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Students' Acceptance of Learning to Speak Arabic through Flip

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ABSTRACT

Speaking has always been the hardest and most challenging skill for many students learning Arabic as a foreign language, even at the tertiary level. Educators and students can use Flip, one of the most recent platforms for student-produced videos, to overcome this problem. This study aimed to evaluate students' acceptance of using Flip in learning to speak Arabic in terms of perceived ease of use, perceived usability, and attitude towards using Flip. A total of 61 diploma students participated in this study. A quantitative approach was employed, and the data was collected by distributing an online questionnaire to the targeted samples. The data were tabulated and analyzed using descriptive analysis. The findings revealed high student acceptance of using Flip to learn to speak Arabic. This study suggested that educators teaching speaking in a foreign language should apply innovative methods rather than conventional ones to enhance their teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

Arabic language courses are widely offered in universities worldwide, including Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), where it is offered as an elective third language course. Completion of the Arabic language course is a prerequisite for graduation. Students can choose from several third-language courses offered by the Academy of Language Studies, including Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin, and French.

Like other languages, there are four basic language skills to be mastered in learning Arabic: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, speaking is considered the hardest and most challenging by some students for two reasons. Firstly, unlike reading or writing, speaking happens in real-time, with the listener waiting for each new word. Secondly, in contrast to writing, where a writer can correct a mistake, a speaker cannot edit or revise what he or she said because, once the word is uttered, it is impossible to retrieve it (Bailey, 2003).

A weak vocabulary capacity and psychological reasons are two main factors contributing to the problem of Arabic speaking skills. According to Goh and Che Mat (2010), the lack of vocabulary is the main factor for students not being able to speak Arabic well, thus hindering the communication process. In order to speak Arabic, one needs an adequate Arabic vocabulary, and an insufficient vocabulary will lead to limited content in speaking. Sometimes the student might have ideas or information on a certain topic in his or her mother tongue but be unable to express them due to a limited vocabulary. As a result, this student feels disappointed, lacks confidence, is afraid, and worries about making mistakes while speaking the language (Aladdin, 2012). Therefore, it is clear here that vocabulary deficiency is one of the obstacles for students to master Arabic speaking skills.

Besides that, psychological reasons such as shyness, low self-confidence, fear of committing mistakes, being laughed at by classmates, and making fools of themselves in front of them resulted in a marked reluctance to speak Arabic (EL-Tingari, 2016). Tanveer (2007) explained that the fear of making mistakes had been found to be strongly linked with the student's concern about saving their positive image or impression in the minds of their teachers and friends. On the other hand, negative emotions will kill students' excitement, and when there is no excitement, they establish no positive attitudes toward their speaking as they become less creative, less motivated, less disciplined, and have less initiative to look for opportunities to practice speaking Arabic (Che Haron et al., 2016).

Reviewing the situation, video response technology known as Flip (formerly Flipgrid) has been introduced as one of the ways to overcome the problems and, at the same time, improve the speaking abilities of students and increase their engagement. Flip is a web-based application that allows educators to post their questions, and the students respond by recording and uploading a video (Mohamad Hsbollah, 2022). It has been used and utilized in classrooms for many purposes, including teaching oral presentation skills (Miskam et al., 2019), conducting speaking activities (Hammett, 2021), increasing student engagement (Esparrago-Kalidas et al., 2022), and assessing students' speaking skills (Subiana et al., 2022). Many literature reviews have discussed the implementation and efficacy of Flip in teaching and learning English speaking skills. However, little is known about using Flip to learn Arabic speaking skills. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the acceptance of Flip in learning and speaking the Arabic language among UiTM Rembau campus students. This was done by undertaking the following research objectives:

i. To examine students' perceptions of Flip's ease of use
ii. To examine students' perceptions of Flip's usability
iii. To evaluate students' attitudes towards using Flip

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student-generated Video

A student-generated video is a video created by students for learning purposes. It has gained great popularity and has been accepted as part of interactive learning activities in the classroom. Hawley and Allen (2018) summarized previous studies on student-generated video creation in higher education institutions. Their

findings revealed that student-generated videos were applied in various programs, such as engineering, business, tourism, biochemistry, nursing, and language. According to Morgan (2012), video-making technology nowadays is more affordable, user-friendly, and powerful than before, with many students having cell phones, cameras, and other handheld devices with video-recording capabilities. Morgan also found that implementing student-generated videos will help students stay connected to their world and promote motivation, the acquisition of content knowledge, critical-thinking skills, and multimodal literacy.

