

Enhancing international students' engagement through audio formative feedback

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Outline

- Rationale / Context
- Methodology
- Results
- Impact
- Limitations /Way Forward

Rationale



Observed not engaging fully
with formative feedback

Did not view it as a tool to
attain achievement

Frameworks

- Debates in education re utility of formative assessment feedback (Barram, 2017; Bennett, 2011; Shepard, 2008; Kahl, 2005; Marshall, 2005 & Sadler, 1989)
- Studies concerning audio feedback (Hooper, 2010; Lunt & Curran, 2010; Orsmond, Merry & Reiling, 2005 & Trimingham & Simmons, n.d.)

Context

- Aim –
 - to refocus students on the learning process and re-engage them to the intrinsic value of feedback rather than focusing solely on grades
- Formative Feedback –
 - specific, detailed and constructive

Audio Feedback



(goo.gl/XDRXkq, 2017)

Feedback recorded and delineated via a

- mp3 recording combined with brief annotation tracking changes asynchronously
- screencast recorded synchronously as making annotations on text
- mp3 recording no annotation different colours highlighted areas – marking code

Structure of Audio Feedback

- Greeted student by name and introduced self
- Feedback divided into 4 sections
 - Structure
 - Content
 - Language
 - Brief overall summary
- Used examples – page & paragraph numbers
- Length between 4-8 minutes

Methodology

Mixed Methods

Quantitative – Bristol Online Survey (BOS)

- Overall sense of students' views of experience
- Structured questions with guide prompts

Qualitative – Focus Group

- Richer more in-depth information
- Semi-structured interview – open-ended questions
- Data analysed by using open coding (Charmaz, 2014)

Participants

- **Survey**
- 9 Males: 5 Arabic, 1 Khazak, 3 Chinese, 1 Sudanese
- **Focus Group**
- 4 Males: 2 Arabic, 2 Chinese



((goo.gl/scV134, 2017)

- **Survey**
- 7 Females: 2 Arabic, 1 Khazak, 4 Chinese
- **Focus Group**
- 2 Females: Chinese



(goo.gl/UEW7KP, 2017)

- **Survey total = 16 Focus Group total = 6**

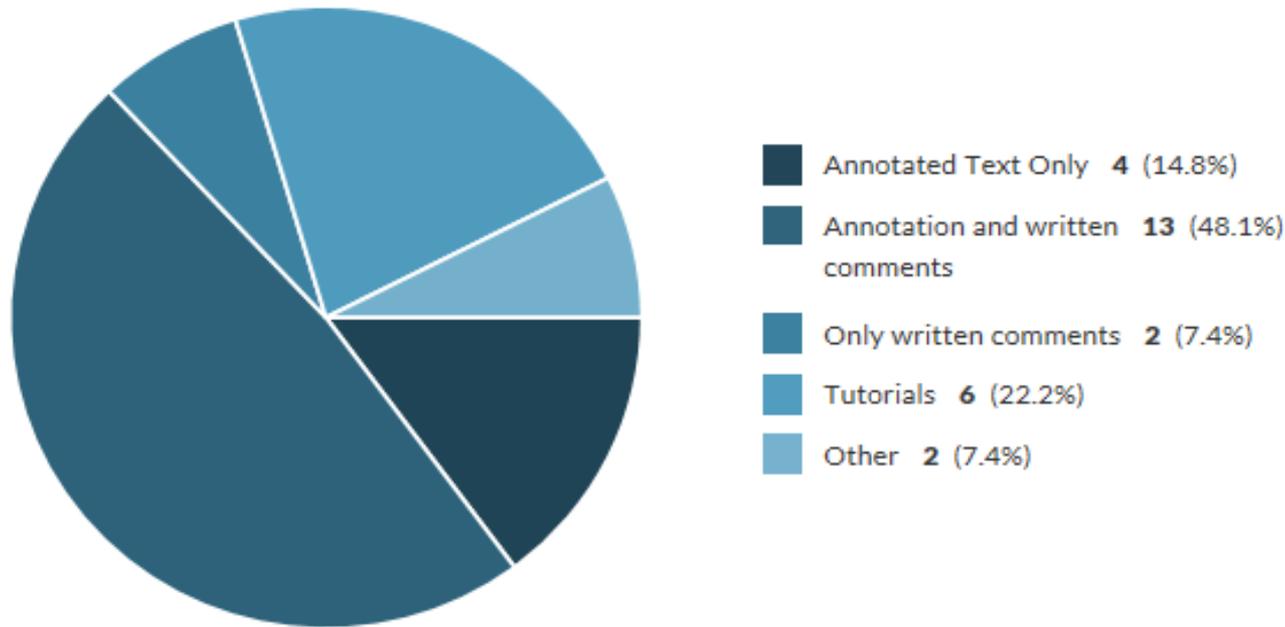
BOS Questions

Sections:

