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The Use of Flip as Asynchronous Tool for Collaborative Learning

Final Report

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Abstract

In this paper we look at the value of the website Flip as it relates to online learning. This site can be linked to Google Classroom to better integrate it into academic institutions. We investigated this technology, as well as creating a few videos to test out the features that the site presented. A tutorial was also created so that new users could view it. After this we asked a few of the students in Raen's class to take a survey to better understand how the users interacted and used the software. The survey asked questions about how they felt the application worked for learning a new language. We expected to see that students would be more confident in their skills, as well as improve when assessed on their language competency. Recording yourself talking in a new language is a type of practice that can enhance the learning of declarative knowledge such as new words and terms. (Smith and Ragan, 2005) Using Flip Grid will also allow other students to assess each other, which can help both the person being assessed and the person doing the assessment. It can also create a sense of community for learners and instructors. The survey did not go as planned, as it had very few respondents. From these few responses we found that it was an overall good experience. Many respondents said they liked the aesthetics and user interface (UI) of the website, and that they found it to be a useful tool in learning a new language. Respondents also seemed to think that Flip helped create a learning community. The main challenges that came about were problems with technology both among the authors and respondents. The respondents seemed to think that parts of Flip were hard to parse, and the authors sometimes had challenges using collaborative technology to do the writing and research of the project.

Project Background

Flip, formerly known as FlipGrid, was developed in 2014 by Professor Charles Miller at the University of Minnesota, which makes the video discussion platform a relatively recent language teaching tool (Young, 2018). Remote, asynchronous communication tools have given people the world over an opportunity to collaborate with virtually anyone else in the world on a given subject. Even before the COVID-19 global pandemic, schools and universities have been actively leveraging remote platforms of various types for learners in dispersed locations who wish to learn a common topic. Far from the passive TV courses of the 1960's and 1970's, today's collaborative tools give learners the ability to not only take in information, but also put out information. Any user with some basic applications can put out text, video, and audio content to the public Internet or to a restricted group behind a firewall. Currently, a traditional computer (tower or laptop) is not even needed: mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets provide all the computing power and app-handling ability any user would ever need.

As any user who has seen someone's personal video output on YouTube, Instagram, or TikTok can attest, the prospect of talking about something one loves, performing a musical or dance number, or even demonstrating everyday activities like putting on makeup or fixing drywall in a house is irresistible to some users of the Internet. These same users, out of social anxiety or just plain fear, wouldn't dream of giving an in-person talk or performance. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that fear of public speaking is (still) the #1 fear in the general population. "Speaking" to an inanimate object like a device screen makes the process of sharing content much easier for many users.

In this project, we intend to explore the use of a video discussion and sharing app called Flip, formerly known as FlipGrid, to enable students to collaborate on projects and assignments from remote locations. The app "flips" the traditional roles of teacher and learner, hence the name.

The project team members are:

- *Raenalyn Maralit*: as a remote foreign language teacher of adolescent students, Raen has chosen this learning platform and will serve as subject matter expert for this report.

- *Tanner Morrison*: as a Microsoft certificate holder, Tanner has a wide range of skills in using Microsoft Suite as well as Google Applications and the Zoom platform.

- *Beth Woodell*: as a corporate trainer and instructional designer/developer in the private sector, Beth has experience with other collaboration tools such as Webex, MS Teams, and RingCentral to deliver skills training to employees of various organizations, as well as experience with content creation tools such as Adobe Captivate.

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment revealed the definite need for such a tool in foreign language education. From Raen's experience as a foreign language instructor, and from asking other professionals' opinions, learners have insufficient time to learn and practice the language when meeting synchronously using Google Meet, which is restricted by 60 minutes of class time. Also, she has observed that some students, for whatever reason, are less socially able than others and have difficulty expressing themselves in certain classroom contexts.

The performance gap exists between the current ability of the students to express themselves in the classroom and the expected ability of these students to do so. Classroom participation constitutes a significant part of their grade, so it is essential that these students, and in fact all students, be able to express themselves without stage fright or some other social anxiety. As a result, demonstration of the language is lessened and achieved results are not as high as they should be. Moreover, education is often interrupted by many other responsibilities such as students working, poor Internet connection, or no access to a device during video sessions, which makes it difficult to find ways to continue study.

Flip will give learners the chance to learn and demonstrate language skills and knowledge without time restrictions. To stimulate their interest in learning the language outside class hours, the adoption of this new technology may motivate students to keep improving their language skills.

