to improve his English:

I think the first priority that I'm thinking is work because that is the best way of improving speaking. I think because I will get chance to speak in English with my co-workers and think that is the best way and I mean if I will start working, if I get a job ... I really want to be able to communicate for myself. I want to say what I feel, what I like and I want to communicate with people for myself.

[Sunil, pre-CSWE, Cohort A, Int 3, interpreted]

At Interview 5, Sunil was caring for his father and not looking for a job, although he still planned to work in the future.

Some participants who quickly found employment early on in their settlement without first improving their language skills could find themselves trapped in low-level jobs that they found it difficult to leave. By the final interview, seven Cohort A participants (19% of the

total number in employment at that time) and five Cohort B participants (25% of the total number in employment) were in low-level employment where opportunities for really improving their English were limited. Several explicitly saw this situation as an obstacle to the pursuit of their long-term career goals. For example, Irene (Cohort A, c08p011, CSWE I) a bank cashier from China, worked throughout the study as a cleaner with a Chinese friend in an English-speaking furniture shop. She reported speaking Mandarin with her friend and only exchanging simple social greetings with Australian staff in the shop. She felt that she had to stay in this labour-intensive job because her English was too limited to do anything else, and she told us in Interview 5 that she would advise new migrants to learn more English before finding a job.

Similarly, Xiao Mei (Cohort A, c10p006, CSWE III), a lawyer with 10 years of experience from China, worked as a Mandarin tutor throughout the study, and part-time as a hotel cleaner at Interviews 6 and 7. In the cleaning job, she only needed to speak English with one Australian co-worker, as the other workmates were all Chinese.

However, employment generally offered some participants an important way of improving their English. As reported in Chapter 3, across both cohorts, people who were in paid work reported using more English in their everyday lives, and at Interview 5, the 21 Cohort B participants who were employed reported using English 49% of the time on average in everyday interactions, whereas the 41 unemployed participants only reported using English 31% of the time in daily communications (see Table 3.3). Chapter 3 discusses the types of English interactions participants engaged in at work, and some of the specific ways they felt that this helped them improve their English.

A small number of participants who had initially planned work as a strategy to improve their English later reported to us that this had helped them realise, or at least move towards, their long-term goals. Svetlana (Cohort B, c25p011, CSWE III), a graphic designer from Kazakhstan, completed an SLPET course that included work experience in an office supplies store. While she did not enjoy the work because it was not in her field (see Chapter 4), she found it invaluable for improving her English. It was her very first experience in an Australian workplace, and while in the beginning she was very nervous about talking to customers, she gradually became more confident and willing to try to talk to people despite the risk of making mistakes, saying that “[n]ow I don’t afraid about this” [Svetlana, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 4]. Ultimately, this experience helped her gain the confidence to start applying for jobs in her field, and by Interview 5 she had secured part-time work doing photo retouching (albeit for a Russian company).

Marimar’s experience also illustrates how short-term employment can be used strategically as a way of improving English at the same time as attending formal classes.

Marimar (Cohort B, c25p003, CSWE III), a software engineer from Venezuela, moved to Australia with her IT engineer husband. When they first arrived, her husband

found a job at a large software company, while she attended AMEP classes, and later private institute classes, to improve her English. She planned to look for work later in the year when her course finished – initially any kind of work, and then work in computer programming. She explained that while her technical computer-related English was very good because computer programming is always done in English, even in Venezuela, she felt her general English needed improving before she could again work in her professional field. By Interview 3 (seven months after she had started in the study) Marimar had found a casual job transcribing audio recordings of conference presentations. Although she found this very challenging, as it was all in English, it was helpful improving her listening skills, so that once she had left the job she continued to practise transcription in her own time in order to keep improving her English. By Interview 4, Marimar had also done three days' work at a florist, and was looking for more work, particularly in retail, where she could practise her English and improve her employability. She was also doing some volunteer work at a second-hand shop for the same reason, and felt that interactions with co-workers and customers challenged and helped to improve her English. By the final interview, Marimar was working part-time as a software programmer at her husband's workplace. She was very happy to be doing the same type of work that she had done previously in Venezuela at last, and planned to keep working in this field while continuing to improve her English.

Short-term employment can be a useful way for migrants to improve their proficiency in English, gain local experience and earn money. However, it does not necessarily guarantee the opportunity to interact in English in ways that help improve language skills substantially, and can also trap them into low-level jobs with few prospects.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter we have analysed the impact of English proficiency, post-AMEP study and English learning opportunities on participants' abilities to achieve their long-term employment goals. The majority wanted to gain employment in Australia, although not always in the same job as pre-migration, as some saw migration as an opportunity to refocus their careers. Those who were not working by the end of the study had retired, were looking after families, were studying, or did not feel they yet had enough English. In both cohorts, and throughout the study, a large number of participants aspired to own and run their own businesses, perhaps because having this level of control over their own work situation was an appealing alternative to becoming an employee in an English-dominant workplace.

We found that for most participants, the route towards achieving their goals in Australia was indirect, involving a number of steps, some changes in plans, and some revision of goals. Many were still some way from achieving their goals by the end of the study,

although we were able to observe the steps they had taken thus far, and how their goals had developed during the study. We saw a number of differences between the cohorts. Compared with Cohort B participants, more Cohort A participants were in employment by the end of the study, and more were working at levels commensurate with their previous occupation. This suggests that Cohort A participants had more opportunities to gain work during the longer time period since exiting the AMEP.

The data clearly show a downward employment mobility during the period of the study for those participants who had worked at managerial and professional levels pre-migration. For some, this was because they were gradually working their way towards their employment goals but needed to earn money and gain local experience as well as improve their English, and short-term work at a lower level met these needs. For others, however, short-term employment was less strategic and more of a financial imperative, as they needed to provide for themselves and their families. These participants ran the risk of becoming trapped in jobs with relatively little opportunity to use and practise English.

Participants engaged in post-AMEP English study and further (mainly TAFE) education to improve their English, find short-term work, and move towards their preferred profession. Some participants, particularly those from Cohort B with lower levels of English proficiency and education, continued to take English classes directly after they had finished the AMEP. Others returned to formal English study only after facing English-related obstacles at work or in TAFE courses, which helped them to realise that they needed higher levels of English.

The most popular form of further education was TAFE courses. More participants from higher CSWE levels planned further study. They either sought to re-qualify in their existing fields of expertise, or to gain new qualifications in order to move into a new area of work. Participants sometimes found the English component of further study (particularly academic writing) to be challenging. While for most, these difficulties were not insurmountable, a few had to drop out and re-evaluate their goals.

A range of factors in addition to English proficiency affected participants' ability or motivation to pursue their long-term career goals, including age, educational level, family responsibilities and economic necessity. Original goals sometimes had to be put on hold, revised or even abandoned. In addition, because migrants may take many years to achieve their goals, progress towards their goals needs to be investigated over a longer period of time than was possible in this study in order to establish if the initial downward employment mobility and de-skilling noted above persists.

CHAPTER 3

USE OF ENGLISH IN EVERYDAY LIFE

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter we consider the extent to which participants used English in everyday life, where they used English, what kinds of interactions they had in English and with whom, the challenges they encountered along the way, and how the AMEP can better prepare them for those interactions. Understanding participants' patterns of English use in their everyday lives and the issues they encounter can help us identify the kinds of language skills they most need to focus on in the AMEP and subsequent language training. It also gives us an insight into the opportunity participants had to further develop their English skills through interactions outside the classroom. Opportunities to use English in everyday life with members of the community outside the classroom is not only vital for learning English successfully (Yates, 2011), but possibly one of the most important influences on developing proficiency overall (Segalowitz, Gatbonton, & Trofimovic, 2009). In fact, successful interactions in English have been described as the "cornerstone of both the achievement of high levels of English language competence and the valued recognition that underpins the mutual respect necessary for social inclusion" (Yates, 2011, p. 458).

Through this exploration of the participants' use of English in everyday life and the challenges they faced, this chapter addresses relevant aspects of the following research questions:

- RQ1: What kind of interactions in English (spoken, written and computer-mediated) do contemporary AMEP clients engage in inside and outside the classroom during their time in the AMEP and afterwards?
- RQ2: How are the two (English interactions used inside the AMEP and English interactions used outside the AMEP) related and how can their fit be improved?
- RQ3: How are interactions in English different for different learner groups and how can language training be customised to meet the language needs of different client groups?
- RQ4b: How does ongoing language learning in the long run build on initial language training?

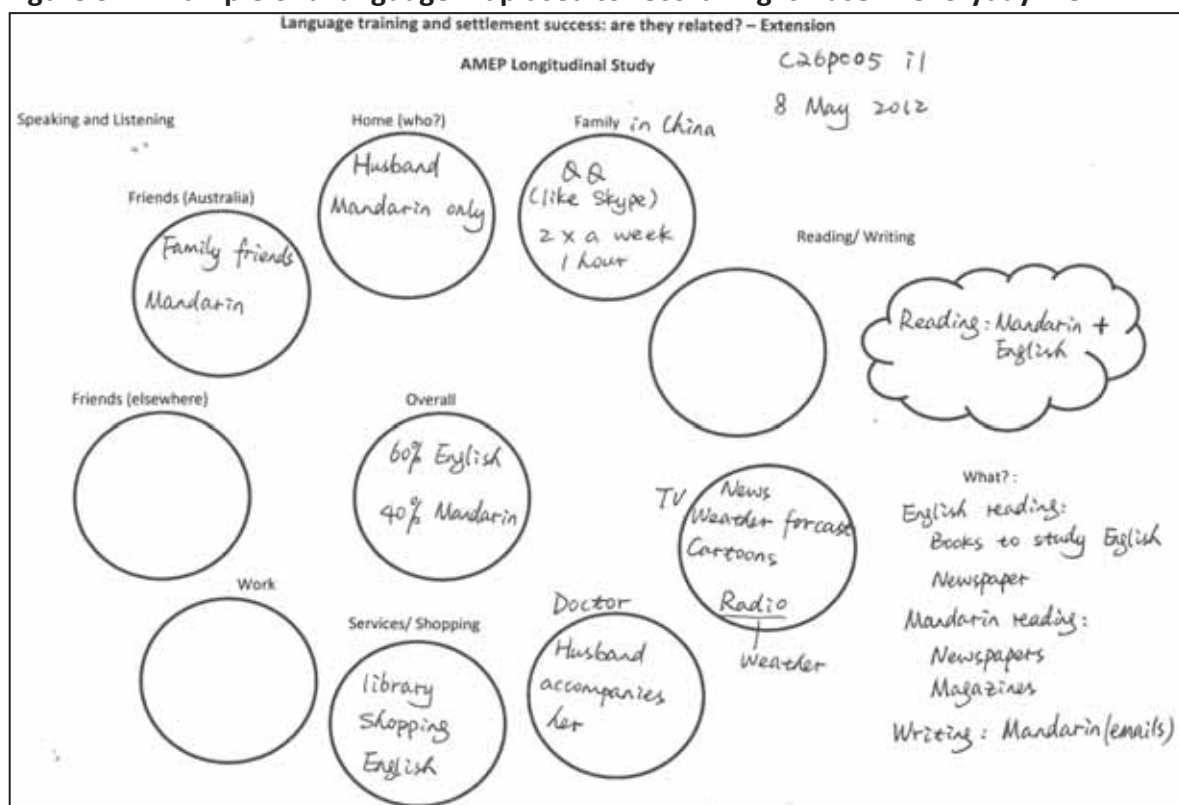
In Section 3.2 we consider the overall trends for participants' reported use of English over time. We then consider where and with whom different participants used English: in the

workplace, in public places, at home and when socialising with friends. We also explore the quality of English they used, the challenges they faced when interacting in English in these settings, and the communicative strategies they found to be effective over time. The analysis of general patterns and overall trends draws primarily on qualitative interview data from Cohort A Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 and from Cohort B Interviews 1, 3 and 5 and on quantitative data captured in the language map.

3.2 How much English did participants use overall?

As noted in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.2.1.3), at each interview in the AMEP LS, participants were guided by the interviewer to report their English use in everyday life using a language map (see Figure 3.1), except where time or other constraints prevented this. The following analysis focuses on participants' reported use of spoken English (speaking and listening) for Interviews 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B. An analysis of participants' reported use of reading and writing skills in English can be found in Section 3.7.

Figure 3.1: Example of a language map used to record English use in everyday life



The language map comprises a series of circles representing where and with whom participants spoke and listened to English and other languages in their daily lives, and a cloud representing what languages and materials they used for reading and writing. The overall percentage of English spoken (entered in the central circle) as estimated at each interview by the participants, is taken here as an indication of the extent to which they used English in their everyday lives. It includes their English use in a range of contexts, including

speaking English with colleagues, classmates, family members and friends; using English while shopping or attending medical appointments; and listening to English media.

Cohort A participants reported using more English than Cohort B participants on average, suggesting that with time in Australia migrants tend to use more English in daily life. Thus at the end of the study, the 35 Cohort A participants who were available for Interview 7 and filled in the language map reported using an average of 62% of English in daily interactions, which was markedly higher than the percentage (37%) reported by the 62 of Cohort B participants who were available for Interview 5 and who had completed the language map. There did not seem to be any particular pattern for participants' overall English use in relation to their education level across either cohort. Higher levels of English on arrival is often, but by no means always, associated with higher levels of prior education. Rather, as discussed in the next section, the extent to which participants used English related more to their CSWE level and employment status.

3.2.1 CSWE level and overall English use

We analysed the figures that participants gave us at each interview for the overall percentage of time they used English in their daily lives (entered in the central circle on the language map) according to their CSWE level. Table 3.1 presents the number of participants at each CSWE level who completed the language map, their overall percentage of English use reported at each interview, the number of participants at each CSWE level who reported using English at least 50% of the time in their daily lives, and the percentage of those participants in relation to all participants at the same CSWE level in that cohort.

Table 3.1: Participants' CSWE level and overall English use

Cohort A	Interview 5				Interview 6				Interview 7			
	n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%		n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%		n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%	
			n	%			n	%			n	%
Pre-CSWE	3	60%	2	67%	0	0%	0	0%	1	90%	1	100%
CSWE I	11	31%	2	18%	9	31%	2	22%	6	33%	2	33%
CSWE II	10	56%	7	70%	6	54%	4	67%	9	49%	3	33%
CSWE III	31	71%	28	90%	20	71%	17	85%	19	77%	19	100%
Total	55	60%	39	71%	35	58%	23	66%	35	62%	25	71%
Cohort B	Interview 1				Interview 3				Interview 5			
	n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%		n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%		n ^a	Average overall English use	Used English at least 50%	
			n	%			n	%			n	%
Pre-CSWE	14	7%	0	0%	12	12%	1	8%	14	15%	2	14%
CSWE I	23	28%	5	22%	15	30%	4	27%	18	28%	4	22%
CSWE III	43	57%	31	72%	27	60%	21	78%	30	52%	20	67%
Total	80	40%	36	45%	54	41%	26	48%	62	37%	26	42%

^a Refers to the number of participants who indicated an overall percentage of English use on the language map.

As can be seen from Table 3.1, across both cohorts at each interview, participants at higher CSWE levels consistently reported using more English than those at lower CSWE levels. For example, at Interview 5 for Cohort A, the 31 CSWE III participants for whom we have language map data reported using an average of 71% English in their everyday lives, which was noticeably higher than the percentage reported by the 10 CSWE II participants (56%), which in turn was much higher than the percentage used by the 11 CSWE I participants, who reported using an average of only 31% English in their daily lives. The percentage of English used by the few participants at pre-CSWE level in Cohort A (e.g. 60%, at Interview 5) goes against this trend. However, it should be noted that this figure is inflated by the amount of English used by just one participant, Robert (c11p003, from Liberia), who had fluent oracy in Liberian English but whose low levels of literacy and formal education meant that he was assigned to a pre-CSWE level class.

Unlike lower-level-CSWE participants, the majority of CSWE III participants across both cohorts consistently reported using English more than 50% of the time in their daily lives; in other words, they reported using more English than they did their other languages, including their mother tongue. As shown in Table 3.1, across all three interviews with each cohort, the majority of CSWE III participants told us that they used English at least 50% of the time in their daily interactions (for Cohort A, this was the case for 90% of CSWE III participants at Interview 5, 85% at Interview 6 and 100% at Interview 7). In contrast, participants at pre-CSWE and CSWE I across both cohorts typically reported that they used English less than other languages in their everyday lives.

These results suggest that a higher level of English allows recently arrived migrants more chance to use English in their everyday interactions with other people, a state of affairs that also allows them access to opportunities to practise and learn, and thus improve, their English.

3.2.2 Employment status and overall English use

We first examined participants' employment status in relation to their CSWE level. Table 3.2 presents the number and percentage of employed and unemployed participants at each interview according to their CSWE level. Interestingly, across both cohorts, the higher the CSWE level, the more participants were in paid employment; in addition, in both cohorts, the majority of participants who were in paid work were at CSWE III. As can be seen from the table, for example, of the 19 Cohort A participants who were employed at Interview 7, 12 were at CSWE III, four at CSWE II, two at CSWE I and only one at pre-CSWE level. At the same interview, 63% of the people who were in paid work (i.e. 12 of 19) were at CSWE III, which was substantially higher than the percentage of employed people who started at CSWE II (21%, i.e. 4 of 19), CSWE I (11%, i.e. 2 of 19) and pre-CSWE level (5%, i.e. 1 of 19). These findings suggest that newly arrived migrants who come to Australia with a higher level of English are likely to gain employment more quickly (see also ABS, 2007).

As expected, regardless of CSWE level, more Cohort A than Cohort B participants were in paid employment. As shown in Table 3.2, by the end of the study, 50% of the 38 Cohort A participants who were available for Interview 7 had entered the workforce, while this was the case for only 34% of the 62 Cohort B participants who were available for Interview 5. For Cohort A, regardless of CSWE level, the number of employed participants was higher than, or at least equal to, the number of unemployed participants at each interview. For example, of the 60 Cohort A participants who were available for Interview 5, the percentage of people who were working was 63%, which was considerably higher than the percentage of people who were unemployed (37%). In contrast, for Cohort B, regardless of CSWE level, the number of employed participants was consistently lower than the number of unemployed participants throughout the study. From Table 3.2 we can see that, of the 62 Cohort B participants who were available for Interview 5, only 34% were working while the other 66% were not in paid employment. While it must be remembered that these results are cross-sectional and that the inclusion in Cohort B of Centre 24 participants who are mostly low-literacy with little workforce experience will have skewed the figures, these results nevertheless suggest that with time in Australia more migrants enter the workforce.

Table 3.2: Participants' employment status and CSWE level

Cohort A	Interview 4 (55)				Interview 5 (60)				Interview 6 (48)				Interview 7 (38)			
	Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed	
CSWE level	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-CSWE	0	0%	3	6%	2	3%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%
CSWE I	5	9%	6	11%	4	7%	7	12%	3	6%	6	13%	2	5%	6	16%
CSWE II	8	15%	2	4%	11	18%	1	2%	11	23%	1	2%	4	11%	5	13%
CSWE III	19	35%	12	22%	21	35%	13	22%	13	27%	13	27%	12	32%	8	21%
Total	32	58%	23	42%	38	63%	22	37%	28	58%	20	42%	19	50%	19	50%
Cohort B	Interview 1 (85)				Interview 3 (56)				Interview 5 (62)							
	Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed					
CSWE level	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%				
Pre-CSWE	1	1%	15	18%	0	0%	14	25%	1	2%	13	21%				
CSWE I	1	1%	22	26%	3	5%	12	21%	4	7%	14	23%				
CSWE III	9	11%	37	44%	13	23%	14	25%	16	26%	14	23%				
Total	11	13%	74	87%	16	29%	40	71%	21	34%	41	66%				

We analysed the impact of participants' employment status on their overall English use in their daily lives. Table 3.3 shows the number and percentage of employed and unemployed participants at each interview and their overall English use reported on the language map. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, across both cohorts, at each interview, people who were in paid work reported using more English in everyday life than those who were unemployed. From this table we can see that, at Interview 7, the 17 Cohort A participants who were working and had completed the language map reported using considerably more

English (77%) than the unemployed 18 participants (49%). This was also true of Cohort B. For example, at Interview 3, the 16 Cohort B participants who were in paid work and had completed the language map reported using more English (57%) than the unemployed 38 participants (34%). That is, employment seemed to offer opportunities for migrants to use more English in their daily lives and therefore potentially to develop their English language skills with colleagues and clients.

Table 3.3: Participants' employment status and overall English use

Cohort A	Interview 5 (60)				Interview 6 (48)				Interview 7 (38)			
	n		Language map		n		Language map		n		Language map	
	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use
Employed	38	63%	34	65%	28	58%	17	65%	19	50%	17	77%
Unemployed	22	37%	21	51%	20	42%	18	52%	19	50%	18	49%
Cohort B	Interview 1 (85)				Interview 3 (56)				Interview 5 (62)			
	n		Language map		n		Language map		n		Language map	
	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use	n	%	n ^a	Overall English use
Employed	11	13%	11	51%	16	29%	16	57%	21	34%	21	49%
Unemployed	74	87%	69	38%	40	71%	38	34%	41	66%	41	31%

Note: Percentages reported for overall English use are the average for each group.

^a Refers to the number of participants who indicated an overall percentage of English use on the language map. A few participants who were interviewed did not complete the language map.

In summary, Cohort A participants reported using more English in daily life than Cohort B participants; those at higher CSWE levels reported using more English in everyday life than those at lower CSWE levels; and employed participants reported using more English in daily interactions than those who were unemployed. However, as discussed in the next section, the quality of participants' English interactions at work varied widely across different job categories and various workplaces.

3.3 Use of English at work

This section focuses on participants' reported experiences using English in the workplace. The vast majority of employed participants worked in English-speaking multicultural contexts, and thus had considerable opportunity to use English at work. However, there were some who reported having little opportunity to use English at work because they worked alone or in a small team, worked closely with L1 colleagues or in L1 workplaces, engaged minimally with customers, or had very labour-intensive jobs.

3.3.1 Interactions in English at work

We analysed participants' interview data (Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B) to explore what kinds of English interactions they engaged in at work. In both cohorts, some occupations demanded the use of more complex English than others. Across these interviews, a large number of participants were working as community and personal service workers (28 – e.g. waitress, childcare worker, nail technician, customer service), labourers (23 – e.g. cleaner, factory worker, farm worker, fast food cook), and in sales (16 – e.g. shop assistant, checkout operator). Some participants were working in clerical and administrative roles (9 – e.g. office administration, reception), in a professional capacity (8 – e.g. graphic designer, furniture designer, musician, interpreter), and in technical and trade areas (6 – e.g. hairdresser, dog groomer). Several participants were working as managers (3) in charge of workforce development or small businesses, and machinery operators and drivers (2). It should be noted that the number of workers discussed as working in a particular job category in this chapter may differ at times from that discussed at different points in Chapter 2 because different interviews were selected for close analysis in the two chapters. It should also be noted that even those participants who worked in the same job category sometimes had quite different experiences using English at work because of the specific nature of their jobs and the work context, their own English competence and the kinds of people they interacted with.

Participants told us about the kinds of interactions they had at work and in particular about the following: (a) formal and complex interactions, (b) reading and writing in English, (c) talking on the phone, (d) face-to-face communication with customers, (e) small talk with colleagues and clients, as well as (f) work-related terminology in their occupations. Across all job types, many participants were at first nervous about interacting with customers and colleagues in English, but they generally gained confidence in this with time and practice, particularly with the support and encouragement of co-workers.

3.3.1.1 Managers

Managerial positions require the use of formal and complex English (for explanation, negotiation, consultation, presentation, etc.), high levels of English literacy (for writing reports and emails) and talking on the phone, as the case of Abrar (Cohort A, c06p009, CSWE III, a medical doctor from Iraq) illustrates.

At Interview 5, Abrar worked as a workforce development manager with a disease prevention program. She reported using English for seven hours every day at work without any problems, speaking with colleagues who were from different cultural backgrounds, reading considerable material in English, preparing PowerPoint presentations, as well as writing emails and performance reports. At Interview 5, some 3.5 years after leaving the AMEP, she said that English was very important for her job and life, and that her English was much better than when she had first arrived in Australia some five years previously.

3.3.1.2 Professionals

Professionals reported needing to use formal and sophisticated English for talk at work. In addition, they reported needing to liaise with clients, make small talk with colleagues, and read and write in English, particularly in email correspondence. Most professionals, including Charles (Cohort A, c05p007, CSWE III, a furniture design manager from Colombia) felt the need to expand their vocabulary of work-related technical terms.

Charles, a furniture designer, had to use English at work in Australia to negotiate contracts and salaries with employers, communicate ideas with his boss and colleagues regularly, give formal presentations (about 30 minutes long) to clients to introduce his designs, write emails to co-workers and clients regularly, talk with his boss on the phone occasionally and make new clients through networking. Although at Interview 5 he said that he lacked English technical vocabulary to explain furniture concepts at work meetings and could not understand social talk at a business lunch, by Interview 7, some two years later, he felt that he could express himself clearly, had become good at giving formal presentations to introduce his designs, had established contacts with potential clients, and reported having no marked problems using English at work.

3.3.1.3 Clerical and administrative workers

Clerical and administrative workers, especially office administrators such as Hannah (Cohort B, c21p001, CSWE III, an office administrator from South Korea), reported having to read and write frequently in English and answer the phone at work. Almost all office administrators in both cohorts found it very challenging to take phone calls (see Section 3.3.2.2).

Hannah – an office worker in an industrial cleaning company at Interview 5 – reported that she practised English in a wide range of tasks in the workplace. These included talking with clients on the phone (the most difficult task for her at work), communicating with banks and post offices, exchanging social greetings with colleagues and talking with them about work (e.g. accounting, how to deal with angry clients), asking workmates questions, learning work-related technical terms, processing invoices and payroll, handling files, completing timesheets and writing memos. She said that she did not quite understand co-workers' small talk about unfamiliar topics such as TV programs and current affairs, and that she did not participate in those conversations because she was afraid of making mistakes.

3.3.1.4 Community and personal service workers

Compared with managers and professionals, community and personal service roles made fewer demands on English reading and writing, but offered more opportunity to interact with customers face-to-face, as the case of Cherry (Cohort A, c01p004, CSWE II, a teacher of Chinese traditional music from China) illustrates.

Cherry worked at an English-speaking childcare centre from Interviews 5 to 7. She interacted with children from diverse cultural backgrounds throughout the day, told them stories, briefed parents about the activities their children had engaged in during the day, asked the parents about their homes, attended social events in the workplace, chatted with Australian colleagues regularly and socialised with them after work. She said that her spoken English had improved a lot because of the daily practice she had at work. At Interview 6, she told us that she had become better at writing the daily page that was one of her responsibilities as a room leader. Her Australian co-workers checked the grammar and wording in her English writing. At Interview 7, some five years after leaving the AMEP, she told us that she now felt comfortable initiating talk with her colleagues to practise English, and had learned a lot of new vocabulary by asking colleagues to explain, including Australian colloquial expressions such as 'dummy spit'. She reported that her work had helped her learn English and had improved her confidence in using English.

3.3.1.5 Sales workers

While both community and personal service workers and sales workers engaged in a significant amount of face-to-face communication with customers, sales workers were involved in more small talk and phone conversations with customers. Checkout operators typically reported having brief, simple and transactional talk with customers, whereas retail workers, such as Alina (Cohort A, c10p007, CSWE III, an accountant from Romania), reported having extended and complex conversations with customers.

Alina, a sales assistant in a fabrics and sewing supplies store at Interviews 5, 6 and 7, told us that she spoke English with customers and workmates the whole day. She had to greet customers and exchange social talk with them, introduce products by describing features like size, colour and material, point customers to the right location in the store for the things that they wanted, sell products by phone, chat regularly with her manager and co-workers and socialise with them after work. She used her reading and writing skills in English to assist with restocking products, checking orders and recording clients' personal details. Initially she found it difficult to understand Australian and other accents, answer phone calls and take down clients' names and addresses. However, by Interview 7, she reported having no problems communicating with customers either face-to-face or over the telephone and had developed communicative strategies (see Section 3.3.2.2) to cope with any problems. She reported that her work enhanced her independence and self-confidence and gave her a sense of pride.

3.3.1.6 Technicians and trade workers

Technicians and trade workers reported using minimal reading and writing skills in English at work. Some, such as hairdressers and dressmakers, who often chatted to customers had considerable opportunity for interactions in English, whereas other participants working in

trade positions in the hospitality and automotive industries as cooks and technicians said that they had very little interaction with customers and only occasionally chatted with workmates. For example, Lisa (Cohort A, c05p009, CSWE III, a logistics manager from Thailand) who worked as a dog groomer, found that she used very little English at work.

At Interviews 5 and 6, Lisa worked as a dog groomer in an English-speaking shop. She thought that her English had got worse because she mostly worked with dogs in the back room, only helped check in some regular customers when it got busy, and rarely answered phone calls at work. She and a young Australian co-worker mainly talked about work and engaged in minimal small talk, as most of the time they were too busy to talk. She said that she did not use any reading and writing skills in English at work. However, she was able to use complex English to negotiate maternity leave and contracts with her boss (a Lebanese Australian) and confront him about not paying her superannuation.

3.3.1.7 Machinery operators and drivers

Machinery operators and drivers such as Alex (Cohort A, c09p006, CSWE III, a public relations officer from Saudi Arabia) reported interacting regularly with clients from varied cultural backgrounds and having to read and write a little bit in English.

Alex, a bus driver for an English-speaking aged care facility at Interviews 5 and 6, said that he spoke English frequently with elderly residents, his Australian supervisor, a lifestyle manager and nurses. He also chatted with other staff members and practised pronunciation and slang with them. He sometimes used his writing skills in English to write reports about incidents.

3.3.1.8 Labourers

Participants with jobs in the labourer category mostly reported speaking only brief, basic, simple and formulaic English and rarely using reading and writing skills in English at work. Cleaners often worked alone or with L1 colleagues, and reported exchanging only social greetings with clients, as reported by Beatriz (Cohort A, c12p009, CSWE II, a dressmaker from Portugal) who worked as a cleaner for an Australian family from Interviews 4 to 6:

At work ... I speak English, but not much because ... they [clients] are going to work. So they say, 'Hi, how are you Beatriz? How are you today?' Not much ... I stay home alone [cleaning the house], always yeah ... Exactly the same as last year's ... I do not like this [job]. But, I need my money.

[Beatriz, CSWE II, Cohort A, Int 6]

Hotel housekeepers reported having more opportunity to use English when they greeted guests, responded to their requests, read their notes and talked to supervisors. They also reported chatting with co-workers, ordering supplies from the front desk, attending staff

meetings, signing names and filling out forms and timesheets. Compared with cleaners, factory workers reported having greater opportunities to chat with colleagues. Most participants in labour-intensive jobs considered their work as just a means to earn income and knew that their work neither demanded nor helped them to develop skills in English.

Not surprisingly, L1 workplaces did not benefit participants' English learning. As their confidence in English developed, they tended to move to jobs that demanded more of their English and gave them more opportunity to further develop their English proficiency, as illustrated by Lily who worked as a sales assistant throughout the study (Cohort A, c01p003, CSWE II, a customer service manager from China):

At Interview 4, Lily worked at a Chinese bakery shop where her regular role was packing loaves at the back so that she had very little opportunity to speak English, and even then, she only engaged in limited interactions such as "Seven dollars. Thank you." and "Have a nice day. Bye." She was therefore keen to work in an Australian shop. By Interviews 5 and 6, she worked as a checkout operator at an English-only supermarket and had some supervisory responsibilities so that she used considerably more English at work. She had to speak English with customers and colleagues on a daily basis, exchange social greetings with customers, make social talk with regular customers, resolve customers' complaints and refund requests, make public announcements in the shop, participate in job training, maintain cordial working relations with colleagues and socialise with friends from work. The job also involved some reading and writing in English as she had to read catalogues, replace specials tickets on products, sign various documents and write notes.

