

ASCILITE 2023

People, Partnerships and Pedagogies

Student perceptions of video feedback: Preliminary findings

Andrea Fenton, Paul Murphy and Mary Jesselyn Co

Monash University

One key challenge with feedback is designing it to ensure that students engage and act on it, which implies that the effect of feedback is as important as the feedback itself. In this paper, we explore students' perceptions of video feedback in comparison to written feedback and report the preliminary findings of our pilot study. We conducted interviews on nine students who received video feedback in their marketing capstone unit. After conducting a thematic analysis on the interview data, we found that students preferred video feedback over written feedback because of the following – it provides more detailed, clearer, and more understandable feedback; and it also creates better connection with the marker because it feels more authentic and personalized. Both positive and negative emotions are generated by the video feedback. The findings will help us identify areas we can focus on in an upcoming large-scale study.

Keywords: video feedback, effectiveness, emotion

Background

Feedback is vital in assisting students in understand their own performance on a given task and to understanding how they can improve (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The major challenge with feedback is designing it to engage learners that will result in students acting on it which implies that the effect of feedback is as important as the feedback itself (Boud, 2015). Feedback has traditionally been in written form. Students complain that written feedback is insufficient, unclear or untimely (Cranny, 2016). Written feedback also increases cognitive load in students since text is the usual default medium for most courses (Grigoryan, 2017) and fosters “fix-oriented feedback” since students focus only fixing the problems that the written feedback raises (Bisnell, 2017). One of the latest developments in alternative methods for feedback include audio and video feedback. Hattie's (1999) meta-analyses found that the most effective forms of feedback provide cues or reinforcement to learners and are in the form of video, audio or computer-assisted feedback compared to written feedback. Current research on the use of video feedback in higher education from a student point of view has revealed most students prefer video feedback over written feedback (Bahula & Kay, 2021). Despite this, most feedback provided to students in higher education is mainly written. Video feedback comes in a variety of forms. Screencast feedback is when a marker's screen showing the mouse movements, scrolling and typing is recorded together with the marker's narration (Henderson & Phillips, 2015) while a talking head video feedback is when a recording of the marker speaking to the camera about the student's assessment (Lamey, 2015); and a combination feedback video where the video of the marker displayed within the screencast of the computer screen is recorded with the narration simultaneously (Klappa, 2015). Although much has been written about the effectiveness of written feedback, literature on video feedback is still limited (Mahoney et al., 2019; Henderson & Philips, 2015). This exploratory research attempts to fill the void in the literature and shed new light on this under researched area which is of benefit to both educators and students. This research aims to explore student perceptions of video feedback (in comparison to written), and the resulting emotional responses towards it. In line with this aim, we address two research questions:

1. How do students perceive video feedback in comparison to written feedback?
2. What emotional responses (if any) are elicited by video feedback?

Literature review

Detail, clarity and understanding

Studies have shown that video-based feedback allows the instructor to provide more detail than written feedback and is unambiguous (Ryan, et al., 2019; Hall et al., 2016; Henderson & Phillips, 2015; Turner & West, 2013; Parton et al., 2010). Rather than writing “good job”, the instructor can explain what the student did well.

Video feedback is also perceived to promote better understanding of the assignment and is more useful and easier to understand compared to written or audio feedback (Espasa et al., 2022; Turner & West, 2012) because markers say more, explain more and explain more clearly (Hall et al., 2016). Additionally, videos convey other visual cues such as body language, facial expressions, and if using screencasting software - demonstrations (Crook et al., 2012) which enhances the feedback experience.

