

การประยุกต์ใช้การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงงานเป็นฐานเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ
สำหรับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศและการต้อนรับผู้มาเยือน:
การวิเคราะห์เชิงพรรณนาของผลสัมฤทธิ์ทางการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษา
Integrating Project-Based Learning in English for Ecotourism and
Hospitality: A Descriptive Analysis of Student Outcomes

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บทคัดย่อ

ในช่วงไม่กี่ปีที่ผ่านมา สภาพจิตใจและอารมณ์ของผู้เรียนนั้นเป็นอีกหนึ่งประเด็นสำคัญในการเรียนการสอนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ ซึ่งปฏิเสธไม่ได้ว่า มีความขัดแย้งกันระหว่างผลสัมฤทธิ์ทางการเรียนรู้ของผู้เรียนและสภาพจิตใจของพวกเขา ด้วยเหตุนี้ การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงงานเป็นฐานได้แสดงให้เห็นถึงผลลัพธ์เชิงบวกในการพัฒนาความสามารถของผู้เรียนและนำมาซึ่งศักยภาพที่ดีที่สุดของผู้เรียน ประกอบกับการเอาใจใส่ถึงสภาพจิตใจและอารมณ์ของผู้เรียนไปพร้อมกัน

การวิจัยระยะยาวในครั้งนี้ ได้ศึกษาประสิทธิผลของการประยุกต์ใช้การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงงานเป็นฐาน (Project-based learning) สำหรับแผนการเรียนการสอนรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์เฉพาะในเรื่องของ 1) การพัฒนาความรู้ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ และ 2) การใช้กลยุทธ์จัดการกับความเครียดของนักศึกษาชุมชนการเรียนรู้เซเวียร์ จังหวัด เชียงราย ในรายวิชาการจัดการการท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศและการต้อนรับผู้มาเยือน ผู้วิจัยทำการเก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลผ่านการสังเกตการเรียนการสอนโดยใช้ผลงานของนักศึกษาและ แบบสอบถามเป็นเครื่องมือซึ่งข้อมูลที่ถูกรวบรวมจากการใช้การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงงานเป็นฐานตลอดระยะเวลา 16 สัปดาห์ ได้ถูกวิเคราะห์โดยใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนา

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า 1) นักศึกษาแสดงให้เห็นถึงพัฒนาการในการเรียนรู้หลังจากเสร็จสิ้นการทำโครงงานของรายวิชาจำนวนมาก และ 2) ประยุกต์ใช้สามกลยุทธ์หลักในการจัดการความเครียดในระหว่างการเรียนการสอน ในขณะที่มีสองกลยุทธ์ที่ถูกใช้ค่อนข้างน้อย จากผลการศึกษาดังกล่าว ผู้วิจัยจึงเสนอว่า การประยุกต์ใช้การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงงานเป็นฐานสำหรับรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์เฉพาะไม่ได้พัฒนาเพียงแค่ความรู้และทักษะของผู้เรียนเท่านั้นแต่ก็ได้ส่งผลต่อสภาพจิตใจของผู้เรียนในเชิงบวกเช่นกัน การศึกษานี้ได้ให้ข้อสรุปด้วย

ความหมายและข้อเสนอแนะสำหรับการศึกษาวิจัยในอนาคตในเรื่องของการเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงการเป็นฐาน และรายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์เฉพาะ

คำสำคัญ: การท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศ; การต้อนรับผู้มาเยือน; การเรียนรู้โดยมีโครงการเป็นฐาน; ความเครียดและกลยุทธ์การจัดการความเครียด

Abstract

In recent years, one of the key focuses on English language education includes students' psychological and emotional well-being. There are undoubtedly discrepancies between learning outcomes and students' mental well-being. Project-based learning has demonstrated positive results in enhancing learners' capacities and guiding them toward their best potential while paying attention to psychological and emotional well-being.

This longitudinal study investigates the effectiveness of the implementation of Project-based Learning (PBL) in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course in (1) enhancing English knowledge and skills and (2) managing stress-coping strategies among students in Ecotourism and Hospitality Management class in Xavier Learning Community, Chiang Rai, Thailand. To obtain a salient understanding, the researchers collected the data through a class observation using students' portfolios and questionnaire items. After 16-weeks of project-based learning implementation, the data were gathered and were analyzed using a descriptive statistical method.