While English listening and speaking are crucial for migrants' early-stage settlement and their entry to the workforce, English reading and writing are needed for higher-level jobs, further education and success in their long-term settlement in Australia. This suggests that, although English listening and speaking may be the first priority in terms of gaining entry level employment, attention to English reading and writing is also crucial to longer term settlement success. At Interview 7, Tat (Cohort A, c12p010, CSWE III, from Thailand), a boner in a chicken factory throughout the study, commented on this:

We want to speak first and get the job, and then you can read. But spelling can be later. If you can reading and you can speaking, you understand what they are saying, that's mean you can find a job. But if you cannot do both at the interview you cannot get a job. Therefore, spelling can be [the] last, or be in until like, okay you get in now, now we can get something you can work it out.

[Tat, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

In summary, the quality and opportunity of English use at work varied across job categories. Managers and professionals reported considerably greater needs to use formal and

sophisticated English and in both spoken and written modes. Community and personal service workers and sales workers interacted with customers frequently. Labour-intensive jobs had the least opportunity for participants to use and develop their English language skills.

3.3.2 Challenges at work and communicative strategies

Across all occupations, participants (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B) reported needing both work-related talk and social language at work. The main challenges they faced in workplace communication included (a) understanding people and being understood, (b) talking on the telephone, (c) expressing themselves fully and using complex English, (d) using reading and writing skills in English, and (e) understanding and engaging in small talk and humour. They reported that these challenges sometimes led to misunderstanding, frustration, embarrassment and isolation, so that they sometimes felt excluded from workplace interactions, were able to have only limited participation in work meetings and at times lost confidence. These challenges are treated in a little more detail below as they suggest some areas that could be usefully addressed in English language and workplace training programs.

3.3.2.1 Understanding people and being understood

Twenty-two participants in Cohort A (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7) and 14 in Cohort B (in Interviews 1, 3 and 5) reported difficulties understanding colleagues and clients due to their accents, work-specific terminology, unfamiliar words, slang or idiomatic expressions, the rate at which they spoke and the formal register they used.

For example, Mary (Cohort B, c23p013, CSWE III, from Iran) – a cook at a fast food outlet – had trouble understanding customers' Australian accent and casual language (e.g. "Can you give me a water?"). Similarly, Shan (Cohort B, c26p003, CSWE I, from China), a waitress at a take-away food shop, had trouble understanding Australian customers' food orders when they talked very fast and used unfamiliar words (e.g. prawn, crab, tong, tuna). Fish (Cohort B, c21p006, CSWE III, from China) found it difficult to understand some customers in the newsagency she ran with her husband, especially if they spoke softly and very fast and used slang. Some participants reported having problems understanding not only Australian accents, but also those related to other varieties of English such as Indian, Scottish and Irish. For Ping (Cohort A, c12p006, CSWE II, from Thailand), however, who worked as a separator at a recycling plant at Interview 6, the accents of colleagues from a wide variety of backgrounds that she found it difficult to understand, sometimes led to friction among co-workers.

Comprehension issues at work were partially due to work-specific terminology, which was specialised and varied across occupations. Work-specific terminology mentioned by participants related to furniture design, graphic design, automotive technology, customer service, the range of drinks available in a bar, childcare, factory, cleaning, lottery tickets and

cigarette brands. Yuna (Cohort A, c10p012, CSWE III, from South Korea) – a graphic designer – asked clients and colleagues to explain job-related technical terms and also attended English classes in the evenings to learn work-related vocabulary. Like many other sales workers in this study, Fish (Cohort B, c21p006, CSWE III, from China) also found it most challenging when customers asked for cigarette brands and magazine names that she was not familiar with. Some participants acknowledged that they acquired work-related terminology, pragmatic conventions (e.g. “thanks hun”), slang and idiomatic expressions on the job over time. Since it is unrealistic to expect that all such language items could be covered as part of general English language training, it may be important for initial language training to include some strategy training on how migrants can observe and learn these for themselves.

Many participants also reported the need to improve their English pronunciation so that they could be fully understood by other people. At Interviews 4 and 5, Samba (Cohort A, c08p014, CSWE I, from Guinea) – a musician who taught drum classes at various schools and played music in two bands – recounted several stories of his frustration when people could not understand him because of his pronunciation. He gave the following two examples. On one occasion, he wanted to say “ship” but instead said something that sounded like “shep”. At another time he was trying to say “thirty” to a person who gave him work but was understood as saying “dirty”. Because the people were not able to understand what Samba was saying, he wrote the words down and explained them. By Interview 6, Samba reported that his pronunciation had improved and he had become confident in talking to other people in English. Similarly, Mark (Cohort A, c02p015, CSWE III, from Sudan), a freelance interpreter, said that some clients needed some time to get used to his African English intonation.

As they spent more time in the workplace, participants used a range of communicative strategies to try to understand others better. These included asking colleagues or customers for repetition or explanation of unknown words, writing down unfamiliar words for clarification, using gestures, looking up new words in a dictionary or using Google, asking people to pause or slow down if they were talking too fast, and changing to a different topic. Some participants also kept an inventory of new words in a notebook to develop their English on the job. Participants also told us that they used the following communicative strategies in their efforts to be fully understood: checking people’s faces for responses, repeating themselves slowly and clearly, and paraphrasing using simple English.

3.3.2.2 Talking on the telephone

Eight participants in both cohorts (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B) who worked in sales and administrative roles explicitly mentioned that talking on the telephone was a major challenge for them at work. At Interview 5, Hannah (Cohort B, c21p001, CSWE III, an office administrator from South Korea) who worked in the office of an industrial cleaning company, explained why she had trouble understanding clients on the phone: (a) she could not see them and therefore did not have

visual support; (b) the clients were from different backgrounds and their accents were therefore unfamiliar; and (c) she found that some Australians spoke very fast.

Two participants in Cohort A – Lila (c09p002, CSWE III, a student from Colombia) and Alina (c10p007, CSWE III, an accountant from Romania) – made great progress in talking on the telephone over time and told us about the communicative strategies they used to help them.

At Interview 6, Lila took on a receptionist job at a law firm to confront her fear of answering the phone. At the beginning she was very nervous and found it very difficult to put calls through because she could not understand what people were saying, although she could write down their phone numbers. However, by Interview 7, she had become much better at understanding clients on the phone and had developed survival techniques to help her identify who was calling if she did not understand them, such as recognising callers' voices, using the records from previous calls and the company's file system to find the correct spelling of client names, and typing in the phone numbers on Google to search for the names of law companies. She said that the receptionist role had definitely improved her English, especially talking on the phone.

Alina, a sales assistant in a fabrics and sewing supplies store at Interview 5, found that she had to take calls herself, as so many customers made orders over the phone. When taking calls, she used strategies such as making sure that she got customers' names right by asking them to spell their names very slowly, and double-checking the spelling of names and addresses that she heard with the computer system and her Australian colleagues. By Interview 7, after three years in the job, she reported having no problems answering phone calls – now she could handle shopping orders, had become more used to customers' strong accents, and felt more comfortable about writing down customers' names and addresses.

As the cases of Lila and Alina show, it takes time to become comfortable with phone communications and develop the necessary skills.

3.3.2.3 Expressing oneself fully and using complex English

Six Cohort A participants (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7) and four Cohort B participants (in Interviews 1, 3 and 5) reported having difficulties expressing themselves fully in English at work with the necessary complexity and sophistication. Their difficulties included a lack of vocabulary, pronunciation problems, grammar mistakes and issues with oral fluency. For example, Revaka (Cohort A, c01p005, CSWE II, from India), a beauty salon assistant at Interview 6, said that she could understand everything but sometimes could not explain what she needed to say or could not find the specific vocabulary she needed. When she was unable to express herself to customers, she referred them to the shop owner. Similarly, Lucia (Cohort A, c09p001, CSWE III, from Colombia), who worked as a tramways inspector at

Interview 4, reported that she could not contribute as many ideas and views in English as she would have been able to in Spanish (her L1), and felt that she would feel more confident if doing the job in her L1. She did, however, find her linguistic and cultural abilities to understand customers from other language backgrounds (e.g. Spanish-speaking customers) an advantage that was not evident in her monolingual peers.

Some participants said that they had problems using complex English for expressing subtleties, making arguments, giving explanations, negotiating and discussing issues. Charles (Cohort A, c05p007, CSWE III, from Colombia), a furniture designer, found it difficult to strike the right note in English. He described communication in Australia as being “quite delicate” and found that he had to learn to be much less direct in offering criticism – “How can you say without saying?” He explained the difficulty he had offering his opinion on the work of others:

For example when I send the drawings of the my chair, the exercise to these people I had to write a kind of a, um, description of my concept, yeah and, um, how can you say without saying, yeah that the whole the designs they have, they are horrible? ... In Colombia we are more direct. Er, we don't care about what you are thinking about my thoughts. But I'm saying to you what I'm thinking even if I don't like you in your face. Yeah and these people can take it or leave it, yeah? Yeah, it's as simple as this, but here ... it's really hard to say something like this.

[Charles, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 6]

Charles found it somewhat exasperating that this need for delicacy not only made it more complicated to offer an opinion, but also meant that he was never quite sure what other people thought about him. His experiences illustrate the importance of learning about indirectness for both production and reception, that is, in order to both avoid giving offence and to understand what people really mean by what they say. Charles had to sort out a more Australian way to comment on the work of others without giving offence.

3.3.2.4 Reading and writing in English

Eight participants in Cohort A (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7) and one in Cohort B (in Interviews 1, 3 and 5) reported having difficulties with reading and writing in English at work, such as reading formal documents, writing emails and formal letters, filling out forms, and spelling names and addresses. Two – Casey and Fish – found the literacy requirements of managing a small business demanding. Casey (Cohort A, c02p016, CSWE III, from Czech Republic), a manager of a coffee shop at Interview 4, had difficulties reading legal contracts and requests from government agencies and had some misunderstandings with her solicitor. Fish (Cohort B, c21p006, CSWE III, from China), who owned a newsagency, was sometimes unable to understand business materials, including official forms and paperwork.

The strategies participants adopted to deal with the challenge of writing in English at work included using email templates, referring to sample letters online, asking supervisors or colleagues to double-check their writing, using grammar and spell check in Microsoft Word, checking the spelling of words in a dictionary, and asking workmates to help with completing forms. For example, Diane (Cohort A, c06p010, CSWE III, from Japan) had employment entering data and serving customers at a tourism industry council at Interview 4. Although she could write letters to friends, she found it difficult to write official letters in formal English, so she referred to sample letters online and asked her supervisor to check her writing.

3.3.2.5 Understanding and engaging in small talk and humour

Many participants noticed, once they had entered the workforce, that small talk and humour were frequent and often challenging features of Australian workplace communication. Several participants told us that small talk seemed to be a more pervasive feature of life in Australia than in their countries of origin (e.g. Korea, China), and one they found quite challenging, particularly at first. Some participants (e.g. hairdressers) found that small talk seemed to be expected in situations where it would not usually occur in their home countries.

Some participants mentioned small talk as being a problem because it made them feel excluded and unable to fully participate at work. For example, Wen (Cohort A, c06p017, CSWE III, a gynaecologist from China) explained in Interview 5 that she had left a previous job in a childcare centre because her co-workers, who were mostly young Australian girls, actively avoided engaging in conversation with her, and this made her feel alienated and lonely. After that experience, she returned to the private childcare centre where she had worked previously and where she felt much more comfortable because her colleagues were multicultural and more supportive. Wen's experience suggests that the onus of engaging in talk rests not only on the shoulders of migrants themselves; co-workers may need to actively encourage migrants to join in the workplace chat, and not assume that lower English proficiency means they do not want to, or cannot, join in.

Other participants, like Estelle (Cohort B, c21p003, CSWE III, from Colombia) who worked in a café, explained that, while they found small talk very difficult in the beginning, they were able to develop skills with time and practice, and with support and encouragement from co-workers. This often began with the development of strategies to cope with small talk, as an interim step before participants felt more able to freely engage in social chat. Strategies reported by participants included observing and learning appropriate topics for conversation, and ways to initiate small talk and keep the conversation focused on familiar topics.

Phoebe (Cohort B, c22p002, CSWE III, from China) was particularly proactive in developing a strategy designed to gain more control of conversations in her workplace. She prepared a

few standard questions for each day of the week so that she could control the topic and did not have the stress of constructing answers to unexpected questions. On Monday and Tuesday she asked about the weekend, on Wednesday she used gambits such as “Oh, the weather has been nice/bad; do you have children?”, and towards the end of the week she asked about plans for the weekend. In this way she was able to direct these interactions and could initiate rather than simply respond.

Understanding jokes and engaging in the ensuing banter was also a challenge for migrants in trying to understand social and interpersonal language at work. While a number of participants in the study reported that they could recognise humour and understand the literal meaning of jokes, they had difficulty understanding why they were funny. Ryoko (Cohort B, c21p007, CSWE III, from Japan), for example, a female participant who worked as a tour operator throughout the study, explained in Interview 3 that she did not understand what was funny about Australians’ humour:

Thirty per cent I understand what they are saying but it’s not fun. So like it’s not funny. So I understand exactly what you’re saying but I do not know why it is joke or why they are laughing.

[Ryoko, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 3]

Few participants reported improvements in being able to initiate and actively engage in humour through time. Participants did, however, report developing some coping strategies. These included listening as much as possible at first and asking friends and family to explain the humour later, as well as learning to smile at the appropriate time. For example, Svetlana (Cohort B, c25p011, CSWE III, from Kazakhstan) told us at Interview 3 that when she was on work experience in a large office supplies store, being polite and smiling was a useful strategy:

Customers always joke. Always, always, always. Ah, I understand that it was a joke. I just polite, how to say, I just smile ... but exactly about what was this joke, I don’t know this thing [laughs].

[Svetlana, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 3]

Mika (Cohort B, c21p002, CSWE III, from Japan), who worked as a supermarket checkout operator at Interview 3, reported that although she usually understood jokes far too late to react to them (i.e. later at home after her husband has explained them), she nonetheless felt that she was getting used to Australian humour with time, practice, and clarification from her Australian husband.

In summary, both small talk and humour are – as participants themselves observed – often an important part of workplace communication in Australia, and therefore could be usefully tackled in initial English language training.

3.3.3 English development at work

Although the majority of employed participants reported feeling anxious and stressed about communicating with colleagues and customers when they started work, they frequently reported making noticeable progress and feeling more confident about their English proficiency with time, practice and the support and encouragement of co-workers. Thirteen participants in Cohort A and 11 in Cohort B reported that work helped them practise what they had learned from the AMEP, expand job-related technical vocabulary, acquire slang and idiomatic expressions, get used to various accents, learn formal English, express themselves clearly, make social talk, improve phone call skills, practise writing skills in English, develop discourse genres, learn English from supportive workmates, make English-speaking friends and enhance confidence in general.

The data indicate that it is important for migrants to have supportive and encouraging English-speaking colleagues to assist their English development in the workplace. A large number of participants in both cohorts said that their colleagues (and sometimes clients), like teachers in the workplace, taught them English, accommodated their limited English proficiency by talking slowly and clearly with them, explained new words and concepts to them, corrected their English mistakes, improved their pronunciation, helped them with English spelling and writing, encouraged them to practise speaking English and take on challenges, and became close friends with them.

In summary, the quality of participants' English use at work varied across job categories. Higher-level jobs required the extensive use of complex English for speaking, reading and writing, whereas lower-level jobs involved the use of simpler English for speaking as well as minimal reading and writing skills in English. Participants reported a variety of challenges in using English in the workplace. Nevertheless, regardless of job types, most participants said that they made progress in using English at work with time, practice and help from co-workers.

3.4 Use of English in public places

In this section, we analyse participants' interview data (Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B) to examine the English interactions that they reported engaging in in public. Table 3.4 presents the common public places where participants in each cohort reported using English independently, in descending order of frequency.

As can be seen from the table, Cohort A participants reported using English independently in more public places and facing fewer challenges using English in public, compared with Cohort B participants, suggesting that with time and practice migrants increase their English proficiency and can interact with other people in public places more independently. Overall, more Cohort A than Cohort B participants reported using English independently in public, as

72% of Cohort A participants said that they could communicate with medical professionals independently in English, which was markedly more than the 49% of Cohort B participants who reported doing this. Similarly, more Cohort A than Cohort B participants used English in other public places such as at the bank (A: 47%, B: 26%), at child’s school/childcare centre (A: 42%, B: 21%) and when taking driving lessons/tests (A: 38%, B: 21%).

Table 3.4: Common public places where participants used English independently

Cohort A (60)			Cohort B (85)		
Context	n	%	Context	n	%
Shopping	58	97%	Shopping	81	95%
Medical appointments (GPs, specialists, midwives, etc.)	43	72%	Medical appointments (GPs, specialists, midwives, etc.)	42	49%
Bank	28	47%	Places of worship	27	32%
Places of worship	27	45%	Public transport	24	28%
Child’s school/childcare centre	25	42%	Bank	22	26%
Driving lesson/test	23	38%	Centrelink	19	22%
Immigration/citizenship test	23	38%	Driving lesson/test	18	21%
Café/restaurant/bar	23	38%	Child’s school/childcare centre	18	21%
Centrelink	22	37%	Job Network	13	15%
Library	21	35%	Café/restaurant/bar	9	11%
Gym	20	33%	Real estate/housing	9	11%
Public transport	20	33%			
Job agency	13	22%			
Real estate/housing	11	18%			
Post office	9	15%			
Park	9	15%			

Note: This table is based on analysis of qualitative interview data from Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 with Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 with Cohort B. ‘n’ refers to the number of participants who reported in at least one interview that they used English in public places.

The seven public places where participants in both cohorts reported using English independently most frequently included shopping, medical appointments, places of worship, at the bank, at schools/childcare centres, for taking driving lessons/tests and at Centrelink. While many Cohort A participants told us that they used English by themselves for immigration purposes/taking the citizenship test, at the library and at the gym, few Cohort B participants reported using English for these purposes.

Many participants in both cohorts reported improvement in being able to interact with other people independently in public places over time. Based on Cohort A participants’ comments on their English language use in public places in Interviews 4–7, four different types of progress could be identified: (a) they gained more independence in communicating with other people in public places, especially in medical appointments; (b) they were able to

apply various communicative strategies to resolve communication problems and achieve effective interaction; (c) their language proficiency had increased so that they had fewer issues understanding others and being understood; and (d) they became more confident about their English competence over time. Twelve Cohort A participants told us that they no longer needed their spouses or interpreters to help them communicate with medical professionals, for they could now do it by themselves. For example, at Interviews 4 and 5, Cherry (Cohort A, c01p004, CSWE II, from China) told us that she had relied on her husband or an interpreter to communicate with doctors, nurses and midwives throughout her first pregnancy in 2008. However, at Interview 7, some five years after leaving the AMEP, Cherry told us that she no longer had to rely on her husband when interacting with other people in English in public places, and that she had attended antenatal appointments on her own during her second pregnancy in 2013, taking a dictionary with her to look up medical terms.

The aforementioned types of improvement reported by Cohort A participants were also mentioned by Cohort B participants. Raja (Cohort B, c24p011, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan) told us at Interview 1 that he seldom went out on his own. However, by Interview 5, he found that he could negotiate very simple conversations in English, even on the phone, especially if the other person spoke slowly. He told us that when he received a phone call from a hospital that he did not understand, he said, "Excuse me. I don't understand. Sorry." and they repeated it for him. Ara (Cohort B, c26p012, CSWE I, from Iran) employed the following communicative strategies to express herself clearly in public and learn English: rehearsing English in her head before saying anything out loud, writing drafts on paper before writing emails and sending text messages, looking up difficult words in a dictionary and writing them down in a notebook. Similarly, at Interview 5, one and a half years after leaving the AMEP, Tara (Cohort B, c23p016, CSWE III, from Iran) said that she now could go shopping, order coffee and food, call a phone company, buy car insurance on the internet and report a car burglary incident to the police.

Participants reported that the challenges and communicative strategies when using English in public places were largely the same as those in the workplace (see Section 3.3.2). Table 3.5 shows the number and percentage of participants who reported difficulties using English in public places at each interview. Regardless of CSWE level, participants in both cohorts reported the following principal challenges interacting with people in English in public places: understanding people and being understood, and expressing themselves fully. As this shows, by the end of the study, fewer Cohort A than Cohort B participants reported having difficulties understanding other people and being understood (A: 13%, B: 23%), and expressing themselves fully (A: 5%, B: 15%). Additionally, across both cohorts, the number of participants who reported difficulties using English in public places decreased over time. For example, while 26% of Cohort A participants reported having problems understanding other people and being understood at Interview 4, this dropped to 13% at Interview 7. These

results suggest that, with time and practice, migrants become more self-reliant and confident using English in public.

Table 3.5: Reported main challenges in English interactions in public places

Cohort A	Interview 4 (55)		Interview 5 (60)		Interview 6 (48)		Interview 7 (38)	
Main challenges	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Understanding people and being understood	14	26%	19	32%	15	31%	5	13%
Expressing oneself fully	8	15%	10	17%	4	8%	2	5%
Cohort B	Interview 1 (85)		Interview 3 (56)		Interview 5 (62)			
Main challenges	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Understanding people and being understood	27	32%	17	30%	14	23%		
Expressing oneself fully	25	29%	9	16%	9	15%		

Whereas some contexts such as shopping and public transport only involved relatively simple, routine and transactional English and were largely manageable for participants, medical interactions, legal consultations/court hearings and communication with government agencies required sophisticated English and were therefore very challenging (see Section 6.5 for discussion about how this might affect their sense of independence). Medical appointments (with doctors, specialists, midwives, nurses, etc.) involved making bookings by phone, understanding and using complex English, and knowing medical terminology. Participants reported encountering a wide variety of medical terms pertaining to antenatal check-ups, pain, mammograms, dental health, diabetes, cholesterol reduction, gastroscopy and oncology. For example, at Interview 5, Teresa (Cohort B, c21p009, CSWE III, from Colombia) said that she found it hard to explain to her English-speaking doctor what specific kind of pain she felt due to a lack of vocabulary. As errors in medical communication can result in severe consequences for patients' health and wellbeing, a large number of participants revealed using professional interpreters, adult family members or friends to facilitate their interaction with English-speaking doctors, at least in the early stages of their settlement. For the same reason, some participants specifically chose to see L1 doctors where possible. On the other hand, some participants like Li Li Lin (Cohort A, c08p010, CSWE I, from China) were strategic about seeing English-speaking doctors for English language practice.

At Interview 5, Li Li Lin said that she self-studied a medical book and wrote down relevant medical terms on a piece of paper before going to the hospital, which provided interpreters for her only occasionally. By Interview 7, she had switched to English when seeing doctors, and only used interpreters for more important medical consultations:

I change to [English], to exercise English ... The environment is uh benefit for my learn English. The, uh the nurse is very, very good to me. Before I say 'Fantastic', she correct me. No, 'fantastic, fantastic'. [laughs]

[Li Li Lin, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7]

Legal consultations and court hearings required an understanding of sophisticated legal language, formal letters and contracts, and the completion of forms and official documents. They were therefore very demanding and stressful for newly arrived migrants. Seven participants in Cohort A and one in Cohort B reported using English for legal purposes (four in divorce cases) either independently or with the help of interpreters. At Interview 4, Jane (Cohort A, c02p014, CSWE III, from Poland) said that she and her husband had sought legal advice for the purchase of a residential property. This legal consultation involved substantial reading and writing in English, including maintaining email correspondence with their solicitor and reading contracts carefully to check specific terms and conditions. Hadia (Cohort A, c12p003, CSWE II, from Sudan) at Interviews 5 and 6 told us that although she had coped quite well with the complex English communication with a court in Australia, she still could not advance her intricate divorce case, and this affected her personal wellbeing and disrupted her English learning at AMEP. Her husband, from whom she had been separated due to domestic violence, was angry and refused to sign divorce papers for their community marriage that had occurred in Egypt. The court refused to give her a divorce certificate because it demanded an official marriage certificate issued by the Egyptian government, which was different from the community marriage certificate that she had. Although she went to court, prepared legal documents, talked to a lawyer and called a government agency about the matter, her inability to resolve this complex problem left her feeling helpless. As the cases of Jane and Hadia show, legal matters can be very complicated and require a high level of English proficiency.

Similarly, communication with government agencies (e.g. Centrelink, Medicare, Immigration/citizenship test, housing agencies) and public services (e.g. electricity, gas, internet, insurance) involved complex reading and writing in English and phone calls. Teresa (Cohort B, c21p009, CSWE III, from Colombia) told us that she did not understand documents related to marrying at church and changing her name. Additionally, at Interview 6, Hadia (Cohort A, c12p003, CSWE II, from Sudan) said that she had failed a computerised citizenship test because she read English so slowly that she ran out of time and therefore had to take the test again. Dada (Cohort B, c23p009, CSWE III, from Lebanon) reported that her cousin had to assist her with filling in a visa application form.

In summary, the quality of English use in public places varied across contexts. Many participants reported increased English proficiency, independence and confidence in interacting with other people in public over time. This was particularly the case for Cohort A participants who had been in Australia for longer.

3.5 Use of English at home

English was relevant for communication in the home – be it with housemates or family members. In this area, no difference in overall patterns was found between the two cohorts. The main influence on whether English was used in the home was the presence of children and English-speaking partners. For 21 Cohort A participants (in Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7) and 19 Cohort B participants (in Interviews 1, 3 and 5), English was at least one of the main languages of the home, often because of English-speaking partners or housemates, and most of these participants attended higher CSWE classes. Even among those who lived with fellow L1 speakers, participants who attended higher CSWE level classes were more likely than lower CSWE ones to use English in the home. At home interactions revolved around everyday matters such as chores, food, social questions, entertainment (e.g. TV, music, parties), and children’s homework. In these settings, language issues sometimes became problematic as participants struggled to express themselves fully. Ryoko (Cohort B, c21p007, CSWE III, from Japan) described at Interview 3 how she found it difficult to talk to her Australian partner’s English-speaking friends because of the kinds of topics they talked about, and also because her English language level meant it was difficult for her to keep up with the dialogue.

Over time, English also became part of most L1-speaking homes as English words and phrases, and sometimes English topics, were increasingly used. Karen (Cohort A, c09p003, CSWE III, from China), for example, used to speak only Mandarin with her husband from Interviews 1 to 4. By Interview 5, they had started using about 50% English with each other. Karen explained that it was because they both worked in English-speaking workplaces and it was easier for them to keep using it at home in some contexts. In Interview 6, with the arrival of their baby son, Karen was using predominantly Mandarin again. Children sometimes triggered changes in language use in the home. Lisa (Cohort A, c11p001, pre-CSWE, from China) and her husband also used to speak their L1 (Cantonese) exclusively in the home with each other at Interview 4, but when their son got older he started to become less responsive in Cantonese and used more and more English, and at Interview 5 Lisa started using English with him too. Lisa was a pre-CSWE student and not very confident in her English. She therefore had to concentrate really hard to understand her son when he used English with her, a situation that could herald more serious communication issues between them in the future (Yates, Terraschke, & Zielinski, 2012).

Spouses, children, grandchildren, family-in-law and housemates were found to take on important roles that helped, supported or hindered participants’ learning of English – regardless of whether they normally use English or their L1 in the home. A few participants with L1-speaking spouses reported that they had tried to assign a few hours or certain times to practise English, but this strategy was usually short-lived. Partners, children and grandchildren provided valuable vocabulary input, explained jokes, corrected participants’

English mistakes, and encouraged them to practise English by answering the phone or ordering food at a restaurant independently.

At Interviews 5 and 6, Susan (Cohort A, c12p001, CSWE II, from Thailand) said that her Australian husband was her English language teacher, because he encouraged her to read English newspapers and answer the phone at home, corrected her mistakes when she spoke English, helped her with English grammar and pronunciation, and explained to her anything that she found difficult. By Interview 7, Susan told us that now her English had improved and she and her husband could talk more freely than before.

Similarly, Imaan (Cohort A, c01p009, CSWE II, from Pakistan) at Interview 6 described how her sons helped her learn English by practising with her and explaining how to say things. They even helped her prepare for a job interview.

I said to them, err, my interview is, err, thirtieth of October. (Be) prepare me for the interview and they were so excited [in-breath] and, and the last night they forgot and I, I also forget that tomorrow is my interview [in-breath] and, err, they are like very excited, oh mum it's, we can err prepare you for interview, you can say this and this and, err, I can ask, [in-breath] I ask them how to say this word, how to say this sentence and they help me.

[Imaan, CSWE II, Cohort A, Int 6]

However, not all spouses and family members were supportive of participants' English language learning. At Interview 1, Svetlana (Cohort B, c25p011, CSWE III, from Kazakhstan) said that she used to practise English with her partner, whose English was better than hers, but they had stopped because he would laugh at her English and criticise her mistakes, causing tension between them. Sometimes English-speaking partners also adapted to the language level of the migrants, which also did not help their English language learning.

In summary, migrants' family members can play an important role in their language learning. However, they often do not know how to help. This suggests that it may be useful to better prepare family and friends on how to better support migrants' English language learning.

3.6 Use of English for socialising

In this section, we explore participants' use of English for socialising, and consider with whom they spoke, the type of English they used, and the challenges they faced. Our analysis investigates their use of English in this context at different points in the study: Interviews 1 and 5 for Cohort B, and Interviews 5 and 7 for Cohort A. Table 3.6 shows that the majority of participants in both cohorts reported using English in social interactions during all of these interviews. However, it seems that Cohort A participants, who had been in Australia longer, were more likely to use English socially than Cohort B participants: 65% of Cohort B participants reported using English socially at Interview 5 (1.5 years in the study) compared

to 95% of Cohort A participants at Interview 7 (4.5 years in the study). This suggests that, as was the case with using English in public places (see Section 3.4), the use of English for socialising might increase with time and practice. However, the time needed here might be longer than 1.5 years, since the percentage of Cohort B participants using English socially over this time period remained much the same at both interviews (Interview 1: 62%, Interview 5: 65%).

Table 3.6: Participants who reported using English when socialising

Interview	Time in project	n	%
Cohort B			
Interview 1 (85)	Beginning	53	62%
Interview 5 (62)	1.5 years	40	65%
Cohort A			
Interview 5 (60)	2.5 years	52	87%
Interview 7 (38)	4.5 years	36	95%

The extent to which Cohort A participants reported using English socially in their final interview was not related to their CSWE level at the beginning of the study, some 4.5 years earlier. Table 3.7 shows the number of participants who reported using English socially at their final interviews, and from this it is clear that, regardless of CSWE level, the vast majority of Cohort A participants were using English socially (CSWE III: 95%, CSWE II: 100%, CSWE I: 89%) at this time. However, for Cohort B participants, CSWE level did seem to play a role; that is, participants at higher CSWE levels tended to be more likely to use English socially by the time of their final interview than those at lower CSWE levels (pre-CSWE: 25%, CSWE I: 63%, CSWE III: 87%). The very low use of English by most Centre 24 participants helps to explain this result.