Project Purpose

Using Flip, we hope to create a response system that allows students to explain or show their learning using video. It is a great tool for those less socially able students to express their thoughts and feelings with the class during a video session. We envision students being able to demonstrate mastery of various foreign language topics, and even include non-verbal behavior appropriate for spoken Japanese, through their video content.

Goals and Context

The goal of this project is to create an instructional tutorial for students and teachers for the purpose of using the Flip application. After watching the tutorials, students and teachers will be able to:

- Explain the convenience and advantages of this technology

- Use and adapt to the Flip application effectively

In order to properly assess if these goals are being met, we have outlined a few learning objectives that we can then assess. Those learning objectives for students are:

- Students will be able to create a Flip video to engage in a discussion over the duration of the class instead of engaging face-to-face in a classroom setting.

- Students will be able to discuss their ideas and experiences with professionals, experts, and scholars around the world.

- Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through posting a response to a discussion topic or uploading a performance of their own.

- Students will be able to articulate their thoughts and ideas verbally, especially if they struggle with writing or have deficits in reading and responding to grade-level content. (Special education students)

- Students will be able to improve their self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, language skills, or even public speaking skills.

For teachers the learning objectives are as follows:

- Teachers will be able to create their own grids with prompts about a topic, solicit video responses, and analyze them for class.

- Teachers will be able to improve their class administration skills.

- Teachers will be able to effectively integrate technology in a student-centered learning environment.

- Teachers will be able to facilitate students' creative thinking and reflection, collaboration and communication, and higher-order learning.

Target Audience

We intend to present the results to administrators and school officials of those schools where the remote students are enrolled. Even the best learning environments have room to grow and change to meet the needs of a changing student population. We hope the administrators grasp the value of students being able to express themselves in different ways as a tool to achieve the goal of becoming fluent in spoken Japanese, a skill that will serve them their entire lives.

Technologies to be Used

Flip can be accessed by any device with a camera, microphone, and Internet access. Additionally, both iOS and Android Flip apps are available for free download. Flip works best in the Chrome browser. Students can access a teachers Grid (community of learners, i.e., Classroom) and respond to Topics using either:

- **Link**: Teachers can post a link to Google Classroom or send through Google email. Students then click the link to access Flip.

- **Flip Code**: Teachers can post a Flip Code to Google Classroom or send through Google email. Students then enter the Flip Code at the website.

Flip is a website that enables teachers to create "grids" to facilitate video discussions. Each grid is like a message board where teachers can pose questions, called "topics," and their students can post video responses that appear in a tiled grid display. Responses can be interactive for classmates to respond to or kept private for only the teacher to see. This learning tool can easily be integrated in a physical class or remote learning. It is simple to integrate with Google Classroom as it represents the technology that learners will be expected to use upon utilizing Flip. Google Classroom makes teaching more productive and meaningful by streamlining assignments, boosting collaboration, and fostering communication. Educators can create classes, distribute assignments, send feedback, and see everything in one place. Classroom also seamlessly integrates with other Google tools like Google Meet, Docs and Drive.

Preparing Flip for use in this project was a straightforward process. To create a free administrator account, one needs to use an existing Microsoft or Google account. Once an account is created, a teacher is able to see their list of grids, a Flip label, for a learning space in which an instructor can create many video tasks. When an account is created there is only one grid, but an instructor is able to make as many as they like. For this project, a grid for the project team (see Appendix B) and another for participating groups of students (see Appendix C) were created. A useful function of Flip is that once an instructor makes a "topic" (assignment), they

can easily duplicate it across each grid. When using Flip for a class, there are two major items that need to be taken care of: how students are enrolled into the grids, and topic creation.

Data Collection

To collect learner reactions to the tool, we devised a Kirkpatrick level 1 survey measuring reactions to 17 aspects of using Flip, using a Likert scale of 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree")." In all but one survey question, a higher score indicates a more positive reaction. One question ("I had to scroll a lot to find what I was looking for on a Flip screen.") was worded in such a way that a lower score correlates with a more positive reaction. We distributed the survey to 73 learners in third- and fourth-year college classes in accounting, business, and arts & sciences in the Philippines through a Google Form associated with the established Google Classroom for this audience. Survey results are in Appendices A and C.

Results

The purpose of this survey was to check student perceptions and attitudes toward the use of Flip in learning Japanese as a foreign language. The respondents in the survey were students who were enrolled in a foreign language class in a higher education institution that focused on learning basic Japanese language and culture. The survey was sent via email to 73 students and was given a response deadline of December 2nd, 2022. Unfortunately, only 7 students participated in the survey, while 9 students made an account to the created "Grid", the classroom (see Appendix B). We tried to follow up with the two students to match the number of respondents to the number of users in Flip, but we didn't hear back from them. So, we decided to proceed with having only 7 respondents, thinking that it would give us enough data to analyze. Overall, the

data demonstrate a positive reaction to the survey questions. The 16 questions in which a higher score is indicative of a positive result gave us a grand average of 4.82 out of a possible 5 on the Likert scale. The one question in which a low score indicates a positive result yielded a 2.57 average, indicating a weakly positive reaction. See detailed results in Appendices A and C.