The results revealed that the students 1) showed significant improvement in their learning achievements after completing several course-related projects, and 2) employed three main stress-coping strategies during the study, while two strategies were used less frequently. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that the application of project-based learning in ESP courses not only

enhances students' knowledge and skills but also contributes positively to their mental well-being. The study concludes with implications and suggestions for future research on PBL and ESP.

Keywords: Ecotourism; Hospitality Management; Project-based Learning; Stress and Coping Strategies

Introduction

The studies of English in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are widely researched, as it has been implemented in many study programs to teach English. Programs such as medicine, engineering, economics, education, psychology, and others commonly integrate ESP into their curricula (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021; Pazoki & Alemi, 2020; Trujeque-Moreno et al., 2021). The use of ESP courses is primarily used to prepare university or higher education students for professional or academic communication in English. As a result, numerous studies and articles on ESP programs can undoubtedly be found in academic journals. However, most research tends to focus solely on learning outcomes, without delving into students' perspectives and experiences during the learning process (Kainta & Rombot, 2020; Kansizoglu & Comert, 2021). Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the literature by focusing on gaining students' perspectives of learning English in the English for Specific Purposes course, particularly when project-based learning is applied.

ESP is one of the branches of English Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The existence of ESP in learning English is essential for those who study English in university, higher education, or those who already have a specific job (Tang, 2020). By undertaking the ESP program, people will gain some knowledge specifically for their needs or occupations. The focus of ESP

program is to prepare the students or workers to face their future challenges in English terms in their field of study or work (Kavlu, 2020; Namtapi, 2022). Learning English with specific determination helps students or workers overcome some obstacles in working places and in any situation in which English is needed on their grounds (Hyland, 2019).

For tourism students, English is essential for their studies and future careers (Cloudia Ho, 2020). English cannot be denied as the largest language used in the world. People are traveling around the world with the English language as their way of communicating. Therefore, tourism students need to master the English language (Cloudia Ho, 2020; Suprayogi & Budi Eko, 2020). The English language that they must comprehend is specifically in hospitality and tourism management (Chamorro et al., 2022; Lertchalermtipakoon et al., 2021). Though general English can serve the students, some special terms need to be introduced to them as a provision for learning in the tourism sector. Consequently, ESP perfectly suits their needs in improving knowledge and skills in tourism (Alhumaidan & Alghamdi, 2023).

Xavier Learning Community in Chiang Rai, Thailand, has one subject for their students majoring in tourism called English for ecotourism and hospitality management (Choemue & Bram, 2020). This course is intended to assist students in preparing for their future careers in the tourism sector. This course is offered for third-year students who choose ecotourism and hospitality management as their study track. This course deals with the knowledge, technical skills, and work style requirements of ecotourism and hospitality management. Through the employment of the English macro skills and fundamental principles of translation and interpretation in English, students are expected to engage in effective and purposive communication in various intercultural contexts, especially in the field of ecotourism and hospitality management in Thailand.

The objectives of this course are to familiarize students with the vocabulary used in the tourism industry, enable them to comprehend texts related to hospitality and tourism, and equip them to professionally manage conversations in various tourism-related situations. By the end of the course, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to handle both written and oral communication within the hospitality and tourism sectors. Additionally, students are encouraged to develop positive personalities and attitudes when interacting with customers.

Nonetheless, there are some evaluations from previous years in this program. Delivering knowledge and skills of ESP for ecotourism and hospitality management is quite tough since the students have complications in relating the principles into practice. To help students have a better understanding of the material, ESP teaching materials should include both theoretical and practical topics. Project-based learning (PBL) is an alternative that can be used in ESP courses. This kind of teaching can help students understand both the theories and practices of ESP materials.

Project Based Learning (PBL) is shown to be a decent method for delivering material for ESP courses in non-English departments (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021). Medicine, engineering, teaching, and economic sectors apply ESP as a program to introduce specific terms in the English language (Drumhiller & Schwanenflugel, 2013; Pazoki & Alemi, 2020). This study aims to address two key questions: first, to what extent does the use of PBL in ESP for the tourism sector help students comprehend the course material? Second, how do students cope with challenges they face while studying an ESP course using the PBL method?