Table 3.7: CSWE level and reported use of English when socialising at final interviews

Participants interviewed		Participants who reported using English socially	
Cohort A Interview 7	n	n	%
CSWE I ^a	9	8	89%
CSWE II	9	9	100%
CSWE III	20	19	95%
All participants	38	36	95%
Cohort B Interview 5			
Pre-CSWE	16	4	25%
CSWE I	16	10	63%
CSWE III	30	26	87%
All participants	62	40	65%

^a Includes one pre-CSWE participant, who was one of those who reported using English socially.

Participants from both cohorts reported socialising in English in a range of different contexts, including with friends, neighbours, colleagues, people at their places of worship and other organisations, and their partner’s friends and work colleagues. Table 3.8 presents information about the language background of their interlocutors in these various contexts.

Table 3.8: Interlocutors and reported use of English when socialising (at final interviews)

Participants who reported using English socially		Language background of interlocutors			
		L2 English speakers		Australian L1 English speakers ^b	
Cohort A	n	n	%	n	%
CSWE I ^a	8	3	38%	7	88%
CSWE II	9	6	67%	6	67%
CSWE III	19	13	68%	14	74%
All participants	36	22	61%	27	75%
Cohort B					
Pre-CSWE	4	1	25%	4	100%
CSWE I	10	6	60%	5	50%
CSWE III	26	23	88%	16	62%
All participants	40	30	75%	25	63%

Note: Percentages for each CSWE level and all participants do not necessarily add to 100% because some participants reported using English socially with both L2 speakers of English and Australians.

^a Includes one pre-CSWE participant (who was one of those who reported using English socially).

^b This refers to L1 English speakers from Australia. However, included here are three participants who reported interacting in English with L1 English speakers from countries other than Australia, two from the UK and one from New Zealand.

As Table 3.8 shows, in their final interview, the majority of participants in both cohorts reported that they used English socially with Australian L1 English speakers (A: 75%, B: 63%), and this was more common for CSWE I participants from Cohort A and pre-CSWE participants from cohort B. Furthermore, for most of these lower-level-CSWE participants, Australians were the only people they used English with socially (A, CSWE I: 5 out of 8, 63%; B, pre-CSWE: 3 out of 4, 75%). The Australians they interacted with socially in English were neighbours (3), fellow church members (3), workmates (1), and a friend’s husband (1). It should be noted, however, that the three pre-CSWE participants who used English socially with Australians were from Centre 24, and as shown in Table 3.1, this group used very little English in their daily lives. For example, Sunil (Cohort B, c24p004, pre-CSWE), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese participant, told us that he used English with Australians at his church, but only attended church services once a week, or sometimes less often.

Similarly, the majority of participants in both cohorts reported that they used English socially with other L2 speakers of English (A: 61%, B: 75%). It seems from Table 3.8 that this was most common among CSWE III participants from Cohort B (88%, 23 of 26), and least common among the lowest CSWE levels in each cohort (A, CSWE I: 3, 38%; B, pre-CSWE: 1,

25%). As mentioned above, this is because these lower-level-CSWE participants tended to use English socially with Australians. For both cohorts, the largest group of L2 English speakers they interacted with were people they had met in the AMEP, students who they now considered as friends (A: 10, B: 20). The others included workmates (A: 7, B: 3), neighbours (A: 3, B: 4), and people from the local community (A: 4, B: 8).

Participants' social interactions ranged from simple greetings and social pleasantries to more in-depth conversations. The challenges they faced when socialising in English included limited English proficiency, shyness or lack of confidence using English in social settings, no time to socialise, and limited contact with people with whom they could speak English. At the final interview, the main challenge faced by participants from Cohort B in using English socially was their lack of English proficiency, and this was a greater challenge for those at pre-CSWE and CSWE I levels than it was for CSWE III participants. This suggests that recently arrived migrants who arrive in Australia with a higher level of English find it easier to use English socially than those with lower levels of English. Over half of the pre-CSWE and CSWE I participants who took part in the final interview (56%, 18 of 32) indicated that their limited English proficiency impacted on their use of English socially, and this was the case for only two of the 30 CSWE III participants interviewed at that time. For example, Krishna (Cohort B, c24p009, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan) who reported using no English socially, explained through an interpreter that it was difficult for her to make non-Nepali speaking friends to socialise with in English because of her limited English:

It is hard because ... we don't understand their language and they don't understand our language.

[Krishna, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 5, interpreted]

Similarly, Yuan (Cohort B, c26p005, CSWE I, from China) who also reported using no English socially, told us through an interpreter that speaking English socially made her feel nervous because she was worried about her English:

I feel ... nervous by communicating with the English-speaking friends ... I was afraid that ... I wasn't able to clearly express myself ... so that communication is not clear.

[Yuan, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 5, interpreted]

In contrast, Hui (Cohort B, c26p004, CSWE I, from Taiwan) reported that she regularly spoke to her neighbours in English. However, her conversations with them were limited because of her lack of English proficiency and this frustrated her. She told us that they talked mainly about her daughter, using simple English, but she would like to be able to talk about other things as well, such as her home country and her interests in art and music.

The challenges most commonly mentioned by Cohort A participants, regardless of CSWE level, were shyness or lack of confidence (7), and concern that their English was not good

enough (5). For example, Imaan (Cohort A, c01p009, CSWE II, from Pakistan), told us that her lack of confidence in her English ability stopped her from socialising in English:

If I am confident in my English I will be a different, very – I’m a different person too, because I like to chit-chat, I want to meet new people, so just because of my language I tell myself no, I can’t talk to him, don’t start any conversation. If they ask me more and more questions what will I do? So I stop. This thing stops me to communicate others ... my main problem is English.

[Imaan, CSWE II, Cohort A, Int 7]

In summary, Cohort A participants were more likely to use English socially than Cohort B participants, suggesting that using English socially might increase with time and practice. Reported use of English for socialising was not related to Cohort A participants’ original CSWE levels, but for Cohort B, the higher the CSWE level, the more participants who reported using English socially, suggesting that those with a higher level of English are more likely to use it socially. The majority of participants from both cohorts reported using English socially with Australian L1 English speakers, and for some, particularly those at the lowest CSWE levels in each cohort, these were the only people they socialised with in English, although this was not necessarily very frequent. The majority of participants from both cohorts also reported that they socialised in English with other L2 speakers of English (usually friends made in the AMEP), and this was most common among CSWE III participants in Cohort B. The main challenges participants from both cohorts faced in using English socially were limited English proficiency and a lack of confidence communicating in English.

3.7 Use of reading and writing skills in English

In this section, we analyse participants’ use of reading and writing skills in English as reported on the language map (see Figure 3.1), and explore the types of English materials they read and wrote in their daily lives. Our analysis focuses on Interviews 4, 5, 6 and 7 for Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3 and 5 for Cohort B.

Many participants in both cohorts reported reading and writing in English for various daily activities, sometimes with the help of dictionaries. A number of participants at all CSWE levels said that they read the following English texts:

- AMEP class materials
- books (e.g. children’s literature, story books, pregnancy books, the citizenship test book)
- newspapers
- magazines
- internet (e.g. Facebook)
- letters (e.g. from Centrelink, Job Network, bank, school)

- bills
- brochures
- subtitles on TV and movies.

Moreover, regardless of CSWE level, a number of participants in both cohorts across the study told us that they used writing skills in English for AMEP homework, forms (e.g. visa application), text messages and shopping lists.

Compared with lower-level-CSWE participants, CSWE III participants in both cohorts reported reading and writing a wider range of texts in English, and using more sophisticated reading and writing skills in English for work, self-study and/or further education. This finding suggests that newly arrived migrants who came to Australia with a higher level of English are more likely to use and possibly develop their reading and writing skills more quickly. For example, a large number of CSWE III participants in both cohorts across all interviews reported reading complex English materials such as novels, professional books, text books, course notes and academic articles, and writing in formal and sophisticated English such as emails, essays, reports and theses. Those who pursued further education often found it particularly challenging to write essays in academic English. For example, at Interview 5, Will (Cohort A, c05p011, CSWE III, a lawyer from Iraq), a university student studying for a bachelor's degree in law, said that although he could read text books and give presentations in English, he had failed most of his courses because he was struggling with English academic writing.

While some participants in both cohorts reported using minimal reading and writing skills in any language or using mainly L1 for reading and writing in earlier interviews, they reported more use of reading and writing skills in English in later interviews, because their English proficiency had improved or they were in paid employment and/or further education. This finding suggests that migrants may make more use of their reading and writing skills in English with time in an English-speaking country. For example, Jeannie (Cohort A, c09p010, CSWE III, from China) at Interview 5 said that she mainly used Chinese Mandarin (her L1) for reading and writing and only used English for reading easy English novels for entertainment, doing homework in her study for certificates in community services, and filling in timesheets and entering shopping orders at work as a shop assistant. At Interview 6, she was studying a diploma in community services at a university. By Interview 7, some four years and nine months after leaving the AMEP, she reported using 100% English for reading and writing such as preparing for her citizenship test and writing assignments for her diploma courses.

In summary, many participants said that they used reading and writing skills in English for various everyday activities. Compared with lower-level-CSWE participants, CSWE III participants across both cohorts reported reading and writing more types of texts in English and using more sophisticated reading and writing skills in English.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter we have analysed participants' use of English in the workplace, in public places, at home, when socialising, and when reading and writing. Overall, Cohort A participants reported using more English than Cohort B participants in all kinds of daily communications, suggesting that with time in Australia migrants are likely to use more English in their everyday lives, become more self-reliant and more confident in using English for daily interactions, and potentially improve their English proficiency. In both cohorts, those at higher CSWE level and in paid employment reported using more English in their everyday lives than those who were not. However, the quality and opportunity of English use in the workplace varied across job types. Unlike lower-level-CSWE participants, those at CSWE III were likely to gain paid employment more quickly, use more English for socialising, and use more English for reading and writing in their everyday lives. These findings suggest that newly arrived migrants who came to Australia with a higher level of English proficiency are likely to settle down more quickly and potentially develop their English language skills further and faster.

CHAPTER 4

PERSPECTIVES ON THE NEW BUSINESS MODEL

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses primarily on participants' experiences and perceptions of the AMEP in relation to key changes introduced to the program with the implementation of the new business model in 2011. Participants in Cohort A studied in the AMEP under the previous business model, while those in Cohort B began their involvement following changes to a number of aspects of the program. This chapter provides a brief overview of the changes to the AMEP program under the new model and explores providers' perspectives. It also explores the experiences and viewpoints of participants under the two business models.

4.2 Background to the new business model

The key changes introduced to the AMEP after consultation with a range of stakeholders on 1 July 2011 include:

- an enhanced role for AMEP counsellors to provide clients with increased support
- the introduction of the Individual Pathway Guide (IPG) to provide a greater level of guidance and support to clients through more clearly delineated pathways to further English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, education, employment and vocational training
- a settlement course to reinforce important settlement information to all AMEP clients upon entry to and exit from the program
- a single national service provider for distance/e-learning and a national distance/e-learning curriculum
- the delivery of specialised youth classes for clients aged under 25
- AMEP access for eligible 15–17-year-old migrants and humanitarian entrants who are not attending mainstream school.

(DIAC, 2012a, p. 247)

One component that has received particular attention is the exit process. Under the new model, clients leaving the AMEP not only have contact with an AMEP counsellor, but they also attend an exit settlement course. Both measures offer more support to migrants as they manage the transition to post-AMEP options.

Further changes relevant to this study are:

- the replacement of the 200-hour Employment Pathways Program and the 160-hour Traineeships in English and Work Readiness Program (AMES, 2014; DIAC, 2010) by the Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET)
- the extension of the registration period with the AMEP from within three months of arrival to within six months (DIAC, 2011a).

Additionally, clients are able to complete the AMEP within a five-year time frame. This offers the flexibility to enter and exit the program as they wish.

While all these changes are important, they will not all have necessarily been consciously noticed by participants. The following discussion therefore examines those aspects of the new business model that participants experienced directly; that is, the enhanced role of the counsellor, the employment-focused programs and the exit process. Given that a major change is the introduction of separate entry and exit settlement courses, this chapter also explores participants' perceptions of settlement content in the AMEP.

The following discussion draws on three sources: publicly available information about the AMEP, participant perspectives from their interviews, and institutional perspectives provided by interview data with AMEP staff.

As noted in Chapter 1, interview data inevitably reflect participants' impressions, experiences and points of view rather than official goals and policies. We conducted an in-depth analysis of Interviews 1, 3, 5 and 7 for Cohort A and Interviews 1, 3, 4 and 5 for Cohort B, as in these interviews participants were particularly encouraged to reflect on their AMEP experiences.

Nine AMEP staff members from three states were asked about their experiences and views in relation to the new business model. The staff performed diverse roles within the AMEP and included managers, teachers and counsellors. Eight were interviewed face-to-face and one provided written information via email.

Staff comments indicated that the significance of the IPG may not have been apparent to students at registration, particularly as some providers covered learning plans in the CSWE curriculum. We therefore considered it unlikely that participants would be able to distinguish between IPGs and classroom-based learning plans; and no participants clearly identified receiving an IPG during their interviews. Only a small number of participants were involved in distance or e-learning. This is in line with DIAC statistics reported for the period 2012–2013, which indicate that 4% of AMEP clients used the home tutor scheme, 3% studied at home with distance or e-learning programs, and 13% chose a blended delivery model, combining various learning options (DIAC, 2013a). Finally, only one participant, Bree (Cohort B, c26p009, CSWE I, from Burma), was involved in specialised youth class for learners under 25 years of age. We examine Bree's experiences in more detail in Section 4.7.

The following sections examine the advice and support available to participants while they were studying in the AMEP, settlement content in the AMEP, the work preparation programs offered, and the process of transitioning out of the AMEP. In each section, there is a brief overview of the relevant change under the new business model, followed by an exploration of staff perspectives. We then examine the experiences of Cohort B, who studied in the AMEP after introduction of the new model and those of Cohort A participants who studied under the previous model. We also consider the specialised youth classes for under-25s and provide a case study.

4.3 Advice and support in the AMEP

Under the new business model, the role of the AMEP counsellor is to assist clients to take appropriate classes while they are in the program, and to understand their options for further study or employment after they leave the program. These include further ESL courses, vocational training, other kinds of further or higher education and/or employment. In addition, clients have access to a referral service for issues such as health or housing (AMES, 2013). They meet with a counsellor a minimum of twice, when they enter and when they exit the AMEP, and when needed while studying in the program.

4.3.1 Staff perspectives

From the interviews with staff it was clear that centres had the following in common in their approach to implementing the role of the AMEP counsellor:

- an understanding that to support learners effectively counsellors must address both educational concerns and personal issues
- the involvement of the counsellor in the classroom as well as in one-on-one counselling sessions (Classroom visits were considered critical in maintaining contact with students and encouraging them to attend individual sessions.)
- the designation of the counsellor as the person to monitor and follow up on student absences
- self-referral as a key mechanism for students to access the counselling service
- an interpretation of the current contract such that each client is entitled to an average of six hours of counselling.

Centres differed in how they organised the initial entry interview and in the timing of clients' initial contact with a counsellor (see Yates et al., 2013, for more detail). Staff at one centre scheduled the initial language assessment and the entry interview with the counsellor on the same day and this was followed up by the counsellor three weeks into the course in order to give clients time to settle into the AMEP. In contrast, at another centre a new client's language assessment and individual learning plan were completed with a teacher on entry to the AMEP. The learning plan was then sent to the counselling service, who arranged an

interview with the student. The staff felt this worked well, as it gave counsellors time to prepare before seeing a student and they could draw on information provided by the teacher.

Comments were generally positive about this aspect of the new business model. Important benefits mentioned included:

- The counsellor provided valuable support to clients and allowed the centres to have more capacity to build relationships with them.
- Having counsellors on staff took the pressure off teachers, as clients were able to get expert advice in areas beyond the teachers' areas of expertise. It also allowed teachers to broaden their approach to issues by introducing other non-educational perspectives into discussions.
- Counsellors could liaise between students and teachers in the case of complaints and could positively support the resolution of problems.

Staff identified the following problems:

- One general provider noted that it was difficult to adequately provide counselling to distance learners or those using the home tutor scheme.
- Staff felt that clients attending the Special Preparatory Program (SPP) would benefit from more counselling support.

4.3.2 Participant perspectives

Almost three-quarters of participants from Cohort B (63 of 85) mentioned having seen or being aware of the counsellors while in the AMEP. Most reported discussing further study or employment, on topics such as study options, how to organise the recognition of past qualifications, and how to apply for courses. Participants also received support in employment-seeking activities such as resume writing, organising work placements and identifying volunteer options for work experience. At Interview 3, Dada (Cohort B, c23p009, CSWE III, from Lebanon) described the support she had received from the counsellor throughout her time at the AMEP. When she enrolled, Dada saw a counsellor who kept in contact with her during the course and followed up with her by phone to discuss course options when she had finished a SLPET course.

Table 4.1 presents the number of participants at each CSWE level who saw, or were aware of, a counsellor while studying in the AMEP and the percentage of participants in relation to the total number of participants at the same CSWE level.

Table 4.1: Contact with/awareness of a counsellor

Cohort A			Cohort B		
CSWE level	n	%	CSWE level	n	%
CSWE III (34)	10	29%	CSWE III (46)	34	74%
CSWE II (12)	2	17%	CSWE II (0)	0	0%
CSWE I (11)	0	0%	CSWE I (23)	19	83%
Pre-CSWE (3)	2	67%	Pre-CSWE (16)	10	63%

Cohort B participants from CSWE I (83%) and III (74%) were more likely than those from pre-CSWE classes (63%) to report having contact with a counsellor. Given their limited experiences with formal education, the refugee participants in the pre-CSWE group may have had difficulty identifying the different roles of staff within the AMEP and therefore been less aware of the role of the AMEP counsellor and how it differed from the other support they received. As Fozdar and Hartley (2012) note, many refugees receive advice and support from a range of government agencies and non-government organisations, and this can make it difficult for them to be clear about the distinctions between these services.

A number of participants reported being aware that counsellors offered support in areas other than work and study. For example, Ryoko (Cohort B, c21p007, CSWE III, from Japan) talked to the AMEP counsellor when she was unhappy with her teacher. Nas (Cohort B, c26p011, CSWE I, a skilled migrant from Iran) contacted the counsellor when he had problems with a parking fine and with school fee payments. Nine Cohort B participants specifically mentioned receiving advice from their teachers, particularly about personal matters.

However, eight participants were critical of the counselling they received. Criticisms related to the level of detail supplied in information on employment and study, and disappointment at receiving downloaded materials that they could have accessed themselves. Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III), an educated participant from South Korea, told us in Interview 5, for example, that the counsellor “just printed out off the internet”. All eight participants who were critical were in CSWE III and under 34 years old. Seven had entered on family visas and, with one exception, all were tertiary educated. It therefore seems likely that these participants would have been able to independently access information through the internet and family and friends. Karen (Cohort B, c22p004, CSWE III, from Iran) and Phoebe (Cohort B, c22p002, CSWE III, from China) felt the counselling was not helpful because it came too early in their settlement experience in Australia at a time when they were not yet ready or able to make plans. In Interview 5 Phoebe told us:

I would just have a ... because ah, at first when I went to class, ah in [name of centre] I have, I don't have anything. I have, how to say, ah, I don't have any, ah, I didn't know about Sydney, I didn't know anything. I just learning, just learning. Now I have been there for one and a half year, I know what I want to get, uh-huh, I know what I want to do.

[Phoebe, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

4.3.3 Comparison of Cohort A and Cohort B participants

In contrast to the experience of Cohort B participants, just over a quarter of Cohort A participants (17 of 60) discussed meeting with, or being aware of, a counsellor. Staff at some centres indicated that they had used student counsellors from an associated tertiary institute under the previous model. Fourteen of those who met with a counsellor found this

meeting helpful, particularly with regard to obtaining advice about further study options and English courses. They also told us how counsellors had supported them in other ways, for example by helping to translate and authenticate documents. In contrast to Cohort B participants, however, none of Cohort A participants reported receiving help with personal issues.

Twenty participants reported that they had not met with a counsellor or received any counselling services. It appears that some participants did not seek out counselling services because they did not understand the scope of the counsellors' role within the AMEP. For example, Jane (Cohort A, c02p014, CSWE III, from Poland), a tertiary-educated participant who arrived on a family visa, thought that the counsellors only assisted students with drug or domestic violence issues. Others seemed to be unaware of the service.

Teachers were an important source of advice and practical support for participants in Cohort A during their time in the AMEP and, in some cases, even after participants had left. Several described how their teachers had helped them get into a course. For example, when Mark (Cohort A, c02p015, CSWE III, a refugee from Sudan) wanted to take an interpreting course at TAFE, his teacher contacted a number of agencies and helped him to locate a suitable option. Wen (Cohort A, c06p017, CSWE III, from China), a tertiary-educated participant, described how her teacher referred her to a childcare centre where she then got her first job in Australia. Teachers also helped students organise further English support, and two participants mentioned that their teacher had organised a home tutor.

In summary, the increased provision of counselling services under the new business model seems to have been appreciated by AMEP staff and Cohort B participants. The role of the counsellor in the exit process is discussed in Section 4.6.

4.4 Settlement content in the AMEP

DIAC (2011b) states that the AMEP provides “settlement-focused English training to eligible humanitarian entrants and migrants” (p. 65), and this close association between English language learning and settlement information has underpinned program delivery under both business models. The new business model, however, introduced the delivery of settlement content in separate entry and exit settlement courses. The potential visibility to and impact on Cohort B participants of the specific entry and exit settlement courses needs to be seen in the context of the settlement-focused language learning elsewhere in the AMEP.

Section 4.4.1 explores staff perspectives of the entry settlement course followed by an examination of the views of Cohort B participants of settlement content in the AMEP, including entry settlement courses. We also consider the views and experiences of Cohort A participants in relation to settlement content in the AMEP generally. The perceptions of Cohort B participants and staff informants on the exit settlement course are discussed in Section 4.6.

4.4.1 Staff perspectives: entry settlement courses

As was the case for the AMEP counsellors, centres have operationalised the entry settlement courses in different ways (see Yates et al., 2013). For example, staff from one centre told us that new arrivals attended a two-hour settlement class for one term in addition to their regular English classes, whereas another centre offered a 10-week settlement course on entry to the AMEP that ran for three days a week.

There seemed to be a consensus among the AMEP staff interviewed that offering settlement content as separate courses rather than as an integrated part of the curriculum could be problematic. However, staff in one centre felt that the focus on developing these separate courses had had a positive impact on the curriculum as a whole, and that the process of developing them had resulted in increased links with the local community. Staff perspectives are covered in more detail in Yates et al. (2013).

4.4.2 Cohort B perspectives: entry settlement courses

It is important to bear in mind that many clients may have had difficulty differentiating between the organisationally distinct entry settlement courses, and settlement content integrated into the curriculum of their language classes. Where possible, we have identified specific references to the entry settlement course. However, in many cases participants made general comments on the topic of settlement-related course content.

Six participants explicitly mentioned attending a settlement course when they started at the AMEP. The two who were refugees, Karen (Cohort B, CSWE III, c22p004, from Iran) and Bree (Cohort B, c26p009, CSWE I, from Burma), found the course “helpful”, and Bree was keen to learn more about settlement issues. Karen had participated in a five-day settlement course before arrival, while Bree had attended a course after arrival in Australia. The other four participants, all from the same centre and all married females on family or skilled migrant visas, were less positive in their evaluations of the entry settlement course. They felt they had already been familiar with the content, or that the course was too general and did not meet their needs. These reflections echo findings from an AMES (2011) study, which found that migrants on skilled or family visas relied less heavily on the AMEP for information about Australian systems and government services than did refugees.

4.4.3 Participants’ perspectives: settlement content

Overall, participants from both cohorts made more positive comments (Cohort B: 26; Cohort A: 25) about general settlement content in the AMEP than negative ones (Cohort B: 7; Cohort A: 3). They appreciated learning about aspects of Australian life such as the banking, education and health systems, as well as more practical skills related to using public transport, road rules or shopping. For example, at Interview 2, Hannah (Cohort B, c21p001, CSWE III, from South Korea) valued learning about the “general things”, such as the transport system in Australia, and this topic focus was evident in the teaching materials collected from the centre she attended. Many clearly appreciated the task-based approach

to settlement materials taken in their AMEP centres, the use of authentic texts and the focus on everyday practical outcomes (Tomlinson, 2012). Several participants also found learning about the legal system useful, including about discrimination laws, bullying and women's rights. The overall importance of settlement content to participants was summarised by Rita (Cohort B, c25p010, CSWE III, from Mexico) in Interview 4:

The [name of centre] is like a – the – the principal entrance or the main ... entrance for your life in – in Australia. Because in [Centre 25] I understand perfectly how, is erm the life – how – or what is the life in Australia and what is the different ways for the doctor and the different ways for, for the any situation. Because they give me all – all topics about my life, new life in Australia. So for me was great.

[Rita, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 4]

Negative comments about settlement topics showed parallels with criticisms of the entry settlement courses described above; that is, some of the topics did not have enough depth and some participants were able to access this kind of information through family members independently. Those who expressed dissatisfaction were highly educated, more proficient in English, and had arrived on spouse visas. Three of the seven Cohort B participants had been in Australia for at least two years when first interviewed and therefore have already learned about common settlement topics before starting the AMEP. This suggests that the delivery of settlement content may need further adjustments to ensure that different groups of clients within the AMEP are provided with information that meets their specific needs.

4.5 Work preparation programs

As noted above, under the new business model the AMEP provides the 200-hour Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) program designed to support clients to transition from the AMEP to the workplace or mainstream training programs (AMES, 2013). The SLPET program, which is offered in addition to the 510-hour AMEP entitlement, includes English language skills for the workplace, familiarisation with Australian workplace culture and practices, and up to 80 hours of work experience (DIAC, 2012a). One major AMEP provider in metropolitan Sydney, for example, offers 40–60 hours of work experience in a range of industries, including childcare, housekeeping and room attending, customer service and business administration (Navitas English, 2014). In its annual report for 2012–2013, DIAC (2013a) indicated that 2,639 out of a total of 59,754 AMEP clients, that is approximately 4% of all clients, had participated in the SLPET program during that period.

4.5.1 Staff perspectives

Feedback from staff was very positive about the SLPET programs, which were reported as popular with clients and running well very. Programs appear to be predominantly targeting

more proficient clients at CSWE III or 'high-level IIs', although some SLPET programs, such as housekeeping, were also offered to less proficient clients. A SLPET expansion initiative for lower CSWE levels is currently being trialled by the department. Criteria for selection included English proficiency, performance in an interview and past work experience. Staff reported that great care was taken in the selection of clients.

There seemed to be some variation in how centres delivered the SLPET program. Staff at one centre told us that students studied the SLPET course for two days and a mainstream CSWE III class on the other three days of the week. This approach allowed learners extra time to manage the challenges of the course, and was implemented in response to teachers' concerns that students struggled to stay engaged with the exclusive employment focus of SLPET courses when they were taught as a block. In contrast, other centres appear to run their SLPET programs separately from general AMEP English language classes.

4.5.2 Participant perspectives

Six of the 60 Cohort A participants (10%), and 16 of the 85 Cohort B participants (19%) mentioned participating in a workplace preparation course through the AMEP. Of the Cohort B group, 14 participants (16%) undertook a SLPET course. This percentage is higher than might have been expected based on the figure of 4% of all AMEP clients provided in DIAC (2013a). This difference is most likely due to the fact that about half the participants in both cohorts (34 of 60 in Cohort A and 46 of 85 in Cohort B) were in CSWE III, whereas the DIAC report indicates that only about 20% of all AMEP clients completed CSWE III or achieved a certificate at that level (DIAC, 2013a). All Cohort B participants who took part in SLPET programs (14) were studying in CSWE III and had a minimum of 8–12 years schooling, while those Cohort A participants who participated in workplace training courses were all tertiary educated and studying in CSWE II and III. Two participants from Cohort B with low levels of language proficiency, both ethnic Nepali Bhutanese refugees with no or very limited formal education, indicated they had been involved in practical placements centred on gardening and basic horticulture. Only one participant in the study reported that her involvement in an employment-focused course had resulted in casual work and ultimately a permanent position (Dada, Cohort B, c23p009, CSWE III, from Lebanon).

Half the participants in each cohort who had enrolled in courses with an employment focus (Cohort A: 3; Cohort B: 8) were positive about their experiences. They valued the opportunity to gain workplace experience and described their increased confidence. For example, Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III, from South Korea), a recently arrived migrant, told us that the work placement had given her the confidence to believe she would be able to get a job in Australia. Cherry (Cohort A, c01p004, CSWE II, from China), a highly educated participant, saw her pathways course in children's services as a stepping stone to a TAFE course in the same area. She later completed a TAFE diploma in childcare and worked full-time in a childcare centre, where she was promoted to room leader. At the time of the final interview Cherry was studying in a part-time master's program in Early Childhood Education

and was working part-time in childcare. She stopped working full-time and started part-time work due to her second pregnancy. Several participants mentioned that learning about job interviews and resume writing in the Australian context in these courses was useful. Marimar (Cohort B, CSWE III, c25p003, from Venezuela) found explicit instruction very helpful for understanding differences between workplace communication in Australia and her country of origin (see for example, Louw, Derwing, & Abbott, 2010).

However, there were a number of criticisms of these courses, and the most specific and detailed complaints were given by participants from Cohort B. Twelve of these were critical of aspects of the courses, and of these, two left before completing the course because they were dissatisfied. It is important to note that some participants made both negative and positive comments about different aspects of the course. The most common complaints were related to participants' expectations and to the nature of the work experience placements. A number related largely to unrealised and unrealistic expectations that participation in the course would lead to employment. Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III, from South Korea) told us:

Um ... mm, I think the last – when the course finished, the two weeks, what's it called? Work experience. I was thinking I – I could get a job or lots of people could get a job, but actually I think it didn't actually work that way.

[Nina, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

Chellam (Cohort B, c23p011, CSWE III, from Sri Lanka) was particularly critical of her experience with the SLPET course in a different centre because she felt that it had not delivered what she thought was promised, that is, help to 'get a job', a sentiment also voiced by Pita (Cohort A, c10p003, CSWE III, from Peru). There therefore seems to have been an expectation, largely unmet, that the course was designed to lead directly to employment rather than to provide skills that would be useful in employment.

There were also some complaints about the nature of the work experience component. Three Cohort B participants complained that they had to undertake low-level tasks not linked to the course. For example, Ben (Cohort B, c22p001, CSWE III, from China), who was enrolled in a forklift driving course, did labouring work, while Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III, from South Korea), who was doing a customer service course, tidied up rather than interacting with clients. Other participants experienced difficulty getting a work experience placement in an appropriate field of work. For example, Svetlana (Cohort B, c25p001, CSWE III), a highly educated participant from Kazakhstan, told us the following:

Svetlana: If you engineer in some, um, very some special, you have some special job and AMES – AMES sometimes can't find a job experience for you 'cause it's ...

Researcher: The same with graphic design.

Svetlana: Yeah, it's, er, rare, yeah, and the people because people were disappointed about it and got ...

Researcher: Okay.

Svetlana: ... er, went away, yeah.

[Svetlana, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 3]

A few participants felt that the work experience component was too short to help with finding a job:

Two weeks experience is not enough, so it should be a full, full ... work experience, otherwise it's not fulfilled.

[Chellam, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 3]

Finally, a number of participants indicated they would like to have done the work preparation courses but had problems finding suitable courses in their desired field or location, securing a place on a program, or had problems with the attendance requirements due to other commitments.

