An Evaluation of Formative Audio Feedback within Part Time Professional Development Programmes in DIT.

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2. Themes Audio feedback pilot project Asynchronous audio formative feedback on draft assignments MA in
An Evaluation of Formative Audio Feedback within Part Time Professionals...

Rationale

Can mix audio and typed comments to personalise the experience more. Evaluate participant opinion of audio feedback, including how they listen to it, any technological issues, and compare with written feedback component of modules.

Participants & Modules

62 postgraduate participants across 3 part time programmes. 22(2013-4) & 16 (2014-5) MA in Higher Education Academic Writing & Publishing module – audio feedback on journal article proposal & final draft. 12 Postgraduate Diploma students Professional Practice in 3rd Level Learning & Teaching module – audio feedback on one formative task within the semester. 12 MSc in Applied eLearning Supporting Virtual Communities module (online) – weekly summaries for the group on online activities.

Process

Equipment: Digital audio recorder, Microphone attached to computer/device, Mobile phone (set to flight mode!). Software: Audacity, Free converters e.g. M4A to MP3. Keep technical demands on participants to minimum. Used own microphone headset.

6. Practicalities

Need quiet space. With handset, flexibility of location (and time). Maximum length of 6 minutes (better if 5 minutes). Good to have a script template with an introduction and categories/headers (can hand write in comments). Use pauses to identify mistakes easily if using an editor (e.g. Audacity). (See Sounds Good guide: Practice Tips on Using Digital Audio for Assessment Feedback, B. Rotherham, Leeds University; https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxzb3VuZHNaeb29kdWt8Z3g6M2ZhNTYxZDU5MjM5ZmZiOA)

8. Results: What Went Well (our perspective)

Higher order concerns get focused on more so than in written feedback (global instead of local). Enjoyment/engagement and personal touch. Encouraging tone of voice – not easy to incorporate to written feedback.

9. Results: Online Survey [MA(Higher Education)]

Survey implemented both years since introduced (14 responses). Prior experience: 11 had not received or given audio feedback before; 2 had received audio feedback before. 1 had provided audio feedback to students already. Was the feedback clear? 9 strongly agreed & 5 agreed. Was the feedback effective? 10 strongly agreed and 4 agreed.

10. Results: What Went Well [MA(Higher Education)]

More personal: It mimicked a tutorial in such a way that I felt the tutor was doing a one-on-one. Audio feedback was useful. I would consider using it myself. Better understanding/clarify: I could get the sense of meaning from tone. Better way to receive constructive criticism: Feedback felt more positive when receiving critical comments which could be viewed as negative when read off a page. Repeated listening/engagement: I thought the audio feedback works really well. I listened to it, took it in, listened to it again and made a checklist of improvements suggested, and then implemented it.

11. Results: What did not go so well [MA(Higher Education)]

Technology anxiety: I was anxious about the process of being able to access the actual feedback but it wasn’t a problem in practice. Need to create own written feedback from the audio. Engagement: I felt I had to transcribe the feedback so that I could keep referring to it. While this was annoying, I came to fully understand it and interacted with it more. I wrote out the feedback in bullet points: took time. Scannable and harder to summarise.

12. Results: What Went Well [Diploma]

Repeated listening – more inclined to listen more than once. Easier to ‘absorb’ the feedback (voice catches an intonation not easily communicated in written form). More engaging: More personal, and as a student I felt more compelled to properly sit down and listen through the audio clip in its entirety, probably more so than if it was traditional written feedback. [...] some tones and emphases may be hard to convey effectively in writing, but
when communicated orally may be a lot clearer I can hear intonation and listening requires less effort than reading This is certainly something I’d consider using myself 12

13. Results: What did not go so well [Diploma]  Fear factor: Afraid of getting bad news  Less effective?  cannot ask for clarification as in conversation  ...but equally cannot interact with it as you would written feedback  Tendency to create their own written feedback from the audio:  easier to refer back to this and scan than to listen to full clip again Not searchable and harder to summarise Higher cognitive load required to identify the relevant points and arrange them yourself 13

14. Results: MSc(Applied eLearning)  Flexibility  It was great to have them downloaded to listen to on the train, while walking etc. Quite liked them as a way of prepping for a session  Have adopted: I thought this was an excellent idea and is something I have already incorporated into my own practice. 14

15. Would they implement it themselves? Are academic staff or design and deliver online / blended training MA - 7 would but 7 were undecided PG Diploma – 3 people out of five would  Concerns:  time needed to do it  finding suitable space  Issues with following up later?  easier to check written feedback to see whether students have acted on the points It would also be more difficult to locate specific feedback points I provided to students if they were only in audio clips  Would use it in cases where there are no instructions for further assessments  (Students could be asked to summarise how feedback was addressed in this situation?) 15

16. Outcomes & What Next  Personalisation  Student choice  Screencast instead  Issues of scale? Does seem to take same amount of time when written feedback is already provided 16


18. Thank You! roisin.donnelly@dit.ie claire.mcavinia@dit.ie @clairemca claire.mcdonnell@dit.ie @clairemcdonndit 18

19. Any questions? Shameless plug 19 #elss15

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