The objective of this project was to implement a working Flip website to overcome limitations of traditional foreign language classrooms and extend the opportunities for learning with no time or place restrictions. Beth made a video tutorial for students to view upon making an account in Flip website or app. The responses we obtained from the students are above expectations, and they have shown motivation to begin and continue learning by actively interacting with the content during evening hours and weekends (see Appendix A). Overall, we are delighted with the product and its outcomes. We think that the continued use of this collaborative tool will help learners to overcome many of their language barriers in the near future. We believe that our future jobs can be enhanced with the skills and knowledge we have acquired as result of this project.

Group Reflection

Survey results showed that Flip is an effective tool in the language classroom. Language instructors often find that learners are reluctant to talk, so it is important to provide a positive environment for interaction and Flip is one way to do that. However, the use of Flip must be integrated into the language classroom curriculum and not be an end in itself. Flip allows for asynchronous conversations between learners, providing them with a user-friendly, enjoyable, and engaging platform that mirrors their experience with video-sharing on different social media

platforms. This platform has many advantages for student learning and engagement. While it cannot replace important face-to-face synchronous conversations in the language classroom, it may certainly complement and facilitate them. Flip offers a platform for social collective learning while still allowing each student to take center stage and shine. Because they get the chance to learn from each other, students become more active in their learning and take up the roles of teachers and learners in the same space as everyone contributes to the learning process. Flip is a valuable tool for amplifying student voices and may be used to enhance language skills and increase student engagement and participation. However, more research is needed to investigate its effective use in language learning as well as other disciplines.

Individual Reflection

Beth Woodell

I had high hopes for this project. The technology was new to me, and I hoped to be able to leverage knowledge of it into possible future research. Thanks to Raen for introducing me to it. The way in which she was using the technology in her Japanese classes also dovetailed somewhat with the material in the IDE 621 class, since flipped classrooms and reciprocal teaching came up occasionally as a manifestation of social learning theory applied to the classroom, especially K-12 classrooms. In fact, one object in one of my infographics for that class was inspired by the work we are doing in this project and in this class in general.

I had not anticipated the low survey response rate from the sample group, but it is understandable. A recent blog post from the survey company Qualtrics suggests that response rates between 20% and 30% are typical, with less than 10% being low. I suspect Qualtrics is

thinking of and gathering data more on marketing and consumer-type surveys, but seven out of 79 is low no matter how one looks at it.

It turns out that the students that did respond were, in Raen's estimation, among the best and the most motivated students she had, so their opinions of the Flip tool and its ease of use might be somewhat skewed. The Qualtrics blog post implies as much also. However, this is a good start for further evaluation of the effectiveness of the tool.

If we had time, it might be interesting to do a longitudinal study of how this cohort relates to the tool over a number of academic years. Do they like it better the more they use it? Does its value wane over time? Do they acquire sufficient skill with the tool that they could perform reciprocal teaching using it? I would be interested in perhaps being a co-author of a paper exploring these topics in the future.

Raenalyn Maralit

One of my major goals as a foreign language instructor is to help students communicate effectively. I wanted to help my students develop their voice in order to communicate verbally what they have learned. Unfortunately, I had trouble finding ways to incorporate this type of instruction into my lessons during the four months of online instruction.

Many teachers, like me, have had to figure out this new world of distance learning in a very short amount of time. Though not ideal in many ways, I have had to discover new ways to keep language learning moving forward, or at the very least not regressing. I was able to use Google Classroom before transitioning into Brightspace as what our school chose to be the official learning platform. I also used Google Meet and Google Forms for video sessions and

assessments. But I had a hard time facilitating video sessions or assessing students as there was limited time to ask 20+ students in each class to demonstrate their language skills within 60 minutes. I am using this time of reinvention to investigate and implement these ideas that I have come across during this collaborative technology project. Flip can be integrated into an activity component of the Google Classroom LMS. After learning more about Flip, I can see myself using it regularly to keep students engaged in all the communication modes in my future online classes.

