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## The L120 Mobile Project

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# The L120 Mobile Project

Valérie Demouy, Annie Eardley, Agnes Kukulska-Hulme and Rhodri Thomas



# Introduction

- Languages at the Open University
  - Distance learning
  - Tutor supported
- L120 and Blended learning
  - Printed material
  - DVD-ROMs
  - Asynchronous online activities
  - Online and Face-to-face tutorials
  - Assessments (oral & written)



# The project

- 2 groups of 35 students
  - Group 1 : iPods or MP3 players (listening)
  - Group 2 : mobile phones and Learnosity (interactive speaking activities)
- Over 6 weeks
  - 6 online questionnaires
  - audio feedback on activities for group 2

# Objectives & Outcomes

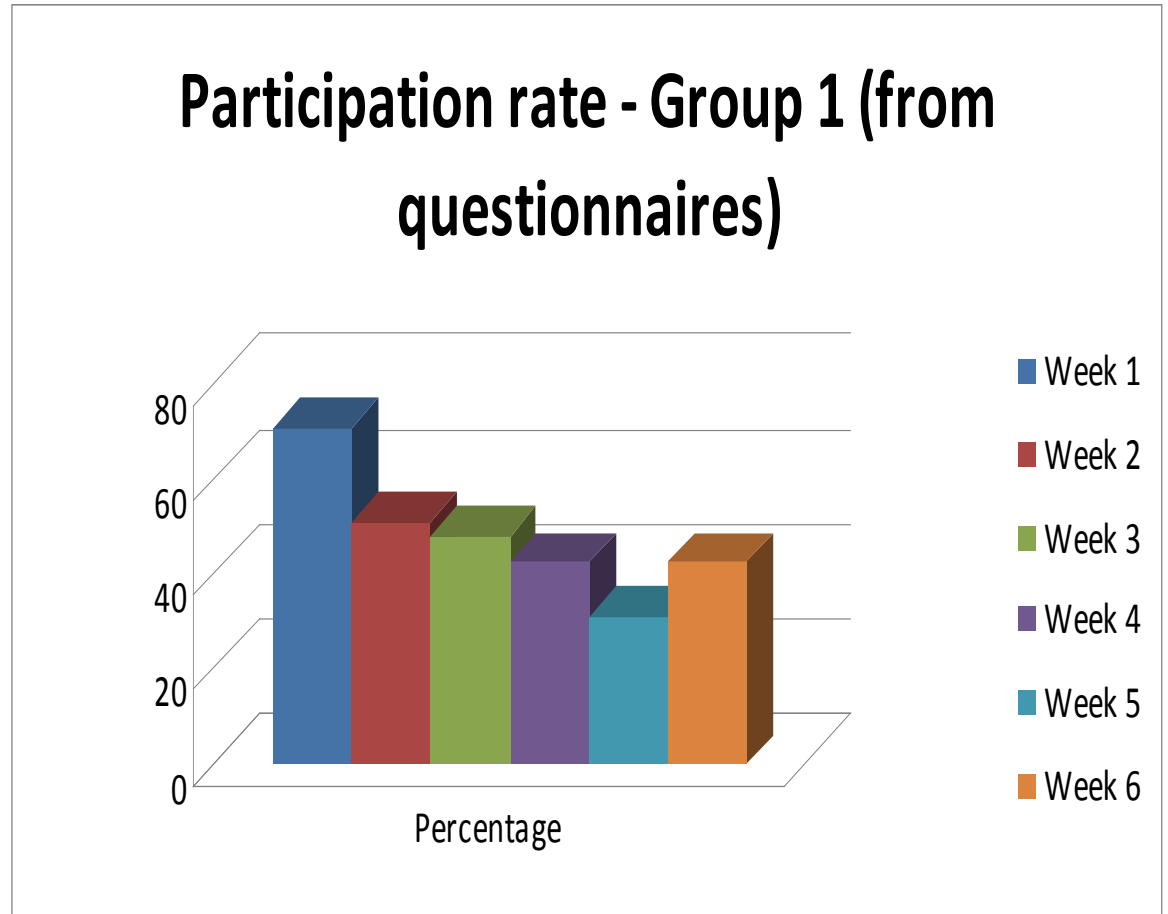


- What are the contexts in which students engage in 'mobile' activities?
- How often do students engage in mobile activities and how long do they spend on them?
- What aspect or what type of activities do they find most or less beneficial and why?
- to evaluate the benefits of providing our students with mobile listening and speaking activities
- to understand better how to integrate interactive activities with mobile technologies into our courses
- to integrate mobile speaking activities (if appropriate) in the design of new courses