Connection, authenticity and personalisation

A major benefit of video feedback is the bond that develops between the instructors and students (Bahula & Kay, 2022; Parton et al., 2010). Students felt that they had a closer connection with their instructor when they received video feedback compared to written feedback (Espasa et al., 2022; Grigoryan, 2017). This connection is created by the social presence fostered by the richness of video feedback which includes audio and images of the marker's facial expressions and body language (Mahoney et al., 2019; Hall et al., 2016). Parton et al. (2010) also indicated that video-based feedback conveys more in terms of encouragement and praise for parts of the assessment that were done well which is supportive and motivating for students (Henderson & Phillips, 2016). Students describe video feedback as like meeting the marker in person (Grigoryan, 2017) and rather than just conveying information which happens in written feedback, video feedback also uses speech as a social function (salutations and compliments) and reduces the perceived distance between the instructors and students (Thomas et al., 2017). Students perceive feedback to be of high quality if it fosters dialogue (van der Schaaf et al., 2011). Espasa et al. (2022) found that students preferred video feedback over audio and text because video feedback facilitates greater interaction and dialogue with lecturers. Students also engaged with the video feedback and spend more time reviewing the video compared to written feedback (Turner & West, 2012). With video feedback, students perceive markers to be caring, honest and accessible (Hall et al., 2016). This is because the feedback is personalised (Ryan et al., 2019; Turner & West, 2012) as it is about their individual work and directed to them (Henderson & Phillips, 2015). This authenticity is reinforced by the rich cues (tone of voice and body language) provided by the video. Parton et al. (2010) concluded that the main benefit of videos is the bond developed between the teacher and student.

Emotion and video feedback

Feedback in any form can elicit emotions in students ranging from positive to negative (Jones et al., 2012). Emotions are important to consider in higher education settings when giving feedback as they drive attention, learning, memory and problem-solving (Varlander, 2008). Emotion generated by specific feedback comments can result in adaptive or maladaptive student behaviours (Rowe, 2016). The link between emotions and feedback remains an under-explored research area with the published literature centred primarily around negative emotions such as anxiety (Henderson & Phillips, 2015), sadness, shame and anger (Ryan & Henderson, 2017). Other research in this area focuses on emotion and effectiveness (Molloy et al., 2019), emotion and achievement (Rowe et al., 2014) emotion and engagement (Rowe, 2016) and emotion and student teacher relationships (Elbra-Ramsay, 2022). While previous evidence suggests that students like and prefer video feedback (Bahula & Kay, 2021) there is scant literature around what positive emotions it might evoke, if any.

Methodology

To address the research questions, data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Ethics approval was obtained from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 31328). Qualitative methodology was selected as it allowed a deeper understanding of student perceptions and feelings (Hammersley, 2011). A systematic framework (Kallio et al., 2016) was developed including reviewing previous knowledge, formulating a guide, pilot testing and drafting the semi-structured [interview guide](#). The interviews were conducted at the end of the semester after the final grades were released. All 426 students enrolled in Marketing Insights and 107 students enrolled in Strategic Marketing received an invitation to participate in the research designed to explore their perceptions of video feedback. In both units, all students received 'talking head' style video feedback (Lamey, 2015) which was embedded in the LMS, and was adjacent to the student's assignment submission. The respondents were undergraduate marketing students at Monash University, who have had experience of receiving both written and video feedback. Although the sample size is small, it is considered appropriate for qualitative research. A small sample size can facilitate a close association with the respondents and enhance the validity of an in-depth inquiry (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Respondents did not receive incentives. The authors used an iterative process and analysed the data employing pattern coding to identify the major themes emerging (Locke et al., 2022). The authors ceased interviewing once saturation had occurred, in terms of both data collection and analysis (Saunders et al., 201). The interviews were recorded and transcribed by two of the authors who did not teach in the unit.

Findings

Description of respondents

The respondents included four males and five females, aged between 20-23, with six local and three international students. There were two second year, two third year, three fourth year and two fifth year students and the respondents achieved a final grade of between 52 to 93.

Theme 1: Detail, clarity and understanding

Detail: Along with video feedback producing increased clarity, many students commented on the higher level of detail afforded by video feedback. This was partly related to the length of the video, as Student D said markers are *“able to pack more in for, because it's faster to speak than writing, and it's more natural to elaborate on the points.”* Student D commented, *“It's clearer... the person is able to expand on the points they talk about, and they can say as much as they want.”* These sentiments align with previous research comparing text and video feedback that established video feedback contains more than double the number of words than written feedback (Thomas et al., 2017). Additionally, it emerged that students found video feedback was easier to watch, rather than read. Student E states *“if they said the same thing um in written form, it would just be like this massive paragraph... probably wouldn't even read all of it.”* Additionally, students perceived that giving video feedback would also be easier for the instructor, as Student H commented *“...I feel like it's [video feedback] less effort than writing everything...and they don't have to make sure it sounds professional... so they just say whatever they feel...it's way more detailed than written.”* These findings are supported by studies that found video feedback offered more detail for tertiary students than text-based feedback (Ryan et al., 2019).