I appreciate the opportunity to learn more about this platform and with the support of my team, we were able to assess the usability and effectiveness of Flip to language teaching and learning. There are lots of things that can be done directly on the Flip website or app, such as students leaving video comments or reactions to each other, leaving feedback on student videos, and following student interactions. Many of these features require students setting up an account, so during the survey, I think it is one of the reasons why most of them didn't bother to explore the website or the app. I hope I will be able to encourage more students, as well as other educators, to use this collaborative tool.

Tanner Morrison

One of the biggest lessons that I learned from this group project was the importance of communication between all members of the team. There would be points where I was not quite sure what I was supposed to be doing, or what other members were working on. This often led to parts of the project dragging, or not getting completed on time. We rectified this by having weekly zoom meetings where everyone's input was welcomed, and we could take or assign tasks that needed to be done. I also learned a lot about working in different formats as each team

member has a specific way they want to work, and technology that they like to use. Successfully working around these barriers was key to finishing the project.

In the future I hope to incorporate many of the team building skills that I have learned to be more successful in a team environment. I will also remember to not expect too many results from any study, as the low turnout rate of our respondents shows just how unlikely you are to get large amounts of survey results on any given study. I have also learned a few important skills relating to researching new technology, and in discovering the capabilities of new technology that will likely be useful when vetting future material for any instruction that I design.

One thing that I wish we could have done was have a group as part of a study that we could try different tutorials on, and see how they reacted to each, and see how they used this technology on their own in different ways. This could have led to interesting results not only with how the Flip technology can be incorporated into new instruction, but also with how people explore new technology. Both of these things could have been examined through multiple surveys, and would have been useful for future studies, and future applications of new technology.

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Young, J. (2018, June 18). Microsoft buys video-discussion platform Flipgrid - EdSurge News. EdSurge. Retrieved from https://www.edsurge.com/news/2018-06-18-microsoft-buys-video-discussion-platform-flipgrid December 1, 2022.

Appendix A

Survey Results

It was easy to log in to Flip using the browser or mobile app.

7 responses
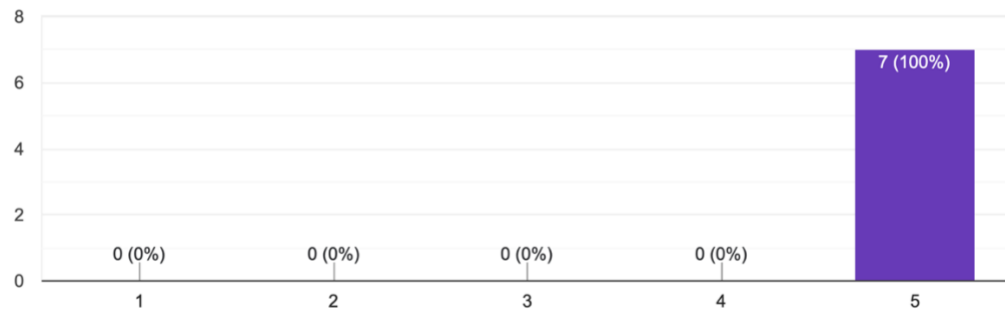
I could use the Flip key to see video activity.