- Understanding/ perception of formative feedback & audio feedback
- Usual experience of formative feedback
- Experience of receiving audio formative feedback

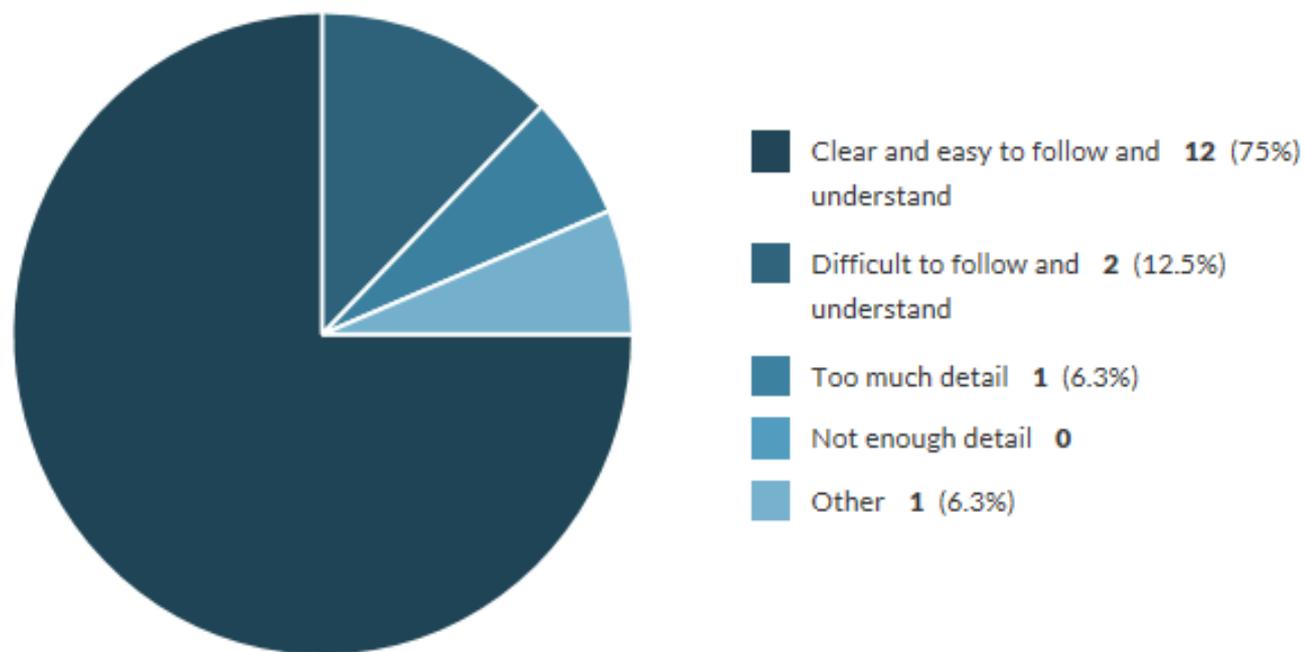
Results – Quantitative - BOS

How do you usually receive formative feedback for your written work? Tick all that is applicable.