In a different study by Akdeniz (2017), the author used student-generated videos to develop oral skills in EFL classrooms. The results showed that the majority of the participants agreed that video recording is more beneficial in improving their communication skills than using the traditional way, which contributed to a better understanding of the target language, feeling confident in speaking, and fostering a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. Focusing on implementing a video production project into three phases: preparatory, video production and video presentation, Puspa (2016) revealed that the students developed and trained their English skills during the process. In the preparatory phase, the students developed their writing skills the most; in the production phase, their speaking skills were trained the most; and in the video presentation phase, their reading and listening skills were the two that were developed the most.

This concludes that students appreciated the video experience. In addition, it has been proven to be effective as a facilitator in the classroom. Flip, the focus of this study, is one of the recent platforms for student-generated videos that educators and students in the teaching and learning process could utilize.

Flip

Flip, developed in 2014 by Professor Charles Miller at the University of Minnesota, is a video discussion application, available for free from Microsoft, that seeks to empower every student's voice in a friendly environment that encourages social learning. Flip is completely video-based; students post a video response to the questions posted, and then they can reply to teachers' or peers' videos with their own videos, from 15 seconds to 10 minutes. Due to its fun-looking interface and functionality that is similar to popular social media video-mediated tools like YouTube and TikTok, Flip has emerged as one of the most widely used online pedagogical tools in 2020 (Ferlazzo, 2020).

Many researchers are expressing great interest in exploring Flip's usage in teaching and learning practice. Stoszkowski (2018), in his study, has outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the application in facilitating learning. This study identified seven strengths of Flip: (i) access that does not require creating an account or 'sign-up', (ii) convenience to be used anytime and anywhere, (iii) participation or students' even distribution in the discussion, (iv) appeal or students' preference for video-based interaction over reading written material, (v) formative feedback that is emailed directly in the forms of regular written or video-based feedback, (vi) tracking of participation levels based on the number of views and total engagement time, and (vii) compatibility to be embedded into other applications or platforms.

In his study, Stoszkowski (2018) also highlighted four potential barriers to the use of Flip: (i) competitiveness because of 'like' or 'hearted' buttons and their relationship with students' confidence; (ii) equipment or the need for a suitable camera, microphone, and good internet connection; (iii) impression management due to students' concern to get peer approval; and (iv) confidence or students' unease with recording themselves for fear of being judged.

On the other hand, Mohamad Hsbollah (2022) studied the use and contributions that Flip could offer to the student's learning experience at the higher learning institution in Malaysia. A total of 117 students who were enrolled in the Accounting System Analysis and Design course at a university participated in this study. Four major impacts of Flip on the students' learning experience were identified: (i) boosting the confidence level; (ii) improving the understanding of the topic's content; (iii) providing a fun learning activity; and (iv) providing exposure to the skills of recording, trimming, and editing videos. The latter impact proves that Flip not only offers the benefit of social learning to students but also offers valuable learning experiences.

Another study by Amirulloh et al. (2021) explored the use of Flip's features as students learning support to improve their speaking skills. A total of 19 students from the Department of English Education at a public university in Bandung, West Java, participated in this study. The data were obtained from students' speaking videos and interviews to provide a more in-depth description. Improvements in the aspects of fluency, pronunciation, and gestures were the results indicated by this study, as were students' development of vocabulary and grammar skills.

Investigating beyond perceptions and attitudes, Mango (2019) conducted a study to analyze students' attitudes toward using Flip in second-language learning. Thirty students enrolled in Arabic courses at a university in the Southwest of the US participated in the survey, which was divided into four categories: (i) affect, (ii) speaking and listening skills, (iii) academic engagement, and (iv) social engagement. Results indicated that students found Flip to be a valuable learning tool that positively affected the development of their speaking and listening skills.

Another study on perceptions was conducted by Aziz et al. (2022), which identified undergraduates' perceptions towards using Flip in learning English speaking skills. A total of 40 students enrolled in the ELC590 English for Oral Presentations course at UiTM Shah Alam participated in an online questionnaire consisting of four constructs: (i) perceived ease of use; (ii) perceived usefulness; (iii) attitudes; and (iv) behavioural intentions. Similarly, the study yielded the same result as Mango's study, as most students had positive perceptions of using Flip, except this recent study focused only on developing speaking skills.

Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the effectiveness of Flip in English language learning, but more research needs to be conducted on its use in Arabic language learning, particularly in Malaysia. This paper aims to address this gap in the literature. It is important to consider student satisfaction and acceptance of new technology when assessing effectiveness, so this paper will also focus on students' acceptance of using Flip to learn to speak Arabic.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach. The data was collected using an online questionnaire as the main tool to examine the students' acceptance of using Flip in learning to speak Arabic. The data was then tabulated and analyzed using descriptive analysis.

Research Participants

This study involved 61 diploma-level students enrolled in TAC101 Foundation Arabic Level I at the UiTM Rembau campus, Faculty of Business and Management. The majority of the participants did not have any prior experience learning Arabic in school, making this their first exposure to the language.

