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Meeting date: May 12, 2025, 01:10 pm

Overview

- The User Testing and Feedback session focused on evaluating a new bow interface design for violinists, where participants provided insights on comfort and usability issues, particularly regarding the awkward button placement and the overall ergonomic design of the bow. Various button pressing techniques were tested alongside audio effects, revealing that the system's presets could be improved for better accessibility and responsiveness. Participants enjoyed the dynamic interaction of the audio effects, though they proposed significant ergonomic changes, including relocating buttons to the top of the bow and reorienting them for easier access. Additionally, discussions explored the educational experiences related to violin teaching and how the interface could integrate audio-visual elements more intuitively. Recommendations included refining slider responsiveness and rethinking the interfaces thickness to enhance playability, with the goal of creating a more engaging and user-friendly experience for musicians. Action items were established to address these improvements in the bows design.

Notes

- **Testing Bow Interface Design** (00:13 - 12:43)
  - Participant provided feedback on bow interface comfort issues
  - Button placement feels awkward with thumb and little finger positioning
  - Tested different button pressing techniques (quick clicks and holds)
  - Discussed optimal button placement - suggestion to reorient buttons and possibly move to top of bow
  - Pushing motion would be better than pulling motion for buttons
  - Demonstrated first audio effects using slider for wet/dry mix
  - Tested changing presets with different buttons
  - Slider movement was noted as awkward during play
- **Audio Effects Testing and Discussion** (12:43 - 26:23)
  - Buttons function in different ways - quick tap vs. holding down
  - System has 6 presets accessible through 4 buttons
  - Tested harmonizer effect with slider control
  - Explored the recording/playback effect (button 4) that listens and responds

- Participant found the back-and-forth audio interplay 'fun' and 'dynamic'
- System uses machine learning to predict responses in real-time
- Brief discussion about teaching positions at various schools

- **Violin Teaching Experiences (26:23 - 33:18)**
  - Discussed living situations and apartment rental experiences
  - Shared experiences about finding violin teachers for children
  - Janet (violin teacher) vetoed several potential teachers
  - Conversation about teaching styles and approaches
  - Participant mentioned challenges of finding appropriate teachers on Lower North Shore
  - Discussion about school systems and music programs

- **Personal Violin Education Journey (33:18 - 45:09)**
  - Detailed discussion about various violin teachers and their teaching styles
  - Participant shared experiences with difficult teachers who affected playing ability
  - Discussed contrasting teaching approaches from strict to supportive
  - Moved to visual component testing of the bow interface
  - Tested how the bow movements affect visual projections
  - Demonstrated how tilting the bow changes the visual thickness
  - Tested bee visualization effect - bees respond to bow movement

- **Interface Feedback and Applications (45:10 - 53:16)**
  - Discussed technical aspects of accelerometer sensing and data mapping
  - Participant suggested bow interface would be useful for improvisation
  - Questioned the audio-visual relationship and how to make it more intuitive
  - Suggested mapping pitch to vertical position and dynamics to visual elements
  - Discussed preference for both predictable control and unpredictable elements
  - Suggested making the system respond like chamber music - creating dialog

- **Final Tests and Design Suggestions (53:17 - 57:49)**
  - Tested double-stopping effect on the audio response system

- Suggested ergonomic improvements for button placement
- Recommended placing buttons on the curve of the bow for more natural access
- Noted that a thinner interface would improve handling
- Final reflections on the overall design and usability

Action items

- **Unassigned**
  - Try moving the buttons to be reoriented in a different direction to improve access (03:54)
  - Test alternative button placement on top of the bow instead of on the side (04:05)
  - Make the slider more responsive and easier to move during playing (11:50)
  - Consider making the interface thinner for better handling (57:35)
  - Design button placement to follow the natural curve of the bow (57:23)