Clarity: For many students, clarity was associated with the ability to re-watch the video if needed. Student C reflected - *“I think it is effective for me, like I can watch the videos...maybe twice or three times... so I can know what the teacher wants adjusted.”* The ability to re-watch the feedback also assists students in absorbing the feedback, as Student E comments *“I can take it on board a little bit more than I would have with written, because I can go back and watch it, and I can really understand what he was trying to say to me.”* This appeared to be particularly important for international students, Student C said, *“English is not my first language, right. So, I cannot... get the point easily. I can, [if] I need to, listen again”.* Five of the nine students interviewed had watched their feedback at least twice with one watching it six times. Students found written feedback easier to trace, access and review than video feedback because of the ‘linearity’ of the video format which limits the navigational control that recipients can exert over how they consume the feedback message (Schilling & Estell, 2014). Students must watch the video from beginning to end, whereas with written feedback, students can scan comments in whichever order they wish. This limitation is mitigated by the video being replayable.

Understanding: Being able to view the teacher's expressions appeared to aid the students' understanding. Student F remarked - *“Video feedback is definitely better since I get to see the teacher's expression.. I get to have a certain understanding on how important this this point is to improve the quality of my project.”* After watching the video feedback they feel a higher level of *“understanding and a little bit relieved. Now I know what's wrong or what other things I have to improve on...”* Being able to hear the teacher's voice, along with viewing their expression also enhances understanding (Crook et al., 2012). Student G indicated, *“I liked the fact that you could sort of hear the tone of the speaker. And instead of writing, when you can't use things like facial expressions, or the other sort of cues that people give when they're communicating, you can incorporate that into your understanding of the feedback that was given.”* Previous literature has identified that students find written feedback insufficient, unclear or untimely (Cranny, 2016) and additionally it increases cognitive load since text is the usual default medium for most courses (Grigoryan, 2017). The findings support studies that found video as a medium for richer feedback because it includes the marker's tone and facial expressions and body language (Mahoney, et al., 2019).

Theme 2: Connection, authenticity and personalization

Connection: Authenticity can foster a stronger connection between the teacher and the student. This was confirmed by several respondents in our study. Student A stated, *I think that it's part of what makes video good, ... it's more personal... it's easy to digest, which is the strength. I feel like that's almost an unfair comparison, because that's an inherent benefit of video, because there is the social connection. You're getting a physical person giving you feedback.”* In fact, many students felt the connection was so strong with video feedback, *“it's like hearing a friend talk, you know, just like your friend giving feedback about something you work on”* (Student D). Parton et al. (2010) found that video-based feedback conveys more in terms of encouragement and praise which students find more supportive and motivating (Henderson & Phillips, 2015). This was confirmed by our research. Student D said *“even though I submitted late, I did a really good job, and [the teacher] was happy about that. So, I was also encouraged about that in those things you cannot see through text. You have to kind of see the facial expressions of the marker.”* This is supported by previous research that found that students feel a closer

connection with their teacher when receiving video feedback compared to text feedback (Espasa et al., 2022; Grigoryan, 2017; Crook et al., 2010).

Authenticity and personalisation: Being able to view the expression of the teacher not only aids the student's understanding of the feedback, it assists the teacher in being perceived as more genuine, honest and authentic. As Student F said, *"I think it's much better ... they're telling me their honest opinion, aren't they?... It's just that it's better because I get yeah, see the expression."* Several students commented that they felt written feedback given to students was often the same for all students, but that video feedback offered a higher degree of authenticity. Student E who stated there was a *"much higher level of authenticity... because they were able to tailor the feedback. I think a lot of the time with written feedback they just copy and paste things... I think it [video feedback] was much more authentic and more emotional."* This is due to the feedback being personalised (Ryan et al., 2019; Turner & West, 2012) as it is about the specific student's work and addressing them directly (Henderson & Phillips, 2015). Our research confirms this - *"I like it a lot because it's very personal. Obviously, they're not just writing the same thing for everyone and just changing some words... she's actually talking to me. She starts with the video with Hi (name) and stuff like that, and then like talks through everything (Student H)."* However, Student D felt this personalisation could have a downside, depending upon the teacher: *"I would not enjoy receiving video feedback if the lecturer is ... very mean, and even in if facial expression... sometimes they can't control it. Something like a normal comment, but when you see the facial expression and it makes you feel like they are disappointed or something."*