4.6 Exiting the AMEP

The new business model provides two key elements for clients exiting the AMEP: a counselling session with an AMEP counsellor and an exit settlement course. The following presents the provider perspectives of the exit settlement course and then explores the experiences of Cohort B and Cohort A participants as they transitioned out of the AMEP.

4.6.1 Staff perspectives

While the focus of the entry settlement course is on topics about living in Australia of particular relevance to new arrivals, the settlement course delivered to clients on exiting the program is intended to build on this information and outline options and pathways post-AMEP. In one centre, for example, AMEP clients who are nearing the end of their hours are identified and then invited to attend a mixed-level exit class, which varies considerably in size depending on the number of eligible students.

Staff raised three main issues in relation to exit settlement courses. The first centred on how to deliver the exit components to students who withdraw without notice. The second was the perceived overlap in the requirements of the exit interview with a counsellor and the exit settlement course, as staff reported that some students were confused about the need to attend both. They suggested that combining the exit interview and exit settlement course into a single session with a counsellor would address this problem and still effectively support transition out of the AMEP. A third source of dissatisfaction among some staff was that enrolment/attendance in an exit settlement course was equated to the achievement of the learning outcomes for that course.

4.6.2 Cohort B perspectives

At Interview 5, Cohort B participants who had left the program were specifically asked about their experiences exiting the AMEP. Table 4.2 shows the number of participants who were studying in the AMEP at that time and those who had left, together with an indication of whether they had completed their 510 hours.

Table 4.2: Cohort B participants, enrolment status at Interview 5 and AMEP entitlement

Enrolment status	Number of participants
Studying in the AMEP	12
Not studying in the AMEP and completed 510 hrs	28
Not studying in the AMEP and not completed hours	20
Not studying in the AMEP, fee-paying ^a	2
Total	62

^a 510-hour entitlement not applicable for these clients.

Twenty-eight out of the total 62 participants interviewed were no longer studying in the AMEP at Interview 5 and had completed their hours. The majority (19) explicitly recalled having an interview with a counsellor on exit. Most interviews occurred face-to-face, although several were conducted over the phone. Three participants reported speaking to someone in the AMEP when their hours were finishing, but did not clearly identify who had advised them, and another participant, a refugee from Bhutan, mentioned talking to her teacher just before she left. That is, over 80% of participants who had completed their hours received advice on exit. Three further participants said they were aware of the exit interviews, but personal circumstances (e.g. illness or pregnancy) meant they had not been able to follow up. The two participants who were fee-paying also described meeting with a counsellor. Only two participants, both males from the same centre with lower levels of proficiency in English, told us they had not met with a counsellor when exiting the AMEP. However, both mentioned getting advice from outside such as a friend or a volunteer.

A third of participants (20 of 60) were not studying in the AMEP at the time of the fifth and final interview although they had not completed their 510 hours. Four out of five participants from one centre told us they had received follow-up phone calls from counsellors once they had left the AMEP, and in these they discussed their next steps. When all Cohort B participants involved in Interview 5 who were not studying in the AMEP at the time are considered (i.e. those who had completed their hours as well as those who had left early), over half (27 of 50) described discussing pathway planning with someone at the AMEP. Only two participants, Mika (Cohort B, c21p002, CSWE III, from Japan) and Iris (Cohort B, c22p007, CSWE III, from South Korea), who were both in CSWE III classes, well-educated and on family visas, referred to the exit settlement course specifically. Their comments suggested that they primarily saw this as a necessary formality rather than as a useful learning activity. Mika told us:

We have got a, you know, um, a module you have to study. I think I have got one here, like ... how to settle in Australia, saving money, what's the emergency things and you know how to get the translate and this stuff. And then you have – then you tick, tick, tick. You have – you understand a bit more about this, or a lot more about this and the stuff.

[Mika, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

4.6.3 Cohort A perspectives

In contrast, only just over a quarter of the Cohort A participants (10 of 38) who were involved in the final interview (Interview 7) reported that they had talked to someone in the AMEP when they left the program. Five of the Cohort A participants said that they had discussed future plans, including course options, while the others remembered discussions about remaining hours or certificate requirements rather than pathway planning. Thirteen Cohort A participants told us they could not remember having an interview or receiving any advice about post-AMEP options. Ludmilla (Cohort A, c08p015, CSWE I, from Russia) described how she completed her course, received a certificate and then left the AMEP.

Overall, it was evident that the transition process for Cohort B participants (i.e. under the new business model), was generally well structured and supported. Almost all Cohort B participants who had completed their hours had had access to counselling or support from AMEP staff or, at the very least, knew how to obtain this advice. A small number also indicated they had received advice from a counsellor, even though they had not formally exited the AMEP program. These experiences compare very favourably with the experiences reported by participants in Cohort A who frequently reported receiving no pathway advice on exiting.

However, concerns raised by staff suggest that there were some issues, and Cohort B participants who withdrew from the AMEP before completing their entitlement did not always receive pathway counselling. In some cases counsellors were addressing this gap through follow-up phone interviews. While the exit interview was clearly prominent and important to participants, the exit settlement course was barely noticed, or considered to be a tick-box activity of limited value by some.

4.7 Case study: specialised youth classes for under 25s

A further key element of the new business model is the delivery of specialised classes to clients under 25. Feedback from two centres was positive and indicated these courses were meeting client needs. Staff from one centre described the course they ran for young migrants aged 16 to 25 years. While the age cut-off was given as 25 years, there was some flexibility around this, and participation depended on the client's experiences and current situation. For example, staff felt it may be more appropriate for a mother with children to

attend mainstream programs rather than the specialised youth classes, which were oriented towards young people with disrupted education and had a general education focus. Staff felt these classes had been very successful, with generally good attendance.

Bree (Cohort B, c26p009, CSWE I, from Burma) was the only participant in the study to attend these specialised youth classes. She found them more motivating than regular classes and we noticed a clear difference in her confidence and language use:

Bree arrived in Australia on a humanitarian visa and she had completed Year 10 at school in Burma. She had learned some English at school, and when she joined the study she was in a CSWE I class. There were two key turning points that impacted critically on her language learning and settlement experience: a mentoring role by an AMEP teacher and joining a specialised youth class. When she first enrolled in the AMEP, Bree struggled to engage in class until a teacher at the AMEP took her “under her wing” and she was observed to become more interested in class. At Interview 4 she was enrolled in a Youth Adult Migrant Education Course (YAMEC):

Before I was the elderly class, which is language school, but now it's a, they call it YAMEC, which is secondary, kind of secondary school ... I enjoy it.

[Bree, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 4]

Bree felt comfortable in a class with learners of a similar age and background and she quickly made friends. At this time her self-reported use of English in the community increased considerably from 10% to 50%. For the first four interviews she used an interpreter and her answers in English were described in the field notes as short, ‘reserved’ and ‘subdued’. However, by the final interview she was noticeably more confident and wanted to be interviewed without an interpreter.

At the end of the interview when the recorder was turned off Bree talked about being able to do the interview for the first time without an interpreter. She became tearful ... she seemed very proud of being able to talk in English for nearly an hour without the support of an interpreter.

[Excerpt from field notes, Bree, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 5]

When she had finished her YAMEC class, Bree continued her studies in a hospitality course.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has explored the experiences and views of participants from Cohorts A and B in relation to support and advice in the AMEP, settlement content, programs in the AMEP focusing on preparation for employment, and the exit process from the AMEP. Participants

in Cohort A studied under the previous business model while those in Cohort B studied in the AMEP following the introduction of the new business model. The majority of Cohort B participants had received advice from AMEP counsellors and seemed less dependent on their teachers for support regarding education and employment than Cohort A participants. Counsellors also provided valuable support to staff.

Settlement content was generally appreciated by participants in both cohorts.

Staff had some concerns about offering settlement courses separately. Refugees were more positive in their evaluation of the content of the entry settlement course than migrants on other visa types. Some highly educated, more proficient participants, particularly those who had already spent some time in Australia, found that aspects of the settlement content were not relevant to their needs.

Work preparation programs were viewed positively by staff. While aspects of the course were valued, some Cohort B participants were dissatisfied with the nature of work experience placements and their unrealised expectations that participation would lead to employment.

Cohort B clients who exited the AMEP after completing their 510 hours were usually well supported in the transition process, while those who withdrew before completion of their hours and the majority of Cohort A participants often left the program without formal discussion of their post-AMEP options.

Cohort B participants were not always aware of the exit settlement course. When discussed, it was viewed as a requirement rather than a meaningful learning activity.

The specialised youth classes for under 25s are successful from the perspectives of the staff interviewed and of the one participant who studied in one.

CHAPTER 5

LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE AMEP AND BEYOND

5.1 Introduction

The primary focus of this chapter is participants' perspectives of their language skills over the course of the study, their perceptions of the AMEP, and the relationship between the AMEP and ongoing language learning. In doing so, we address the following research questions:

- RQ 3: How are interactions in English different for different learner groups and how can language training be customised to meet the language needs of different client groups?
- RQ4b: How does ongoing language learning in the long run build on initial language training?

Whereas Chapter 4 explores participants' experiences and views of aspects of the AMEP that were directly affected by the new business model, in this chapter we examine participants' perspectives of their initial language training in the AMEP more generally, and what they identified as either valuable or lacking and their perceptions of their language development over the course of the study.

The analysis draws largely on participants' perspectives of their language learning and the influence of the AMEP on their lives in Australia as articulated in the interviews. These data are supplemented by classroom material where appropriate. While language learning is a complex undertaking that occurs in a wide variety of settings, the classroom is a particularly important context for learning, since it is often here that the structure and use of language is made explicit. The relationship between what is taught in the classroom and what is learned, however, is rarely straightforward. The language that is retained and used by participants depended on a range of complex, interacting factors, including their opportunities to use and practise English. Our analysis of the interview data allows us to highlight those areas of the teaching that participants themselves identified as either useful or lacking based on their own experiences.

The analysis presented in this chapter draws mostly on data from Interviews 1 and 3 from Phase 1, and Interviews 5 and 7 from Phase 2 for Cohort A participants; and Interviews 1, 3, 4 and 5 for Cohort B. Other interviews were consulted where appropriate. These interviews were selected for close analysis as they reflected participants' views when they were still in

the AMEP (Interview 1), shortly after most had left the program (Interview 3), and at several points in time afterwards in order to capture their retrospective evaluations.

In Section 5.2 we examine participants' feedback on the AMEP, including what they liked and did not like about it and what they learned in class. We then use their self-ratings to consider their perspectives on their language development during their time at the AMEP and after exiting the program. A particular focus is on how the AMEP has contributed to their perceptions of their language development.

5.2 Experiences and perceptions of the AMEP

Participants generally valued their experience of the AMEP and found it very helpful. All but two of the 60 participants in Cohort A commented positively on one or more aspects of their experience in the AMEP in Interview 1, and in Interview 7, 37 of the 38 participants still reflected positively on the program up to five years after their initial contact with the course. Similarly, the majority of Cohort B participants (57 of 62) commented positively on some aspects of the AMEP during their fifth and final interview.

Participant evaluations of the AMEP indicated that, in general, they felt that the AMEP not only facilitated their language learning, but also developed their confidence and helped them to settle in Australia. Some participants told us that the AMEP had provided an indispensable foundation or gateway to both English language and Australian society. Lourdes (Cohort A, c02p003, CSWE III, from the Philippines), who had completed high school in her home country but not undertaken any further training or study, commented that her time in the AMEP had given her a desire for knowledge.

In reflecting on what they valued in the AMEP, participants commented on course content, their teachers and the social connections they made. These topics were evident across participants in both cohorts, and echo themes described in detail in Yates (2010) for Phase 1 of the study.

5.2.1 Content

When discussing what they learned in the AMEP, many participants focused particularly on settlement topics and these findings are discussed in Chapter 4. In this section we examine participants' reflections on their experiences with other facets of teaching and learning. Due to their lack of experience with education, learners in pre-CSWE classes seemed to be less able to reflect and comment on course content and class activities, whereas participants in CSWE I, II and III commented on these more extensively and in more detail.

Pre-CSWE participants often signalled an enthusiasm for developing basic literacy skills in their first interviews. Most of these (18 of 19) were humanitarian entrants (2 out of 3 for Cohort A and all 16 for Cohort B) with little or no schooling and very limited English. They mentioned liking learning the alphabet and how to write their name in English. However, by

Interview 5, participants' optimism seemed to have waned and comments suggested that they found mastering basic literacy skills a slow and painstaking task. In the last interview, for example, Kancha (Cohort B, c24p005, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan) said he was still practising writing the alphabet and could not read. When he received a letter he would ask his children or a neighbour for help. Positive comments about learning opportunities in the AMEP shifted to the comments of the practice of everyday spoken English, which allowed students to go shopping by themselves (e.g. Maya, Cohort B, c24p006, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan) and generally to talk to others (e.g. Kiran, Cohort B, c24p007, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan).

CSWE I learners in particular highlighted the value of learning about topics and skills relevant to everyday activities and were able to use their English skills in their daily lives. Nakula (Cohort B, c24012, CSWE I, from Bhutan),⁶ for example, said that studying in the AMEP had helped him to pass the computer-based component of his learner's driving test. Similarly, Akbar (Cohort B, c26p016, CSWE I, from Somalia) found that he could apply what he had learned in supermarkets, shopping centres and coffee shops. These learners also liked in-class activities that focused on more traditional teaching practices, such as practising grammar and the four macro skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing).

In contrast, more proficient learners in CSWE III generally appreciated opportunities to practise both spoken and written English as well as skills related to the workplace. In-class speaking activities were valued. For example, five Cohort B participants in CSWE III from the same centre found interacting with volunteer tutors useful as it allowed them to talk to a native speaker and learn more about Australia:

I want to say what another interesting part in our classes, is when a volunteer come ... It's a great – really great. When you can see real Australian people ... and listen or – it's amazing ... They know so many interesting stories.

[Wendy, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 1]

A number of CSWE III learners identified the AMEP as the only place where they could develop and practise writing in English. Other comments by CSWE III participants indicated that they also appreciated activities focusing on learning grammar and vocabulary, including colloquial English and pronunciation, as well as topics related to the workplace such as writing resumes and job interview preparation.

5.2.2 The teachers

Many positive comments centred on AMEP teachers. Participants from all levels of language proficiency and educational backgrounds referred to how important their teachers had been to them. Participants often mentioned how much they liked their teachers, who were

⁶ Nakula is one of two ethnic Nepali Bhutanese who joined the study at CSWE I level. The majority of ethnic Nepali Bhutanese joined the study at pre-CSWE level.

described as caring, helpful, patient, enthusiastic and able to tailor their classes to the learners' needs. Rezarta (Cohort B, c26p002, CSWE I, from Albania), for example, felt a close bond to her teacher and therefore would talk to her rather than to the counsellor:

I was very friends with [Teacher] ... 'Cause yeah, she was my teacher and ... I used to like her. She was very good. So everything I was talking with her

[Rezarta, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 5]

5.2.3 Social connections

The participants valued the role of the AMEP in helping them to make social connections in the early days of their settlement. This finding was evident for both cohorts irrespective of participants' level of English language proficiency or educational background. These connections were important as ways of making friends, having contact with people from different cultural backgrounds and finding support through contact with other migrants (see also Fozdar & Hartley, 2012; Yates, 2010). In their final interview, over one-third of participants from Cohort B referred to friends and contacts they had made in the AMEP. Furthermore, in Interview 7 over half the Cohort A participants emphasised the importance of social connections made in the AMEP up to five years after their initial interview, long after they had left the AMEP. Jane (Cohort A, c02p014, CSWE III, from Poland), for example, bonded with a number of her AMEP classmates over their shared struggle to settle in Australia, and she was still close with them two years after leaving the program:

... but I think that for people who come here, it's good because this is, um, you know, can like for me was I meet, ah, I meet my friends, I meet my friends and we still – we still meet together ... Yeah, and you know, I don't need to go and looking for another friend because I have my good friends here now four years together and I think that we will be to the end of our life together, you know, nothing will be happen, yeah, because we meet in, ah, bad time but everybody had bad time.

[Jane, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 5]

However, there were also a number who retained little or no contact with friends from the AMEP by this point, although these friendships had been significant to them at earlier stages of settlement.

Participants generally made more positive than negative comments about the AMEP. For example, in Interview 7 there were 115 positive compared to only 33 negative references to the AMEP made by Cohort A participants. In general, participants with lower levels of education were less critical of the AMEP in contrast to those with more years of schooling.

The major themes that emerged in negative references to the AMEP were:

- the difficulty of catering for diverse learner groups

- class size and composition
- course content and teaching style
- the length of the 510-hour entitlement.

These are discussed in turn in the following sections.

5.2.4 Catering for diverse learner groups

In their reflections, a number of participants from both cohorts expressed concerns about the challenge for the AMEP of catering adequately for the diversity of clients. Ten of the 36 Cohort B participants in Interview 5 who made critical comments mentioned the difficulty of offering classes at appropriate levels. Some participants felt that three levels were not adequate and that more advanced-level courses should be offered. Nine participants, all with at least eight years of schooling, told us that the AMEP classes were too easy or basic. With two exceptions, these participants had been in Australia for at least a year and they felt that classes were more oriented towards the needs of very recently arrived migrants or refugees and/or were insufficiently attentive to the needs of professional migrants such as themselves. One suggestion for improvement was to stream classes according to learners' educational backgrounds or goals and/or circumstances related to employment. Marimar (Cohort B, c25p003, CSWE III, from Venezuela) and Rita (Cohort B, c25p010, CSWE III, from Mexico), two tertiary-educated participants who had migrated to Australia with their husbands under the skilled migrant program, were of this view. Rita, who had a master's degree in economics, expressed the following concerns:

... maybe AMEP is more for refugees ... You know, because it's not for professional people ... It's more for – AMEP, it's for survive in, in English ... It's, it's, it's very, very good but it's not for professional people I think. That's my, my opinion but ... Yeah, maybe, maybe you, you need to put the professional people in different, err, class, you know ... because it's complicate to try to explain because, because ... the professional, because the professional, err, people, err, think different things about your life ... it's not good for me, because why, I understand [unclear] that I need to wash my hands.

[Rita, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

Marimar thought that AMEP clients who were already working had other priorities and commitments, and did not have the time to focus on study. She told us:

I think it's because, you know, some people when arrive, they have a job and don't, they don't, don't have time to do homework or study English really have a long time, don't have long time to study English. But some people like me, I need just learn English to, to get a job or something like that ... I think it's um, ah good advice for, it's kind of a program is classified ... Split the people.

[Marimar, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

However, several refugees with low literacy from Cohort B also felt that the AMEP had not adequately catered for the specific needs of their group. Raja (Cohort B, c24p011, pre-CSWE), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese participant, thought there should be a special class with a Nepali speaking teacher because he was “not learning anything” when the class was taught in English. Nearly one-third of the pre-CSWE learners in Cohort B mentioned that they were not able to follow or respond to instructions, as they did not understand what they were supposed to do:

Everything is hard because we don't understand ... We don't have an interpreter all the time in class, that is why we don't understand many things because ... the teacher will be saying in English always, they will speak in English, and we don't understand.

[Indira, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 1, interpreted]

This issue was also raised by refugees in a study conducted in Western Australia who suggested the use of interpreters in class to help learners (Fozdar & Hartley, 2012). Some pre-CSWE learners in the class also had some basic literacy skills, whereas others were pre-literate and this diversity made it difficult for the teacher to meet the needs of all learners.

A number of well-educated Cohort B participants at CSWE III expressed dissatisfaction with the mix of different levels of English proficiency in a class, a theme also evident in interviews with Cohort A participants. Classes of mixed-level learners were variously described as “slow”, “boring” or “a waste of time”, which suggests that more advanced learners felt held back by their less proficient classmates. Jane (Cohort A, c02p014, CSWE III, from Poland), thought the teachers were forced to try to find “the middle ground”. Dbchater (Cohort B, c23p001, CSWE III, from Iran) described what happened when learners who had just completed CSWE II joined a CSWE III class:

See. They cannot speaking, they cannot understanding then, they are stopping themself ... I think here we need another [class].

[Dbchater, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 2]

5.2.5 Class composition and size

The predominance of speakers from the same language background(s) in a class was also raised as an issue. This was perceived as problematic not only by those learners with a different L1, but also by those who spoke the language of the majority group. They complained that getting adequate speaking practice was difficult under these circumstances because people tended to communicate in their L1, an issue also found in comparable language programs in Canada (Derwing & Waugh, 2012). Several participants at both beginner and higher CSWE levels proposed maximising English speaking opportunities through an English-only rule in class.

In addition to concerns about the composition of the class, there were also negative comments on larger classes. Corazon from Colombia commented that “It’s like [laughs] like a jail, many peoples in the room” (Cohort B, c25p007, CSWE III, Interview 5). Two participants made explicit links between smaller class size and a more personalised approach to teaching and learning. Some participants were also unhappy when classes had to be combined at short notice due to low enrolment numbers, as Nina (Cohort B, c22p008, CSWE III, from South Korea) told us:

... because, um, I don’t know, the people said that, that our classes, not enough or, or not enough, err, students for the running or, err, running. So we have to move to the err, another class and suddenly we moved to another class [...] Err, every time, we, err, change the room, all my friend is keep changing but I’m stuck somewhere ... And also my friend was or lots of friend, oh, friends, they doesn’t like it, so they just quit or stopped the course at, at the time, you know.

[Nina, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 2]

5.2.6 Course content and teaching style

There were very few negative comments on course content and teaching style. When learners did comment, their focus was often on spoken language and a desire for more speaking opportunities. Conversation practice emerged particularly as a strong priority for CSWE I participants. This is perhaps not surprising given that CSWE I learners consistently rated their speaking skills poorly as indicated by the self-assessments described in Section 5.3.2.1. Adam (Cohort B, c26p001, CSWE I, from Somalia) felt that they often spent a lot of time on writing but only had a few minutes per class to practise speaking, and Ryoko (c22p007, from Japan) noticed that the teaching style of her new teacher did not foster interaction between students who:

... come to the English class to improve the conversation as well. So, if we cannot have opportunity to speak with partner, we will not have opportunity to speak English.

[Ryoko, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 4]

Several Chinese participants studying CSWE I from Cohort A specifically expressed a desire for more pronunciation. Hua, a well-educated participant from China told us: “I think should increase the class for pronunciation” (Cohort A, c08p005, CSWE I, Int 3).

A number of well-educated Cohort B participants made some negative comments and suggestions for improvement in relation to classroom activities. Four participants in CSWE III and five studying at CSWE I level from Cohort B commented on the need for a more formal, structured teaching and learning environment. Sabeen (Cohort B, c26p020, CSWE I), a skilled migrant from Iraq, thought the AMEP did not follow a curriculum as there was no textbook,

only handouts and she had no clear idea of the syllabus. Yoo-Jin (c26p015), a skilled migrant from South Korea, had a preference for fewer games:

Um, my understanding, um, is that the teacher provides the game based class to boost our confidence in communication. However, um, it's um, it's quite, um, frequent and it's once in a week. I might like it if it is just once in a month based. And it's interesting but because of the, um – we had many of the same game based classes and topics are usually very similar. [...] So it's getting a bit, um, boring.

[Yoo-Jin, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 2, interpreted]

Other suggestions included a greater focus on reading, more rote learning and stricter teachers. These suggestions may reflect the previous experiences in formal educational settings in the home countries of these participants (see Yates & Williams, 2003) and indicate that some learners may benefit from more explicit explanation of the relevance of activities that they might find unfamiliar (Derwing & Waugh, 2012).

A few participants at CSWE III expressed a desire for more integration between the AMEP and the life beyond the classroom. Mathu (Cohort B, c23p005, CSWE III), a tertiary-educated participant from India, saw a major gap between learning in the AMEP and language use in the community and suggested conversation classes with native speakers. Jonah (Cohort B, c25p002, CSWE III, Int 1), a highly educated migrant from Iran, also emphasised a need for greater connections between the AMEP and “the outside world”.

5.2.7 The 510-hour entitlement

Some less proficient learners expressed a desire for an increase in the 510-hour entitlement, a finding also identified in research into the needs of refugees in Western Australia (Fozdar & Hartley, 2012). This trend was more evident while clients were still in or had fairly recently left the AMEP (e.g. six Cohort A participants mentioned this at Interview 3 but none referred to this at Interview 7).

5.3 Language development during Phase 1 and Phase 2

In order to get an indication of language development over time, in this section we explore four different indicators of development: participants' self-ratings of their language skills, comments made by participants in their interviews, researchers' commentary in the field notes, and the degree to which interpreters were used to conduct the interviews.

The self-rating scale was introduced in 2012 and was therefore part of each interview with Cohort B participants and Interviews 6 and 7 for Cohort A participants. Analysis of these data for Cohort B provides insights into participants' perceptions during and shortly after they left the AMEP over a period of 1.5 years, while analysis of Cohort A data for Interviews 6 and 7 provides insights into participants' self-ratings of their language after longer periods (3.5 and

4.5 years into the study) after they have left the AMEP. For the self-rating scales, participants were asked to rate their overall proficiency in English on each of the four macro skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading) using one of the following descriptors: *very good*, *good*, *okay* and *not good enough*. These categories were not further defined so that ratings represent participants' subjective judgements of their English language abilities in their individual settings.

Self-ratings have been widely used in survey studies (Chiswick, Lee, & Miller, 2004; Fozdar & Hartley, 2012; Hugo, 2011; Richardson, Miller-Lewis, Ngo, & Ilsley 2002), but they are not necessarily a measure of *actual* performance. Rather, they provide us with an indication of how participants feel about their language at a particular point in time in a particular context. For example, a CSWE I participant may have rated his/her English as *okay* based on an ability to manage day-to-day interactions adequately in English, while a more proficient CSWE III participant may have evaluated his/her language as *not good enough* against a background of more linguistically demanding job-seeking scenarios. Changes in self-ratings may reflect changes in how participants critically evaluate their language skills in relation to their language needs at a particular time, rather than their language development per se.

Ratings may also be influenced by other factors such as a person's cultural background. For example, Zielinski (2010) used data from Phase 1 of this study to examine Mandarin and Arabic speakers' perceptions of their pronunciation. She observed that the Mandarin speakers tended to be more negative about their pronunciation and were more worried and less confident than the Arabic speakers. Crucially, Zielinski found that participants' perceptions did not always align with their externally assessed pronunciation difficulties. Nevertheless, self-ratings can be seen as a useful tool for gauging how individuals feel about their language proficiency, and we identified some trends across time for participants at different CSWE levels, which we discuss in the following sections.

5.3.1 Perceptions of language skills over time

We analysed the data for participants' self-ratings of their overall language ability in English according to CSWE levels. Table 5.1 shows the four self-rating categories and the number and percentage of participants at each CSWE level who selected a particular category at Interviews 1, 3 and 5 for Cohort B participants and Interviews 6 and 7 for Cohort A participants. Because of the small numbers of Cohort A participants at pre-CSWE (1) and CSWE I (5) at Interview 7, discussion of the findings for these levels focuses primarily on Cohort B. Cohort A CSWE II data were also excluded because there are no CSWE II participants in Cohort B and therefore the data could not be compared.

Table 5.1: Overall self-ratings by CSWE level

CSWE level	Cohort B						Cohort A			
	Int 1		Int 3		Int 5		Int 6		Int 7	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-CSWE										
Not good enough	12	75%	6	55%	11	79%	0	0%	1	100%
Okay	2	12%	5	45%	3	21%	1	100%	0	0%
Good	2	13%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	16	100%	11	100%	14	100%	1	100%	1	100%
CSWE I										
Not good enough	19	83%	7	50%	6	33%	5	62%	1	20%
Okay	3	13%	6	43%	11	61%	3	38%	2	40%
Good	1	4%	1	7%	1	6%	0	0%	1	20%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	20%
Total	23	100%	14	100%	18	100%	8	100%	5	100%
CSWE III										
Not good enough	7	18%	3	11%	5	17%	2	13%	1	5%
Okay	17	45%	9	33%	6	20%	3	20%	2	11%
Good	13	34%	13	48%	15	50%	9	60%	12	63%
Very good	1	3%	2	8%	4	13%	1	7%	4	21%
Total	38	100%	27	100%	30	100%	15	100%	19	100%

As can be seen from Table 5.1, there was a general trend for Cohort B participants at CSWE I and III to view their language more positively over time, while participants who started in the study at pre-CSWE level continued to perceive their language as *not good enough* throughout the study. Twelve out of 16 (75%) thought their English was *not good enough* at Interview 1, and 11 out of 14 (79%) pre-CSWE participants in Cohort B gave this rating at Interview 5. In contrast, ratings for Cohort B participants in CSWE I tended to move from mostly *not good enough* in Interview 1 (19 out of 23 participants or 83%) to *okay* in Interview 5 (11 out of 18 participants or 61%). Similarly, while two-thirds of Cohort B CSWE III participants rated their skills at the lower end of the scale (*not good enough* or *okay*) at the time of the first interview, at Interview 5, two-thirds viewed their overall language skills as *good* or *very good*. The trend for CSWE III participants to feel increasingly positive about their language ability may continue over time, since 16 out of 19 Cohort A participants (84%) considered their overall English language skills as *good* or *very good* at Interview 7.

For participants with low levels of proficiency in English, a further indicator of their language development is whether they continued to require an interpreter throughout the study. A minority of participants (12 out of 60) in Cohort A required an interpreter at Interview 1. Of these, seven remained in the study at Interview 7 about 4.5 years later, and only three still depended on an interpreter during the final interview. In contrast, 34 of the 85 Cohort B participants required an interpreter at Interview 1, and 25 of the 28 of these who talked to us at Interview 5, that is after 1.5 years, still made use of an interpreter. Only three of those who had started with an interpreter, Annisa (Cohort B, c24p001, pre-CSWE, from the

Democratic Republic of Congo), Abdul (Cohort B, c24p002, pre-CSWE, from Ethiopia) and Bree (Cohort B, c26p009, CSWE I, from Burma), communicated independently with the researcher in the final interview. All the ethnic Nepali Bhutanese refugees from Centre 24 who participated in the final interview relied on an interpreter at that time.

The pre-CSWE groups from both cohorts stand out as consistently rating their overall English skills as *not good enough*. This perception was corroborated by the researchers who interviewed them. They also continued to rely on an interpreter, further suggesting they had very limited capacity or confidence to communicate independently in English. The largest group of these learners were studying at the same centre, Centre 24 (16 participants from Cohort B); all were refugees who had experienced personal issues such as trauma, or had health concerns or carer responsibilities. Most had had no experience of formal education. Half (8 of 16) told us that their low levels of literacy and a general lack of experience with learning in a classroom setting had played a critical role in their difficulties learning English. Sunil (Cohort B, c24p004, pre-CSWE, an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese), the one Cohort B participant at pre-CSWE level with more education (four years) felt that, while he was familiar with some literacy-based activities, such as writing sentences, he was struggling with the different educational environment in Australia and often did not understand the exercises they were supposed to do. As reported in Yates (2010), learners often need a minimum of five years of schooling to have achieved basic literacy skills in their L1 as a foundation on which to build their subsequent formal language learning. These pre-CSWE participants were, therefore, not only dealing with the unfamiliar demands of the classroom, but also unable to draw on knowledge of any written language to support their learning (see, for example, McPherson, 2007). The effect of this increased cognitive load on their memory and concentration is reflected in comments by many participants who were either frustrated that they could not remember information learned in class, or reported difficulty paying attention to the teacher. Dibya (Cohort B, c24p003, pre-CSWE, an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese), who also dealt with ongoing mental health issues from her years in a refugee camp, struggled to remember what she had learned in class. In Interview 2 she had not attended AMEP for a few weeks after an accident and she said that she had already forgotten everything she had previously learned in class, including the few letters of the alphabet she had previously memorised. Kiran (Cohort B, c24p007, pre-CSWE) and Gayatri (Cohort B, c24p008, pre-CSWE), both ethnic Nepali Bhutanese, also described how their lack of basic literacy impacted significantly on their efforts to learn English at home:

We are learning and at house also sometime we are opening books and trying to do something but we don't know anything and try to learn a word but again it will not stay in mind.