During the TAC101 class, the students covered five topics: introducing themselves, talking about the university, discussing their home and favourite places, sharing information about family, and describing their favourite foods and drinks. After completing each topic, the lecturer posted 4-5 simple questions on Flip. Students were then required to record their responses and share their ideas via the platform. Flip aimed to improve students' Arabic speaking skills and reinforce vocabulary learned in each lesson. It also provided an opportunity for students to continue learning outside the classroom. The lecturer evaluated each video response submitted by the students, and they were watched together in class.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire used in this research was adopted from Lim and Md Yunus' (2021) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) questionnaire. The questionnaire was adopted and modified according to the suitability of the current research, which is to explore students' acceptance of learning to speak Arabic using Flip.

The questionnaire contained three sections. The first section was to seek the students' agreement to participate in the research as participants. The second section was to obtain their demographic profile data, and the last section was to rate their acceptance of using Flip to learn speaking in Arabic. Through the three major constructs of (i) perceived ease of use, (ii) perceived usefulness, and (iii) attitude towards use, there were nine items altogether. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale: 1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neutral, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The study was conducted prior to the first academic session of 2022–2023. A total of 61 students participated in the survey on a 5-point Likert scale (5 being "strongly agree" and one being "strongly disagree"). The questionnaire was given to the students in their last meeting, the 14th week of the academic session. Data collected using Google Forms was screened, cleaned, and transferred to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 and presented in tables and charts. Percentage and mean were used to analyze the students' acceptance of using Flip to learn speaking in Arabic.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Demographics of Respondents

The demographic profile distribution of study participants is shown in Table 1, consisting of gender, age, and Arabic language learning period. A total of 61 respondents answered the questionnaire distributed online.

Table 1: Respondents Demographics Analysis

No.	Demographic Characteristics		Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Gender	Male	16	26.2
		Female	45	73.8
2	Age	Under 20 years old	57	93.4
		20 years old	3	4.9
		Above 20 years old	1	1.6
3	Arabic language learning period	Less than 1 year	27	44.3
		1-2 years	18	29.5
		3-5 years	4	6.6
		More than 5 years	12	19.7

Based on the background analysis of the respondents, the number of female students is 45 (73.8%), more than the number of male students, which is only 16 (26.2%). This shows that the researcher chose the study sample randomly. In addition, the results of the survey found that 57 (93.4%) students were under 20 years old, three students (4.9%) were 20 years old, and one (1.6%) student was over 20 years old. The study also found that the majority of students, 27 students (44.3%), had studied Arabic for less than 1 year. There were 18 (29.5%) students who had studied Arabic within 1 to 2 years. Only four students (6.6%) studied Arabic within 3–5 years, while 12 students (19.7%) studied Arabic for more than 5 years.

Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)

There were three items for this component. The results of the items are as follows:

Figure 1 PEU1: I think using Flip does not take too much time

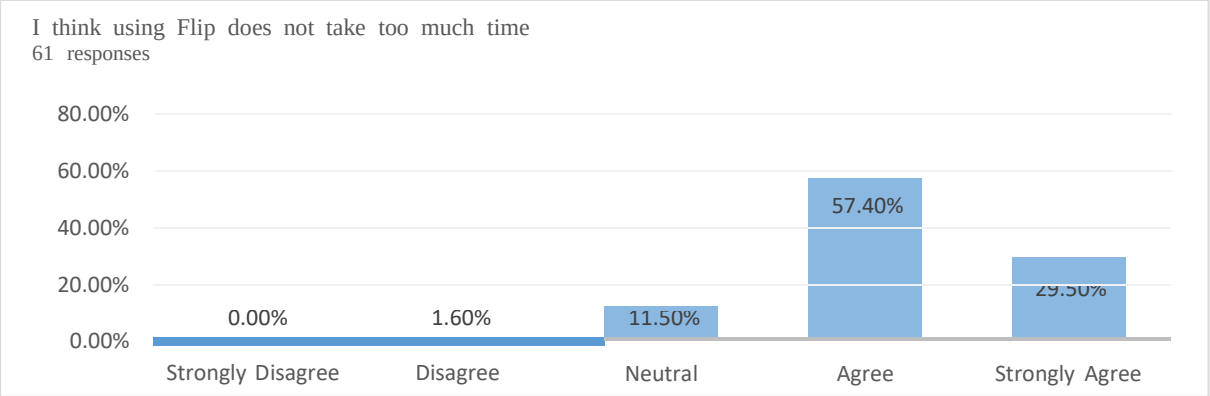


Figure 1 indicates that 57.4% of students agreed, and 29.5% strongly agreed that using Flip does not take too much time. Only 11.5% were neutral, and 1.6% disagreed with the statement. None of them strongly disagreed with the statement.