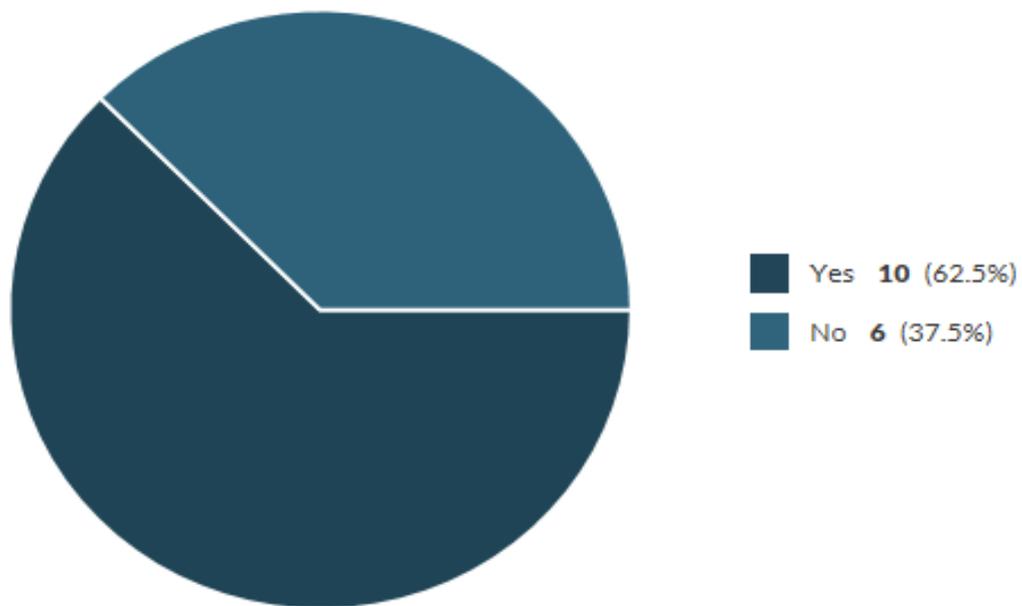


How did the audio feedback compare to your usual form of receiving formative feedback?

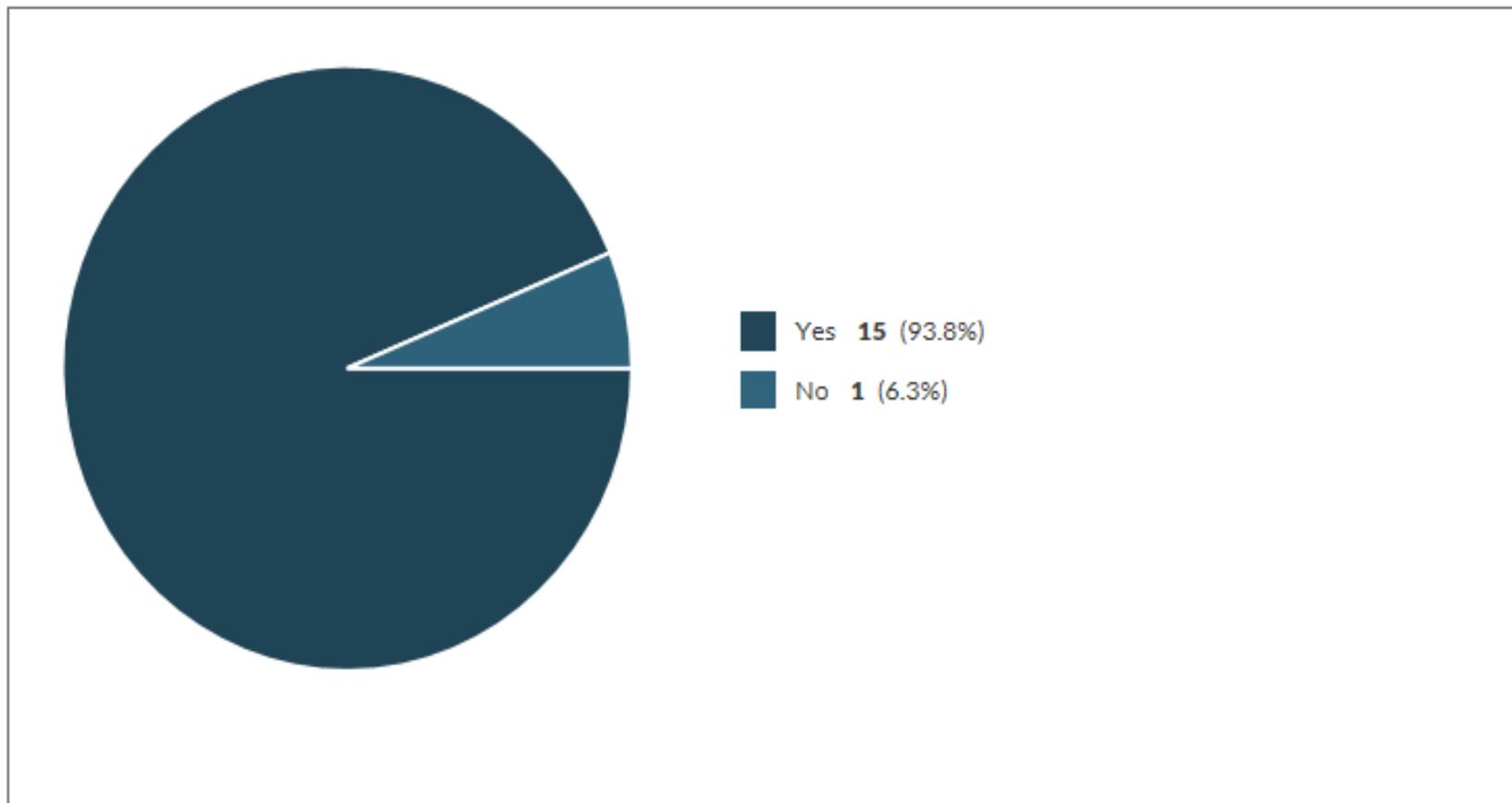
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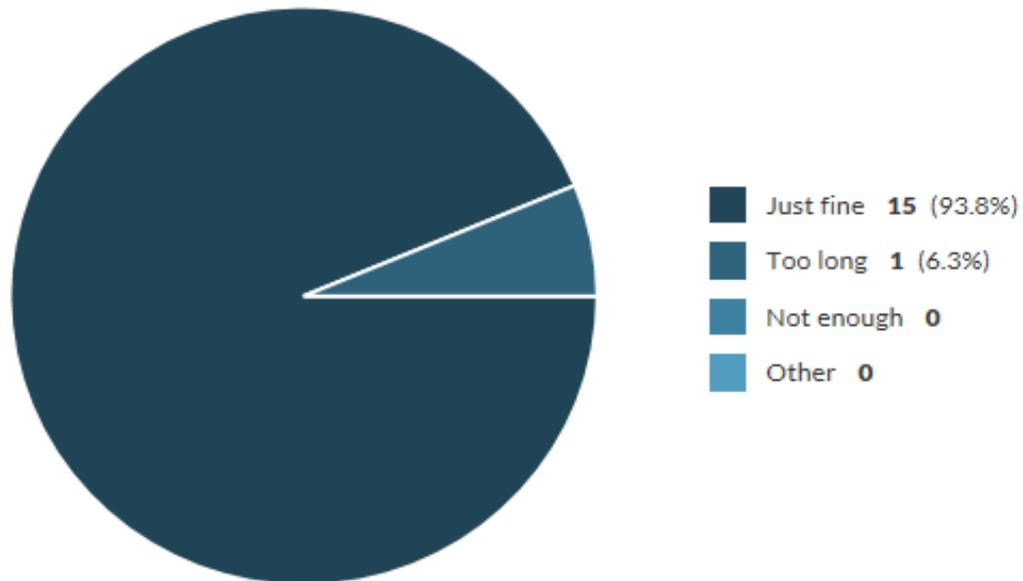
Did the audio approach add anything 'extra' to your formative feedback?



