

Assignment 8 – Reflection Paper

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When I first began the course, my exposure to audio in instruction was limited to experiences as a learner. All of the online classes at my undergraduate school involved the use of audio in the form of interactive multimedia presentations and live chat sessions during which the instructor's voice could be heard for discussions, lectures, and other interactions. Interestingly, after the class began, I was assigned to an instructional development project within the organization for which I work and this project entailed the use of audio. This made the audio course especially helpful and timely for my professional work and development. While I came into the course with some existing knowledge, such as file formats and their uses, and ways to incorporate audio into instruction, I did not have extensive knowledge of the physical functions of audio nor its impact on the learning experience.

I understand the course objective to mean that I should be able to review and apply research that has been done on the instructional use of audio. It also means I should be able to use various tools to create and edit audio for use in the entire instructional process, from design to assessment. Coming into the course, my initial perception was that the course would simply cover how audio is used in instruction, without considerations of the implications of research as to the impact of audio on the learning process. I also assumed that audio is a natural choice regardless of the

instructional situation and without any thought as to how it fits into the particular instructional need at hand. I now understand that audio should not be used just because it can be – instead, it needs to be used for specific reasons as part of a defined instructional strategy. It must serve a purpose in the instructional process. I think this highlights a key descriptor in the objective: the *effective* use of audio.

The greatest transformation for me came with the realization that, just as with any other media, audio is not a solution to instructional problems in and of itself. While research has shown that audio can enhance instruction, it must not be assumed that its use will necessarily accomplish this in every given scenario. Instead, the key is to only use audio – or any other form of media – with specific purposes in mind as part of an instructional strategy. This “ah ha” moment came for me during the review and considerations of the various research in audio, and I was reminded of the point as I reviewed the literature again for the final project. Part of this realization came through study in other courses – particularly Instructional Media – but was also a key take-away from the audio course.