From the graph above, about 86.9% of students agree that Flip helps save time in the video production process, despite one disagreeing with it, perhaps due to the weak internet connection to record or upload the video.

Figure 2 PEU2: Learning to use Flip for my class activities was easy

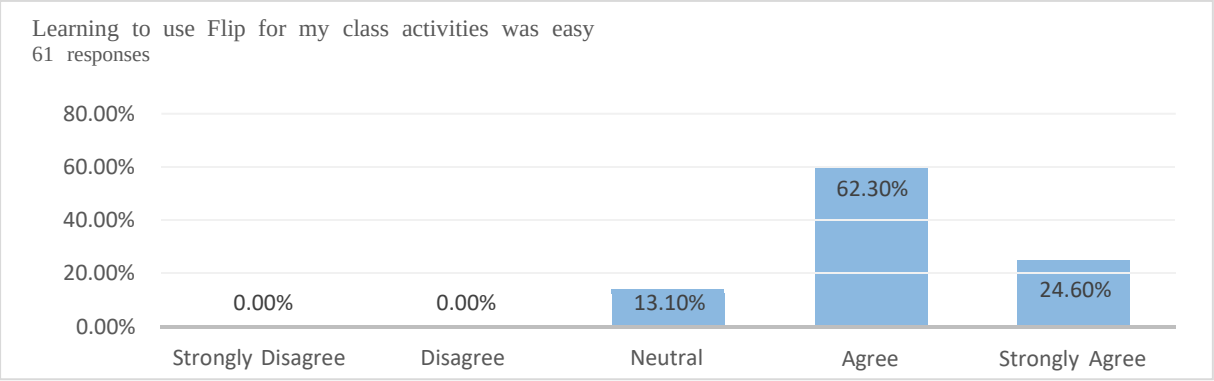


Figure 2 shows that 62.3% of students agreed, and 24.6% strongly agreed that learning to use Flip for class activities was easy. The remaining 13.1% were neutral on the statement. None of them disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. This positive perception will undoubtedly increase students' participation in class activities and the possibility of carrying out collaborative learning through this medium in a better way.

Figure 3 PEU3: Interacting with my lecturer and other members through Flip was easy and not stressful

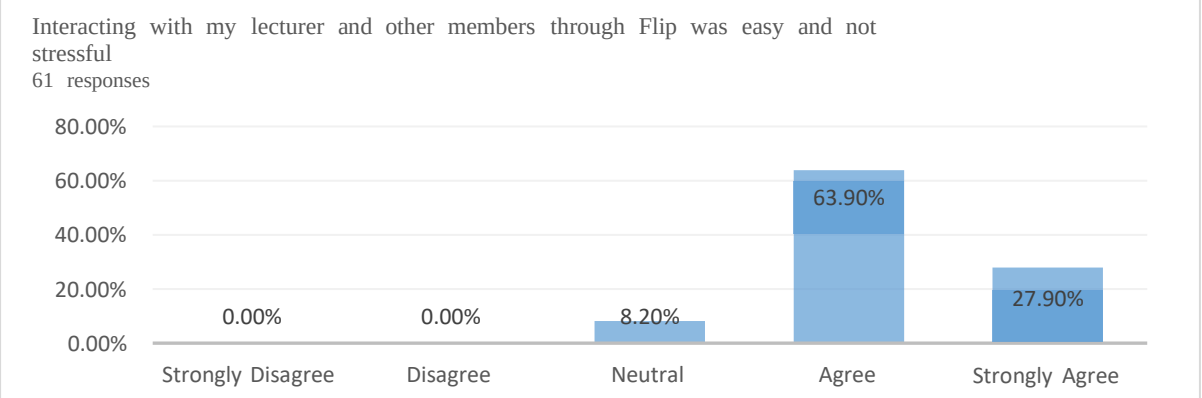


Figure 3 indicates that 63.9% of students agreed and 27.9% strongly agreed that interacting with their lecturer and other members through Flip was easy and not stressful. Only 8.2% were neutral. None of them disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. All videos in Flip are hosted in a closed environment and are not made public, allowing students to interact freely with others, which is why about 91.8% of students agree with this item.