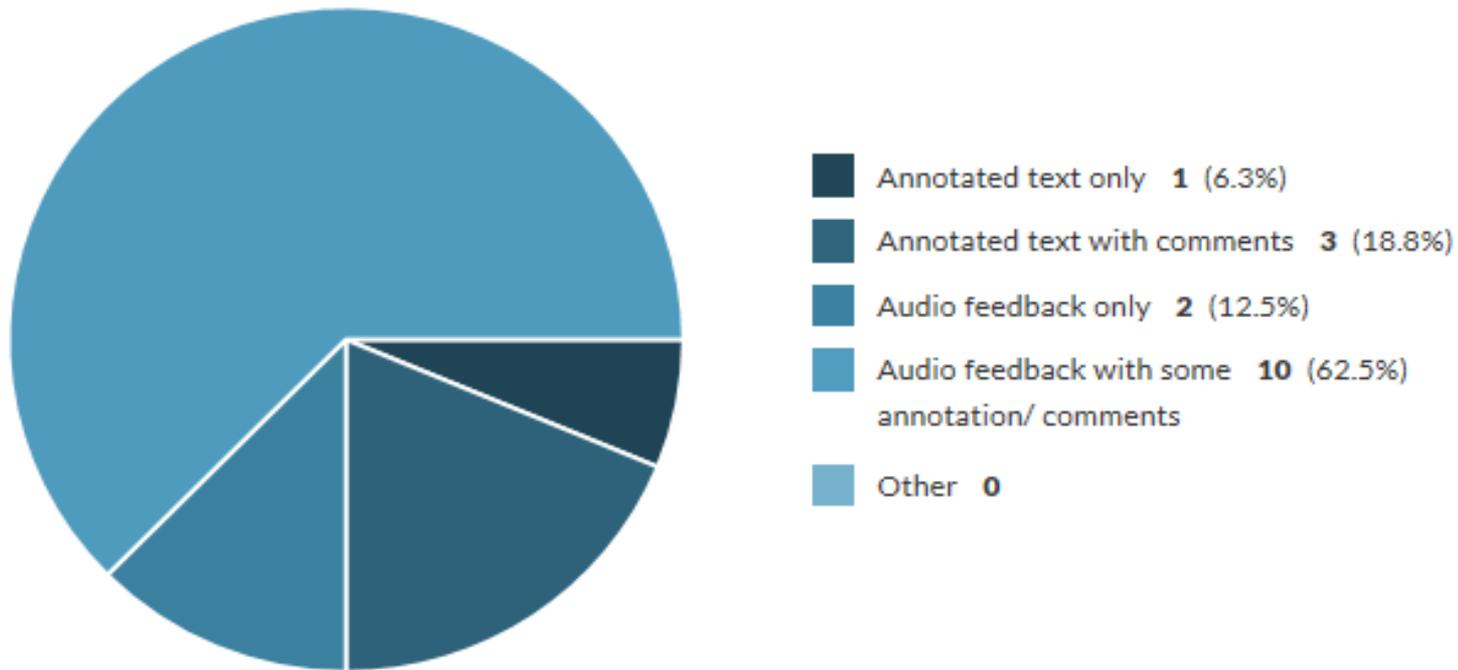
Did the audio feedback assist with developing your listening skills?



