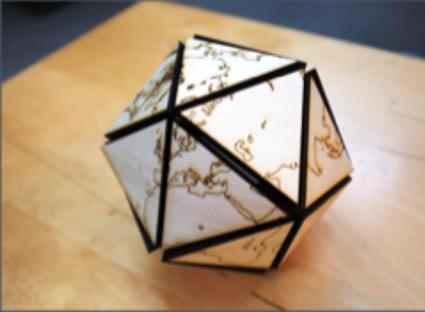


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The Use of Group Chats to Enhance Engagement in the Classroom: An observation



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What is feedback?

Feedback:
Information provided by an agent (e.g. teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding.
(Hattie & Timperley 2007)

What aspects?

How can we maximise its effect?

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5 functions of feedback

1. Correction
2. Reinforcement
3. Forensic diagnosis
4. Benchmarking
5. Longitudinal development

(Price et al. 2010)

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4 foci of feedback

The focus of feedback (Hattie & Timperley 2007)

1. Feedback about the task (FT)
2. Feedback about the processing of the task (FP)
3. Feedback about self-regulation (FR)
4. Feedback about the self as a person (FS)

FP and FR are powerful for deep-processing and mastering of the task.

Maximising feedback: medium

According to students (Bohnacker-Bruce 2013)

Most effective type of feedback

1. Verbal feedback
2. Written feedback

Most liked type of feedback (independently of effectiveness)

1. Written feedback
2. Verbal feedback

Maximising feedback: timing

The **more quickly** clear and legible feedback is returned, the better. (Narasimhan 2001)

- Immediate feedback is effective for difficult tasks
 - Delayed feedback is more effective for easy tasks
- (Clariana 1999, via Samuels & Wu 2003)

Maximising feedback: engagement

Feedback is powerful:

... when the learner understands the feedback and is willing and able to act on it. (Prince et al. 2010)

... when there is a learning context to which feedback is addressed. (Hattie & Timperley 2007:82)

... when students can apply it to another piece of work, i.e. **feed-forward**. (Price et al. 2010)

Students are not likely to show interest in feedback if they consider the assignment as a 'finished product' (Mann 2001)

Problems surrounding feedback

- Students consistently show low satisfaction (Robinson et al. 2011)
- There is a mismatch between teacher's and student's perceptions
- Widening participation: Students today come with different skills than before
- Students would show poor satisfaction if they are unable to interpret and use the feedback that they receive (Robinson et al. 2011, Price et al. 2010)
- In fact, students are often scared to meet with their tutors (Brown 2007)

Questions

Previous studies suggest that:

- We need to help students understand feedback.
- Students need to want and to be able to engage with feedback for it to be effective.

Questions

1. Would creating more dialogue (i.e. feedback) outside the classroom enhance engagement inside the classroom?
2. If students receive enough feedback while working on their assignment, can we simplify our summative feedback?

Growing popularity of chat apps for learning

Teachers around the world are using WhatsApp in a variety of ways (Alderman 2017)



Benefits:

- Encourage collaboration
- Extend learning time
- Manage large class sizes
- Flip the classroom
- Build confidence

<https://www.english.com/blog/5-ways-use-whatsapp-elt-classroom/>

Experiment using LINE

What we did:

We created a group on LINE in a level-6 translation module.

Students and tutors posted freely (e.g. how to translate a phrase, how to comment on a translation).

Aims:

1. To help students work through the translation tasks;
2. To create more engagement in class.

LINE group chat

Participants:

22 students were enrolled in the module.

19 students and 2 tutors participated in the group chat.

9 students posted at least once.

Students posted 1 to 17 times (average 5.9).

1 tutor posted 34 times, the other never posted.

The group chat was a channel for students to interact with the tutor and a channel to share their opinions.

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Other methods of feedback used in the module

The group chat was combined with other methods of feedback.