Perceived Usefulness (PU)

There were three items for this component. The results of the items are as follows:

Figure 4 PU1: Learning using Flip helped me to speak Arabic

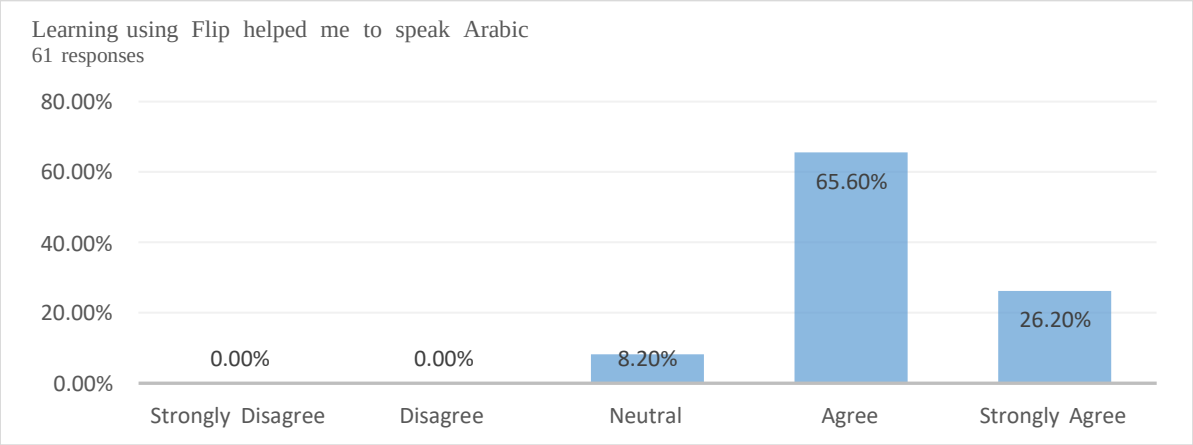


Figure 4 shows that 65.6% of students agreed, and 26.2% strongly agreed that learning using Flip helped them to speak Arabic. The remaining 8.2% were neutral on the statement. None of them disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Using Flip's features, such as closed captions (CC), students' speaking skills can be strengthened.

Figure 5 PU2: I think that using Flip can help me to improve my Arabic speaking skills

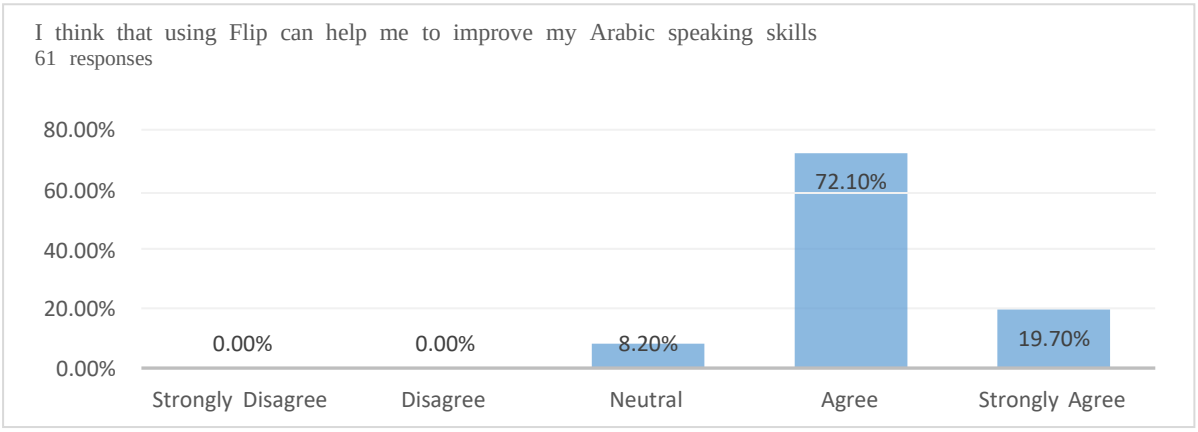


Figure 5 shows that 72.1% agreed that using Flip can help them improve their Arabic speaking skills, and 19.7% strongly agreed. 8.2% remained neutral, while none of them disagreed and strongly disagreed. Almost 91.8% of students agree with this item because Flip has allowed them to re-record responses, which helps them improve their Arabic speaking skills.

Figure 6 PU3: The comment and feedback given by my lecturer and classmates in Flip were really useful