# Group 1



- **Type of activity**
  - a variety of audio clips
  - no question or activity linked
  - reinforcement
- **Participation**

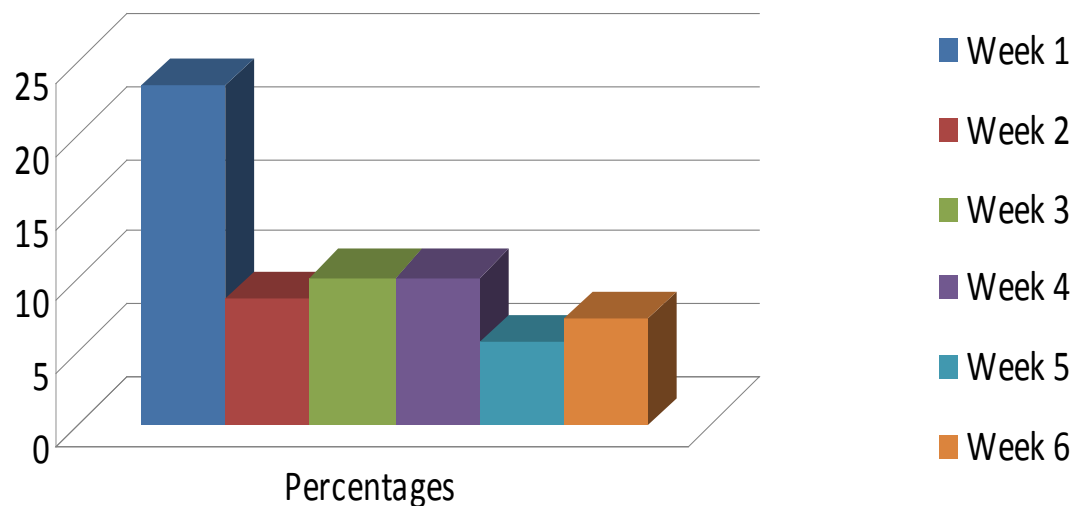


# Group 2



- Type of activities listening, oral presentations, pronunciation or grammar drills and dialogues
- Example
- Participation

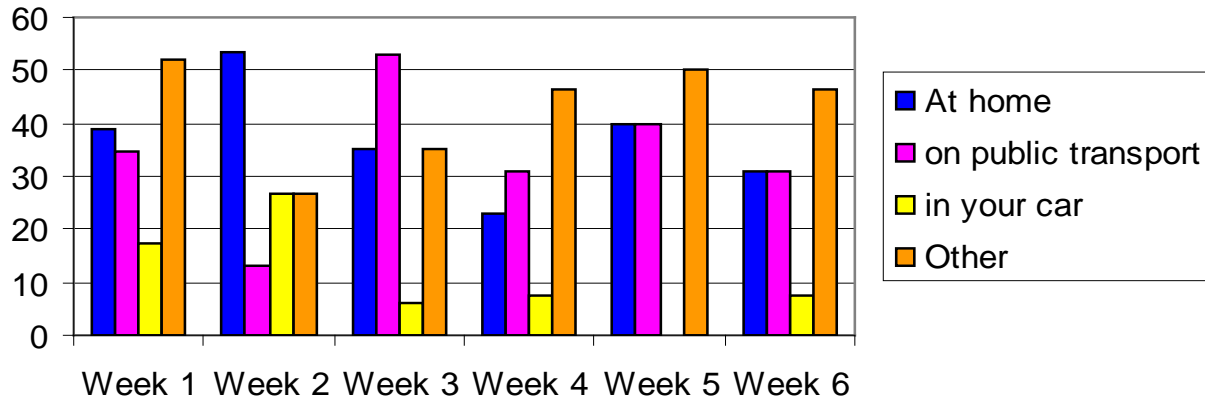
**Participation rate - Group 2 (from questionnaires)**



