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

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

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Dublin Institute of Technology

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

1. An Evaluation of Formative Audio Feedback within Part Time Professional Development Programmes in DIT EdTech, University of Limerick, 28th-29th May 2015 Dr Claire McDonnell, Dr Roisin Donnelly, Dr Claire McAvinia Learning, Teaching and Technology Centre Dublin Institute of Technology

2. Themes Audio feedback pilot project Asynchronous audio formative feedback on draft assignments MA in

Higher Education MSc Applied eLearning PG Diploma in Third Level Learning and Teaching Rationale Process
Feedback on the feedback! Outcomes and what next 2

3. Rationale Crucial for early establishment of participant engagement Enhance quality and participant experience of feedback 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 3

4. 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 4

5. 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 5

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 / headings (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=ZGVmYXVsdGRv bWFpbnxz3VuZHNnb29kdWt8Z3g6M2ZhNTYxZDU5MjM5MmZiOA>) 6

7. Timescale 7 Best incentive to get started was to have already told our students we were doing it! Once about 5 feedback files had been recorded, we felt we had become accustomed to the process; - Read the work and make your own notes (handwritten or using track changes and comments facility on PC) - Select the aspects you want to focus on (may be easier to add notes to a feedback template sheet) - Decide whether some written annotations to the work are needed (e.g. an example of a specific change such as citing correctly or rephrasing to improve clarity) - Record the audio feedback The intention wasn't to save time, it was to provide more effective feedback while not adding to the time

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 8

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 9

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 / clarity: 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 10

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. Not searchable and harder to summarise Scanning through the paper to locate the issues being highlighted was a negative 11

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

17. Further reading & Other Applications 17 Chris Anson www.ansonica.com Will be video on www.dit.ie/lffc soon (DIT, INEW, FACILITATE & Maynooth U. Writing Centre) Sounds Good project- <https://sites.google.com/site/soundsgooduk/> Cavanaugh, A.J. & Song, L. (2014) Audio Feedback versus Written Feedback: Instructors' and Students' Perspectives MERLOT JOLT 10(1) [accessed 27th May 2015] McGarvey, D., & Haxton, K. (2011). Using audio for feedback on assessments: tutor and student experiences. (HEA Physical Sciences) New Directions, 7, 5-9. iAnnotate app (can write with stylus and add audio comments at particular points on a PDF) IMPALA Project – tips on creating podcasts

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

19. Any questions? Shameless plug 19 #elss15

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