[Kiran and Gayatri, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 1, interpreted]

The specific issues of this group are referred to in Section 5.2.4, which also includes suggestions from participants on how they would like to see the AMEP address their

considerable learning challenges. Further details of participants in Centre 24 can be found in Yates et al. (2013).

In order to obtain a more detailed picture of participants' perception of their language skills over time, we looked closely at the self-evaluations of the two macro skills most often commented on by participants as crucial for their daily life, namely speaking and writing (see Section 5.2.1). Speaking was often listed as an area that participants from all CSWE levels and cohorts wished to improve, and in later interviews a number of participants, particularly at CSWE III, were also concerned about their literacy skills as they sought to gain entry into further education or the workforce. Below we focus on these two skills.

5.3.2 Language development: perceived change in speaking and writing

We analysed the self-ratings data for speaking and writing according to the same principles used for the self-rating of overall English language skills. That is, we included CSWE levels in the analysis for which there were ratings at each interview and, due to the small numbers of Cohort A participants at pre-CSWE and CSWE I at Interview 7, discussion of the findings focuses primarily on Cohort B data for these levels.

5.3.2.1 Speaking

The main macro skill participants reported wanting to improve was speaking. Table 5.2 shows the participants' self-ratings for their speaking skills in English as *not good enough*, *okay*, *good*, or *very good*. The table shows the number and percentage of participants at each CSWE level who selected a particular category.

Table 5.2: Cohort A and B self-ratings for speaking

CSWE level	Cohort B						Cohort A			
	Int 1		Int 3		Int 5		Int 6		Int 7	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-CSWE										
Not good enough	15	94%	6	55%	9	64%	0	0%	0	0%
Okay	0	0%	4	36%	5	36%	1	100%	1	100%
Good	1	6%	1	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	16	100%	11	100%	14	100%	1	100%	1	100%
CSWE level	Cohort B						Cohort A			
CSWE I										
Not good enough	19	86%	9	60%	10	56%	6	75%	1	20%
Okay	3	14%	3	20%	7	39%	2	25%	3	60%
Good	0	0%	3	20%	1	5%	0	0%	1	20%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	22	100%	15	100%	18	100%	8	100%	5	100%
CSWE III										
Not good enough	11	29%	3	11%	4	13%	0	0%	1	5%
Okay	17	45%	10	37%	9	30%	3	20%	4	21%
Good	9	24%	11	41%	12	40%	10	67%	10	53%
Very good	1	2%	3	11%	5	17%	2	13%	4	21%
Total	38	100%	27	100%	30	100%	15	100%	19	100%

In line with their evaluations of their overall English skills (see Section 5.3.1), Cohort B participants from higher CSWE levels generally rated their spoken English more highly compared with those from lower levels, most of whom considered their speaking to be *not good enough*. Furthermore, there appears to be an overall trend for Cohort B participants to view their speaking skills more positively from the first to the third interview. However, there was little change in their perceptions of their speaking from the third to the final interview at each CSWE level when most had left the AMEP and were conducting their lives in the community. The ratings for the Cohort A CSWE III group, however, suggest that time might play a role for these more proficient learners, since 14 out of 19 (74%) CSWE III participants in Cohort A considered their speaking as *good* or *very good* at Interview 7, after some 4.5 years in the study.

These findings are supported by comments made by participants during the interviews about their progress in their ability to understand others and engage in simple conversations throughout the period of the study. Despite the generally low self-ratings of their speaking skills by pre-CSWE and CSWE I students (see Table 5.1), participants still reported some progress with their speaking skills. In describing these gains and how they had improved, some participants referred to specific situations, and this improvement is often credited to the AMEP. For example, Kiran (Cohort B, c24p007, pre-CSWE), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese, recounted how in class he had learned simple conversational phrases such as “Where do you come from?” or “What is your name?” as well as some words needed for shopping, and in Interviews 3 and 5 said that he was able to understand more when people talked to him at the supermarket.

CSWE II and III participants from both cohorts also commented on their improvements in speaking and communicating. In the early interviews in Phase 1 and 2, six of the 12 CSWE II participants and eight of the 34 CSWE III participants from Cohort A, as well as 13 out of 46 from Cohort B specifically told us about the ways in which the AMEP had helped them to improve their language. Revaka (Cohort A, c01p005, CSWE II, from India), for example, believed the AMEP had helped her to improve her speaking because only after she had joined the class was she able to talk to shop assistants. Beatriz (Cohort A, c12p009, CSWE II, from Portugal) also reported being able to conduct basic interactions by herself after attending AMEP. Others specifically mentioned how they had developed their understanding of colloquial English or pronunciation, for example, Kinjal (Cohort B, c22p003, CSWE III, from India) and Dada (Cohort B, c23p009, CSWE III, from Lebanon). Twelve Cohort A participants and eight Cohort B participants from CSWE II and III classes commented that the AMEP had helped them increase their confidence in their speaking, and for some that meant greater independence from their spouses. In her first interview, Kinjal (c22p003) described how, when she first arrived in Australia, she was scared to speak English, but after attending AMEP classes for a few weeks she found her confidence had increased substantially:

Yeah, and, you know, ah, in my mind like, ah, I will speak something wrong and something, like, you know, misunderstanding is create and, like so I was, ah, little bit, ah, scared to speak English. And right now I build that much of my confidence level that I can speak anywhere.

[Kinjal, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 1]

Many participants referred to their use of language outside the AMEP when talking about the development of their skills, and because their use of English increased over time (see Chapter 3) we investigated the relationship between participants' perceptions of their speaking ability and their reported language use. Previous research has also suggested that the amount of English migrants report using may be linked to speaking ability (Derwing & Munro, 2013). We explored a subset of the data in more depth and selected the group of Cohort B participants who had been involved in Interviews 1, 2, 3 and 4, a total of 33 out of 58 participants who had completed ratings of their speaking skills and their use of English. To explore the interaction between participants' self-ratings for speaking and their overall use of English at all four interviews we computed Spearman correlations, which revealed a significant, positive, moderate correlation between the two factors. That is, participants who rated their speaking more highly also reported using more English in their daily lives, whereas those who rated their speaking less positively also reported less use of English.

Table 5.3: Correlation between reported English use and self-ratings for speaking

Int 1	Int 2	Int 3	Int 4
$r = 0.42^*$	$r = 0.44^{**}$	$r = 0.49^{**}$	$r = 0.61^{**}$

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between English use and self-ratings suggests the importance of supporting engagement of AMEP clients with the wider community and initiatives such as the Home Tutor Program, which participants valued (see Section 5.2.3). They reinforce the value of activities designed to promote confidence and language use beyond the classroom, such as those outlined in the Building Confidence Fact Sheet series developed as part of this project (Yates & Chisari, 2014a, 2014b; Yates, Chisari, & Pryor, 2014; Yates & Pryor, 2014a, 2014b).

5.3.2.2 Writing

Writing was the second macro skill identified by participants as important. Table 5.4 shows the participants' self-ratings for their writing skills in English using the four descriptors: *not good enough*, *okay*, *good* and *very good*. The table shows the number and percentage of participants who selected a particular category at each CSWE level.

Table 5.4: Cohort A and B self-ratings for writing

CSWE level	Cohort B						Cohort A			
	Int 1		Int 3		Int 5		Int 6		Int 7	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-CSWE										
Not good enough	14	88%	9	82%	11	79%	1	100%	1	100%
Okay	1	6%	2	18%	2	14%	0	0%	0	0%
Good	1	6%	0	0%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	16	100%	11	100%	14	100%	1	100%	1	100%
CSWE I										
Not good enough	15	68%	5	33%	8	44%	6	75%	2	40%
Okay	7	32%	8	53%	8	44%	2	25%	1	20%
Good	0	0%	2	13%	2	11%	0	0%	2	40%
Very good	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	22	100%	15	100%	18	100%	8	100%	5	100%
CSWE III										
Not good enough	11	29%	4	15%	7	23%	2	13%	3	16%
Okay	13	34%	10	37%	9	30%	6	40%	4	21%
Good	11	29%	10	37%	12	40%	7	47%	9	47%
Very good	3	8%	3	11%	2	7%	0	0%	3	16%
Total	38	100%	27	100%	30	100%	15	100%	19	100%

As shown in Table 5.4, similar to the pattern previously noted for the speaking ratings, the proportion of Cohort B participants at pre-CSWE and CSWE III levels who rated their writing in each category tended to remain fairly constant across the three interviews. For example, 37% of CSWE III participants (14 out of 38) rated themselves as *good* or *very good* at Interview 1, and 47% (14 out of 30) gave these ratings at Interview 5. In other words, there was little change in the ratings for both speaking and writing over the 1.5-year period captured by the Cohort B data. However, since 63% of Cohort A participants rated themselves at the upper end of the scale at their final interview, it is possible these more proficient learners, at least, may see gains over time. The case of Emma (Cohort A, c05p006, CSWE III, from Brazil) illustrates how a learner with more linguistic resources and learning skills was able to continue developing her writing skills over the course of the study.

Emma was one of those few Cohort A participants who rated their writing skills as *very good* in the last interview. She had been studying towards a PhD in nutrition since the beginning of Phase 2, and writing had always been the area with which she had had the most difficulty as she acquired the written conventions required in her field. In Interview 6 she took part in an online writing course to improve her skills, and one year later at Interview 7, she had successfully published a journal article and generally felt more confident in her writing.

In contrast, CSWE I Cohort B participants tended to rate their writing more highly at Interviews 3 and 5 compared to Interview 1. Whereas over two-thirds of these participants rated themselves as *not good enough* at Interview 1, only one-third perceived their writing

as *not good enough* at Interview 3, suggesting that participants felt better about their writing skills while they were in the AMEP. The majority of participants in the pre-CSWE consistently rated their writing as *not good enough*. However, a number of these did report some specific gains in their literacy. For example, Annisa (Cohort B, c24p001, pre-CSWE, from the Democratic Republic of Congo) reported learning to write her name and simple words while in the AMEP.

When we compare ratings for writing and speaking, a number of differences are evident. Both the pre-CSWE and the CSWE III participants generally rated their writing skills lower than their speaking skills over the course of the study. The majority (about 80%) of pre-CSWE participants considered their writing *not good enough* across Interviews 1, 3 and 5, whereas half thought their speaking was *not good enough* at Interview 3, and just under two-thirds at Interview 5. These findings align with comments described in Section 5.2.1, which suggests that pre-CSWE learners faced significant challenges in developing foundational literacy and shifted their learning focus to speaking. For the more proficient CSWE III participants, the difference in ratings for the two skills was less marked, 57% of Cohort B participants felt their speaking was *good* or *very good* at Interview 5, compared to 47% for writing.

Cohort B CSWE I participants tended to rate their writing higher than their speaking at Interviews 1 and 3 when they were still enrolled or had recently left the AMEP. In Interview 1, about two-thirds of participants (15 out of 22) considered their writing *not good enough* compared to 86% (19 out of 23) who rated their speaking *not good enough*. This is perhaps because this group of CSWE I learners included a number of participants with higher levels of education whose literacy was more developed than their oracy in English on arrival. However, by Interview 5, when most had exited the AMEP, the distribution of ratings for both skills was roughly similar, as shown in Tables 5.2 and 5.4. This finding may reflect earlier comments from participants that the AMEP is the only place where they could practise their writing. Once participants have left the program, they may have limited opportunities to further develop their written language skills, but can continue their language learning through the need to use spoken language in their daily lives. The case of Chin Chin (Cohort A, c08p009, CSWE I) illustrates the differential development of written and oral skills over time and provides further insights into this trend.

Chin Chin was refugee from Burma who had never attended school before arriving in Australia. She had left the AMEP by Interview 2 before her 510 hours were finished to work as a cleaner at a hotel. In the first few interviews after she had started work, Chin Chin's comments indicated that she was dissatisfied with her level of English, as she continued to have difficulty communicating with her colleagues. By Interview 5, two years later, she said she believed that her spoken English had improved, but felt that her literacy skills were not adequate:

Um if compared to when I started it's much you know I improve a lot. I'm much better because now that whenever I have to order things um without um helping I can order things. But um sometimes I can understand I can't understand when the guests have written um

[Chin Chin, CSWE I, c08p009, Int 5, interpreted]

It seems that her increased engagement in the English-speaking community had allowed her to develop more confidence in her speaking, but she had not been able to improve her literacy skills on the job.

5.4 Participant strategies for ongoing language learning

In addition to teaching basic language skills for everyday life and the confidence to use these skills outside class, the AMEP also directly supports students' ongoing language learning by helping them to understand what it means to learn a language and helping them to develop independent learning skills and these have been incorporated as core aspects of the CSWE curriculum (Learning how to learn). Participants reported on their developing skills in this area. For example, Cohort B participants reported being advised by their teachers to practise their listening skills by watching TV or listening to the radio, and recommended the use of websites and phone applications to help them with their ongoing English language learning.

The majority of Cohort B CSWE I participants (18 of 23) and all but one of the CSWE III participants had relatively high levels of education and were very proactive in this area, using a range of language learning activities outside class. In line with their teachers' suggestions, they reported using TV as a means of improving their English. CSWE I participants described watching television in English with subtitles, and CSWE III participants, in particular, told us how they watched reality shows and the news as an opportunity to practise their listening skills, learn Australian idioms and slang, and immerse themselves in everyday Australian culture. These educated participants were also able to employ a range of more formal language learning strategies, including looking words up in the dictionary (9) or writing a journal in English (4). In contrast, pre-CSWE participants from Cohort B seemed to have had less awareness of how to learn a language without teacher support. In Interview 3, seven of the 11 participants who commented on their language learning strategies said they did not practise English outside class other than to watch TV. However, while more proficient participants reported actively practising their language skills while watching TV, most of those pre-CSWE students watched cartoons, which they were generally not able to understand.

Participants' stories also point to other critical components that influenced their language development. These included individual attributes such as the ability to sustain motivation, language aptitude and confidence, as well as the unique social circumstances and the particular linguistic environment in which they found themselves. Personal circumstances, such as pregnancy (e.g. Rezarta, Cohort B, c26p002, CSWE I, from Albania) or carer

responsibilities (e.g. Will, Cohort A, c05p011, CSWE III, from Iraq), as well as extended periods of time spent in the home country (e.g. Li Li Lin, Cohort A, c08p010, CSWE I, from China) were all identified by participants as impacting on their language learning.

5.5 Summary

The AMEP was generally highly valued by participants for whom it provided not only valuable English language and settlement training, but also a place where they could make social connections in the early days of their settlement and learn important independent language learning skills. Participants particularly appreciated program content, the quality of their teachers and the social aspects of the program. Participants at all CSWE levels valued learning skills that enabled them to communicate in their daily lives. More proficient learners, in particular, also appreciated learning skills that would assist them in achieving their employment and study goals. Participants reported few opportunities outside the AMEP to develop literacy skills.

The difficulty of catering for the diversity of learner backgrounds was noted. Aspects of course content and teaching style were not always suitable for all learners. Very low-level learners felt the need for bilingual teaching, while professional and educated participants did not always feel sufficiently challenged, although one-third rated their speaking as *okay* at the end of the study period. Some less proficient learners felt they needed more than 510 hours in the AMEP, and many who initially relied on interpreters continued to require an interpreter throughout the project. Some clients thought that class size and composition sometimes interfered with the quality of delivery.

Participants at CSWE I and III generally felt that their overall language had improved over time. Although pre-CSWE participants continued to feel that their English was *not good* enough, they were able to identify some improvements over time. However, many struggled to make small gains. CSWE I participants tended to rate their writing higher than their speaking while studying in the AMEP. Generally, participants who rated their spoken English more highly also reported using more English in their daily lives, whereas those who rated their speaking more negatively reported that they used English less. Participants in Cohort A were more positive about their English and used more English than participants in Cohort B, suggesting that not only language use but also language skills increase with time.

CHAPTER 6

SETTLEMENT

6.1 Introduction

A number of theoretical frameworks have been developed for understanding settlement indicators and outcomes for migrants, both in Australia and internationally, often with the ultimate aim of identifying indicators that can predict settlement success. The notion of settlement success in the literature has also been defined in different ways (or not defined at all), described with different terms, and approached from different perspectives, using different frameworks. For example, two terms commonly used in the literature to describe the process of settling in a new country, settlement and integration, are sometimes used interchangeably, and sometimes have different meanings. In fact, Ager and Strang (2008) identified 49 different definitions or concepts related to the term integration.

In addition, the process of settlement is generally considered to be dynamic in nature, and impacted by multiple influences at different times. For example, successful settlement is described by Fozdar and Hartley (2012) as “a dynamic two-way process” (p. 11) that involves both the migrants and the host society. They argue that migrants need to be prepared to become accustomed to the way of life in the host society while at the same time still maintaining their own cultural identity, and that the host society needs to welcome and support the migrants and respond to the needs of the culturally diverse community that results. On this view, successful settlement involves adjustments by both migrants and the society in which they settle. Ager and Strang (2008) also acknowledge a two-way understanding of the nature of settlement by recommending that the different components of their framework be considered from the perspective of various stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, service providers, researchers, migrants). For example, they argue that a lack of proficiency in the main language of the host community is a challenge not only for migrants, but also for the host community, particularly for providers of essential services such as health care. Their framework includes 10 core domains: employment, housing, health, education, three different aspects of social connection, language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability, and citizenship and rights. They emphasise that different aspects of settlement are interdependent. For example, they found, that migrants’ social connections with their own ethnic groups had health and employment benefits, and the type and location of housing influenced migrants’ feelings of safety and security, their relationships within the community and whether or not they felt “at home” (p. 171) in the new country.

In this chapter, we explore the dynamic nature of the settlement process from the migrants' perspective by addressing the following research questions:

RQ4: What are the settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants?

RQ4a: How do they change with time in the country?

6.2 A framework for understanding settlement indicators and outcomes

Frameworks for understanding migrant settlement differ, and although there is considerable overlap in the indicators and outcomes they incorporate, there are also some important differences. In order to consider the settlement indicators and outcomes for participants, we selected a framework relevant to the Australian context (see DIAC, 2012b, p. 13) as a starting point for our analysis (see Table 6.1).

In considering settlement outcomes, the Australian Survey Research Group (ASRG) (2011) argues that it is important to make the distinction between *systemic* and *life* outcomes. The former are used by many government agencies to define and measure settlement success in order to develop plans and establish priorities for decisions about how best to address migrants' needs. However, they do not necessarily reflect the way the migrants themselves – in the case of ASRG's research, humanitarian entrants – define settlement in terms of life outcomes (i.e. that is their own personal happiness and connectedness with the community), or to use ASRG's terms, *comfort about living in Australia*. The framework proposed in DIAC (2012b) includes both systemic and life outcome indicators, and therefore allows the settlement process to be viewed from different perspectives. It also views the key settlement dimensions as interrelated, so acknowledges the possibility that the process can be impacted by multiple influences at different times. In this research, we are able to address both systemic and life outcomes for the participants, and, indeed, these should not be seen as discrete, since systemic outcomes can be seen as contributing greatly to life outcomes. However, since the data give detailed qualitative insight into the views of the participants themselves, the focus here is on *their* perceptions of the settlement process, and how comfortable they feel living in Australia.

As shown in Table 6.1, there are five key settlement dimensions in the DIAC (2012b) framework: social participation, economic wellbeing, personal wellbeing, independence, and life satisfaction and being connected to the community.

Table 6.1: Framework for understanding settlement indicators and outcomes

Dimension: Social participation Indicators: English proficiency, participation in education and training, participation in community life, citizenship.
Dimension: Economic wellbeing Indicators: Employment circumstances, level of income, level of debt, job satisfaction, satisfaction with accommodation.
Dimension: Personal wellbeing Indicators: Physical health, mental health, self-esteem, relationships.
Dimension: Independence Indicators: Access to transport, access and use of community and government services, source of income, ability to make life choices, gender equality.
Dimension: Life satisfaction and being connected to the community Indicators: Sense of belonging in Australia, sense of being treated well by the local community, level of discrimination and cultural religious expression.

Source: DIAC (2012b).

Unlike large-scale quantitative studies, which survey specific predetermined indicators and outcomes systematically across all participants (see for example, Houle & Schellenberg, 2010; Khoo & McDonald, 2001; Schellenberg & Maheux, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2005), we were able to explore qualitatively the themes that emerged from the interviews as they related to the participants' life outcomes in Australia. We used the DIAC (2012b) framework as a starting point for the categories used to code these themes, adding further themes as they emerged from the data. Table 6.2 presents the adapted framework we use to explore the data. This includes the settlement dimensions and indicators that emerged as important to participants and the relevant coding category descriptions we used for the analysis.

Yates et al. (2013) found that for Cohort B participants, the settlement indicators most commonly associated with a positive change in feelings of comfort living in Australia over the first three interviews (6–9 months) were involvement with friends, having plans for the future (see Chapter 2), English proficiency and increased independence. As they noted, although this was a relatively short period of time, these findings provide insight into settlement indicators and outcomes important to migrants early in the settlement process. In order to further explore the settlement indicators and outcomes and how they change over a longer period of time, we focus here on data collected across both phases of the study, that is, over a period of approximately 1.5 years for Cohort B, and approximately 4.5 years for Cohort A.

Table 6.2: Adapted framework and coding categories

Settlement dimensions and indicators	Related coding categories
<p>Social participation and connection to the community</p> <p>Indicators: Participation in community life, sense of belonging in Australia, citizenship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memberships or involvement in community, facilities or organisations and how this relates to their sense of connection to the local community • Whether or not participants are or plan to become citizens and why
<p>Personal wellbeing and life satisfaction</p> <p>Indicators: Feelings about living in Australia, satisfaction with accommodation, physical health, mental health and happiness, relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How participants feel about living in Australia or their decision to come to Australia • Housing circumstances and how they feel about where they live • Health status, both physical and mental • Relationships participants have (or do not have and would like to) with relatives, friends, neighbours and classmates
<p>Independence</p> <p>Indicators: Sense of independence in daily life (includes access and use of community and government services, access to transport and ability to drive)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of independence since coming to Australia and reasons for this • Achievements that contribute to participants' sense of independence

Note: The participants' sense of being treated well by the local community – an indicator in the DIAC (2012b) framework – was reflected in other dimensions in this adapted framework, including social participation and connection to the community, and personal wellbeing and life satisfaction.

Because English proficiency has the potential to influence many of the indicators we consider here, we explore its relationships with indicators in all dimensions rather than discussing it as an indicator of just one dimension (i.e. social participation), as in the DIAC (2012b) framework. As DIAC (2013a) states, “Learning English is one of the most important steps migrants and humanitarian entrants can take to successfully settle in Australia” (p. 227). The data include many personal accounts of how true this was for participants. For example, Cohort B participant, Qian (Cohort B, c26p006, CSWE I, from China), told us in Interview 4 of how limited English proficiency impacted on various aspects of her settlement:

Qian felt that her limited English affected her ability to make friends with English-speaking people, and impinged on her ability to deal effectively with different people. For example, she felt her limited English affected her dealings with an estate agent from whom she was trying to retrieve a bond for a rental property she had vacated. She also found it difficult to deal with the different organisations to have utilities connected when she moved into her new rental property. She tried to communicate with them in English but could not do so very well, so in the end had to

use an interpreter service. She also had a lot of difficulty organising insurance for her car and ringing for roadside service assistance when her car broke down.

In following sections we discuss the revised settlement dimensions presented in Table 6.2, and consider the role of English proficiency in each.

6.3 Social participation and connection to the community

6.3.1 Participation in community life

Participation in community life was an important indicator of social participation. Here we take *community life* to include life in both small communities within Australia with shared mutual interests, and broader levels of community encompassing the public sphere, including *imagined communities* (Anderson, 2006) such as the Australian nation and a migrants' cultural community (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). While participants tended to focus more on the smaller-level communities, some did talk about broader migrant communities and the broader Australian community (see Sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3). As the examples and discussion in this section highlight, for participants there was a strong link between participation in community life and sense of belonging to both the smaller-level communities and Australia as a whole, a link also found in the literature on community psychology (McMillan, 1996; McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Sarason, 1974) and sociology (Cuba & Hummon, 1993).

Participation in smaller-level communities provided participants with opportunities to connect and interact with community members from diverse backgrounds and a range of common interests. This was important to participants because it presented opportunities for them to:

- meet like-minded people with similar interests and/or beliefs (e.g. religious communities, mothers' groups, groups with shared cultural and language backgrounds)
- make friends and establish social networks
- participate in a meaningful activity, and thus have a sense of purpose
- make a contribution to society by volunteering
- use and practise English
- feel that they belong to a community.

In the following discussion, we draw mainly on information from the final interviews for each cohort (Cohort A: Int 7, Cohort B: Int 5) to get a sense of the level of participation at the end of the study. We also include examples from earlier interviews to illustrate changes in this participation over time.

Smaller-level communities in which participants were involved included places of worship, volunteer groups and organisations, parents' groups, clubs for sports and other recreational

activities, politics, public events, local neighbourhoods, workplaces and educational establishments. For some, the capacity to participate in community life was hampered by their English proficiency while others found that participation provided an opportunity to improve their English.

Although it was not discussed with all participants in their final interviews, approximately one-third in each cohort reported attending some kind of place of worship (A: 34%, 13 of 38; B: 32%, 20 of 62) where they connected with local and sometimes more distant communities with which they sometimes but not always shared an L1 or country of origin. For example, Henry (Cohort B, c26p008, CSWE I, from Burma) belonged to a Hakha-Chin-speaking church community, and attended meetings twice a week; every Friday night he attended a local meeting, and every Sunday he travelled some distance to attend a church service on the other side of Melbourne (Interview 1).

English-speaking religious communities provided some participants with the opportunity to communicate in English and also to meet people from a similar background. Jude (Cohort A, c02p001, CSWE III, from Sri Lanka) reported going to a “friendly” English-speaking church attended by people from different backgrounds; and English was the primary language used at the Hindu temple attended by Sita (Cohort B, c23p008, CSWE III, from Bhutan).

Ludmilla (c08p015), aged 72, from Russia, had mixed feelings about her earlier involvement with a Russian Orthodox Church community. On the one hand, she felt that being involved with such a church community in the beginning was very helpful:

Those Russian speaking people who come over here, first thing they do, they find a church or they go to the church to find connections, to find people ... they can talk to. And ... this is very helpful to people ... this is helping to settle down here in Australia.

[Ludmilla, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7, interpreted]

On the other hand, she felt that her involvement with this community actually held her back, not only in her English development, but also in her sense of belonging, and her personal wellbeing. She felt that certain church members had exploited her and this made her want to return to Russia and feel like she had lost an opportunity to learn English.

You know I wish I didn't ... waste those three years because ... she was telling me you don't need English, everyone speaks Russian here so don't ... go and study English ... I wish I didn't waste those three years because she didn't let me go to the courses ... I was missing the [English] classes and every time I was ... working for her basically so she was ... using me.

[Ludmilla, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7, interpreted]

Once Ludmilla had distanced herself from the church community she actually felt more comfortable and adventurous:

The final disconnect, that happened one year ago ... but I started ... getting away from them for a while because I found things ... of interest for myself in my life ... not just them.

[Ludmilla, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7, interpreted]

Ludmilla's story highlights that participation in church communities could have positive and negative impacts on meaningful participation, sense of belonging and English language learning.

Volunteering, both within and outside places of worship, provided another means of participation in community life. Seventeen participants said that they were volunteering in at least one of the interviews, and a further three said that they wanted to. While four volunteered in an area directly related to their employment or employment aspirations, for most it was not, suggesting that they saw voluntary work as a contribution to society. They volunteered in faith communities, charities, other community organisations and workplaces, undertaking such activities as doing accounts for a charity shop, running a community radio station and research work.

Takumi (Cohort B, c26p019, CSWE I, from Japan) regularly volunteered as a local missionary for the Jehovah's Witnesses, while Ludmilla (c08p015), mentioned in the previous example, started a library at her Russian Orthodox Church, which provided her with an important interest:

When I was creating that library I did have interest in my life. So that's why I was interested doing it, but since they closed it there's no interest for me there.

[Ludmilla, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7, interpreted]

Mothers' groups (or playgroups) also provided an opportunity for participation in community life, particularly for women. Fifteen participants (10 in Cohort A, 5 in Cohort B) told us about the mothers' groups they attended where they met others from their L1 network. This number comprised 14 females and one male, and their babies were all born during the course of the study, except for two women (Chellam, Cohort B, c23p011, CSWE III and Kanchan, Cohort B, c23p012, CSWE III) whose children were born before the study commenced. Mothers' groups included Korean (Yuna, Cohort A, c10p012, CSWE III), Spanish (Teresa, Cohort B, c21p009, CSWE III) and Filipino (Lourdes, Cohort A, c02p003, CSWE III) groups. Some participants attended non-L1 mothers' groups too, including Lourdes (Cohort A, c02p003, CSWE III, from the Philippines), who switched from her Filipino group to a playgroup with non-Filipinas because she felt the activities were more structured.

For two participants, Lourdes and Hua (Cohort A, c08p005, CSWE I, from China), their involvement in mothers' groups was linked to their use of local services.⁷ Lourdes formed one of her mothers' groups through going to her local library, while Hua met up with other Chinese mothers at a local park and formed a playgroup that became an important friendship group for her.

Mothers' groups provided long-lasting friendships with both L1 and non-L1 people. Yuna (c10p012), aged 32, from South Korea was part of an "Australian" (by which she meant, non-Korean) mothers' group:

The Australian group – Australian mum's group's through the childcare nurse, so when they – when you, you know, have baby they just kind of contact and they just kind of make a group, of similar age. But my mother's group's really strong, always there. Now it's nearly three years and it's still going. One of them's moved to – she's actually originally from Melbourne and ... she's back and she moved to Gold Coast because her husband's work. She made our kids' birthday party a few weeks ago.

[Yuna, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

Yuna was part of two mothers' groups, an "Australian" and a "Korean" one (made up of Korean women married to Australian men). Both these were long lasting and played an important role in her life, facilitating her sense of belonging in both Australian and Korean communities. One male, Charles (Cohort A, c05p007, CSWE III, from Colombia), aged 42, also attended what he referred to as a mothers' group with his non-Colombian partner and commented on it as one of his sources of friends.

Not all experiences were successful, however. Pita (c10p003) from Peru started in a non-Latino playgroup but, although she made some connections, she generally felt like an outsider because of her English and the fact that they could not relate to her experience as a migrant:

Yeah but I couldn't catch up well with them because you see, when you are – we – you – I think everyone feel like this, if you want meet some people in a group, sometime you sympathise with them, but they are maybe not in another time. So this time I felt good over there, but not as, as well because I always, I feel like I'm not really, my English not good enough yet, because we – if we are talking and they are talking quickly and, and about issues I didn't know, and this one, this, this what I'm saying to you now, I just with my, my home tutor. So I felt like ah, I think I don't fit here. Um, just and then I have my trip to Peru and finally I didn't see them again ... Because people that he – ah, people who can understand, ah, ah, who can be able to

⁷ Hui (Cohort B, c26p004, CSWE I, from Taiwan) was another participant whose use of local services contributed to her settlement in a regional town.

understand, I think, ah, have had the same experience as we the migrants had ... But of course some people are different and say are you okay? Ah, or I, before, sometime they used to, even now I think try – treat me as a child.

