Using Audio Feedback for Assessment

Brian Starbuck
and
Hayley Craddock
Introduction

- Inspired by Sounds Good presentation
- A group of students willing to give it a go
- Frustration at the limited impact of written assessment feedback
- Interest in assessment for learning
- Decision to try both summative and formative feedback
Summative feedback

- Based on student presentation
- Talking around notes made during presentation
- Recorded using headset and Audacity software with support and encouragement from Steve Humphries – Learning Technology Manager at North West Kent College
- In recording - outlined context for assessment – learning outcomes for course and assignment and then stage by stage comments with grade at the end
- Saved as MP3 and emailed
Listening To MP3 Files

- In the comfort of your own home, on a laptop or home computer.
- On a smart phone for listening on the move.
First Reactions

- Can be a fun and relaxed way to receive feedback and grades.
- At first it can be a little strange to hear a tutor’s voice coming from the speakers.
- Easy to recall the feedback as it is easily saved on a computer.
- We gain a lot more information in comparison to written feedback.
- We get to hear the thought process of the tutor.
First Reactions

- Useful to be able to remind the student about the context for assessment
- A lot more feedback given in less time than usually given to written feedback
- Feedback can be more subtle
- Enabled efficient use of tutorial time
- Largely confirmed findings from Sounds Good research
Formative Feedback

- Based on good draft of an essay
- Usually longer and more discursive
- No grade given
Impact On Learning

- Using tone of voice to gauge important points to change.
- As good as having a tutorial.
- Gives you time and space to digest information and build on it.
- Easy to recap on important points made by tutor, by replaying the audio.
- We could hear they had read the work properly.
Impact on learning

- Opportunity for detailed comments but not to cover everything
- Student performance improved by 8-12% typically
- Some students rescued from disaster
- Less formal approach worked surprisingly well
- Voice tone and certainty – very subtle
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative</th>
<th>Summative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendlier and more relaxed.</td>
<td>Authoritative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great for use with students</td>
<td>Great for use with all students</td>
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<tr>
<td>you know well.</td>
<td>- even ones you don’t know well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can be longer to include</td>
<td>Shorter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>more information.</td>
<td>Formal and to the point.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less scripted, and more</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>personal.</td>
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Audio Feedback vs Written Feedback

**Audio**
- Easier to remember.
- Easier to store/save.
- Feels like more time has been put into the feedback.
- More information gained.
- The mark seems less important.

**Written**
- Doesn’t stick in the mind.
- Easy to lose.
- Feels less personal, and that less effort has been put in.
- It tends to be just the mark you take notice of, rather than the feedback.
From Higher Education Academy Art, Design and Media – assessment practices often tied in with knowing the student – potentially makes audio feedback more effective in our context.

There can be issues around feedback on very personal and/or challenging work.
and something else…Feedforward

- Used 12 minute piece before start of programme to introduce students to a challenging assignment
- Students brought ideas, research and initial work to early group discussion for development
- Better work, more quickly, from most students