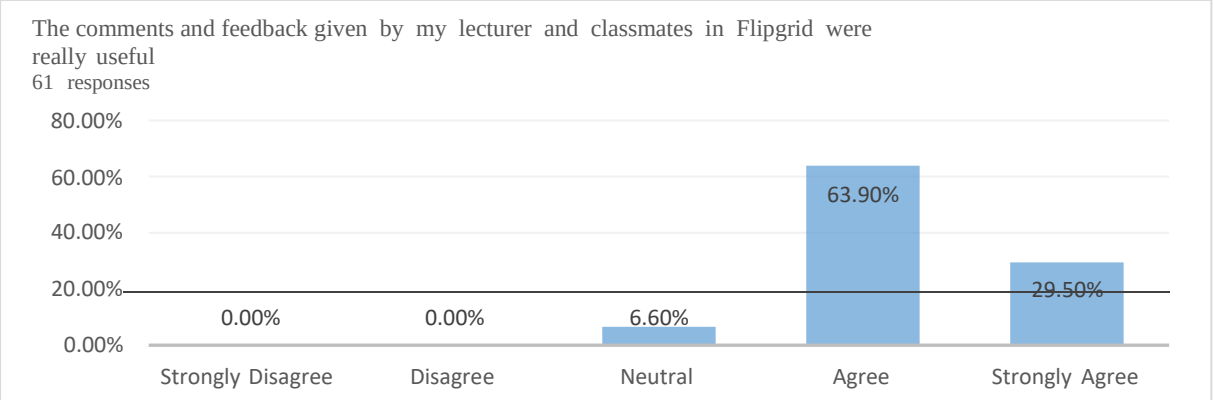


Figure 6 indicates that 63.9% of students agreed, and 29.5% strongly agreed that the comments and feedback from their lecturer and classmates in Flip were really useful. The remaining 6.6% are found to be neutral. None voted to disagree and strongly disagreed with the statement. The comments and feedback received by students will definitely open the door to massive improvement in their speaking performances.

Attitude towards Use (AT)

There were three items for this component. The results of the items are as follows:

Figure 7 AT1: I like using Flip to learn how to speak Arabic

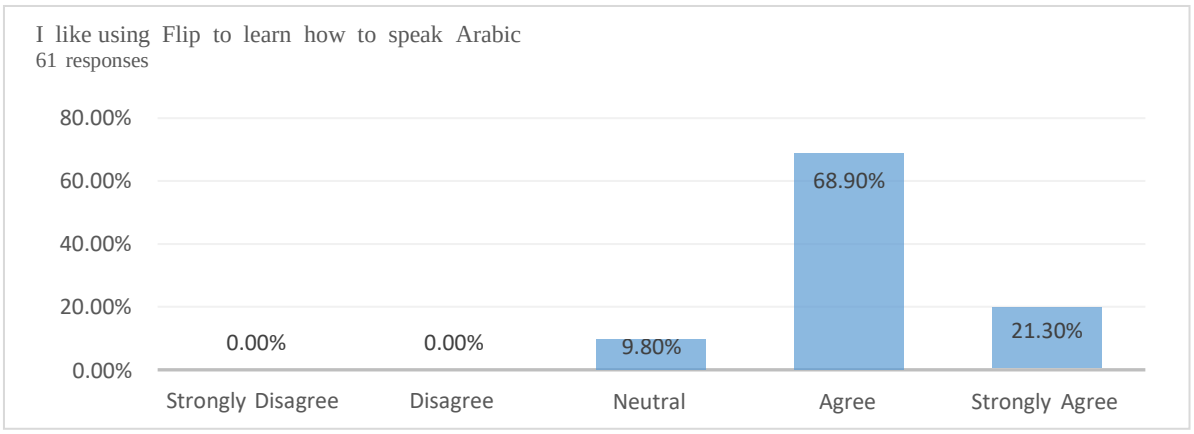
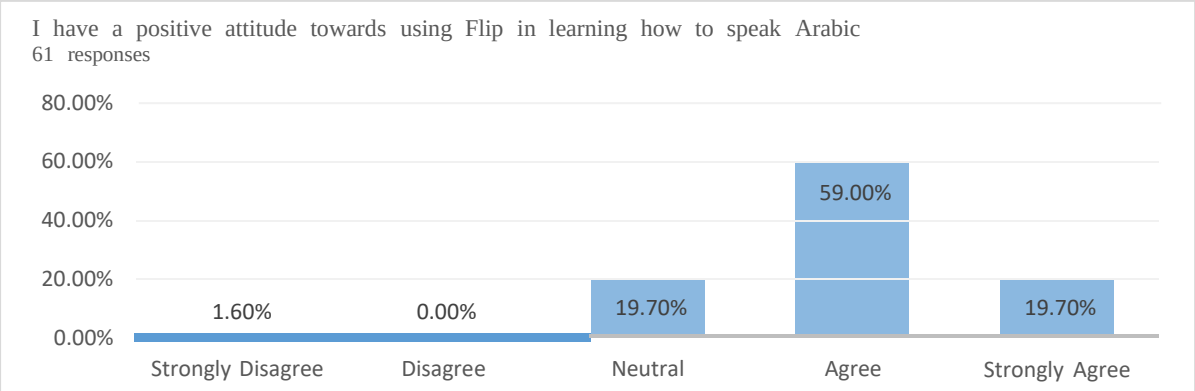


Figure 7 shows that 68.9% of students agreed, and 21.3% strongly agreed that they like using Flip to learn how to speak Arabic. The remaining 9.8% were neutral on the statement. None of them disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. The high percentage of the total of 90.2% indicates that students are satisfied with the overall feature that Flip has.