[Pita, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 5]

In contrast, Pita talked with some enthusiasm about her L1 playgroup, in which she felt comfortable and at ease:

We have a playgroup, Latino playgroup as well. Where the childrens and we, ah, we can speak just Spanish. I feel free you know?

[Pita, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 5]

Workplaces also provided opportunities for social participation, as in the case of Lily, from Cohort A:

Lily (c01p003), is a young woman from China, aged 24. At Interview 4, she talked about moving back to China and feeling frustrated with Australia, feeling lonely and like she does not belong. However, Lily persevered and by Interview 5, she had found a job working five days per week as a cashier in a supermarket, where she made friends and found a sense of community. By Interview 5, only a few months after starting in the job, she had already made friends there, and at Interview 7, the final interview, she spoke passionately about the sense of community participation and belonging she felt there:

That store is a small one and ... I know everyone, everyone knows me as well and the people there are so nice and I don't want to move into this big store ... That is my second home, yeah, I feel so warm in that store ... we are small store and everyone know each other a lot and we're a great team and we're talking a lot every day and about everything, every part of your life.

[Lily, CSWE II, Cohort A, Int 7]

Other avenues for participation in social life reported over the course of the study included gyms (14), sports clubs (4) and other recreational or community groups (5). While some of these involved using English, others did not. Migrant community groups, for example, offered an important connection with people from a similar background. Hannah (Cohort B, c21p001, CSWE III, from South Korea), for example, joined Korean community craft classes (Interviews 3 and 5). Some also connected with people from outside their own L1 network. For example, Emma (Cohort A, c05p006, CSWE III, from Brazil) and her husband, joined an Italian class (their L1 was Portuguese) and thoroughly enjoyed the company of their classmates becoming good friends and staying in touch outside the classes, and even acting in a commercial for one of their new friends (Interview 7).

Cohort A participant Nfumu (c10p013) from the Democratic Republic of Congo aged 21, became very actively involved in an African youth association and various community groups, and through this became interested in Australian state politics. By the final interview (Interview 7), Nfumu was running as a candidate in his state election. He described his decision to run as an election candidate in terms of making a unique contribution to the Australian national community, his political party and state and national politics:

So it's about serving, it's about bringing a new voice in ... the way things are done and ah I think it's time for a renewal within the [political party] Party and in politics in general in state and in Australia.

[Nfumu, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

To participate at this level, of course, he drew heavily on his increasing proficiency in English. Nfumu saw his participation as an expression of his strong sense of belonging in Australia and identity as Australian and this was, in turn, influenced by his participation:

So as time goes by I – I find that I – I become more Australian than – than African and um maybe it's because I decided to be – to do that or maybe it's because my – my future roles oblige me to do that.

[Nfumu, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

6.3.2 Sense of belonging in Australia

In this section we discuss the broader notion of belonging in (or to) Australia, particularly in relation to national and cultural identity, that is, beyond the smaller-level communities discussed in the previous section, to the “imagined community” (Anderson, 2006). We begin by considering participants’ responses to the direct questions we asked in the final interviews with both cohorts about their sense of belonging in Australia, and then discuss the comments made about belonging and identity throughout all interviews.

Typically we asked about belonging in the form of, “Do you feel Australia is home/like home?”⁸ Across both cohorts, 30 participants (A: 14, B: 16) responded to this question, and the majority (67%, 20 of 30) answered with either an affirmative or qualified affirmative response, suggesting that they felt that Australia was home for them, although such feelings were not always straightforward. They were often associated with other facets of their life such as family, a sense of being accepted and included in the community around them, having friends in Australia, homesickness (most participants reported being homesick in

⁸ Here we report on the 30 participants who responded to the question, “Do you feel Australia is home/like home?” There were three other forms asked about belonging that we do not report on here. They were, “Do you feel like you belong in Australia?”, “Would you call yourself Australian?” and “Do you feel at home in Australia?”.

some form during the study), speaking English, their sense of identity, or whether or not they had found employment.

The settlement journey described by Lila (c09p002), a young woman from Colombia (25–34), illustrates the complex interaction between confidence in English, personal identity, feelings for family overseas and a sense of belonging in Australia.

In Interview 1, Lila told us that after seeing herself as a successful student in Colombia, her lack of confidence and proficiency in English restricted that part of her identity in Australia. However, by Interview 3, she reported that she had missed Australia on a recent trip home to Colombia:

Yeah. I felt like it is now – I mean I was born here in Colombia and ... my mum is here. I love the food here but I don't want to be here.

[Lila, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 3]

By Interview 4, Lila talked about being at home in Australia but having a hybrid “Colombian Australian” identity. In Interview 6, she described being comfortable and proud of what she had achieved in Australia and, hence, surprised herself when she told her workmates that she was going “home” to Colombia. In Interview 7, she felt like she was “at home” in Australia but, because her family were not with her, “something missing”.

Feelings of belonging can fluctuate and change over time, as the experiences of Rita and Elsie illustrate.

Cohort B participant, Rita (c25p010) from Mexico, aged 35, first talked about her sense of belonging positively in Interview 3, saying that she felt that Australia was “a second home” for her. Compared to Mexico, she found Australia a safe place to live, and she said this at almost every interview. However, in Interview 5 following the birth of her baby she found that she missed her family and the emotional and practical support she would have received from them, and thought she was suffering from post-natal depression. She also experienced an instance of what she felt may have been discrimination and was feeling isolated. All of these factors negatively affected her sense of belonging to the point where even participating in social events with her L1 community made her feel sad:

When I – oh my God, I think like Mexico but when you finish the party or the meeting or something you feel terrible ... because it's not your country, so it's not your people, it's not your culture.

[Rita, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 7]

Cohort A participant Elsie (c08p006), from Lebanon, aged 39, reported similar fluctuations in her sense of belonging. In Interview 4 she told us she was homesick and disappointed at the lack of social life and connections in Australia compared to Lebanon, where people would visit one another regularly after work:

You know in Lebanon okay work in Lebanon and then go to ... your home. You ... do it and you go anywhere you want to visit anyone ... you enjoy it if you feel people ... very close. Can say hello come to drink coffee but here ... nothing, nothing.

[Elsie, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 4]

However, in Interview 6 Elsie told us that she had missed Australia on a recent visit to Lebanon and now felt happier in Australia. Unlike Rita, she found that having a child helped her to feel more settled and less bored and isolated in Australia. However, by Interview 7, one year later, however, Elsie again felt bored and isolated and homesick. She told us that she had not missed Australia when she visited Lebanon and felt a strong sense of Lebanese identity.

For some participants, a sense of belonging was linked to their feelings about aspects of their English proficiency. For example, in her final interview Hong (Cohort A, c10p008, CSWE III, from Vietnam) felt that she would never fully belong in Australia because she is not able to pronounce English properly. For others, their feelings about a particular place was important to their sense of belonging:

Charles (c05p007), from Colombia, talked about falling in love with his local area (Interview 7). A neighbour helped Charles turn his garage into an office, and other neighbours had children of their own so they became friends. There was a nearby café owned by a Colombian migrant, and through him Charles met a number of other Colombian migrants (all male) that he socialised and spent time with. He loved the area they lived in and the natural bush living. They found a childcare place for their son and already knew which school he will be attending, as it was very close to them.

I think here in this place we are very lucky because everybody's like very, like, like, um, you can see people like happy, smiling, and saying hello with the dogs, and walking, and it's a very nice place to live. Lots of kids. A beautiful school here that [his son] will go.

[Charles, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

Several participants described specific places for which they had developed deep feelings of love. These could either be related to where they were living, as in the case of Charles, or a place that they enjoyed frequenting or visiting for holidays. Rodmina (Cohort B, c21p005, CSWE III, from Iran), aged 35, reflected on the “amazing” experience of visiting North Head

in Sydney (Interview 5), while Lucia (Cohort A, c09p001, CSWE III, from Colombia), fondly described the countryside areas she had visited on her travels (Interview 4).

While connection to place could offer a sense of comfort, moving from one city to another could disrupt this sense of belonging. When Mika (Cohort A, c21p002, CSWE III, from Japan), aged 34, moved from Queensland to Sydney before the start of the study she had difficulty settling down and was still not particularly enamoured of the city by the final interview.

Some participants expressed a strong sense of loyalty to Australia for the safety and opportunities it offered. Alex (Cohort A, c09p006, CSWE III, from Saudi Arabia) told us in Interview 4 how much he wanted to disconnect from recent traumatic experiences before arriving in Australia:

I believe in, this is my only country, I don't have any other citizenship. Australia is my only country. I lived in different countries, in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, I lived for a few amount of time in Malaysia and but ah I could say I still have good memories in Egypt, good memories in Saudi Arabia while I was a little child, but the only country I am loyal to is Australia. That's it.

[Alex, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 4]

Alex spoke negatively about his cultural background and discouraged their children from speaking their L1. Ben (Cohort B, c22p001, CSWE III, from China) felt a similar strong sense of loyalty to Australia. He wanted to make Australian friends and tried to distance himself from his L1 community.

Only two participants of the 14 who discussed the topic across both cohorts, Imaan (c01p009, CSWE II) from Pakistan and Yuna (c10p012, CSWE III) from South Korea clearly stated that they felt or would call themselves Australian. They were both from Cohort A. Others articulated a sense of hybrid identity (e.g. Iranian Australian). Some felt, as Charles did, that in spite of feeling a strong sense of belonging to Australia, that they would never be 100% Australian. Others like Teresa (Cohort B, c21p009, CSWE III, from Colombia) were not wanting to lose their original national identity; she did not want to become Australian if she had to give up being Colombian. For Pita (Cohort A, c10p003, CSWE III, from Peru), the sense that she 'looked different' affected her sense of being accepted.

As discussed in the next section, for many participants this sense of national and cultural identity and their sense of belonging were connected to their attitudes towards citizenship.

6.3.3 Citizenship

Citizenship is “a significant milestone on the settlement journey” recognised as important for “making migrants feel they belong” and which “marks the beginning of their formal membership of the Australian community” (DIAC, 2012b, p. 5). Citizenship involves a legal status with rights and responsibilities, and also an association with identity, feelings of

belonging to a community, and the desire to share aspirations and beliefs with others in the community (Lathion, 2008; Vasta, 2013).

Many participants told us that becoming an Australian citizen was an important step in their settlement journey. Table 6.3 shows the numbers of participants who were already citizens, and for those who were not, whether or not they wanted to become one. As this shows, for both cohorts, the majority of participants who commented on citizenship at the beginning of the study (Interview 1) were either already an Australian citizen or intended to become one (A: 73%, B: 76%). These figures were similar at the end of the study (A, Interview 7: 71%; B, Int 5: 74%), suggesting that attitudes to citizenship did not change over time.

Table 6.3: Participants' comments about becoming Australian citizens

Cohort and interview	Those who commented ^a	Already a citizen		Want to become a citizen		Undecided		Do not want to become a citizen	
	n	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Cohort A i1 (60)	40	13	33%	16	40%	7	18%	4	10%
Cohort A i7 (38)	35	20	57%	5	14%	4	11%	6	17%
Cohort B i1 (85)	29	0	0%	22	76%	7	24%	0	0%
Cohort B i5 (62)	56	2	4%	39	70%	10	18%	5	9%

^a Percentages are taken from those who commented on citizenship at each interview rather than the total number of participants, and may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Participants gave a range of reasons for pursuing Australian citizenship. Some identified Australian citizenship as important for pragmatic and legal reasons such as facilitating overseas travel, securing the right to vote, and eligibility for cheaper university fees. For example, Ying (Cohort B, c26p007, CSWE I, from China) told us in Interview 4 that her main motivation to become an Australian citizen was so that her 12-year-old son would also automatically gain citizenship and his education would therefore be less expensive. For others, becoming a citizen was associated with feelings of participation in, and belonging to, the broader Australian community. For example, in his final interview, Samba (Cohort A, c08014, CSWE I, from Guinea) told us that after he had become an Australian citizen, as well as enjoying the convenience of travelling with an Australian passport, he felt that he was “part of Australia”:

I feel I'm part of here, so one, I'm very part of here and um the citizen also ah says something that – yeah, so I'm, I'm Australian.

[Samba, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7]

Similarly, Sabeen (Cohort B, c26p020, CSWE I, from Iran) commented that she wanted not only an Australian passport, but also the safety and security that came with being an Australian citizen:

You want to live here and you want safety and security, so better to have the citizenship.

[Sabeen, CSWE I, Cohort B, Int 5]

English language proficiency was an important factor in becoming an Australian citizen and could present some challenges. For example, Ying (Cohort B, c26p007, CSWE I, from China), mentioned in a previous example as wanting to become an Australian citizen so that her son's education would be less expensive, sat for the Australian citizenship test three times before she passed it, and her lack of success on her first attempt was directly related to her English proficiency:

Ying reported that she used very little English in her daily life, and spoke to us through an interpreter at each interview. In Interview 4, she told us that she had had her first attempt at the Australian citizenship test during the previous week, but had been unsuccessful. She talked about having difficulty understanding some of the questions, and asked the interviewer what the answer might have been for one of them. However, she did not really have a clear idea of what the question had been, so it was difficult for the interviewer to know what the answer might be. At Interview 5, she reported that she had been attending English classes again over the previous six months, and had finally passed the Australian citizenship test on her third attempt.

Ethnic Nepali Bhutanese participants from Centre 24 (Cohort B, pre-CSWE) seemed particularly challenged by the level of English proficiency required to pass the Australian citizenship test. As discussed in Chapter 3 and Yates et al. (2013), this particular group used very little English in their everyday lives. As Maya (c24p006), Shinta (c24p010) and Krishna (c24p009) told us in their final interviews, they were unable to take the citizenship test because of their limited English. The most recent quarterly snapshot report released by DIAC (June 2013b, p. 2) reports that humanitarian entrants like the Centre 24 participants with limited English have lower success rates in passing the Australian citizenship test compared to those with skilled or family stream visas.

English proficiency did not seem to be an issue for many of the participants in both cohorts who had not yet taken out Australian citizenship by the time of their final interviews. As shown in Table 6.3, in their final interviews, 10 Cohort A and 15 Cohort B participants told us that they had not yet decided (A: 4, B: 10) or did not want (A: 6, B: 5) to become a citizen. Five of the six participants in Cohort A who did not want to become Australian citizens were Chinese nationals for whom dual nationality was not possible. They did not want to risk any

future difficulty travelling to China. Xiao Mei (c10p006) struggled with the question of becoming an Australian citizen throughout the study, but was worried about her elderly parents who live in China. In Interview 4 she told us:

Especially Chinese people for – for the parents very ill they want to see you, especially when they're passed away. Whatever you live, you have to go back. So ... if it's very late and then you feel – always feel sorry for yourself.

[Xiao Mei, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 2]

In Interview 7 she had not taken out Australian citizenship. She was still registered as a lawyer in China and planned to buy property there one day. Interestingly, in this interview, she described herself as “very Australian” and commented that other Chinese people she knew had Australian citizenship, but did not care about Australian society the way she did.

Decisions about becoming Australian citizens become enmeshed with family responsibilities and obligations. Karen (Cohort A, c09p003, CSWE III, from China), told us that her husband had become an Australian citizen and because of this it had been difficult for him to travel to China on short notice when his grandfather passed away. Karen did not want this to happen to her if she needed to travel to China to visit family in a similar situation. Irene (Cohort A, 08p011, CSWE I, from China) similarly had strong family connections with China and did not want to become an Australian citizen because of her frequent trips there. During the study, she made several trips back to China for family reasons that included visiting her daughter and grandson, her dying father and her widowed mother. In contrast, Li Ming (Cohort A, c08p001, CSWE I), also from China, told us through an interpreter, that she had decided to become an Australian citizen because she did not need to visit China regularly:

I feel that I want to live here long term so ... I decided to ... take up the Australian citizenship ... I don't go back to China frequently. I just go back there for holidays.

[Li Ming, CSWE I, Cohort A, Int 7, interpreted]

For Yuna (Cohort A, c10p012, CSWE III, from South Korea), the potential loss of her South Korean citizenship if she became Australian was an issue because “That’s me. That’s who I am” (Interview 7).

6.4 Personal wellbeing and life satisfaction

Yates et al. (2013) found that personal wellbeing was the most important settlement dimension for Cohort B participants over the first 6–9 months of the study. Two important indicators of personal wellbeing, relationships with friends and a sense of purpose (plans for the future), were the indicators most commonly associated with a positive change in feelings of comfort living in Australia. In this section we explore the importance of these and other

indicators of personal wellbeing over the entire project for both cohorts. First we consider their overall feelings about living in Australia as a broad indication of life satisfaction, and then consider the importance to settlement of the participants' physical health, mental health, and relationships.

6.4.1 Feelings about living in Australia

When we asked participants what they liked and did not like about their life in Australia, they tended to comment more about the positive aspects than the negative ones, and this tendency did not change over time. Table 6.4 shows the number of participants who commented on likes and dislikes about their lives in Australia. Included are the numbers for Cohort B participants at the beginning (Interview 1) and the end (Interview 5) of the data collection period for this cohort, (a period of 1.5 years) and those made by Cohort A in their final interview (Interview 7) 4.5 years into the study. As shown in Table 6.4, almost all Cohort B participants made positive comment on aspects of living in Australia, at both the beginning of the study and 1.5 years later (Interview 1: 91%, 77 of 85; Interview 5: 97%, 60 of 62). Similarly, all but one Cohort A participant made positive comment in their final interview.

Table 6.4: Participants' comments about living in Australia

Cohort and interview	n	Time in project	Those who commented about likes		Those who commented about dislikes	
			n	%	n	%
Cohort B, Int 1	85	Beginning	77	91%	44	52%
Cohort B, Int 5	62	1.5 years	60	97%	46	74%
Cohort A, Int 7	38	4.5 years	37	97%	28	74%

Note: Percentages for each interview do not add to 100% because some participants commented on both likes and dislikes.

Considerably fewer negative comments were made. In Interview 1 only 52% (44 of 85) of Cohort B participants talked about aspects of living in Australia that they did not like, although this figure increased by the final interview 1.5 years later (74%: 46 of 62). A similar percentage of Cohort A participants (74%: 28 of 38) made some negative comment in their final interview after 4.5 years in the study. This suggests that, although there were aspects of their lives they did not like, most participants were positive about their life in Australia.

Positive comments from both cohorts tended to centre on the natural environment, the friendly and helpful Australian people, and their perceptions that Australia was calm and peaceful. However, in Interview 7, comments by Cohort A participants about what they liked also included assistance provided by the government, such as welfare payments, free health care and free English language classes. The response of, a Cohort B participant, Rose

(c23p002) from Iran in her final interview, illustrates this sense of satisfaction with life in Australia:

I like it because it's a multicultural country and I like it when I see everyone respect ... each other. And no one is telling you that you have to do this, you have to do that. And everything, everyone can do anything that they want and no, no one force them to do anything. I like it because it's beautiful and it has lots of places to go and visit. It's beautiful nature. What else? ... it's a free country.

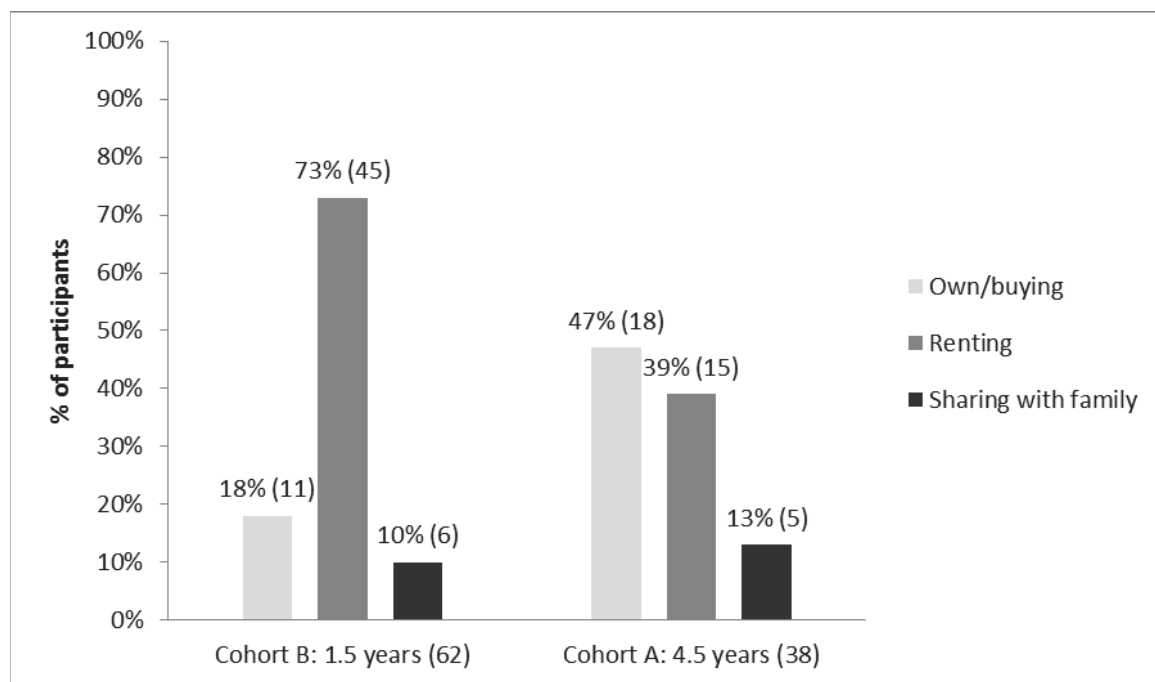
[Rose, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 5]

While there were many positive comments about the positive aspects of settling in Australia, the feeling of homesickness remained a constant concern for participants in both cohorts throughout the study (as discussed in Section 6.3.2). These suggest that settlement for these participants is a long-term, ongoing and emotionally fraught process. Thus, although some had been in Australia for some time they still felt the loneliness of settling in a new country without family and friends. For example, in their final interview after 4.5 years in the study, Faith (Cohort A, c02p009, CSWE III, from Sri Lanka) spoke of missing her country and her parents; Yuna (Cohort A, c10p012, CSWE III, from South Korea) felt “left behind” from South Korea because she is so far from her Korean family and friends; and Alina (Cohort A, c10p007, CSWE III, from Romania) felt that “half her soul” was still in Romania because her sons are there. Karen (Cohort A, c09p003, CSWE III, from China) told us that the only thing that she did not like about living in Australia was that she missed her parents who still lived in China. Other negative comments about living in Australia in the final interviews tended to centre on the weather (both cohorts), the different culture (Cohort B), and the lack of work opportunities for migrants (Cohort A). For discussion of work-related issues, see Chapter 2.

6.4.2 Satisfaction with accommodation

Because of the nature of the interviews, satisfaction with accommodation was not discussed in every interview, and was more likely to be raised as an issue if the participant was particularly unhappy about where they were living. However, in the final interviews for each cohort, researchers specifically addressed details about the participants' living arrangements at that time and how they felt about them, and these are presented in Figure 6.1. As this shows, the percentage of Cohort A participants who owned or were buying their own home at this time is far greater than the percentage of Cohort B participants (47% vs 18%), and more Cohort A participants were living in a home they had bought or were buying than in rented accommodation (39%, 15) or with family (13%, 5). In contrast, the majority of Cohort B were living in rented accommodation (73%, 45) or sharing with family (10%, 6), and only 18% (11) had bought or were buying their home. Although these data are cross-sectional, they suggest that the goal of buying their own home may become more achievable for migrants with time in the country as they find employment and improve their financial situation.

Figure 6.1: Cohort A and B living arrangements at final interviews



Note: Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Almost half (47%, 24 of 51) of the Cohort B participants who were renting or sharing with family indicated that they would like to buy a house, and for some, this was of particular importance to their settlement. For example, Bima (c24p018), a 67-year-old ethnic Nepali Bhutanese man, talked about the importance of owning his own home through an interpreter:

To have house – own house is very important. Like, if we have a house we will have everything. Like now my neighbours they are not my neighbours ... but if I have my house I would have my own neighbours I would have my street, this sort of things, but I have nothing now.

[Bima, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 5, interpreted]

Others, who had been told that they had to vacate their rental accommodation for various reasons, felt that owning their own home would make them feel more secure and in control of their own living arrangements, as Krishna (c24p009), an ethnic Nepali Bhutanese woman told us through an interpreter:

Yes that is a big thing because if I have [my own house] I don't have a fear of anything like nobody will be ... able to move me out from the house if I had my own house.

[Krishna, pre-CSWE, Cohort B, Int 5, interpreted]

Those who were renting at the time of the final interview, however, were not necessarily unhappy with their accommodation, and some preferred renting to owning a home. Table 6.5 shows the number of participants who commented on whether or not they liked where they were living. We can see from this that the majority of participants from each cohort said they were happy with where they lived (A: 58%, 14 of 24; B: 59%, 19 of 32). In both cohorts, the majority of participants renting said they were happy (A: 70%, 7 of 10; B: 70%, 16 of 23). They liked the houses they lived in and their neighbourhoods and communities. Some commented that they would not be able to afford to buy a comparable house in a similar location.

Table 6.5: Cohort A and B satisfaction with accommodation at final interviews

Cohort and interview (time in the study)	Those who commented ^a	Happy		Not happy	
		n	%	n	%
Cohort A Interview 7 (4.5 years)					
Own/buying	12	7	58%	5	42%
Renting	10	7	70%	3	30%
Sharing with family	2	0	0%	2	100%
Total	24	14	58%	10	42%
Cohort B Interview 5 (1.5 years)					
Own/buying	6	1	17%	5	83%
Renting	23	16	70%	7	30%
Sharing with family	3	2	67%	1	33%
Total	32	19	59%	13	41%

^a Percentages are taken from those who commented on satisfaction with their accommodation rather than the total number of participants who took part in the interviews.

In contrast, home ownership did not necessarily lead to satisfactory living conditions, particularly for Cohort B participants. Five of the six who were living in a home they had bought or were buying expressed some dissatisfaction with where they lived and complained about the location of the house (too noisy, not close enough to the city and public transport) or the house itself (too big, not big enough, built on a steep slope). Cohort A participants, who had been in Australia longer, tended to be happier with the houses they were buying (7 of 12), and comments, both positive and negative, tended to relate to the size and the location of the house.

6.4.3 Physical health, mental health and happiness

Across both cohorts, 35 participants reported experiencing health setbacks that affected their independence over the course of the study (see Section 6.5) and quality of life. These included injuries from car accidents or other incidents, strokes, chronic illnesses, pregnancy-related ill health (diabetes, fatigue and morning sickness) and general reports of fatigue or

headaches. Another two participants reported ongoing health problems that pre-dated migration. Poor health was at times precipitated by participants' work, and injuries could interfere with their ability to work. For example, Tat (Cohort A, c12p010, CSWE II, from Thailand), reported leaving her night-fill job at a hardware store because she had felt tired all the time (Interview 4). When she later got another job as a chicken boner she had to take time off from because of repetitive strain injury (Interview 7).

Across both cohorts, 15 participants mentioned feeling depressed (specifically using the word 'depressed'), stressed or anxious, over the course of the study and of these, eight sought medical help. They related feeling depressed to a range of issues, including relationship problems, financial difficulties, frustrations with their level of English, post-natal depression and trauma relating to their migration experience. For three participants, mental health problems were mentioned in more than one interview. In addition to these cases of mental illness, one participant mentioned experiencing memory lapses, which she attributed to lack of sleep. In three cases, medical help brought about improvements in mental health. For example, Dan (Cohort A, c05p004, CSWE III, from Egypt) reported in Interview 5 feeling "a lot relaxed now than before" after seeing a counsellor, and Anjani (Cohort B, c24p013, pre-CSWE, from Bhutan) reported improvements since being treated for speaking, hearing and mental health problems in Interview 2.

The health of participants' immediate family members also contributed to their sense of wellbeing and mental health, particularly if they had a carer's responsibility. For example, Pita (Cohort A, c10p003, CSWE III, from Peru) experienced both the trauma of her husband's severe work-related injury and a diagnosis of early osteoporosis for herself, which prevented her from enjoying her normal physical activities. Will (Cohort A, c05p011, CSWE III, from Iraq) had the responsibility of looking after his mother who suffered from physical and mental illness and his daughter who had respiratory problems (Interview 6), which he found difficult to cope with alongside his studies. Medical costs also caused financial issues and he was frustrated that they would have to wait two years for the visa that would enable his brother to come to Australia to help out (Interview 5 and 6). By Interview 6 he was considering leaving Australia to seek work in the Gulf region and was not available for the final interview.

Given the psychologically challenging nature of migration and settlement (Sonderegger & Barrett, 2004), the mental health of migrants can be a good indicator of the success of their settlement. Attitudes to mental health vary cross-culturally, and can be very sensitive to broach directly. Where appropriate, researchers approached such issues through queries about participants' general feelings of happiness. For example, participants were sometimes asked whether they were happy with their lives at the time of the interview, or how they felt about a particular experience. Some participants talked spontaneously about their feelings and their mental health, often in relation to their feelings and likes and dislikes about living in Australia.

As discussed in Section 6.4.1, participants across both cohorts were generally positive about their lives in Australia, despite areas of dissatisfaction. Of those Cohort A participants who commented specifically about their level of happiness in the first and final interview (9 and 14 respectively), only one was unhappy. The number was slightly higher for Cohort B participants, however. Thus three of the 10 who spoke on this topic at the first interview and six of the 17 who commented in the final interview were judged to be largely unhappy. The numbers here are small, however, and need to be interpreted with caution.

Specific references to not being happy related to a range of reasons, including lack of family support for parenting, trauma related to the process of immigration, relationship breakdown or problems, lack of friends, anxiety about the health of family members and friends, lack of employment, missing family, homesickness, lack of independence, racist incidents, mental health issues (including post-natal depression), other traumatic events, and frustration about their lack of English.

Some participants remained unhappy across several interviews and until the end of the study, whereas others were unhappy in early interviews but reported feeling happier as the study progressed. This was often associated with improvements in their lives on other aspects of wellbeing such as friends, confidence and comfort. For example, Cohort A participants Lily (c01p003, CSWE II) and Cherry (c01p004, CSWEII), both from China, were close friends and both reported feeling happier over time. In Interview 4, they both reported being unhappy, Cherry because she lacked work and was lonely, Lily because she felt lonely and frustrated by not knowing what to do with her life. By Interview 5, Lily told us she was now feeling 70% happy and had succeeded in finding work and making friends. By Interview 6, Lily and her husband had bought a house that they liked very much, and Cherry had gained more confidence to use English in the workplace. In their final interviews one year later, both reported feeling much happier. Particularly for Cherry, improvements in her English played a significant role in to this:

I don't know, I feel like it, err, I think since, since my language has been reprovred – improved, so everything's different ... because you can communicate, you can in – express yourself and you can understand the other people and you can work and your value would be accepted and you, you be feeling appreciated, what, so it's different ... since I was in Australia I – I didn't talk at all, like I didn't speak English at all. Erm, I can't – I feel scared like, not like, not scared, just like not confident to – to go out by myself. I need stick with my husband ... I think that's the benefit I, I got from my language improved as well, and also my studies, because I can speak English and also I have this career background. So I can go around the world, everywhere, I'm not scared. And like not that, I wasn't myself before, now that different now. So I don't mind to live every, anywhere.