Research Objectives

1. To measure students' English knowledge and skills improvement in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management class with a project-based learning method.
2. To investigate students' coping stress during their study with project-based learning methods in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management class.

Conceptual framework

Project-based learning (PBL) is more focused on the real world and personally actively engaged in many purposeful projects (Guo et al., 2020). This teaching method is going to enhance students' critical thinking, communication, and collaborative skills (Maros et al., 2023). In this teaching method, students and teachers are going to work hand in hand to solve problems that come up and observe the situation and environment. To solve the problem, students are going to establish a project to answer the problems and give meaningful answers to the problem. Students will encounter many obstacles and challenges, and as a result, come up with solutions from the projects. Therefore, students are going to hone their critical thinking in order to solve the dense issues that arise. In the project, they will work and collaborate with other students. Consequently, their communication and collaboration skills will be strengthened.

As we had already known, the application of PBL in the education field was widely applied. As mentioned by Hidayati et al. (2023) project-based learning was effective to be implemented in learning English. Not only in the field of English learning, but the use of PBL is also widely known in economics, engineering, and health care (Barros et al., 2021; Beneroso & Robinson, 2022; Eka et al., 2022; Servant-Miklos & Kolmos, 2022). Unfortunately, there are only a few

researchers, who put their interests into investigating the implementation of Project-Based Learning in ecotourism and hospitality management (Sen & Walter, 2020). As mentioned by Anwar et al. (2022) the use of project-based learning in the course has a positive impact on students' academic motivation and life skills especially in the tourism sector. However, the implication of the study stated that it was only a sample and might be improved and enhanced in the future. The study also suggested future researchers specifically conduct a project-based learning study on the economic community and developmental sustainability. On the other hand, nowadays, the need for implementation of ecotourism and hospitality management has increased in line with the growth of the tourism sector after the Covid-19 pandemic (Kangai et al., 2024).

The application of Project Based Learning in eco-tourism and hospitality management courses in the education department is a need. By implementing this teaching method, students might gain abundant benefits and learn from the real-life experiences around them (Maros et al., 2023). One of the main aspects of the tourism sector is service. In order to give the utmost service to the customer or guest, students are required to be able to have high understanding and great communication skills. Therefore, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) serves it thoroughly (AbdulRaheem Al-Malki et al., 2022). Regrettably, the attention to the study of English for specific purposes in ecotourism and hospitality management has not been thoroughly given.

In the learning environment, students' perceptions before, during, and after finishing a course are significant (Maros et al., 2023). In many cases, students are able to fulfill the requirement and show great improvement in learning a subject. However, little is known about their condition and mental health (Nguai & Lay, 2020). Nowadays, many students are vulnerable to stress and anxiety (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021). Particularly, in learning a second or foreign language, students

are inclined toward speaking or writing in English. Therefore, it is essential to know students' mental health and coping-stress on the implementation of project-based learning methods in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management classes.

Research Methodology

Research design

This research is a semester-length survey study. The participants were given a form to fill out and their performance, as well as emotional and psychological aspects, were recorded using a closed-ended questionnaire survey. In this study, the researchers gave a pre-test to measure students' English level with an English preliminary test based on their sector, and vacation industry. During the process, students were given treatment on project-based learning. Students were taught the material while practicing the implementation of their knowledge in the form of making video advertisements, presenting trip itineraries, performing role-play, and promoting new tourist attractions. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the focus of the study. The study was conducted from September 2023 to January 2024 in the ESP course in ecotourism and hospitality management class at Xavier Learning Community, Chiang Rai, Thailand. The students' progress during the implementation of the case study design was measured to assess their achievement before, during, and after being taught using project-based learning. The students' stress-coping strategies were collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using the IBM SPSS program to obtain the mean and standard deviation (SD) of the data.

Participants

In this study, the researchers focused on students from the English for Ecotourism and Hospitality Management (EEHM) program. The participants consisted of all students in an ecotourism and hospitality management class, totaling eight students– one male and seven female students. All students willingly participated in this longitudinal survey research. They were in the first semester of the third year of their study during the 2023 academic year at Xavier Learning Community, with ages ranging from 21 to 23 years old. This course carried three credits, meaning in each week, students had three hours of in-class meetings, three hours of individual study, or three hours of projects outside the classroom. Students met the teacher twice a week, one hour on Mondays, and two hours on Wednesdays.