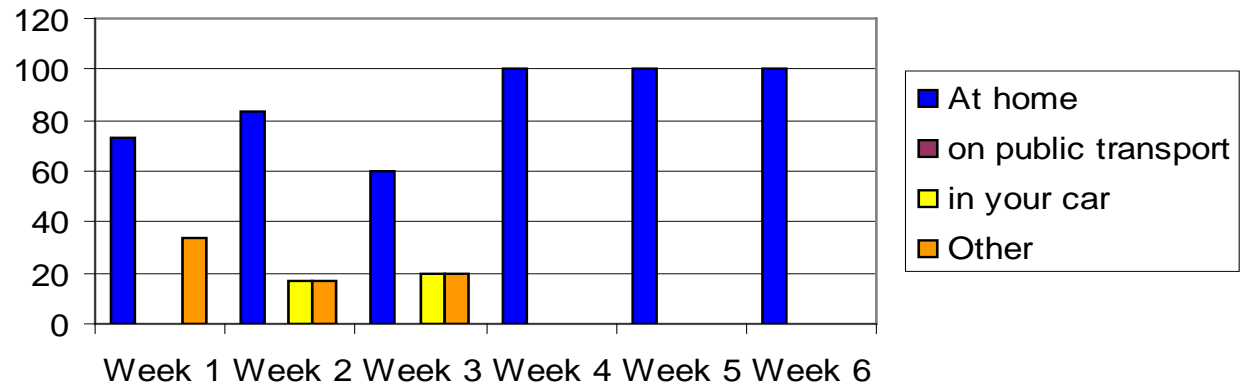


So where  
did they  
do it?

