##### LAMI Workshop

**Uneven profiles & language requirements within the migration context**

**HANDOUT 1 – Task 1**

**The tasks for this afternoon**

Structure

* Task 1 – 20 minutes
* Task 2 – 25 minutes
* Feedback (roundtable in plenary) – 20 minutes

Logistic

Creating small working groups (5-7 participants)

Each group nominates:

* + a group coordinator (for the activities)
  + a group rapporteur (for the final roundtable and written summary)

**Uneven profiles – ALTE LAMI report 2021** - DRAFT

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1. ***The test – structure and reason for measuring the skills separately***

*The Norwegian language test for adult migrants* (*Norskprøven for voksne innvandrere*, hereafter *Norskprøven*) is developed by the full member of ALTE, Skills Norway (Kompetanse Norge), on assignment of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The test received the ALTE Q-mark in 2018. The test is based on the *Common European Framework of Reference* and measures at levels A1, A2, B1 and B2, with Under A1 also being a possible result. The test consists of four parts: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The reading, listening, and writing parts are digital, while the oral test is a face-to-face exam. The reading and listening parts are partly adaptive. In 2020, 20 526 adult migrants took Norskprøven. The test is compulsory for refugees and family reunited for whom the test serves the purpose of an achievement test following the state financed course of Norwegian, while one may also take the test as a proficiency test, e.g. without following a particular course beforehand.

Importantly, Norskprøvenmeasures the four language skills, listening, reading, writing and speaking/interacting in four separate parts yielding separate CEFR-based scores. The listening test is a multiple choice test and does not depend on writing skills at all, and strive towards requiring as little reading skills as possible, with instructions being read aloud and answer alternatives are given either as pictures, numbers or very simple, familiar written words. This is possible since the test is digital. The reading test requires reading only, no writing or oral replies are required. Candidates give their responses by choosing the right written alternative or picture alternative or in other ways manipulate text, for example by sorting paragraphs in the right order, by clicking on a word in a text etc. The written test requires some reading of instructions/tasks, but also here an attempt to isolate the skill in question from other skills have been a guiding rule, especially on lower levels. The oral production/interaction test, which is a peer exam, requires no reading or writing, only listening and speaking/interaction.

The test developers of Norskprøven acknowledge several important advantages of measuring the four skills separately (Carlsen & Moe, 2016, 2019). Firstly, it allows adult learners with limited reading and writing skills to perform better in the oral skills of listening and speaking/interaction. These learners often have more uneven profiles than learners with more prior education (Carlsen, 2017, 2018), and for this group, it is particularly important to be given the chance to show their oral abilities in separate parts not depending upon their reading and/or writing skills. Secondly, independent tests of the different skills allow candidates who fail to obtain the level they need or desire in one or several skills to sit again for only one or some parts of the test, which is advantageous both for economic and pedagogical reasons: Candidates don’t have to pay for more parts of the tests than they need, and they may prepare in a more focused way for the part of the test which is most difficult for them. The main advantage, however, is that it allows users of the test results to set differentiated language requirements for different contexts like residency/citizenship, labour and education. Whether test users take full advantage of this possibility will be further explored below.

1. ***Test results on the different parts of the test (statistics)***

Skills Norway publish the [results of Norskprøven](http://status.vox.no/webview/index.jsp?headers=virtual&virtualsubset=A1_value+-+UnderA1_value&v=2&stubs=Sted&stubs=Tidspunkt&stubs=Prvetype&Prvetypesubset=1+-+4&measure=common&Stedsubset=23%2C1+-+50&measuretype=4&study=http%3A%2F%2F10.36.88.50%3A80%2Fobj%2FfStudy%2Fnorskinnvandrere-prover-resultatfylkekommune&language=no&cube=http%3A%2F%2F10.36.88.50%3A80%2Fobj%2FfCube%2Fnorskinnvandrere-prover-resultatfylkekommune_C1&Tidspunktsubset=20142+-+20184&mode=cube&top=yes)*.* The overview shows the percentage of test candidates obtaining the different CEFR levels on the different parts of the test.