Figure 8 AT2: I have a positive attitude towards using Flip in learning how to speak Arabic



Based on Figure 8, 59% of students agreed they have a positive attitude towards using Flip to learn how to speak Arabic, followed by 19.7% who strongly agreed. 1.6% are found to disagree strongly, and none disagree with the statement. The remaining 19.7% is found to be neutral. Although one student voted to disagree strongly, this does not significantly affect the study's overall results because the number is very small.

Figure 9 AT3: I feel that using Flip is a good way to learn how to speak Arabic

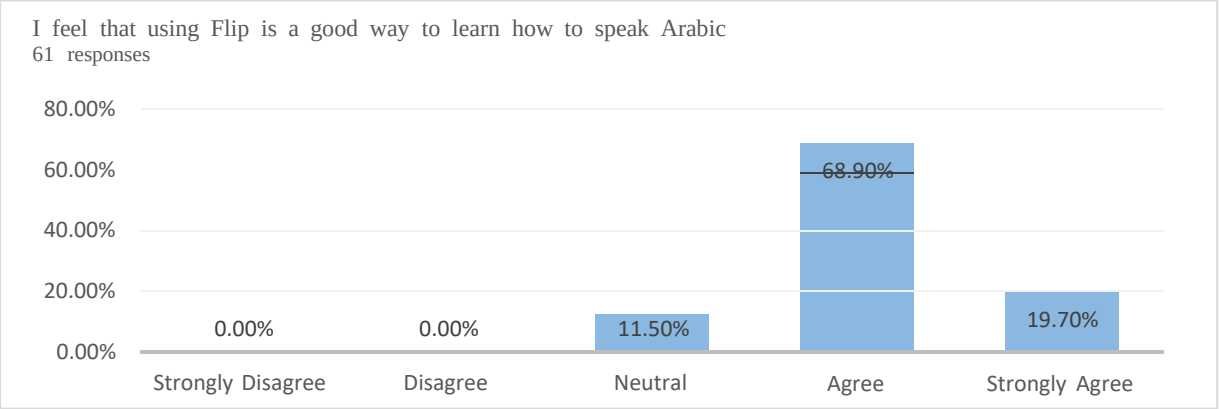


Figure 9 indicates that 68.9% of students agreed, and 19.7% strongly agreed that they felt using Flip was a good way to learn how to speak Arabic. Only 11.5% were neutral. None of them disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement. Using technology to spark speaking is surely a smart move because today's youth are avid users of technology and mobile devices. Therefore, it is not surprising that 88.6% of students agree with this item.

To interpret the mean scores, the following scoring guidelines were used (AlAwadni & AlFadley, 2022):

Table 2: Score Means and The Interpretation

Score Means	The Interpretation
3.68-5.00	High
2.34-3.67	Moderate
1.00-2.33	Low

Table 2 shows that the mean score of 3.68–5.00 is at a high level, the mean score of 2.34–3.67 is at a moderate level, and the mean score of 1.00–2.33 is at a low level. This scoring guideline is used in this study because the questionnaire uses five Likert scales. Table 3 below shows the overall result for responses, together with the mean and interpretation.

Table 3: Percentage, means, and interpretation

No.	Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Interpretation
1	I think using Flip does not take too much time (PEU1)	0	1.6	11.5	59	29.5	4.16	High
2	Learning to use Flip for my class activities was easy (PEU2)	0	0	13.1	62.3	24.6	4.11	High
3	Interacting with my lecturer and other members through Flip was easy and not stressful (PEU3)	0	0	8.2	63.9	27.9	4.20	High
4	Learning using Flip helped me to speak Arabic (PU1)	0	0	8.2	65.6	26.2	4.18	High
5	I think that using Flip can help me to improve my Arabic speaking skills (PU2)	0	0	8.2	72.1	19.7	4.11	High
6	The comments and feedbacks given by my lecturer and classmates in Flipgrid were really useful (PU3)	0	0	6.6	63.9	29.5	4.23	High
7	I like using Flip to learn how to speak Arabic (AT1)	0	0	9.8	68.9	21.3	4.11	High
8	I have a positive attitude towards using Flip in learning how to speak Arabic (AT2)	1.6	0	19.7	59	19.7	3.95	High
9	I feel that using Flip is a good way to learn how to speak Arabic (AT3)	0	0	11.5	68.9	19.7	4.08	High

The data above shows that the students provided highly positive feedback on the acceptance of using Flip in learning Arabic in terms of speaking. The mean value shows that overall, the student's responses and acceptances were favorable for Flip. The data also indicate that the majority of the students also "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with the use of Flip, thus proving that it is the right tool for students to learn to speak Arabic.