- **Padlet:** for sharing answers to exercise questions
- **Socrative:** for revision
- **Discussions in class**
- **Peer-feedback**
- **Written feedback** to submitted work

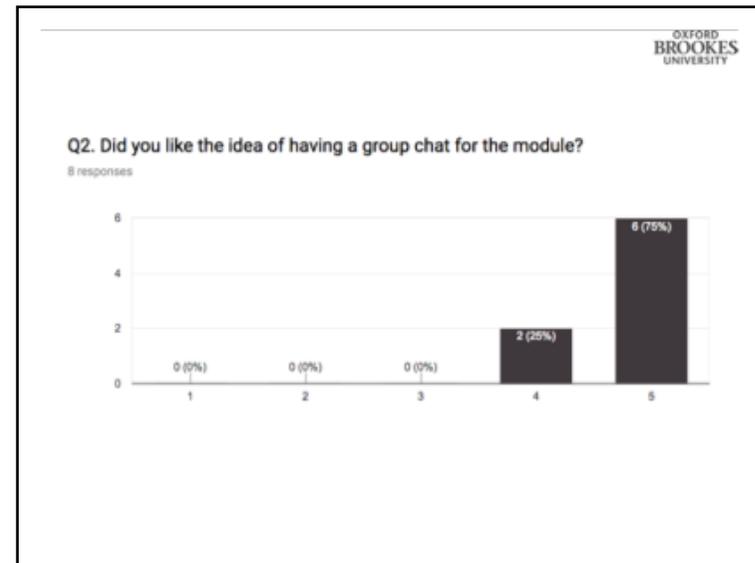
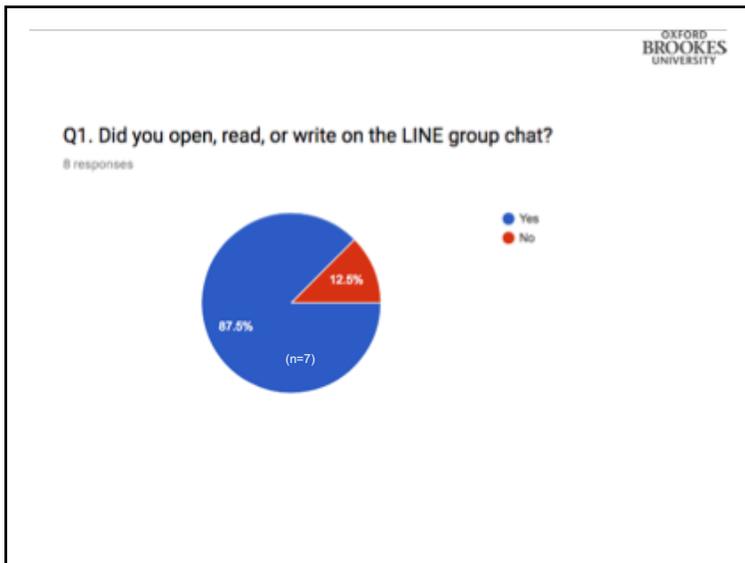