Theme 3: Emotion and video feedback

Negative emotion did emerge from our findings, specifically around nervousness. Student A stated, *"I just felt a bit more nervous to hear that as opposed to just opening it up and reading it, which was pretty interesting."* Student B agreed - *"it was a little bit nerve-wracking."* However, we also found that students often experienced both positive and negative emotions at the same time. Student D explained, *"I was nervous that he was going to be angry about it. But I was more excited to hear what he thinks about my work."* Student E also felt mixed emotions - *"I was quite excited to hear what feedback he had for the next assignment would be. I think it was that this was going to be helpful, even though I was apprehensive."* The negative emotions students experienced appeared prior to opening the video feedback - *"I felt slightly nervous. I didn't know exactly what the content would be. (Student G)"* and Student H who stated *"I was very stressed."* These negative emotions were replaced by positive emotions once the video feedback had been viewed. Student H expressed that *"I was just relieved because you know, hearing how I did, hearing how she thought I did, and like kind of seeing a smile on her face while she was talking to me. That was nice, satisfied, kind of reinforces what she was saying."* Although there is some support from existing research on the link between video feedback and emotion, it mainly focuses on negative emotions such as anxiety (Henderson & Phillips, 2015), sadness, shame and anger (Ryan & Henderson, 2017).

Conclusion

This research explores student perceptions of video feedback compared to written feedback and associated emotions. Students prefer video feedback for its detailed, clear and engaging nature. Videos are easier to consume, offer more content, and convey teacher expressions and tone, enhancing comprehension. Video feedback feels authentic and personalised, strengthening the student-teacher connection. Positive video feedback is more supportive and motivating. Initially, students feel mixed emotions (stress, nervousness, excitement) but shift to positive ones (relief, satisfaction) after viewing, contrary to previous research highlighting negative emotions like anxiety, sadness, shame and anger (Henderson & Phillips, 2015; Ryan & Henderson, 2017). This research highlights the potential benefits of using video feedback in education, including improved understanding, stronger connections, and a more positive feedback experience. It is particularly valuable for formative assessment when students can apply feedback to enhance future assessments. However, the study's findings are limited due to the small, self-selected respondent group, potentially biased toward those satisfied with the video feedback. Unanswered questions remain about students who may be dissatisfied or ambivalent. Moreover, positive responses may be attributed to feedback content rather than the format's effectiveness. Future research should involve larger, diverse samples, compare feedback perceptions among high and low-performing students, assess feedback utilisation, and explore emotions in greater depth.

References

- Bahula, Tim, & Kay, Robin. (2021). Exploring student perceptions of video-based feedback in higher education: A systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*, 21(4), 248–258. <https://doi.org/10.33423/jhetp.v21i4.4224>