[Cherry, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

6.4.4 Relationships

As reported in Yates et al. (2013), involvement with friends regardless of their language or cultural background was an important settlement indicator for Cohort B participants in the first 6–9 months in the study, and by the time of their final interviews, most participants from both cohorts reported having friends (A: 84%, 32 of 38; B: 55%, 34 of 62).

Good relationships with friends and family seemed to have a positive impact on participants' sense of wellbeing, and played an important role in making participants feel happy and settled. The opposite was also true: difficult relationships with in-laws or other members of their family, partners, or friends had a negative effect on wellbeing. This was the case for Revaka (Cohort A, c01p005, CSWE III, from India), a woman (aged 25–34) who lived with her in-laws. In Interviews 4 and 6, Revaka reported that her parents-in-law disapproved of her leaving the house. In Interview 6, she reported that her parents-in-law were putting pressure on her to get a full-time job and had mistreated both her and her parents, and that her sister-in-law excluded her and her husband from family events. These difficult relationships created a lot of tension and affected her outlook on living in Australia. When asked what advice she would give a friend coming to Australia, Revaka responded that she would discourage people from coming to Australia unless they had money or their husband had a good job. In contrast, other participants such as Lily (Cohort A, c01p003, CSWE III, from China) and Vinny (Cohort A, c01p012, CSWE III, from India) had good relationships with their in-laws and were able to draw on their support.

There were also cases of relationship difficulties with spouses, siblings, parents and children, sometimes exacerbated by financial difficulties, depression, cultural differences and domestic violence (three cases). While some participants were able to resolve these issues, others were not, and this had a debilitating influence on their wellbeing, especially when marriages ended in divorce and ongoing legal issues. For example, Hadia (Cohort A, c12p003, CSWE II, from Sudan) became preoccupied with matters relating to her husband's refusal to sign divorce papers, and this led her to withdraw from AMEP classes.

There were also examples of resilience among participants (see Brough, Gorman, Ramirez, & Westoby, 2003 for examples of resilience among refugees). For example, Ludmilla (Cohort A, c08p015, CSWE I, from Russia), described in Section 6.3, persevered in spite of health issues and relationship difficulties with her daughter and church community to find a sense of belonging and purpose through immersing herself in the cultural life of Melbourne (where she found a sense of belonging and connection to place) and bonding with her grandchildren. In such instances, participants were able to settle well despite the difficulties they faced.

6.5 Independence

A lack of independence affected various aspects of participants' lives at different times, and affected their sense of comfort about living in Australia. Participants were frustrated by their inability to independently carry out daily tasks such as shopping, going to medical appointments, visiting Centrelink, paying bills, and getting from place to place. However, for most participants in both cohorts, this frustration diminished over time as they began to feel more independent in different aspects of their daily lives. The majority (40, 65%) of the 62 Cohort B participants who took part in both Interviews 1 and 5 reported increased independence in various aspects of their lives over the 1.5 years since the start of the study. Similarly, 61% (22) of the 36 Cohort A participants who took part in both Interviews 4 (12 months into the study) and 7 (4.5 years in the study), reported increased independence in Interview 7.

English proficiency was central to many participants' feelings of independence, and was the reason most commonly given in the earlier interviews for feelings of dependence. For example, in Interview 1 Estelle (c21p003), from Colombia, was frustrated that she was totally dependent on her husband, who was bilingual and much more proficient in English:

Yes, I'm happy now, yes, but it's difficult because I think the ... the most barrier ... is the language ... because when I was in Colombia, my city, I was really independent ... I live alone. I, I love my family, I have a good relation with my mother, with my father, with my sister but I live alone, yes ... Yeah, but here, oh my God, it's totally different because I'm totally dependent of my husband.

[Estelle, CSWE III, Cohort B, Int 1]

By Interview 3, Estelle's situation had changed dramatically because her English had improved. She was working in a café and speaking English with her workmates and café customers, and felt that she could go about her daily life independently and communicate well in English.

Improved English proficiency was also associated with feelings of increased independence for many other participants. The 37 (97%) Cohort A and 30 (75%) Cohort B participants who reported increased independence in their final interviews cited improved English proficiency as a reason. However, some participants reported that although their improved English had allowed them to be independent in some aspects of their lives, they still needed assistance in others. For example, in Interview 7, Elsie (Cohort A, c08p006, CSWE I, from Lebanon) told us that she was able to do her shopping in English, but she still relied on her husband as an interpreter when she attended specialist medical appointments for her son.

For many participants, an important aspect of becoming more independent was getting a driver's licence. In the final interview, approximately one-third (32%, 20) of the Cohort B participants told us that they either had their licence or were working towards it, and this

was the case for an even greater proportion (68%, 26) of Cohort A participants. For some this meant sitting for the driving test multiple times until they were successful. For example, April (c02p005), from China, failed the practical driving test three times before she was successful on the fourth attempt. In Interview 7, she told us that being able to drive was very important for her because it gave her the freedom and independence to manage without her husband:

Yeah, I feel ... I have more freedom, yeah. And then, um, when I'm driving ... you need to do this, you need to do that ... I can do, and I believe I can do. I think I am doing better when he's [her husband] not with me. I feel so happy, the first day I said to my husband, I said, I'm so happy, you know, you no here with me now. Yeah.

[April, CSWE III, Cohort A, Int 7]

Other participants commented on the importance of a driver's licence for their work and future work prospects (e.g. job requirements, attending job interviews), looking for accommodation, attending English classes, visiting friends, driving children to school and other activities, and, more generally, just making everyday life easier. For some, for example Sunil (Cohort B, c24p004, CSWE III, from Bhutan), limited English proficiency impacted directly on his plans to get a licence.

The ability to access public transport and other facilities was also important for a sense of independence. While a number of participants living in the outer suburbs of cities felt they needed to drive in order to be able to get around, others in inner city locations were able to get around using public transport. Hui (Cohort B, c26p004, CSWE I, from Taiwan), on the other hand, who moved to a regional town during the study, reported increased independence in her new home because it was close enough to walk everywhere.

Financial and health issues also had the potential to affect participants' independence. Faith (Cohort A, c02p009, CSWE III, from Sri Lanka) told us in Interviews 5, 6 and 7 of her frustrations:

Faith was unable to find work, so had to depend on her husband's income. She and her husband were living with her husband's parents and Faith wanted to move out and be independent from them, but this was not possible because of financial constraints. She also wanted to get a driver's licence but could not afford to take the test.

Health issues, such as visual impairment, physical difficulties, chronic conditions, limited mobility, and mental health issues also had a negative impact on independence for a number of the ethnic Nepali Bhutanese participants from Centre 24 (Cohort B). For example, as a result of their mental health issues, Dibya (c24p003, pre-CSWE) and Anjani (c24p013, pre-CSWE), both women in their early to mid-40s, remained fully dependent on their families throughout the study. Health issues also reduced independence for Li Li Lin (Cohort B,

c08p010, CSWE I, from China), a fiercely independent woman in her 70s who resented the reduction in her independence that resulted from a fall:

In Interviews 4 and 5, Li Li Lin told us that being independent was very important to her and she and her husband managed most aspects of their lives independently. In Interview 5 she reported that she was working as a volunteer at her local AMEP centre. Following a fall at the local market a short time later, she found that she could no longer be as independent as she would like because of ongoing pain and she had to move to public housing because she could no longer manage the stairs in her home. In her final interview, she was quite emotional about no longer being able to be independent, and was particularly upset about no longer being able to volunteer at the AMEP centre. She described herself (with tears in her eyes) as having no purpose now.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, we have explored the settlement process from the participants' perspective by addressing the settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants and exploring how they change with time in the country. Our findings reflect the dynamic nature of the settlement process, where different aspects of settlement are interdependent at different times. The findings suggest strong interrelationships between indicators in the DIAC (2012b) framework. These and other factors emerging from the data have been incorporated into the adapted framework presented in Table 6.2. The findings here also reflect the importance of life outcomes (see ASRG, 2011) to participants.

In summary, participants from both cohorts valued opportunities to participate in community life, and their participation in a range of community activities was associated with developing a sense of belonging. These feelings of belonging were closely related to other facets of their lives, including family, acceptance, having Australian friends, homesickness, being proficient in English and their employment status. Participants who were able to participate in community life and find a sense of belonging often settled well, and this impacted their decisions, intentions and feelings about citizenship. Gaining Australian citizenship was considered an important step in the settlement journey for most participants.

Overall, participants from both cohorts felt more positive than negative about living in Australia, and the majority were happy with where they lived. As the study progressed, participants generally reported becoming happier, but more participants also reported being unhappy, shared dislikes about Australia and talked about health setbacks that they had experienced. The slight rise in the reporting of negative aspects might relate to the passing of a 'honeymoon period' with Australia or increased familiarity and comfort with the

researchers. The kinds of likes and dislikes they reported changed over time, with focus shifting to the practical settlement services in the later interviews.

Many participants were also frustrated by a lack of independence that affected various aspects of their lives at different times, and this was in large part related to their limited proficiency in English. However, for most, feelings of independence increased over time, often associated with improvements in their English. English proficiency was also relevant for most other settlement indicators, although participation in community life did not necessarily require English proficiency.

Previous studies have suggested that it may take some migrants 5–10 years (or even longer) to feel comfortable about living in a new country (see for example, ASRG, 2011; Khoo & McDonald, 2001; Waters, 2011). The period of time we consider (Cohort A: 4.5 years, Cohort B: 1.5 years) is therefore a relatively short time over which to consider long-term settlement issues. For many participants, some aspects of their lives in Australia have improved with time, while others have remained difficult or become more so. Although the data is cross-sectional rather than strictly longitudinal across both cohorts, Cohort A participants did seem to feel more comfortable about living in Australia, and thus appear to be further on in the process of settlement than Cohort B participants, who were in relatively early stages. Like Waters (2011), however, we found that feelings of comfort can fluctuate over time, regress for some and improve for others at different points, and we saw this in participants' settlement trajectories.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

As we have seen throughout this report, the pre-migration backgrounds and post-migration experiences of the participants varied enormously. In addressing the research questions, we have explored their goals and plans for employment, how and where the two cohorts used English, the AMEP and the impact of the new business model, their experiences of language learning, and what successful settlement meant for them. In this chapter we bring together some of the key findings of the report to consider the implications for initial language training and support for newly arrived migrants to Australia.

Below we first summarise the findings and then offer some recommendations under the five headings of *employment, education goals and the role of English, use of English in everyday life, perspectives on the new business model, language learning in the AMEP and beyond, and settlement*.

7.2 Employment, education goals and the role of English

For most of the participants, it was very important to find appropriate employment in Australia, and language learning and post-AMEP study were seen as vital steps towards achieving this goal. Those who were not working by the end of the study had retired, were looking after families, studying or did not yet feel they had enough English. Some saw migration as an opportunity to refocus their careers. In both cohorts, and throughout the study, a large number of participants aspired to own and run their own businesses. Most participants had to work towards their goals in stages, some had to revise their goals and many were still some way from achieving them by the end of the study.

More participants from Cohort A, who had been in the study for longer, were in employment by the end of the study, and more were working at levels commensurate with their previous occupation. This suggests that Cohort A participants had more opportunities to gain work during the (longer) time period since exiting the AMEP. However, managerial and professional level participants worked below their level of skill, at least within the relatively short time period covered by the study. For some, this was because they were gradually working their way towards their employment goals but needed to earn money and gain local experience as well as improve their English. For others, however, short-term

employment was less strategic and more of a financial imperative to provide for themselves and their families. These participants ran the risk of becoming trapped in jobs with relatively little opportunity to use and practise English.

In addition to finding short-term work, many participants, in particular those from higher CSWE levels, undertook post-AMEP English study and/or further education, mainly at TAFE. They took a range of courses in a bid to either re-qualify in their pre-migration occupation or to qualify for a new area of work. While they sometimes found the English component, particularly the literacy demands, of further study challenging, only a few had to drop out.

Some participants, particularly those from Cohort B with lower levels of proficiency and education, continued to take English classes directly after they had finished the AMEP. Others returned to formal English study only after they had encountered English-related obstacles at work or on TAFE courses which helped them to realise that they needed higher levels of English.

A range of factors in addition to English proficiency intersected to impact participants' ability or motivation to pursue their long-term career goals, including age, educational level, family responsibilities and economic necessity. Original goals sometimes had to be put on hold, revised or even abandoned. However, since migrants may take many years to achieve their goals, further research is needed to find out if the downward occupational trajectory noted above continues in their long-term settlement.

Recommendations

- In addition to the existing programs such as the AMEP and SLPET, new programs should be developed specifically to assist migrants with low levels of education and skill (e.g. pre-literate humanitarian entrants) to gain meaningful and sustained employment. These new programs could include a formal component of English language learning and workplace skills.
- Initial language training should continue to support migrants to fully understand the role of English proficiency in the achievement of their goals, and the potential risks in relying solely on short-term work to improve their English post-AMEP.
- Career counselling services for AMEP clients should continue to encourage the early identification of goals and employment pathways, including the understanding that goals may change and that a long-term perspective may be necessary.
- Initial language training needs to include explicit attention to the nature of the language learning process so that it is understood to be a complex and lifelong process. Initial language training and support services should emphasise the importance of 'learning how to learn' skills so that migrants can take control of their own ongoing language learning.

- TAFE courses specifically designed for migrants should be developed to maximise language learning, incorporating language and content objectives and using team-teaching by language and content experts.
- In addition to the AMEP, English language training and mentoring programs should be developed for professional migrants wanting to re-enter the workforce (at a professional level). Such support should include more advanced English language instruction (including literacy), information on vocationally specific practices, professional work placements, and self-access online material designed to guide professionals through the specific English language demands of their profession.
- AMEP clients should be referred to already available registered training organisations (RTO) courses that provide support and advice to newly arrived migrants on opening and running a small business in Australia. These courses should include assistance with clarifying goals, drawing up plans, understanding local business practices and identifying relevant further education pathways.
- Study participants should be followed up in a third phase of the longitudinal study in order to track their progress towards their goals and the role of English language proficiency over the longer term.

7.3 Use of English in everyday life

Cohort A participants reported using more English than Cohort B participants in daily communications, and more Cohort A participants were in paid employment by the end of the study. These results suggest that with time in Australia, migrants are likely to use more English in their everyday lives and enter the workforce, hence become more independent and more confident using English. Self-ratings appeared to be associated with levels of confidence rather than with proficiency per se.

In both cohorts, participants at higher CSWE levels consistently reported using more English in their daily lives and were more likely to be employed. They also reported reading and writing more in English. This finding suggests that a higher level of English proficiency provides recently arrived migrants more opportunities to use English in their everyday interactions with other people, a state of affairs that also allows them more opportunities to practise and learn English, and to find employment more quickly.

Across both cohorts, at each interview, people who were in paid work reported using more English in everyday life than those who were unemployed. In other words, employment seemed to offer opportunities for migrants to use more English in their daily lives and therefore potentially to develop their English language skills with colleagues and clients.

The majority of employed participants worked in English-speaking multicultural workplaces. The opportunity to use English and the quality of English interactions varied across job categories. Higher-level jobs required the extensive use of complex English language across

all four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), whereas lower-level jobs typically required the use of simpler English and minimal reading and writing in English. The main challenges participants faced in workplace communication included: (a) understanding people and being understood, (b) talking on the telephone, (c) expressing themselves fully and using complex English, (d) using reading and writing skills in English, (e) understanding and engaging in small talk and humour, and (f) the work-specific terminology in their occupations. These challenges suggest areas that could be addressed in English language and workplace training programs. Although many participants were initially nervous when communicating with colleagues and customers, they generally gained in confidence and made noticeable progress with time, practice and support from co-workers. Participants reported few opportunities outside the AMEP to develop reading and writing skills in English.

Recommendations

- In addition to the current AMEP training provided, language training should prepare newly arrived migrants in both job-seeking skills, such as how to write job applications and prepare for interviews, and in the kinds of English interactions required by specific jobs, for example, writing emails and answering the telephone.
- Initial language training programs should address the following skills identified as problematic by our participants:
 - understand a range of accents of speakers of other varieties of English
 - make themselves understood through clear articulation and use of communicative strategies such as paraphrasing
 - conduct telephone conversations
 - construct and understand longer, complex explanations and exchanges
 - read and write in English
 - understand and engage in social talk including small talk and humour
 - understand and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Since language development relies on engagement outside as well as inside the classroom, newly arrived migrants should be supported to:
 - Interact with other people in English in a wide variety of contexts both in the classroom and in authentic situations outside class.
 - Find opportunities to practise social interactions with English speakers in the community beyond simple greetings and social pleasantries.
- Family members are very important in the development of migrants' English language skills and should be offered explicit support and guidance on how to best assist with migrants' English language learning at home.

7.4 Perspectives on the new business model

The majority of Cohort B participants who had received advice from AMEP counsellors under the new business model were less dependent on their teachers for support regarding education and employment than did Cohort A participants who studied in the AMEP under the old model. Counsellors also provided valuable support to staff. Settlement content was generally appreciated by participants in both cohorts, but staff had some concerns about offering settlement courses separately. Refugees were more positive in their evaluation of the content of the entry settlement course than migrants on other visa types. Some highly educated, more proficient participants, particularly those who had already spent some time in Australia, found that aspects of the settlement content were not so relevant to their needs. Generally, the exit settlement course was not clearly recalled by Cohort B participants and if they did, they tended to regard it as an institutional requirement.

Work preparation programs were viewed positively by staff, and while half of the Cohort B participants who participated in such courses were happy, half raised some issues with the programs. Critical comments most commonly related to the nature and length of the work experience placements and the fact that they did not lead to employment.

Cohort B clients who completed their 510 hours generally felt well supported as they exited the AMEP. Those who withdrew before completion of their hours and the majority of participants in Cohort A often left the program without formal discussion of their post-AMEP options.

Staff and the one participant who studied in a specialised youth class for under 25s found it successful.

Recommendations

- The role of AMEP counsellors should be continued and enhanced.
- Provision should be made for clients with more educational resources to access online information about study and work prospects for themselves.
- The timing of pathway planning and discussion of the Individual Pathway Guide (IPG) should be responsive to how long clients have been in Australia.
- Settlement content, including the entry settlement course, should be tailored to the needs of different learner groups, such as highly educated participants with family or community support in Australia.
- The purpose of the SLPET program and employment prospects resulting from participation should be made clear to clients.
- Consideration should be given to increasing the length of work experience placements from the current 80 hours.

- The content and delivery mode of the exit settlement course and its relationship with the individual exit interview with a counsellor should be reconsidered.
- Youth classes should be continued.

7.5 Language learning in the AMEP and beyond

Participants were overall very positive about the AMEP for providing valuable English language and settlement training and a place where they could learn important independent language learning skills and make social connections in the early days of their settlement.

Participants at all CSWE levels valued learning about topics and skills that enabled them to communicate in their daily lives. More proficient learners also appreciated learning skills that helped them pursue employment and study goals.

Class size and composition sometimes interfered with the quality of delivery. The difficulty of catering for the diversity of learner backgrounds was also mentioned. Aspects of course content and teaching style were not always suitable for all learners, particularly those at the highest level (CSWE III) and lowest level (pre-CSWE). Very low-level learners felt the need for bilingual teaching, whereas professional and educated participants did not always feel sufficiently challenged. Some less proficient learners felt that they needed more than 510 hours in the AMEP.

Recommendations

- The AMEP should offer a range of classes to cater for the diversity of client needs. When appropriate, these should include faster-paced classes with a workplace focus and/or electives and extension classes for professional and other educated clients, and attention to specific skills as required such as pronunciation or employment-relevant literacy skills.
- Bilingual support and extended AMEP hours should be considered for classes with low-level learners with little experience of formal education.
- Classroom learning objectives should be made very explicit to clients so that those who are more familiar with traditional approaches to learning can very clearly understand the purpose of classes.
- AMEP clients should be supported to use English in community settings. The Home Tutor Program is one successful example of how interaction between clients and community members can be encouraged (See Building Confidence Fact Sheet series developed as part of this project).

7.6 Settlement

Our analysis of settlement indicators and outcomes for the participants highlighted the dynamic nature of the settlement process.

Owning a home was important but not essential to feeling settled. Overall participants were happy with where they lived by the end of the study.

Participation in a range of community activities was associated with developing a sense of belonging. Other factors such as family, a sense of being accepted and included in the community, having friends in Australia, homesickness, being proficient in English, their sense of identity and their employment status also impacted their sense of belonging. Social participation with their first language (L1) network was important. Participants who were able to participate in community life and find a sense of belonging often settled well, and this impacted their decisions regarding citizenship. Although Australian citizenship was considered an important step, the decision to apply for citizenship was influenced by whether or not dual citizenship was possible. English language proficiency also played a role in participants' success in the citizenship test.

Overall, participants from both cohorts felt more positive than negative about living in Australia. As the study progressed, more participants spoke about aspects of their lives in Australia that they liked. Comments about aspects they did not like also increased over time, suggesting that there may be a 'honeymoon period' for settlement. The likes and dislikes and the sense of comfort they reported fluctuated over time, with the focus shifting to the practical settlement services in the later interviews. For some participants, some aspects of their lives in Australia improved over time, while for others their circumstances remained difficult. Comparisons of Cohort A and Cohort B data present a picture that is cross-sectional rather than strictly longitudinal. Nevertheless, the finding that Cohort A participants felt more comfortable about living in Australia suggests that time in country may help migrants to feel more settled.

Many participants were frustrated by a lack of independence that affected various aspects of their lives at different times, and this was in a large part related to their limited proficiency in English. However, for most participants, feelings of independence increased over time, often associated with improvements in their English. English proficiency was also relevant for most other settlement indicators.

Recommendations

- The provision of English language training for migrants without functional English should continue to be supported as English proficiency is crucial for successful settlement.
- Initial English language training and support services should target priorities of everyday life likely to assist migrants to develop a sense of independence.
- Language training and settlement services should maintain a focus on participation in community life, as a means of fostering feelings of belonging and acceptance.
- Support services should assist migrants to become more aware of local services, community groups and neighbourhoods, and more familiar with local places of interest.

- The community should be supported to become more culturally aware and cognisant of their role in helping migrants to feel more accepted.
- Further studies should explore settlement and indicators of settlement success over a longer time period than was possible in this study.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Consent Form

Information Form: Language training and settlement success: are they related?

Chief Investigators: Associate Professor Lynda Yates, Professor Ingrid Piller

What this study is about

You are invited to participate in a study on how migrants to Australia learn and use English. The purpose of the study is to find out where and how migrants use English in their daily lives, where they have difficulties, and if language classes at the AMEP cover areas that are important to them.

The study is funded by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and is conducted by a research team at Macquarie University. The chief investigator is:

Associate Prof. Lynda Yates
Department of Linguistics
02 9850 9646
lynda.yates@mq.edu.au

Professor Ingrid Piller
Department of Linguistics
02 9850 7674
ingrid.piller@mq.edu.au

What you have to do in the study

If you agree to participate you will be interviewed once a year over the next three years; these interviews will take about 1–1½ hours and they will be audio recorded. We would also like to observe you or audio record you when you use English in your daily life (e.g. when you speak at work or at home). We will ask you if you agree every time we want to record you.

What we can give you as our token of appreciation.

If you agree to participate, we will give you \$50 at the end of the second interview and again after the third interview as our thank you to you. If you do not wish to receive such a token of appreciation, we can also donate the amount in your name to a charity of your choice.

What happens to all the information we collect.

The hard copy data for this project will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at Macquarie University and electronic data will be stored on password-protected computers at Macquarie University. All data will be kept for a period of five years after the results have been published (in accordance with university policy).

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are treated confidential. Only the researchers who are part of the research team will have access to the data you provide. Our research team includes the chief investigators, academic researchers and research assistants. Information gathered as part of this project may be used in academic publications. You will not be identified in any publication of the results – however, the things you say may be quoted in these publications. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request by emailing or calling the chief investigators named in this form.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

**Language training and settlement success: are they related?
Extension Consent Form:**

I, _____ have read and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: _____

(Block letters)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator's Name: _____

(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY

Appendix B: Ethics Approval Letters

From: nicola.myton@mq.edu.au [mailto: nicola.myton@mq.edu.au] On Behalf Of Ethics Secretariat

Sent: Wednesday, 12 October 2011 2:35 PM

To: Lynda Yates

Subject: Amendment Approved for Project REFHE22FEB2008-R05612

Dear Lynda,

RE: "Language training and settlement success – Are they related?" (REF: HE22FEB2008-R05612)

Thank you for your recent correspondence clarifying your amendment request. The following amendments to the above study have been reviewed and approved:

1. To extend the original LTS study by recruiting the following groups of participants:
 - a) Former LTS participants (group 1)
 - b) New migrants undertaking English classes at AMEP centres (group 2).
2. The former LTS participants will be recruited by telephone.
3. Group 1 participants will be involved in three interviews between the end of 2011 and the end of 2013. Group 2 participants will take part in five interviews between early 2012 and the end of 2013. Out-of-class and classroom data will also be collected from both groups (as per the approval of the original ethics application).
4. Changes to the original information and consent forms.

Please accept this email as formal correspondence approving your amendment request. Please do not hesitate to contact me on ext. 4194 or by email if you have any questions or concerns.

Regards

Nicola

--

Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)

Ethics Secretariat

Research Office

Level 3, Research HUB, Building C5C

Macquarie University

NSW 2109

Ph: +61 2 9850 6848

Fax: +61 2 9850 4465

Email: ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **FHS Ethics** <fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au>

Date: Sun, Mar 10, 2013 at 11:06 PM

Subject: Re: HS Ethics Application – Approved (Ref. No 5201300063)

To: Agnes Terraschke <agnes.terraschke@mq.edu.au>

Cc: Kay Bowes-Tseng <kay.bowes-tseng@mq.edu.au>

Dear Dr Terraschke,

Thank you for your response to the Faculty Ethics Sub-Committee's questions.

Please be advised that your response has been reviewed and approval has been granted to your project. You may now commence your research.

A formal notification of approval will be sent to you from FHS Ethics shortly.

Thank you and all the best with the project.

Kind regards,

FHS Ethics

Faculty of Human Sciences – Ethics

C5C Research Hub East

Level 3, Room 324

Macquarie University

NSW 2109

Ph: +61 2 9850 4197

Fax: +61 2 9850 4465

E: fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au

Appendix C: AMEP LS Centre Descriptions

Cohort A

Centre 01, CSWE II – Centre 01 is located on the first two floors of a four-level building, which it shares with other businesses, in the central business district of Parramatta, New South Wales. The centre is located on a busy street about five minutes walking distance from a shopping centre. Parramatta is a culturally diverse middle-class suburb in the Sydney metropolitan area. At the time of data collection for Phase 1, almost 38% of its population spoke a language other than English at home (ABS, 2008a).

The centre serves around 250 clients from a number of ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds, which reflects the overall population in the area. The majority of clients are of Chinese descent. Students of Indian ethnicity, Farsi and Dari speakers from Iran and Afghanistan, and Arabic speakers from Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Sudan also attend classes.

Centre 02, CSWE III – This AMEP centre is located in Blacktown, the largest Local Government Area (by population) in NSW. Blacktown is a culturally and linguistically diverse city and has seen a high intake of new migrant groups over the years. The AMEP Centre is housed in the local Macquarie Community College, which is adjacent to Blacktown TAFE and is within walking distance of the railway station.

The centre is located on the second floor of a three-story building that it shares with SydWest Multicultural Services. Access to the AMEP Centre is via two lifts and a stairwell. On the ground floor is a café, which was open during business hours. The AMEP Centre consists of a reception area with staff offices, about 10 classrooms, a computer lab and a common room/kitchenette for staff and clients.

Centre 05, CSWE III – Centre 05 is located in the Institute of Languages at the University of New South Wales. It shares premises and facilities with two other departments (English for Academic Purposes and General English) on the Kensington campus.

Kensington is a suburb located six kilometres south-east of the Sydney central business district, in the local government area of the City of Randwick. Numerous buses service Kensington, linking it with the city and surrounding suburbs. However, there are no trains or light-rail services to the area.

Centre 06, CSWE III – Centre 06 is an AMEP centre located in a new six-level building that is part of the Southbank Institute of Technology in the heart of Brisbane's cultural precinct in the city centre. The building houses staff rooms and teaching facilities for AMEP, LLNP, SEE and other language learners. The campus is a three-minute walk from the train station, which makes the TAFE campus easily accessible from all parts of the city.

The city of Brisbane has a high Australian-born population. In 2006, 25.6% of the total population of 992, 176 people were born overseas. Only 15% of the total population speaks a community language other than English (ABS, 2008b).

Centre 08, CSWE I – Centre 08 is part of the Foundation Studies Department of the Institute of TAFE, which is part of a consortium of AMEP providers across the northern region of Melbourne. It is housed in buildings that were formerly a secondary school, in a northern suburb of Melbourne. The suburb is located in a public transport hub with train, bus and tram routes passing through, and it has good public transport links with the city centre and other suburbs.

The suburb has a long history of migrant settlement and has a population of migrants and working-class Australian-born residents. There are significant migrant communities in surrounding suburbs that use facilities close to the centre, including a culturally diverse market and retail facilities, municipal and legal offices and a migrant resource centre. AMEP clients come from a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds and they travel from different parts of Melbourne, although most live in the inner suburban areas.

Centre 09, CSWE III – Centre 09 is located in Melbourne's city centre in the legal and business (rather than commercial) district. It is close to an underground train station, as well as city tram and bus stops. Students come from different parts of Melbourne, although most live in the inner suburban areas. Classrooms occupy five levels of the building that can be accessed by two central lifts. There is a café located at the ground floor entrance to the building and a newsagency on the other side.

Students are culturally and ethnically diverse, and there is a range of activities in the centre (such as multicultural week and dance classes) that attempt to encourage and harness inter-cultural harmony. There are approximately 600 students enrolled in the programs at the centre, about 250 of whom are young adults in the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students.

Centre 10, CSWE III – Centre 10 is housed in a large TAFE campus on the fringe of the central business district of Hobart. It is located in two buildings on opposite sides of a major intersection. The centre is close to other public services and offices, such as Hobart's main hospital, central police station and law courts. The centre is only a short walk from the central retail area and the central bus terminal. The AMEP teachers at the centre are well qualified and some have experience teaching in other parts of Australia and overseas. There is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in the centre, and there is a feeling that both teachers and students know each other and get on well.

Centre 11, pre-CSWE – Centre 11 is situated on a large TAFE campus in central Perth behind the Art Gallery of Western Australia, the museum and the State Library. It is a five-minute walk from the central train station and is also connected to the free inner city bus network. Students travel from all over Perth to attend classes at this centre.

AMEP classes are mostly held on one level of the building but the centre does not have exclusive access to the area. The centre has about 1,400 clients enrolled at AMEP courses at all levels and intensities, including evening and Saturday morning classes. The centre also offers a range of ‘Migrant Pathways to Employment’ courses that specialise in preparing students for the language used in particular industries.

Centre 12, CSWE II – Centre 12 provides AMEP courses for all levels as well as a range of specialised classes and the centre also coordinates distance learning and the home tutor scheme. At first, the centre was located in the central business district of Perth, a 10-minute walk from the central station and main shopping area, which made it easy for migrants from all over Perth to come to class. It occupied three floors in a 10-level office building with a small shop and cafeteria on the ground floor. In mid-2008, shortly after data collection for Phase 1 commenced, Centre 12 moved out of the city centre into a more suburban area.