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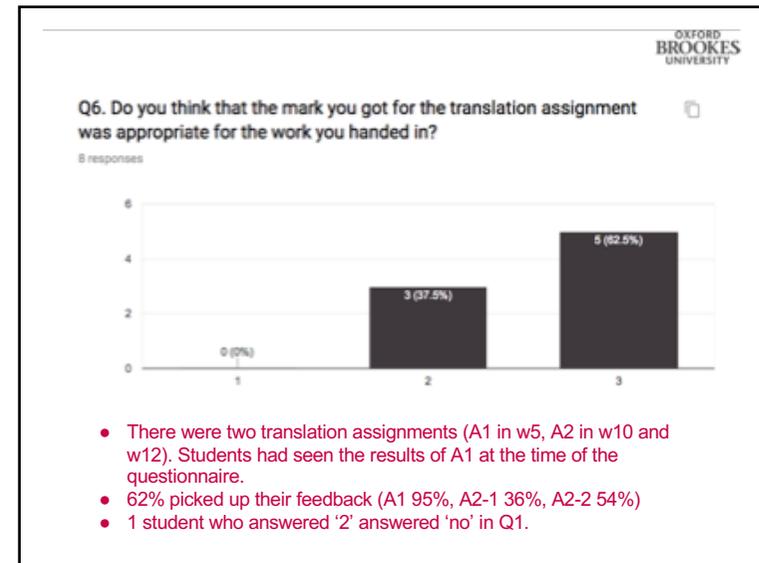
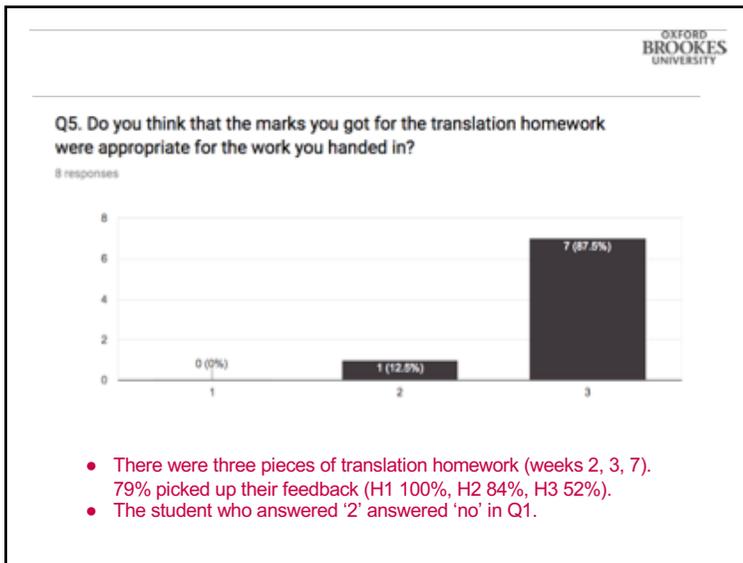
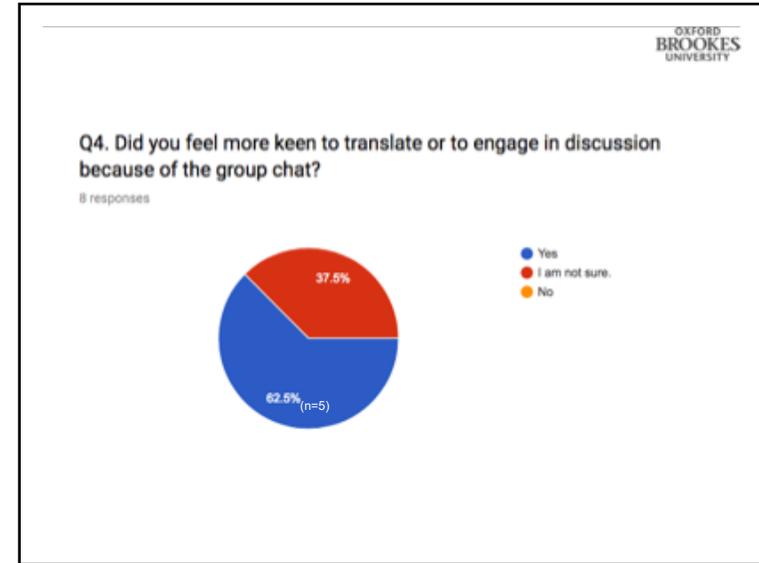
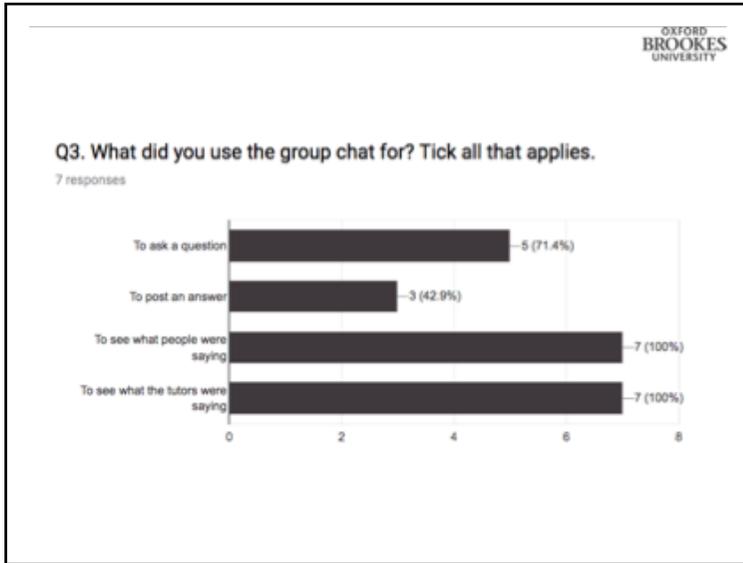
How we measured the impact