**Group 1**  
Where did you listen to L120 audio clips using your device? (Tick all that apply)



**Group 2**  
Where did you do the L120 speaking activities using your device?



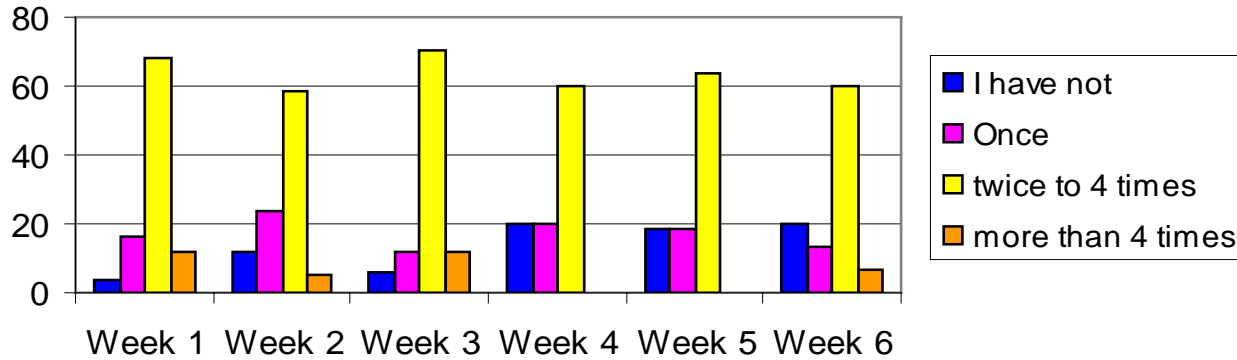




# How often and for how long?

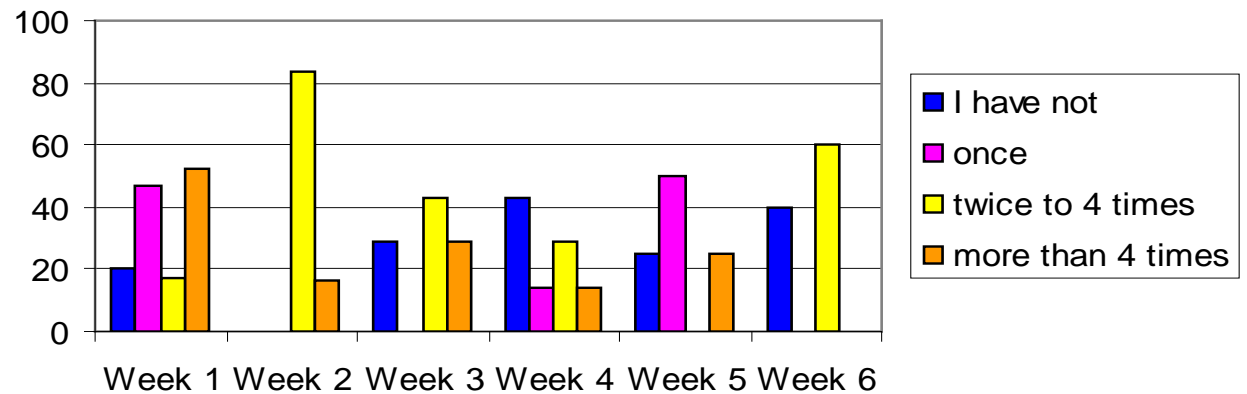
## Group 1

How often have you used your device to listen to L120 audio clips?



## Group 2

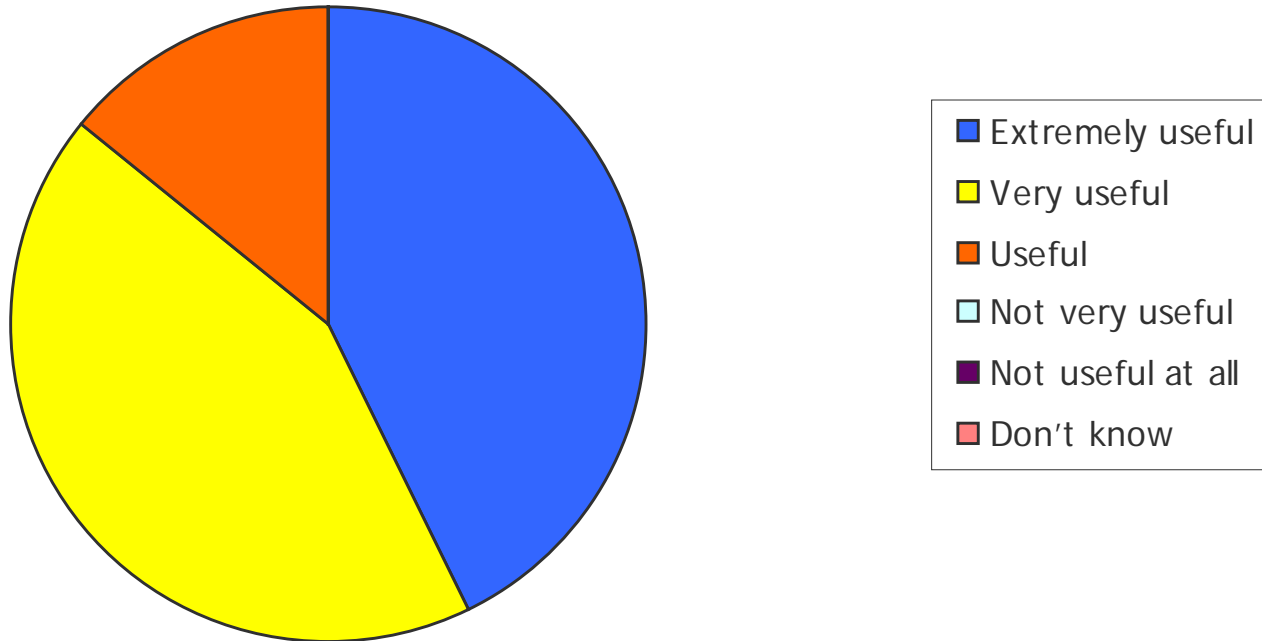
How often have you used your device to do the speaking activities?



# So did Group 1 find it useful?



In relation with your studies on L120, how do you rate the usefulness of listening to L120 audio clips on mobile devices?