How was the length of the feedback?



If you had a choice which approach of formative feedback would you prefer the most? Choose one.



Results – Qualitative – Focus Group

Initial thoughts re audio feedback:

- “**Surprise** never had anything like this before” (Chinese participant 1)
- “**Interesting** a new form of feedback...first time to receive audio feedback” (Arabic participant 1)
- “I think it is a **new useful idea.**” (Chinese participant 3)
- “I **was impressed** as the audio feedback was a **new experience.**” (Arabic participant 2)
- “**Afraid** I would **not be able to understand everything**” (Chinese participant 2)

Voice/tone/speed/delivery

- “Your **voice is very clear** and I can **listen to it easily.**” (Chinese participant 3)
- “Very clear...understand clearly, speed, tone okay. I think it is natural just like a face-to-face talk.” (Chinese participant 1)
- “It was an **appropriate length**. The most important thing, in my opinion, is the **quality of voice must be clear.**” ((Chinese participant 2)
- “Yes **teacher should put in his/her personality in audio** as it more **like a conversation** talk just the same speed pace...otherwise robotic.” (Chinese participant 4)
- “It is **important to hear tutor’s personality that makes good relations between students and tutors.**” (Arabic participant 1)

Voice/tone/speed/delivery

- **“The language was clear, natural and conversational. The pace of delivery was moderate neither fast nor slow just as it should be.**

I do not think that it is very important because objectivity here is the focus on the content of the feedback. However, the tutor’s personality could be a source of inspiration to some students.” (Arabic participant 2)

- **“The feeling that comes with audio feedback and the voice tone of my tutor gave me a clear idea about my weakness area and where I should focus.”** (Arabic participant 1)

Voice/tone/speed/delivery

- “You were talking to me just like you were next to me...”
(Arabic participant 1)

Agency

- “I should say that I’m not tired of listening...**because it’s audio I can start and stop it any time I want.**” (Arabic participant 2)
- “It is good because **I can stop it when I want...doesn’t matter how long it is....**generally timing is okay” (Chinese participant 2)
- “For me it is more efficient than the feedback on paper...it has more details similar to a face to face talk...because when you write on paper it is a short comment **with audio I receive more details...I am in control and play it many times.**” (Chinese participant 4)
- “Yes, more in control when receive it as audio feedback. **Gives more freedom to listen whenever we want...**” (Chinese participant 3)

Agency cont'd

- “It was the **first time for me receiving audio feedback** and that **enhance my experience** because for example when I receive my feedback about my writing **I can follow my tutor section by section because I can play and pause the recorder.**” (Arabic participant 1)
- “It was **very useful compared to face to face** – more detailed and listen to it over again...**when we forget we can listen to it again.**” (Chinese participant 3)