7 responses
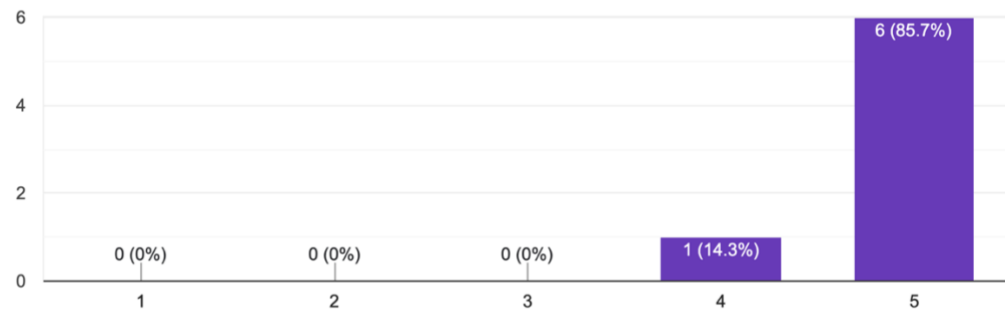
It was easy for me to record and upload a video to Flip.
7 responses
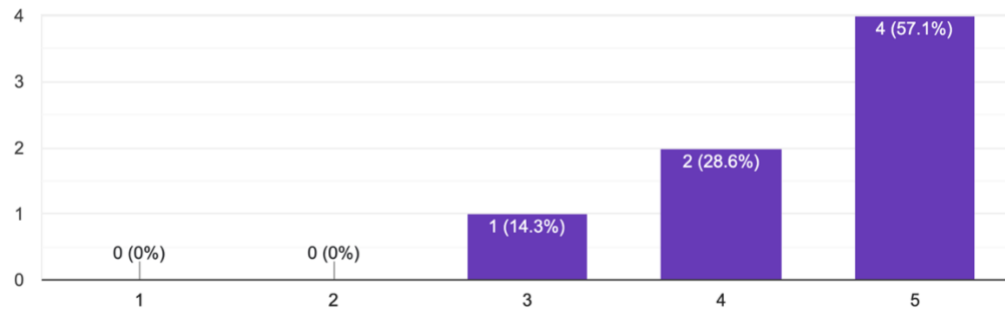
I was able to do my assignments using either PC/Mac or smartphone.
7 responses
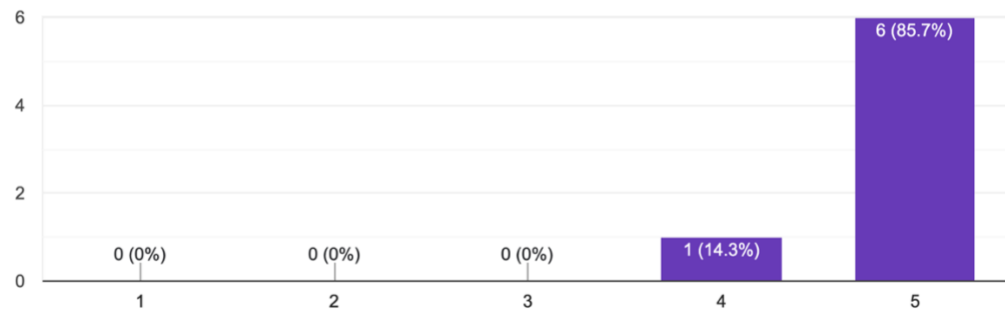
I was able to see and hear other students' responses to my videos.

7 responses
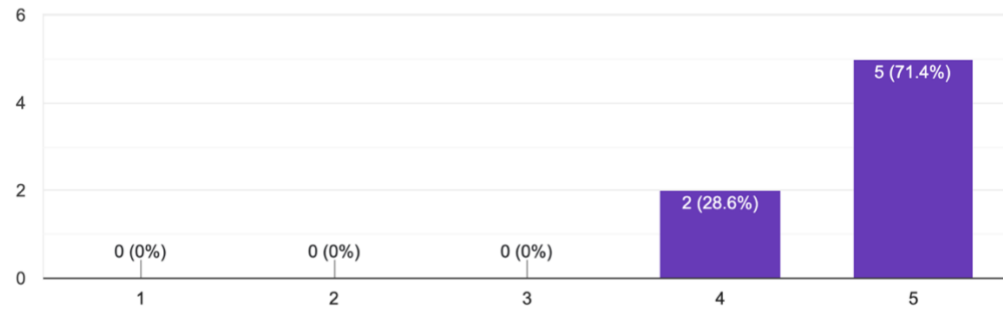
It was easy for me to use video messaging to interact with other students in the class.

7 responses
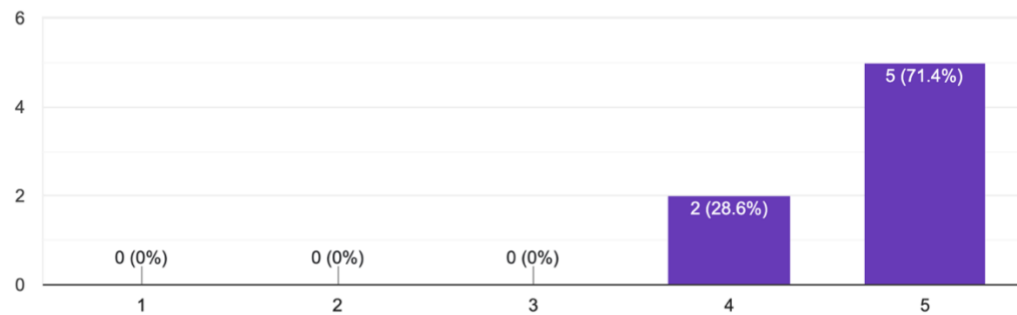
The Flip screens were easy to navigate.