- Bisnell, L. (2017). Screen-casting as a technology-enhanced feedback mode. *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice*, 5(1), 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.14297/jpaap.v5i1.223>
- Boud, D. (2015). Feedback: Ensuring that it leads to enhanced learning. *The Clinical Teacher's Toolbox*, 12, 3-7.
- Cranney, D. (2016). Screencasting, a tool to facilitate engagement with formative feedback? *The All Ireland Journal of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, 8(3), 2911–29127.
- Crook, A., Park, J., Lawson, C., Lundqvist, K., Drinkwater, R., Walsh, J., . . . Maw, S. (2010). ASSET: Moving forward through feedback (pp. 1-20). Reading: University of Reading.
- Crouch, Mira, & McKenzie, Heather. (2006). The logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research. *Social Science Information Sur Les Sciences Sociales*, 45(4), 483–499. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018406069584>
- Elbra-Ramsay, Caroline. (2022). Roles, relationships and emotions: Student teachers' understanding of feedback as interpersonal. *Research in Education (Manchester)*, 113(1), 3-24.
- Espasa, A., Mayordono, R.M., Guasch, T. & Martinez-Melo, M. (2022). Does the type of feedback channel used in online learning environments matter? Students' perceptions and impact on learning. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 23(1), 49-63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787419891307>
- Grigoryan, A. (2017). Audiovisual commentary as a way to reduce transactional distance and increase teaching presence in online writing instruction: Student perceptions and preferences. *Journal of Response to Writing*, 3(1): 83–128.
- Hall, T., Tracy, D. & Lamey, A. (2016). Exploring video feedback in philosophy: Benefits for instructors and students. (2016). *Teaching Philosophy*, 39(2), 137-162.
- Hammersley, M. (2011). *Methodology*. (1st ed.). Sage Publications.
- Hattie, J.A. (1999). Influences on student learning. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237248564_Influences_on_Student_Learning
- Hattie, J. A. & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112.
- Henderson, M., & Phillips, M. (2015). Video-based feedback on student assessment: Scarily personal. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 31(1), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.1878>
- Jones, N., Georghiades, P. & Gunson, J. (2012). Student feedback via screen capture digital video. *Higher Education*, 64(5), 593-607.
- Kallio, H., Pietilä, A-M., Johnson, M. & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72(12), 2954–2965.
- Klappa, P. (2015). *Innovative pedagogies series: Videos for learning and teaching*, York: Higher Education Academy.
- Lamey, A. (2015). Video feedback in philosophy. *Metaphilosophy*, 45(4-5), 691-702.
- Locke, K., Feldman, M. & Golden-Biddle, K. (2022). Coding practices and iterativity: Beyond templates for analyzing qualitative data. *Organizational Research Methods*, 25(2), 262–284. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120948600>
- Mahoney, P., Macfarlane, S. & Ajjawi, R. (2019). A qualitative synthesis of video feedback in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*. 24(7), 157-179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2018.1471457>
- Molloy, E., Noble, C. & Ajjawi, R. (2019). Attending to emotion in feedback. In *The Impact of Feedback in Higher Education* (pp. 83-105). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Parton, B. S., Crain-Dorough, M., & Hancock, R. (2010). Using flip camcorders to create video feedback: Is it realistic for professors and beneficial to students? *International Journal of Instructional Technology & Distance Learning*, 7(1), 15-23.
- Rowe, A. D. (2016). Feelings about feedback: The role of emotions in assessment for learning. In *Scaling up Assessment for Learning in Higher Education* (The Enabling Power of Assessment, pp. 159-172). Springer Singapore.
- Rowe, A. D., Fitness, J. & Wood, L. N. (2014). The role and functionality of emotions in feedback at university: A qualitative study. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 41(3), 283-309. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-013-0135-7>
- Ryan, T., Henderson, M. & Phillips, M. (2019). Feedback modes matter: Comparing student perceptions of digital and non-digital feedback modes in higher education. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(3), 1507-1503.
- Ryan, T., and Henderson, M. (2017). Feeling feedback: Students' emotional responses to educator feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(6), 880-892. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2017.1416456>
- Schilling, W., & Estell, J.K. (2014). Enhancing student comprehension with video grading. *Computers in Education Journal*, 5 (1), 28-39. <https://doi.org/10.18260/1-2--19548>
- Turner, W. & West, J. (2012). Assessment for “Digital First Language” speakers: Online video assessment and feedback in Higher Education. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 25(3), 288-296.
- Thomas, R. A., R. E. West, and J. Borup. 2017. An analysis of instructor social presence in online text and asynchronous video feedback comments. *The Internet and Higher Education* 33, 61–73.
- Varlander, S. (2008). The role of students' emotions in formal feedback situations. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 12(2). 145-156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510801923195>

Fenton, A., Murphy, P., & Co, J. M. (2023) Student perceptions of video feedback: Preliminary findings. In T. Cochrane, V. Narayan, C. Brown, K. MacCallum, E. Bone, C. Deneen, R. Vanderburg, & B. Hurren (Eds.), *People, partnerships and pedagogies*. Proceedings ASCILITE 2023. Christchurch (pp. 398–403). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14742/apubs.2023.675>

Note: All published papers are refereed, having undergone a double-blind peer-review process. The author(s) assign a Creative Commons by attribution license enabling others to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon their work, even commercially, as long as credit is given to the author(s) for the original creation.

© Fenton, A., Murphy, P., & Co, J. M. 2023