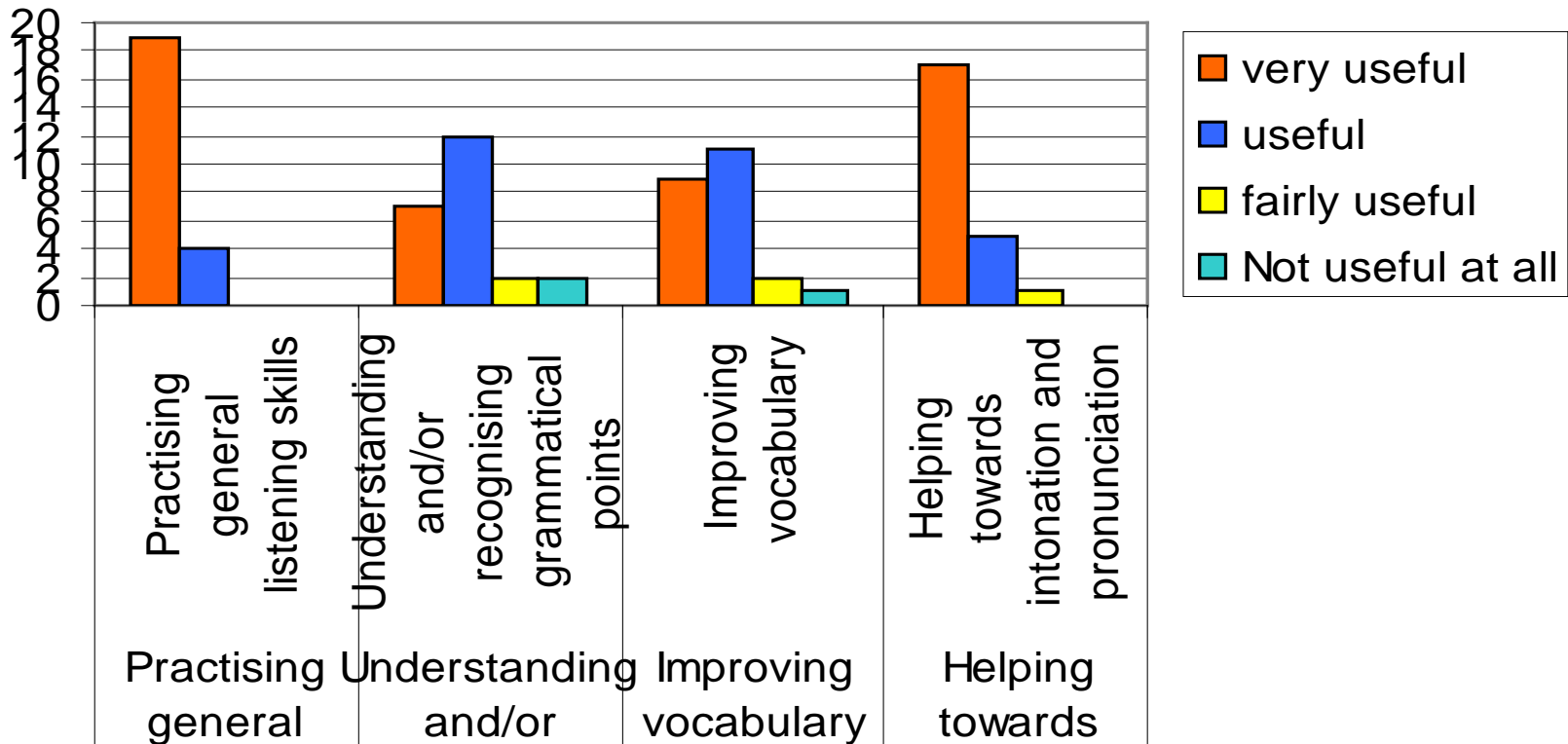


Extremely useful: 42.9% - Very useful: 42.9% - Useful: 14.3%

# Which aspect did Group 1 find most useful?



**In listening to the audio clips on your device, which aspect did you find most useful? Group 1 week 1**



# What did Group 2 like?



- Additional practice on pronunciation and grammar provided prompts/answers were short and it did not rely too much on memory
- The challenge (being stretched) & the 'authentic' aspect
- The potential to complement the DVD-ROM or the other course materials