7 responses
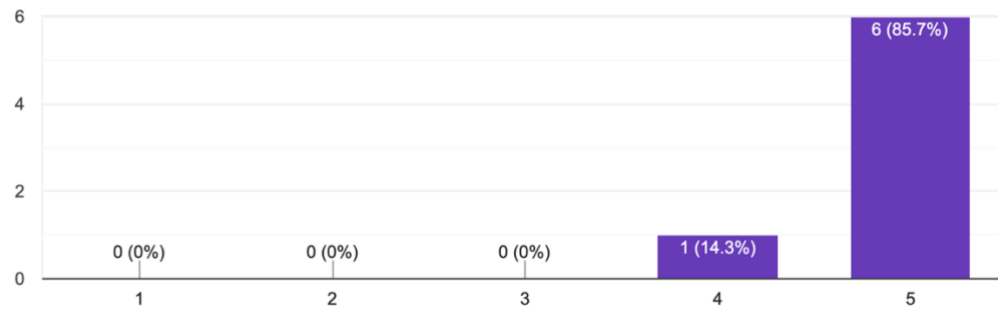
The screen colors, fonts, icons, and buttons were appealing to the eye.

7 responses
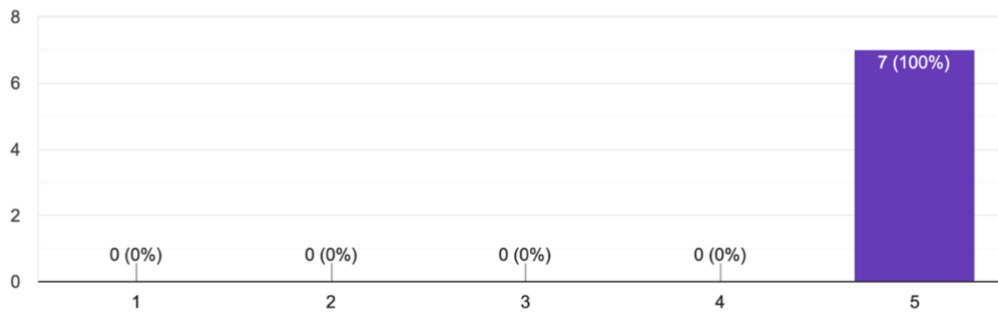
THE USE OF FLIP AS ASYNCHRONOUS TOOL FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