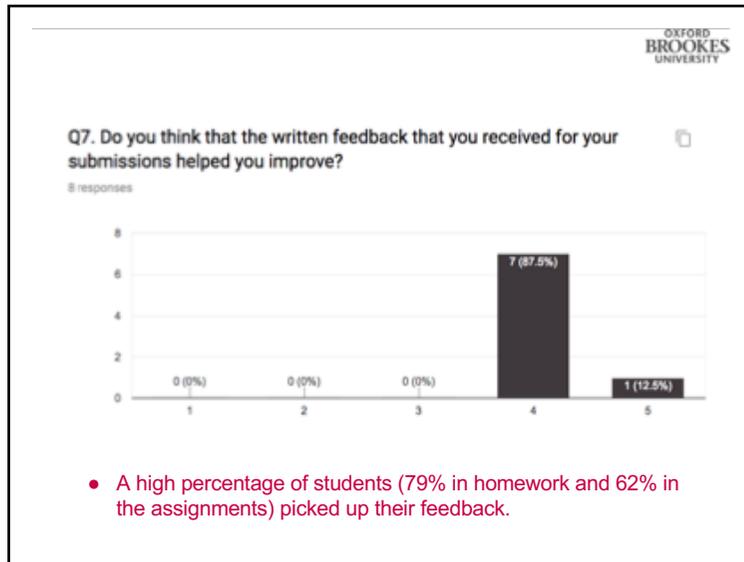
An online questionnaire using Google forms at the end of the semester. There were 8 participants (out of 22, 36%).

We also looked at how many students had actually picked up their feedback in Turnitin:

- Homework 1 (w2) - 100% (20/20)
- Homework 2 (w3) - 84% (16/19)
- Homework 3 (w7) - 52% (11/21)
- Assignment 1 (w5) - 95% (11/20)
- Assignment 2-1 (w10) - 36% (4/11)
- Assignment 2-2 (w12) - 54% (7/13)







Summary of the findings

1. Students liked the idea of having a group chat.
2. Students found it useful, mainly to see what the tutor and their peers were saying.
3. Some felt more keen to participate in the discussions in the classroom.
4. Students generally agreed with the marks they received for the assignments.
5. Students felt that the written feedback helped them improve.
6. The high percentage of students picking up their feedback on Turnitin suggested good engagement with feedback.

Pros & cons



1. Most functions and foci of feedback are compatible.
2. It is written & verbal.
3. On-demand: Suitable for challenging tasks
4. Fits with students' life-style
5. Inclusive and safe



1. The tutor needs to want to do it.
2. Good T-S relationship is essential.

- Encourage collaboration
- Extend learning time
- Build confidence

Conclusion

Questions

1. Would creating more dialogue (i.e. feedback) outside the classroom enhance engagement inside the classroom?
YES. But there are other factors involved (e.g. T-S relationship, other means of feedback, type of module).
1. If students receive enough feedback while working on their assignment, can we simplify our summative feedback?
MAYBE. But some form of feedback to recognise their work is necessary.

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Limitations and future directions

Limitations

This was done in one module by one tutor.
There were only 8 participants in the questionnaire.

Future directions

Group chats are a versatile and promising tool to improve student engagement!
How should we measure its effectiveness?
Collaborators needed!

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Thank you!

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