In 2020, the part of the test which most candidates took for a second (or third) time, was the written production part, as was the case also for the other years since Norskprøven was administered for the first time in 2014. This indicates that written production is the most challenging skill, which underscores the importance of measuring the different language skills in independent parts. Reading, listening and oral production is taken more than once around 30 000 times, while written production is taken more than once around 40 000 times.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | READING | LISTENING | ORAL PRODUCTION | WRITTEN PRODUCTION |
| Number of parts of tests | 101669 | 101099 | 110780 | 108222 |
| Parts of tests taken only once by each candidate | 70799 | 71127 | 78492 | 68202 |
| Parts of tests taken more than once by each candidate | 30870 | 29972 | 32288 | 40020 |
| Number of unique candidates | 83753 | 83818 | 92600 | 84258 |

*Table xx: Numbers of candidates taking the different parts of Norskprøven between 2014 and September 2020.*

1. ***To what extent is the profiled approach used in society (integration policy, labour market, higher education, other?)***

As one of few CoE-member states, Norwegian *immigration policies* set differentiated language requirements for permanent residency and citizenship (Rocca et al., 2020). While most countries set the same level requirement in all four skills, the formal language requirement in Norway is level A1 in only the oral production/interaction part of the test for permanent residency, and B1 in the oral part for citizenship[[1]](#footnote-1). While the explicit language requirement is oral, there is however an additional requirement to pass a knowledge of society test for citizenship[[2]](#footnote-2). This test is also in Norwegian, and it is a written multiple choice test requiring both Norwegian skills and reading skills (it is however possible to apply to take the test orally)

The Norwegian discrimination act stipulates that discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, including language, is illegal. Setting specific requirements such as language requirements to certain groups, is not a violation of the law if the requirements can be justified as relevant for purpose. In the *labour market*, most examples of employers setting formal language requirements referring to CEFR levels do so referring to the same level for all four skills (ref.). There are some exceptions. In 2017 there was a national language requirement that non-native speaking kinder garden assistants document proficiency in Norwegian. The requirement was set at B1 in reading, listening and speaking, while a lower level, A2, was required in writing. Similar, Tide transport company requires A2 in reading and writing, but a higher level, B1 in listening and speaking. Drammen municipality has developed a system of differentiated language requirements in oral and written skills for a range of different jobs in the municipality.

**Short summary of the Norwegian example**

1. ***The test – structure and reason for measuring the skills separately***

-The Norwegian language test for adult migrants (Norskprøven for voksne innvandrere, hereafter Norskprøven)

- Developed by Kompetanse Norge (Skills Norway)

- Reading, listening, writing and speaking in separate parts yielding separate CEFR-scores

- Digital (reading, listening, writing) and partly adaptive (reading and listening)

- Advantages of separate tests: one can take again only the part(s) one need, allows to show differentiated profiles, particularly important for LESLLA-learners

1. ***Test results on the different parts of the test (statistics)***

- Written production – the part of the test which is most often taken several times by the same candidates, confirming that writing is the skills which poses the biggest challenges to learners (Carlsen, 2012, Samfunnsøkonomisk analyse, 2017)

1. ***To what extent is the profiled approach used in society (integration policy, labour market, higher education, other?)***

- Norway set differentiated level requirements in different skills for permanent residency as well as for citizenship. Only oral production is required (but the KoS-test is a written multiple choice test in Norwegian, representing an implicit test of Norwegian and of reading). In the labour market most employers set flat requirements (some exceptions)

**Task 1: Questions to be discussed in the groups (20 min)**

Q1: Are there language tests measuring different skills in different part of the test in your countries?

Q2: Are differentiated language requirements set by different agents in your society, for example for

- a) residency &/or citizenship

- b) admission to higher education

- c) different jobs/professions

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Countries represented in your group** | **Q1 yes/no** | **Q2 yes/no** | **Examples of differentiated requirements in your countries (a,b or c), explain briefly** |
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**Please send this grid to** [**chca@hvl.no**](mailto:chca@hvl.no)

**Task 2: Questions to be discussed in the groups (25 min)**

Q1: What, in your opinion, threatens the construct validity of listening tasks?

Q2: Develop a listening task for the A2-level aimed to avoid the influence of construct-irrelevant skills//

Develop a listening task for the B1-level aimed to avoid the influence of construct-irrelevant skills//

Choose one of the two levels (A2 or B1) and move on to the other if you have time

1. The level is proposed raised from A2 to B1 and awaits final decision/approval. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The test for permanent recidency can be taken in 27 different languages, including Norwegian. For 11 of these languages the test includes audiofiles of questions [↑](#footnote-ref-2)