The videos were arranged on the screen in a way that made sense to me.
7 responses
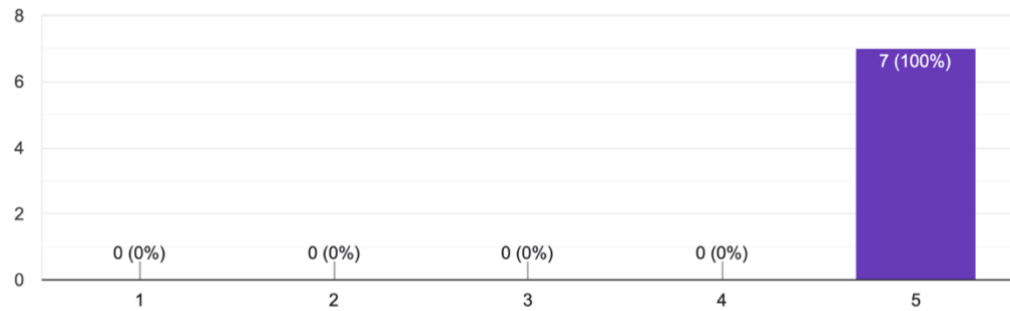
I could find find what I was looking for on a Flip screen.
7 responses
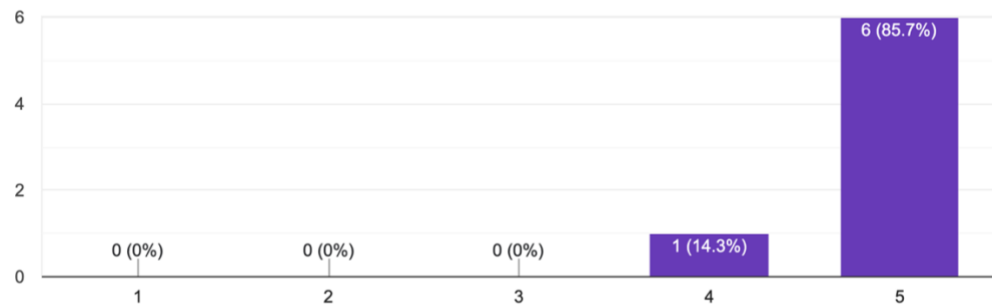
**I had to scroll a lot to find what I was looking for on a Flip screen.**
7 responses
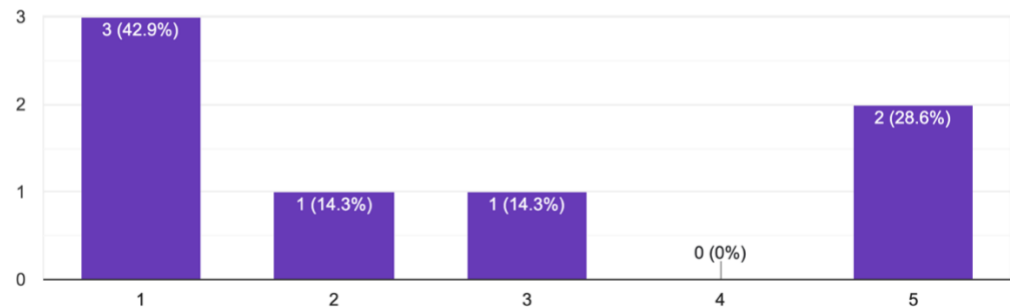
I got useful video feedback from my classmates and/or teacher in class.
7 responses
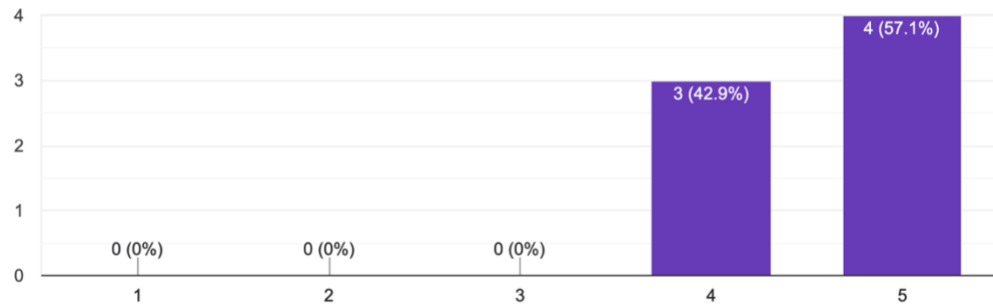
The lesson activities were a good way for me to prepare my videos.
7 responses
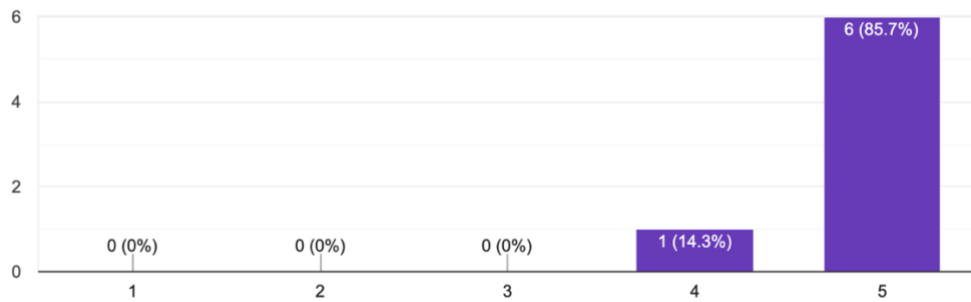
Videos are good way to discuss a topic with students in other locations.
7 responses
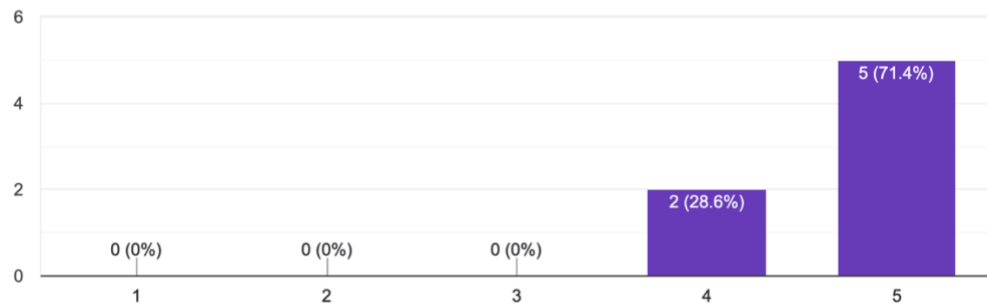
THE USE OF FLIP AS ASYNCHRONOUS TOOL FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Lesson videos made available to everyone to watch in class or in small groups is an effective way to learn a new language.

7 responses
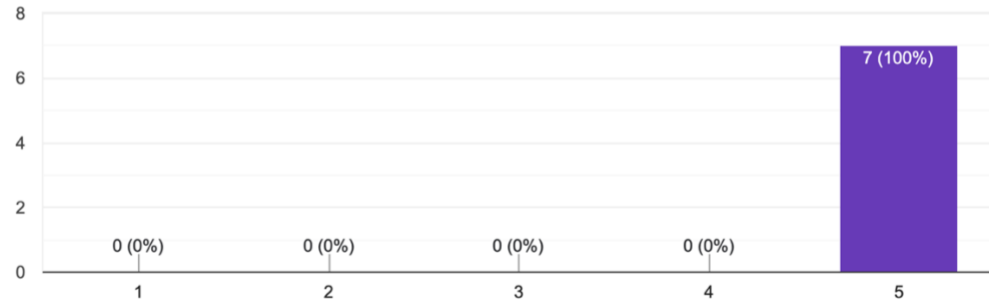
Flip helped me to improve my speaking.