From mid-2008 onwards AMEP classes became affiliated with a TAFE and took place at two locations, both of which were a 20–30 minute train or bus ride away from the city centre. All of the participants from Centre 12 decided to attend classes at the same campus, which is conveniently located opposite a train station. The new campus is small and friendly and students from all classes mingle during breaks.

Cohort B

Centre 21, CSWE III – At the time of initial data collection, Centre 21 was only small and occupied one floor of a building that also hosted the campus of a university located in a different part of the country. Located in central Sydney, the centre consisted of five classrooms, a staff room and administration offices and was supported by three administrative staff, one pathway adviser/counsellor and approximately seven teachers, including the centre manager. The centre ran morning and evening classes as well as weekend classes and on occasion an additional workplace communication class. With about 20 students per class, there were between 100–300 students overall. In mid-2012, the centre moved to the provider’s headquarters in a large building in a different part of the city, which is much bigger, busier and less personal. The move did not have an impact on the classes offered by the centre.

Centre 22, CSWE III – This AMEP centre is also located in the middle of Parramatta (see description for Centre 01 for a description of the suburb) but it is run by a different provider and situated in a different building. Centre 22 occupies two levels of a relatively small office building about five minutes walk from the train and bus station. It shares the ground floor with Mission Australia and there is also an adjoining childcare centre. The centre consists of a reception area, a large staff room, about 10 classrooms and an independent learning library.

Centre 23, CSWE III – Cohort B participants of Centre 23 attended classes at the same place as those from Centre 02 in Cohort A. Participants were given a new centre number in order to differentiate the two groups who studied under different business models. For a centre description, see information above for Centre 02.

Centre 24, mixed levels – This AMEP centre is located on the main campus of the Tasmanian Polytechnic in Northern Tasmania in Launceston's central business district and is close to the city's main shopping strip, public transport hubs, and Launceston College. The majority of AMEP students are from Central Africa and Bhutan due to the recent influx of migrants (mainly refugees) from these areas, but there are also other students from different countries attending classes at the centre.

Centre 25, CSWE III – Centre 25 is the same centre as Centre 09. For a centre description, see the entry for Centre 09.

Centre 26, CSWE I – Participants at Centre 26 attended the same AMEP centre as participants from Centre 08. For a centre description, see the entry for Centre 08.

Appendix D: Overview of Participants

Table D.1: Cohort A participants

	Participant number	Pseudonym	Age group (2008)	CSWE level	Years of schooling	Country of origin
1.	c01p003	Lily	16–24	2	8–12yrs	PR China
2.	c01p004	Cherry	16–24	2	13+	PR China
3.	c01p005	Revaka	25–34	2	13+	India
4.	c01p006	Nhung	25–34	2	13+	Vietnam
5.	c01p008	Kristina	16–24	2	13+	Lithuania
6.	c01p009	Imaan	25–34	2	13+	Pakistan
7.	c01p012	Vinny	25–34	2	13+	India
8.	c02p001	Jude	25–34	3	13+	Sri Lanka
9.	c02p003	Lourdes	35–44	3	13+	Philippines
10.	c02p005	April	35–44	3	13+	PR China
11.	c02p009	Faith	25–34	3	13+	Sri Lanka
12.	c02p014	Jane	25–34	3	13+	Poland
13.	c02p015	Mark	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Sudan
14.	c02p016	Casey	35–44	3	8–12yrs	Czech Republic
15.	c05p004	Dan	16–24	3	13+	Egypt
16.	c05p006	Emma	16–24	3	13+	Brazil
17.	c05p007	Charles	35–44	3	13+	Colombia
18.	c05p009	Lisa	25–34	3	13+	Thailand
19.	c05p010	Kamran	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Iran
20.	c05p011	Will	35–44	3	13+	Iraq
21.	c06p003	Sarah	45–54	3	13+	Iran
22.	c06p004	Richard	16–24	3	13+	Cambodia
23.	c06p007	Delta	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Iran
24.	c06p009	Abrar	35–44	3	13+	Iraq
25.	c06p010	Diane	25–34	3	13+	Japan
26.	c06p016	Lucy	25–34	3	13+	South Korea
27.	c06p017	Wen	35–44	3	13+	PR China
28.	c08p001	Li Ming	45–54	1	8–12yrs	PR China
29.	c08p002	Leo	45–54	1	13+	PR China
30.	c08p003	Yin Yin	25–34	1	8–12yrs	PR China
31.	c08p005	Hua	25–34	1	8–12yrs	PR China
32.	c08p006	Elsie	35–44	1	13+	Lebanon
33.	c08p009	Chin Chin	35–44	1	0–7yrs	Myanmar
34.	c08p010	Li Li Lin	55+	1	13+	PR China
35.	c08p011	Irene	45–54	1	8–12yrs	PR China
36.	c08p013	Li Ye	16–24	1	13+	PR China
37.	c08p014	Samba	16–24	1	0–7yrs	Guinea
38.	c08p015	Ludmilla	55+	1	13+	Russia
39.	c09p001	Lucia	35–44	3	13+	Colombia
40.	c09p002	Lila	16–24	3	13+	Colombia
41.	c09p003	Karen	25–34	3	13+	PR China
42.	c09p004	Anna	35–44	3	13+	PR China
43.	c09p005	Lyn	35–44	3	8–12yrs	Philippines
44.	c09p006	Alex	25–34	3	13+	Saudi Arabia
45.	c09p010	Jeannie	35–44	3	13+	PR China
46.	c10p001	Suleman	35–44	3	13+	Ethiopia
47.	c10p003	Pita	35–44	3	13+	Peru
48.	c10p006	Xiao Mei	45–54	3	13+	PR China

49.	c10p007	Alina	35–44	3	13+	Romania
50.	c10p008	Hong	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Vietnam
51.	c10p012	Yuna	25–34	3	13+	South Korea
52.	c10p013	Nfumu	16–24	3	13+	DR Congo
53.	c11p001	Lisa	25–34	0	13+	PR China
54.	c11p003	Robert	25–34	0	0–7yrs	Liberia
55.	c11p009	Alan	25–34	0	8–12yrs	Burma
56.	c12p001	Susan	25–34	2	0–7yrs	Thailand
57.	c12p003	Hadia	35–44	2	0–7yrs	Sudan
58.	c12p006	Ping	25–34	2	8–1 yrs	Thailand
59.	c12p009	Beatriz	55+	2	8–1 yrs	Portugal
60.	c12p010	Tat (Sirikit)	35–44	2	0–7yrs	Thailand

Table D.2: Cohort B participants

	Participant number	Pseudonym	Age group (2011)	CSWE level	Years of schooling	Country of origin
1.	c21p001	Hannah	25–34	3	13+	South Korea
2.	c21p002	Mika	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Japan
3.	c21p003	Estelle	25–34	3	13+	Colombia
4.	c21p004	Dandan	25–34	3	13+	Taiwan
5.	c21p005	Rodmina	35–44	3	8–12yrs	Iran
6.	c21p006	Fish	25–34	3	13+	PR China
7.	c21p007	Ryoko	25–34	3	13+	Japan
8.	c21p008	Ilias	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Greece
9.	c21p009	Teresa	25–34	3	13+	Colombia
10.	c21p010	Sua	25–34	3	13+	Thailand
11.	c22p001	Ben	25–34	3	13+	PR China
12.	c22p002	Phoebe	25–34	3	13+	PR China
13.	c22p003	Kinjal	25–34	3	13+	India
14.	c22p004	Karen	16–24	3	13+	Iran
15.	c22p005	Jae-Sun	25–34	3	13+	South Korea
16.	c22p006	Emily	25–34	3	13+	Slovakia
17.	c22p007	Iris	25–34	3	13+	South Korea
18.	c22p008	Nina	25–34	3	8–12yrs	South Korea
19.	c23p001	Dbchater	45–54	3	8–12yrs	Iran
20.	c23p002	Rose	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Iran
21.	c23p003	Barbi	25–34	3	13+	India
22.	c23p004	Michael	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Iran
23.	c23p005	Mathu	25–34	3	13+	India
24.	c23p006	Madhoosh	25–34	3	13+	Afghanistan
25.	c23p007	Jake	16–24	3	13+	India
26.	c23p008	Sita	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Bhutan
27.	c23p009	Dada	16–24	3	8–12yrs	Lebanon
28.	c23p010	Hawa	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Liberia
29.	c23p011	Chellam	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Sri Lanka
30.	c23p012	Kanchan	25–34	3	13+	India
31.	c23p013	Mary	25–34	3	13+	Iran
32.	c23p014	Nymph	16–24	3	13+	India
33.	c23p015	Tania	35–44	3	8–12yrs	Iran
34.	c23p016	Tara	25–34	3	8–12yrs	Iran
35.	c24p001	Annisa	16–24	0	0–7yrs	Congo
36.	c24p002	Abdul	35–44	0	0–7yrs	Ethiopia, Eritrea
37.	c24p003	Dibya	45–54	0	0–7yrs	Bhutan

38.	c24p004	Sunil	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
39.	c24p005	Kancha	45-54	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
40.	c24p006	Maya	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
41.	c24p007	Kiran	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
42.	c24p008	Gayatri	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
43.	c24p009	Krishna	45-54	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
44.	c24p010	Shinta	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
45.	c24p011	Raja	45-54	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
46.	c24p012	Nakula	35-44	1	0-7yrs	Bhutan
47.	c24p013	Anjani	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
48.	c24p014	Arundhati	25-34	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
49.	c24p015	Arjun	35-44	3	0-7yrs	Bhutan
50.	c24p016	Sadewa	45-54	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
51.	c24p017	Indira	45-54	0	0-7yrs	Bhutan
52.	c24p018	Bima	55+	1	0-7yrs	Bhutan
53.	c24p019	Joy	35-44	0	0-7yrs	Uganda
54.	c25p001	Puspa	25-34	3	13+	India
55.	c25p002	Jonah	25-34	3	13+	Iran
56.	c25p003	Marimar	35-44	3	13+	Venezuela
57.	c25p004	Musa	25-34	3	8-12yrs	Somalia
58.	c25p005	Melody	16-24	3	13+	PR China
59.	c25p006	Tony	16-24	3	13+	PR China
60.	c25p007	Corazon	25-34	3	13+	Colombia
61.	c25p008	Winnie	25-34	3	13+	PR China
62.	c25p009	Wendy	25-34	3	8-12yrs	Hong Kong
63.	c25p010	Rita	35-44	3	13+	Mexico
64.	c25p011	Svetlana	25-34	3	13+	Kazakhstan
65.	c26p001	Adam	25-34	1	8-12yrs	Somalia
66.	c26p002	Rezarta	16-24	1	8-12yrs	Albania
67.	c26p003	Shan	35-44	1	8-12yrs	PR China
68.	c26p004	Hui	35-44	1	13+	Taiwan
69.	c26p005	Yuan	35-44	1	13+	PR China
70.	c26p006	Qian	25-34	1	13+	PR China
71.	c26p007	Ying	45-54	1	0-7yrs	PR China
72.	c26p008	Henry	25-34	1	8-12yrs	Burma
73.	c26p009	Bree	16-24	1	8-12yrs	Burma
74.	c26p010	Niki	25-34	1	13+	Iran
75.	c26p011	Nas	35-44	1	0-7yrs	Iran
76.	c26p012	Ara	35-44	1	13+	Iran
77.	c26p013	Amir	25-34	1	8-12yrs	Iran
78.	c26p014	Liam	25-34	1	8-12yrs	PR China
79.	c26p015	Yoo-Jin	35-44	1	8-12yrs	South Korea
80.	c26p016	Akbar	45-54	1	8-12yrs	Somalia
81.	c26p017	Mitra	35-44	1	13+	Iran
82.	c26p018	Mehry	35-44	1	13+	Iran
83.	c26p019	Takumi	55+	1	13+	Japan
84.	c26p020	Sabeen	25-34	1	8-12yrs	Iraq
85.	c26p021	Sana	25-34	1	0-7yrs	Somalia

Appendix E: Interview Schedule

- A greeting.
- Catching up about what participants have been doing since the last interview.
- The compilation of a language map and questions about language use in the identified domains.
- Family (e.g. Tell me about your family and who lives at home with you? What languages do you use with whom and why? What do you find most difficult about using English with your partner?).
- Work (e.g. Where do you work? How did you find the job? What languages do you use at work with whom and for which tasks? What do you find most difficult about using English at work?).
- Education (e.g. Are you doing courses at TAFE/studying at university? What are you studying? How did you find out about the course? What do you find most difficult about language use at TAFE/university?).
- Social networks (e.g. Tell me about who you spend time with? How did you meet them? What languages do you use with them? Do you have Australian friends? How much contact do you have with people back in your home country?).
- Religious practices/other activities (e.g. Tell me about other groups you belong to. How did you find out about them? What languages do you use? Do you volunteer?).
- Question prompts that aim at eliciting longer stretches of talk:
- I'd like to hear what you think about Australia.
- What do you like about Australia?
- What don't you like about Australia?
- Imagine a friend is moving to Australia. What advice would you give them?
- I'd like to hear you talk about the future. What are your plans and dreams for the next five years?
- Settlement success (e.g. Do you want to become an Australian citizen? Why/why not? Do you feel at home in Australia? What do you need to have to feel at home?).
- Participants' self-rated language assessments.
- Language learning practices (e.g. Tell us about anything that you do to learn English outside of class. Do these things help? Which skills are most important and why?).

- AMEP (e.g. What did you like/not like about AMEP? How did AMEP help you with your pathway/developing a social network? What did you learn at AMEP? What did you think about the settlement topics you talked about in class?).
- Closing.

Appendix F: Complete List of Countries of Birth

Table F.1: Complete list of countries of birth of Cohort A and B participants

	Cohort A	Cohort B
Country of birth	n	n
Afghanistan	1	1
Albania	0	1
Bhutan	0	17
Brazil	1	0
Burma	2	2
Cambodia	1	0
Colombia	3	3
Czech Republic	1	0
DR Congo	1	1
Egypt	1	0
Ethiopia	1	1
Germany	0	1
Greece	0	1
Guinea	1	0
Hong Kong	0	1
India	2	7
Iran	2	14
Iraq	2	2
Japan	1	3
Lebanon	1	1
Liberia	1	1
Lithuania	1	0
Mexico	0	1
Pakistan	1	0
Peru	1	0
Philippines	2	0
Poland	1	0
Portugal	1	0
PR China	16	11
Romania	1	0
Russia	1	0
Saudi Arabia	1	0
Slovakia	0	1
Somalia	0	4
South Korea	2	5
Sri Lanka	2	1
Sudan	2	0
Taiwan	0	2
Thailand	4	1
Uganda	0	1
Venezuela	0	1
Vietnam	2	0
Total	60	85

Appendix G: Complete List of Languages Spoken

Table G.1: Complete list of languages spoken by Cohort A and Cohort B participants

	Cohort A	Cohort B
Language	n	n
Albanian	0	1
Amharic	1	1
Arabic	7	5
Cantonese	1	2
Chin	1	0
Czech	1	0
Dari	1	1
Dinka	1	0
Farsi (Persian)	3	14
French	2	0
Fulani	1	0
Greek	0	1
Gujarati	0	2
Hakha Chin	0	2
Hakka	0	1
Hindi	2	3
Japanese	1	4
Kakabe	1	0
Kakwa	0	1
Kinyamulenge	0	1
Kissi	0	1
Khmer	1	0
Korean	2	5
Kurdish	0	2
Liberian English	1	0
Lingala	1	0
Lithuanian	1	0
Malinke	1	0
Mandarin	15	14
Mindango	1	0
Nepali	0	17
Polish	2	0
Portuguese	2	0
Punjabi	2	2
Romanian	1	0
Russian	2	1
Shanghainese	0	1
Shona	0	1
Sinhalese	1	0
Slovakian	0	1
Somali	0	4
Spanish	5	5
Susu	1	0
Swahili	1	2

	Cohort A	Cohort B
Szechuanese	0	1
Tagalog	2	0
Tamil	1	2
Telugu	0	1
Thai	5	1
Tigrinya	0	1
Tshiluba	1	0
Turkish	0	1
Urdu	1	0
Vietnamese	3	0
Visaya	1	0
Xianese	0	1
Zande	1	0

REFERENCES

- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2007). Migrants and English proficiency. Perspectives on Migrants, cat. no. 3416.0. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/3416.0Main%20Features52007?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3416.0&issue=2007&num=&view>
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2008a). National Regional Profile: Parramatta (C) - North-East (Statistical Local Area). ABS, Canberra. Retrieved on June 8, 2010 from <http://www.census.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/105406252Population/People12004-2008?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=105406252&issue=2004-2008>
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2008b). National regional profile: Brisbane (C) local government area. ABS, Canberra. Retrieved on June 8, 2010 from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/LGA31000Population/People12004-2008?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=LGA31000&issue=2004-2008>
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2009). Skilled migration. Perspectives on Migrants, cat. no 3416.0. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3416.0Main+Features32009>
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2010). Forms of employment – A comparison of Australian and overseas born persons. Perspectives on Migrants, cat. no. 3416.0. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3416.0Main%20Features42010?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3416.0&issue=2010&num=&view>
- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics). (2013). ANZSCO -- Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations, 2013, Version 1.2. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/PrimaryMainFeatures/1220.0?OpenDocument>
- Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding integration: A conceptual Framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(2), 166–191.
- AMES. (2011). *Words to work: The experiences of people in the Adult Migrant English Program in Melbourne*. Melbourne: AMES.
- AMES. (2013). *AMEP and settlement outcomes*. Paper presented at the AMEP Conference, May 2013.

- <http://www.ames.net.au/files/file/Research/AMEP%20Conference%20Paper%202013.pdf>
- AMES. (2014). *Employment pathway programs at AMES*. Retrieved from https://www.ames.net.au/files/file/Settlement/RefugeeYoungPeople/7_Margaret_Davis.pdf
- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (3rd ed.). London, New York: Verso Books.
- ASRG (Australian Survey Research Group). (2011). *Settlement outcomes of new arrivals: Report of findings. Study for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia Retrieved from https://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CB0QFjAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dss.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F01_2014%2Fsettlement-outcomes-new-arrival_access.docx&ei=sJeVIWUMYXbmgWjIHWBQ&usg=AFQjCNHXqj_Bi1S10kpZQdb4VObkl1xSQ&bvm=bv.79189006,d.dGY
- Bloch, A. (2002). *The migration and settlement of refugees in Britain*. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brough, M., Gorman, D., Ramirez, E., & Westoby, P. (2003). Young refugees talk about well-being: A qualitative analysis of refugee youth mental health from three states. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 38(2), 193–208.
- Castles, S., & Miller, M. (2003). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world* (3rd ed.). Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chiswick, B., Lee, Y. L., & Miller, P. (2003). Patterns of immigrant occupational attainment in a longitudinal survey. *International Migration*, 41(4), 47–69.
- Chiswick, B., Lee, Y. L., & Miller, P. (2004). Immigrants' language skills: The Australian experience in a longitudinal survey. *International Migration Review*, 38(2), 611–654.
- Colic-Peisker, V. (2005). 'At least you're the right colour': Identity and social inclusion of Bosnian refugees in Australia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31, 615–638.
- Colic-Peisker, V. (2009). Visibility, settlement success and life satisfaction in three refugee communities in Australia. *Ethnicities*, 9(175), 175–200.
- Colic-Peisker, V., & Tilbury, F. (2006). Employment niches for recent refugees: Segmented labour market in 21st-century Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19, 203–229.
- Cooke, F. L., Zhang, J., & Wang, J. (2013). Chinese professional immigrants in Australia: A gendered pattern in (re)building their careers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(13), 2628–2645.
- Cools, C. A. (2006). Relational communication in intercultural couples. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 6(3–4), 262–274.

- Cuba, L., & Hummon, D. M. (1993). A place to call home: Identification with dwelling, community, and region. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34(1), 111–131.
- Department of Industry. (2014). *English courses for eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants in Australia*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.industry.gov.au/skills/ProgrammesandAssistance/AdultMigrantEnglishProgram/Documents/English-courses-for-eligible-migrants-and-humanitarian-entrants-in-Australia.pdf>
- Derwing, T., & Munro, M. J. (2013). The development of L2 oral language skills in two L1 groups: A 7-year study. *Language Learning*, 63(2), 163–185.
- Derwing, T., & Waugh, E. (2012). *Language skills and the social integration of Canada's adult immigrants*. Toronto: Institute for Research on Public Policy.
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2010). *Annual report 2009–2010*. Belconnen, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2009-10/pdf/diac-annual-report-2009-10-full-version.pdf>
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2011a). *Annual report 2010–2011*. Belconnen ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2010-11/pdf/2010-11-diac-annual-report.pdf>
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship) (2011b). Portfolio Budget Statements 2011–12. *Immigration and citizenship portfolio*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/budget/budget11/pbs/2011-12-pbs-full.pdf>
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2012a). *Annual report 2011–2012*. Belconnen ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2011-12/pdf/2011-12-diac-annual-report.pdf>
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2012b). *The settlement journey. Strengthening Australia through migration*. Belconnen ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from http://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/12_2013/settlement-journey_access.pdf
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2013a). *Annual report 2012–2013*. Belconnen ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2012-13/pdf/2012-13-diac-annual-report.pdf>
- DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship). (2013b). *Australian citizenship test snapshot report: 30 June 2013*. Belconnen ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.citizenship.gov.au/pdf/2013-12-snapshot-report.pdf>

- Duff, P. A., Wong, P., & Early, M. (2000). Learning language for work and life: The linguistic socialization of immigrant Canadians seeking careers in healthcare. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(1), 9–57.
- FECCA (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia). (2013). *Multicultural Access and Equity: Strengthening connections between communities and services*. Retrieved from http://www.fecca.org.au/images/stories/documents/Submissions/2013/fecca_multicultural_access_equity_report_june2013.pdf
- Fozdar, F., & Hartley, L. (2012). *Refugees in Western Australia: Settlement and Integration*. Retrieved from <http://www.mmrcwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/Refugees-in-WA-Settlement-and-IntegrationFINAL.pdf>
- Goldenberg, C., Gallimore, R., Reese, L., & Garnier, H. (2001). Cause and effect? A longitudinal study of immigrant Latino parents' aspirations and expectations, and their childrens' school performance. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(3), 547–582.
- Green, C., Kler, P., & Leeves, G. (2007). Immigrant overeducation: Evidence from recent arrivals to Australia. *Economics of Education Review*, 26(4), 420–432.
- Hammarstedt, M. (2001). Immigrant self-employment in Sweden-its variation and some possible determinants. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 13(2), 147–161.
- Hammersley, M. P., & Atkinson, P. (1989). *Ethnography: Principles and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Hawthorne, L. (1996). Reversing past stereotypes: Skilled NESB women in Australia. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 17(1–2), 41–52.
- Ho, C., & Alcorso, C. (2004). Migrants and employment: Challenging the success story. *Journal of Sociology*, 40, 237–259.
- Ho, C. (2009). Migration as feminisation? Chinese women's experiences of work and family in Australia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(3), 497–514.
- Holmes, J., Marra, M., Newton, J., Joe, A., Riddiford, N., & Vine, B. (2009). *Enhancing socio-pragmatic skills among professional qualified workers* (Language in the Workplace Occasional Papers No.10). Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington.
- Houle, R., & Schellenberg, G. (2010). *New immigrants' assessments of their life in Canada*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Ministry of Industry.
- Hugo, G. (2011). *Economic, social and civic contributions of first and second generation humanitarian entrants*. Final Report to Department of Immigration and Citizenship, May.
- Inal, G., Ariss, A. A., & Forson, C. (2013). Self-employment as a career strategy for ethnic minorities: The case of Turkish-Cypriots in Britain. *Journal of Management Development*, 32(2), 166–181.
- Junankar, P. N. R., & Mahuteau, S. (2005). Do migrants get good jobs? New migrant settlement in Australia. *The Economic Record*, 81(255), S34–S46.

- Khoo, S., & McDonald, P. (2001). *Indicators of immigrant settlement for Australia*. Canberra: Australian Centre for Population Research, Australian National University.
- Kirkman, M., Harrison, L., Hillier, L., & Pyett, P. (2001). 'I know I'm doing a good job': Canonical and autobiographical narratives of teenage mothers. *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 3(3), 279–294.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Cameron, L. (2008). Language moves: The place of 'foreign' languages in classroom teaching and learning. *Review of Research in Education*, 32, 147–186.
- Lathion, S. (2008). Muslims in Switzerland: Is citizenship really incompatible with Muslim identity? *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 28(1), 53–60.
- Liamputtong, P., & Ezzy, D. (2005). *Qualitative research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Louw, K. J., Derwing, T. M., & Abbott, M. L. (2010). Teaching pragmatics to L2 learners for the workplace: The job interview. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 66(5), 739–758.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- McMillan, D. W. (1996). Sense of community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(4), 315–325.
- McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), 6–23.
- McPherson, P. (2007). *Course planning for preliterate and low-literacy learners*. AMEP Research Centre Fact Sheet. Retrieved September 27, 2013, http://www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/docs/fact_sheets/Teaching_Issues_Fact_Sheet_10.pdf
- Miller, E. R. (2010). Agency in the making: Adult immigrants' accounts of language learning and work. *TESOL Quarterly*, 44(3), 465–487.
- Navitas English. (2014). *SLPET: AMEP Pathways to Work Program*. Retrieved from <http://www.navitas-english.com.au/amep/amep-courses/slpet-courses/>
- Pavlenko, A., & Norton, B. (2007). Imagined communities, identity, and English language learning. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (Vol. 15, pp. 669–680). New York: Springer US.
- Pearson, J., Hammond, M., Heffernan, E., & Turner, T. (2012). Careers and talents not to be wasted: Skilled immigrants' journeys through psychological states en route to satisfying employment. *Journal of Management Development*, 31(2), 102–115.
- Richardson, S., Miller-Lewis, L., Ngo, P., & Ilsley, D. (2002). *The settlement experiences of new migrants*. Adelaide: National Institute of Labour Studies, Flinders University.
- Richardson, S., Robertson, F., & Ilsley, D. (2001). *The labour force experience of new migrants*. Canberra: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

- Sarason, S. B. (1974). *The psychological sense of community: Prospects for a community psychology*. Oxford: Jossey-Bass.
- Schellenberg, G., & Maheux, H. (2007). Immigrants' perspectives on their first four years in Canada: Highlights from three waves of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada. *Canadian Social Trends. Special Edition* (pp. 1–34): Statistics Canada (Catalogue no. 11–008).
- Segalowitz, N., Gatbonton, E., & Trofimovic, P. (2009). Links between ethnolinguistic affiliation, self-related motivation and second language fluency: Are they mediated by psycholinguistic variables? In Z. Dornyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivations, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Sonderegger, R., & Barrett, P. M. (2004). Patterns of cultural adjustment among young migrants to Australia. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 13(3), 341–356.
- Statistics Canada. (2005). *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada: A portrait of early settlement experiences*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Special Surveys Division. Retrieved from <http://publications.gc.ca/Collection/Statcan/89-614-XIE/89-614-XIE2005001.pdf>
- Suarez-Orozco, C., Pimentel, A., & Martin, M. (2009). The significance of relationships: Academic engagement and achievement among newcomer immigrant youth. *Teachers College Record*, 111(3), 712–749.
- Syed, J., & Murray, P. (2009). Combating the English language deficit: The labour market experiences of migrant women in Australia. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 19(4), 413–432.
- Thomson, R., & Holland, J. (2010). Hindsight, foresight and insight: The challenges of longitudinal qualitative research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 6(3), 233–244.
- Tomlinson, B. (2012). Materials development for language learning and teaching. *Language Teaching*, 45(2), 143–179.
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). (2004). *Resettlement handbook* (2nd ed.). Geneva: Department of International Protection.
- Valtonen, K. (2001). Cracking monopoly: Immigrants and employment in Finland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27, 421–438.
- Valtonen, K. (2004). From the margin to the mainstream: Conceptualizing refugee settlement processes. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 17, 70–96.
- van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning. A sociocultural perspective*. New York: Kluwer Academic.
- van Tubergen, F. (2005). Self-employment of immigrants: A cross-national study of 17 Western societies. *Social Forces*, 84(2), 709–732.
- VandenHeuvel, A., & Wooden, M. (2000). Immigrants' labour market experiences in the early settlement years. *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 26(1), 59–69.

- Vasta, E. (2013). Do we need social cohesion in the 21st century? Multiple languages of belonging in the metropolis. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 34(2), 196–213.
- Waters, J. L. (2011). Time and transnationalism: A longitudinal study of immigration, endurance and settlement in Canada. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(7), 1119–1135.
- Yates, L. (2010). *Language training and settlement success: Are they related?* Sydney: AMEP Research Centre, Macquarie University.
- Yates, L. (2011). Interaction, language learning and social inclusion in early settlement. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14(4), 457–471.
- Yates, L., & Chisari, M. (2014a). Fact Sheet 1: Confidence and language learning. Series: Building confidence in the classroom and beyond. Professional development resource. Retrieved from:
http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_human_sciences/linguistics/linguistics_research/a-z_research_list/adult_migrant_english_program_longitudinal_study/
- Yates, L. & Chisari, M. (2014b). Fact Sheet 5: An annotated bibliography of resources confidence building. Series: Building confidence in the classroom and beyond. Professional development resource. Retrieved from:
http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_human_sciences/linguistics/linguistics_research/a-z_research_list/adult_migrant_english_program_longitudinal_study/
- Yates, L., Chisari, M. & Pryor, E. (2014). Fact Sheet 4: Building confidence in the community. Series: Building confidence in the classroom and beyond. Professional development resource. Retrieved from:
http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_human_sciences/linguistics/linguistics_research/a-z_research_list/adult_migrant_english_program_longitudinal_study/
- Yates, L. & Pryor, E. (2014a). Fact Sheet 2: Activities for building confidence in the classroom. Series: Building confidence in the classroom and beyond. Professional development resource. Retrieved from:
http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_human_sciences/linguistics/linguistics_research/a-z_research_list/adult_migrant_english_program_longitudinal_study/
- Yates, L., & Pryor, E. (2014b). Fact Sheet 3: Building confidence outside the classroom – preparing learners. Series: Building confidence in the classroom and beyond. Professional development resource. Retrieved from:
http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_human_sciences/linguistics/linguistics_research/a-z_research_list/adult_migrant_english_program_longitudinal_study/

- Yates, L., Terraschke, A., Setjadi, C., Zielinski, B., Pryor, E., Cheng, J., Major, G., Williams-Tetteh, V., & Chisari, M. (2013). *AMEP longitudinal study 2011–2014: Interim research report 2: Cohort B*. Unpublished interim report. Sydney: Macquarie University.
- Yates, L., Terraschke, A., & Zielinski, B. (2012). *Planning language use in bilingual families*. Sydney: Macquarie University.
- Yates, L., & Williams, A. (2003). Turning the kaleidoscope: Perceptions of learning and teaching in the AMEP. In Wigglesworth, G. (Ed.), *The kaleidoscope of adult second language learning: Learner, teacher and researcher perspectives* (pp. 183–220). Sydney: NCELTR.
- Zielinski, B. (2010) *The impact of English learners' pronunciation skills on communication: Perceptions and reality*. Paper presented Applied Linguistics Association of Australia Conference, Brisbane.



MACQUARIE
University

Macquarie University
North Ryde
New South Wales 2109
T: (02) 9850 7111
mq.edu.au

CRICOS Provider 00002J