Impact on listening skills

- “It is a **good way to improve your English listening...your voice is clear and classical British English not like our classmates when we listen to your voice it is more helpful to our listening skills than listening to classmates.**” (Chinese participant 1)
- “I listened to it three times...**I can listen to the words...good for my oral English and pronunciation.**” (Chinese participant 2)
- “The **more I listen and expose to the language and comments on my learning the more I learn and become aware of my points of weakness, strength and opportunity.**” (Arabic participant 1)

Impact on listening cont'd

- “I think it is clear and **if I finish it I get a sense of achievement that I can understand my teacher’s meaning and I’m willing to listen to it next time.**” (Arabic participant 2)

Development tool

- “Compared face-to-face, this is very good to listen – **focus on more important points** – listened 2/3 times and **remember it.**” (Chinese Participant 1)
- “Actually it is good...because **when I receive paper feedback**, it is paper and you put it in your booklet or somewhere and **put it away and you forget [about] it** and can't find it anymore. With **audio it exists on your device whenever you want it**, you can replay it...**when I do something according to the feedback you can play it again to see if I followed the feedback.**” (Chinese Participant 3)

Development tool cont'd

- “I can correct my mistakes one by one – it was **very good to correct my mistakes quickly and efficiently.**” (Chinese participant 2)
- “The audio feedback was **really effective** and enjoyable experience as it **involved different learning skills.** Students who care for **improving their integrated learning** would definitely like the audio formative feedback **as it involves listening and reading the tutor comments.**” (Arabic participant 2)

Development tool cont'd

- “Feedback you gave me I put it into sections - **pause after first section make notes so I need to know what I work on.** Then, I start it for the next section and make notes...” (Chinese participant 4)
- “I am listening and **I need to make notes...**helping my academic skills while I listen I can't remember it, memorise it; I need to make notes **so practising my note-taking not just my listening.**” (Arabic participant 1)

Development tool cont'd

- “It’s not just about the essay but it is also about my future study so **I definitely will play it and listen to it many times as feedback can be applied to other areas of study...**hand written feedback is all about essay...audio feedback I receive **more than the focus on the essay...it is a reminder...**once we realise our weakness we can’t change it very quickly so we sometimes need **something to remind about the weakness and reflect on it to see if I made progress on this...**Did I make progress and make some changes? **I will reflect on it many times...**with handwritten feedback I just put it away because it’s all about essay when we finish the essay we hardly ever look at it again or read it again...**with audio you can.”** (Chinese participant 4)

Development tool cont'd

- “To be honest, I think most students are like this...when we finish this term and the essay we it put away...even though I think I should read it again but I don't. I file it and I just don't read it again, **with audio I will listen to it again because it is easier and more convenient.**” (Chinese participant 4)

Development tool cont'd

- “I found it **organised, cohesive and professional**. It had deep analysis and condensed comments which **increased my realisation of my areas of weakness and strength.**”

(Arabic participant 2)

General comments

- “I think **audio feedback is more like face to face feedback**...think we have a talk we can receive more information...on paper you need to write just the main point **with audio you will give me more details.**” (Arabic Participant 1)
- “Essentially the **overall benefit was most helpful**; the **feedback on various areas of my learning I found most useful**. That is, to me, the **ultimate purpose of the feedback.**” (Arabic participant 2)

Improvements/Least Useful

- “Too many clicks...**need audio icon on same document** so it can be clicked **for convenience...efficiency.**” (Chinese participant 1)
- “**Add time** when talk about separate points.” (Chinese participant 1)
- “**Not always easy to open...**was not able to open it on laptop but on the university computer ok.” (Chinese participant 2)
- “Possibly the **lack of interactivity**. That is in my experience of the formative audio feedback I was **not allowed to record an audio reply and interact with the tutor** on the feedback.” (Arabic participant 2)



(goo.gl/QKpd8H, 2017)

Impact

- Engagement with this form of feedback
- Promotes agency
- Develops listening
- Develops academic skills
- Encourages revisiting feedback to check understanding & progression
- Re-engages with formative feedback
- Enhances relationship between student and tutor

Way Forward/Limitations

- Explore 'audio' as a means of presenting formative feedback to further engage international students
- Practicalities need to be 'measured', e.g.
 - Extra time/energy is required to present audio feedback in the various guises (as opposed to the 'traditional' way)
 - Accessibility/reliability of technology
 - Explore different platforms e.g. ULTRA & Moodle

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