7 responses
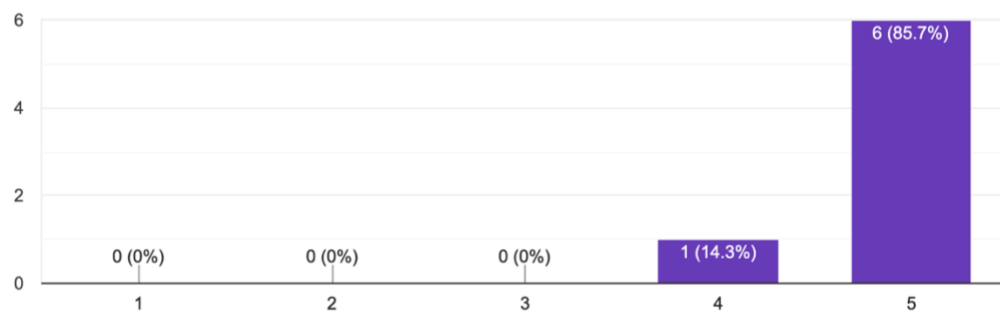
I would be interested in using Flip again in another class.
7 responses
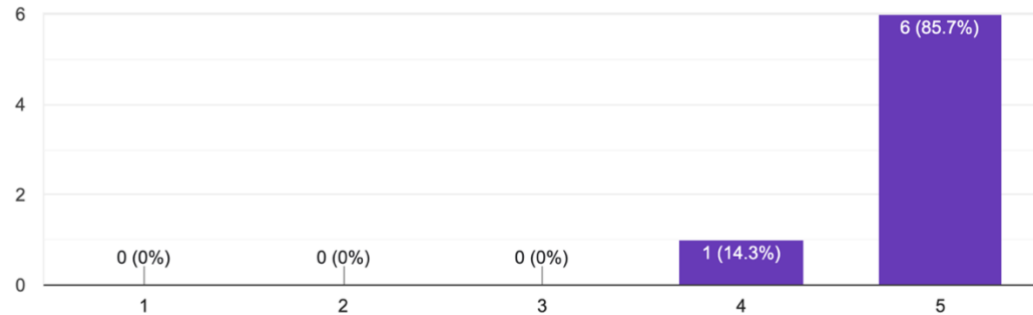
What aspects of the Flip app were a challenge?
7 responses

The audio and video presentation.

None. As i said, it is really easy to access. there are no problem or challenges that I find difficult when using this app.

None

The only thing that challenged me was the video uploading. I can't upload the video through my browser (phone) because it was giving me option download or open, and when I'm clicking open, it's not opening, so I had to download the app to upload my video.

Being new to app I need to navigate but it's very easy

I think the flip screen but somehow it was fine

What aspects of the Flip app were the most helpful to you in your learning?

7 responses

The part where you can create and start a discussion.

I can say that Flip app is extremely helpful to me in many ways. Not only does Flip app help me with learning it is also very easy to access.

Video messaging

I guess it's the user friendly app for me. It's really not complicated to use. And even though there's no tutorial on how you would use it, you can easily use it.

The app itself is much convenient to use

The videos are available to everyone

The Flip tutorial

Any final comments you would like to share?

7 responses

nothing more. :)

Hi Ms. Loomis, I hope you're doing well. Thank you for introducing me to this application. As you know, I am really interested in learning languages so Flip app is really helpful, and I'm really grateful that they made this platform accessible to all types of devices. I look forward to meeting you in person Ms. Loomis. Have a nice day!!

None

I guess that's it po >< we miss u mam!

Great job!

Flip app is something you can call friend when it comes to your activities, assignment because it help you

It is user-friendly app and it is easy to navigate.

Appendix B

Google Classroom Environment

Appendix C

Flip Environment and Supporting Objects

Summary of Learner Survey Responses

Linked below is an Excel file containing the raw data, including open-ended responses, from those learners who did provide a response to the survey.

Flip Survey Final Results

Sample Flip Tutorial

Linked below is a simple video tutorial, created by the team in Adobe Captivate 2019 and exported to .mp4 format, illustrating how to log on to a Flip group, record a short video topic, and upload it to the group.

Log on to Flip and Post a Topic to a Group