

Last year I was fortunate enough to receive an ASSTA Conference Travel Award which assisted me in attending the 20<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS) in August. The theme of the conference for 2023 was “Intermingling Communities and Changing Cultures”. This was quite a fitting theme for many of us as it was the first major international conference that we had attended post COVID (or ever, for myself!). It was wonderful to have the opportunity to meet so many researchers from around the world and hear about research from all aspects of phonetic sciences.

It was a particularly exciting time for me to be travelling overseas to present my research having submitted my PhD just days before! I was definitely riding a wave of adrenaline over to Europe.

As someone who has spent my entire PhD focused on creaky voice, it was fantastic to see the first keynote speaker was John Esling, someone whose work was fundamental in the writing of my thesis. He gave a fascinating talk on the larynx with several entertaining examples of different voice qualities.

One of the main highlights of the conference for me was the number of talks and posters dedicated to research on creaky voice (and voice quality more generally). Another highlight was, of course, the keynote talk by former Macquarie University Phonetics Lab member Titia Benders on child speech acquisition in under-documented languages. It was a wonderful presentation!

It was my first time presenting a poster at a conference and I found the experience to be a lot of fun. My poster was entitled “Convergence of creaky voice use in Australian English”, which presented results from a study that showed that teenage speakers of Australian English converged (i.e., became more similar to each other) in their levels of creaky voice use during conversations. We also found that female speakers used creak at more similar levels to each other than males overall. The poster session lasted for about 90 minutes and I don’t think I had a minute to breathe with a steady stream of visitors wanting to hear about our study. It was hugely rewarding.

I was lucky enough to present a talk entitled “Creak prevalence and prosodic context in Australian English” at Interspeech 2023 in Dublin a week after ICPhS and visited with Jonathan Harrington at IPS in Munich during the week in between. Overall the trip was an incredible experience and I greatly appreciate the support from ASSTA that helped to make it happen.