# What did Group 2 not like?

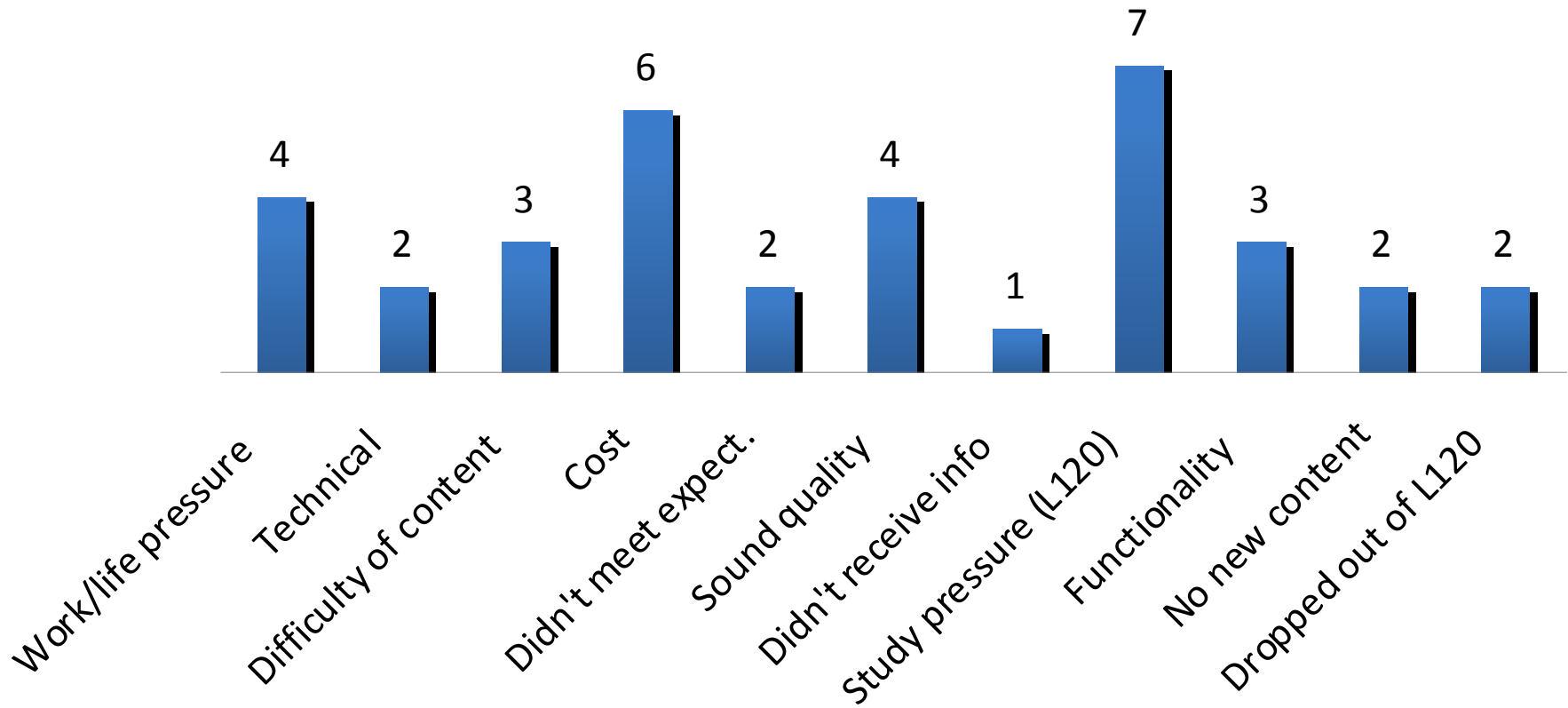


- Lack of sample/model answers in the review mode
- Issues around sound quality and functionality
- The high level of difficulty:
  - relying too much on memory
  - relying too much on course material content
  - hard to understand

# Reasons for dropping out



## Reasons for dropping out



# Possible practical applications



- Encouraging the use of iPods and MP3 players for listening practise
- Standalone repetition activities (pronunciation/intonation)
- follow-up activities (complementing other medium such as DVD-ROM) focusing on practising grammar or oral skills in general such as grammar drills, dialogues and short oral presentations
- Approaching listening differently (developing memory and comprehension as well as immediate response)



# Lessons learned

- Don't assume that even basic technology is easy to master
- Don't forget that the sound quality so important in listening and speaking skills might be an issue on mobile phones
- Match content with the medium and its functionality (including its limitations)
- Educate the students to the potential of approaching listening and speaking skills in a less supported way. (lack of visual can help with listening skills)





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