DISCUSSIONS

The first objective of this study is to examine students' perceptions of the ease of use of Flip in learning and speaking Arabic. The results of items PEU1, PEU2, and PEU3 indicated that students positively perceived using Flip was easy. On Flip, when educators post a topic to their students, they can reply with short videos as short as 15 seconds or 10 minutes, as the educators can set the maximum length for the videos their students can submit. According to Stoszkowski (2018), the reason was to promote more focused and less ambiguous responses among the students, which will indirectly save time. Besides that, Flip's ease of use guarantees the involvement of all students in class activities, including those who are more reserved or more afraid to face the public, as they become more confident when giving opinions in class. Moreover, students responded positively to Flip, as its simple features and convenience allow them to interact with other members in a stress-free environment. Esparrago-Kalidas (2022) mentioned in his study that Flip can bridge the gap to interact with peers and teachers as students rarely participate during synchronous sessions.

The second objective of this study is to examine students' perceptions of Flip's usability. The results of items PU1, PU2, and PU3 indicated that students highly perceived Flip as a useful tool for learning Arabic speaking skills. Flip motivates students to speak and improve their Arabic speaking skills, a result that is supported by Lim and Md Yunus (2021), which revealed that pupils are optimistic about using Flip as it could help to improve their English-speaking confidence and reduce their speaking anxiety. According to Amirulloh et al. (2020), most students claimed that they felt their speaking ability had improved when using Flip. With Flip, students can also become fluent because they have to repeat many times to avoid mistakes before recording the video. Through short videos recorded on Flip, students and peers can also respond to other people's videos so that it can enhance students' speaking abilities while also actively involved in learning. Like a domino effect,

Pillai (2019) studied how one's comment can lead to a cascade of comments, and his study showed that if one's content has one comment, it is 54% more likely to be followed by another comment.

The third objective is to evaluate students' attitudes toward using Flip. The results of items AT1, AT2, and AT3 showed positive responses. The majority of students found that they like using Flip, which aligns with other research on video-based asynchronous discussions (Lowenthal et al., 2020). Students feel more comfortable and positive because they feel that their level of Arabic is quite similar to that of their peers. With this, students can identify their strengths and weaknesses of themselves and their peers. Students can measure their performance after seeing their classmates' performances, and in this way, they can indirectly increase their confidence and motivation to become more confident in their own abilities. With the diversity of UiTM students' learning backgrounds in terms of their previous experience in learning Arabic, it is important to create a safe space where students feel welcome and can practice speaking comfortably, and without a doubt, Flip offers this advantage.

Currently, there is an emerging tool in the area of language learning called ChatGPT, which is designed to answer questions and engage in conversation with input from a user. In the context of using it to improve students speaking skills, it needs the ability to hear and understand verbally spoken language as it is designed to process written language input and generate responses based on that input. However, as a conversation partner, students can use it as vocabulary and grammar practice by learning and seeing how sentences are constructed, or certain words are used in a conversation. With the skill acquired, the students will be confident and motivated to create a better Flip video response for their assignment.

While ChatGPT can be a helpful tool for language learning, it is always best to have supervision or guidance from a language teacher to ensure a more comprehensive and effective learning experience. They can provide personalized feedback and tailor the language learning experience to students' needs and learning styles.

Compared to other skills, speaking can be the most difficult to teach and learn. Some students claimed they acquired new vocabulary items during the lecture but lacked the opportunity to use them in conversations. Therefore, the researchers see the need to create a *bi'ah lughawiyyatt* (Arabic language environment) in which a person can interact with others using the Arabic language as a communication tool. Implementing Flip in teaching and learning Arabic speaking in this study is thus an innovation in Arabic pedagogy, whereby the researchers created *bi'ah lughawiyyatt* in the virtual world to encourage students to speak Arabic.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examined Flip's acceptance of learning to speak Arabic among UiTM Rembau campus students. The results showed that Flip is an exciting tool and a well-accepted application among students for learning to speak Arabic. Besides, the mean readings recorded for all items are above 4.0, which indicates that students have positive perceptions and attitudes towards using Flip to learn Arabic speaking due to its features, which are self-friendly, convenient, no installation needed, and easy access. The high volume of videos and engagement hours during the implementation of this study, as well as favourable research findings, demonstrate that Flip increases students' engagement and gives every student a voice in the classroom, which will eventually help them develop stronger conversation skills and become more confident interacting with others.

The results of this study could encourage educators to modify past teaching methods, as teaching speaking, especially a foreign language, requires innovative ways and approaches rather than teaching speaking through parroting and memorization. The limitation of this study was that it only involved diploma-level students from the Faculty of Business and Management, UiTM Rembau campus, who were taking the Arabic course TAC101; hence, further studies with a larger number of students and within different courses and institutions may shed more light on the effects of Flip use in speaking.

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