Research instruments

Two research instruments were used in this study, (a) portfolio and (b) questionnaire results. A portfolio was used to track the improvement of the students' English knowledge and skills in the ESP course in an English for ecotourism and hospitality management class with a project-based learning method. Six parts of the portfolio were assessed for this study, namely: First, a writing of tourist destination advertisements. Second, a roleplay video at a hotel. Third, a writing of an itinerary trip for a minimum of three days, with the topic of "Amazing Thailand". Fourth, a video about new tourist destinations around the Isan Region, Thailand. Fifth, a session of job interview, and last, two quizzes. In addition, the results of the questionnaire would respond to students coping with stress during their study with the project-based learning method in English for specific purposes course in the English for ecotourism and hospitality management class.

Data collection

The data were gathered from the population of EEHM program students in Xavier Learning Community, Chiang Rai. The data collections were gathered through several steps. First, the researcher sought to consult with the academic advisor and asked permission to apply the project-based learning method in English for specific purposes course in the English for ecotourism and hospitality management class to pilot the study. Second, the researchers submitted a course outline for 16 weeks to the academic board. The researchers explained the steps and several assignments, projects, and quizzes that were going to be conducted during the study. The researchers also clarified the way the researchers would assess the participants during the course. Next, researchers introduce the course outline, objectives of the study, and assessment score to the participants. The Project-based learning was conducted for 16 weeks, and the results were recorded and gathered through a portfolio. The participants were asked to do the projects based on the course outlined and were given feedback on their performance. After 16 weeks, participants were required to answer some of the questions in the questionnaire about their coping strategy after the use of the project-based learning method in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management class.

Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, focusing on two key components. First, participants' portfolios were compiled and presented in tables and charts to visually demonstrate their performance throughout the course. Second, the results from the questionnaire, which consisted of 30 closed-ended questions, were analyzed using the SPSS statistical tool to calculate the mean responses. The analysis employed a five-point Likert scale, with ranges from

1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), as detailed in Table 1. This descriptive statistical approach provided valuable insights into students' stress management strategies while participating in the project-based learning (PBL) method in the English for Specific Purposes course, focusing on Ecotourism and Hospitality Management.

Table 1 Five-Likert Scale Range

| Number | Statement | Range number |
|--------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 5 | Strongly agree | 4.21-5 |
| 4 | Agree | 3.41-4.2 |
| 3 | Neither agree nor disagree | 2.61-3.4 |
| 2 | Disagree | 1.81-2.6 |
| 1 | Strongly disagree | 1-1.8 |

Findings

The outcomes of the study are presented in the form quantitative data.

Students' improvements

The improvements of the students are shown as follows in the table 2:

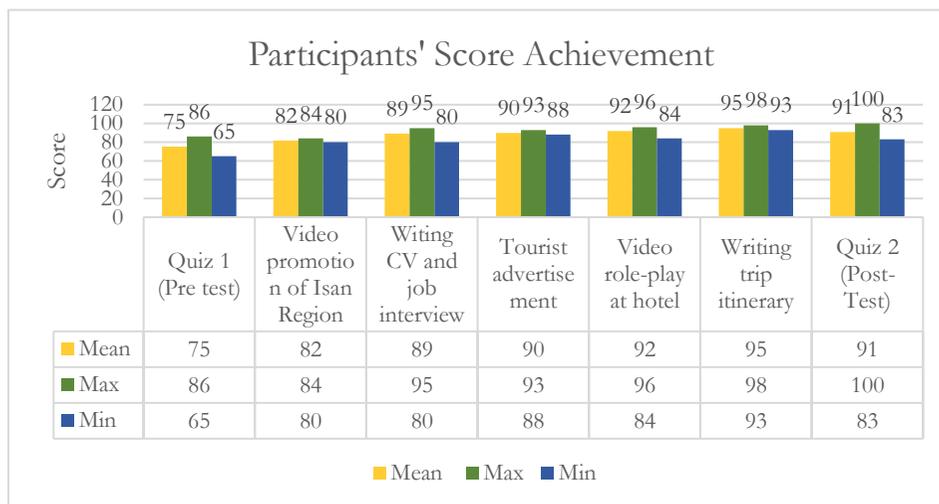
Table 2 The result of Project-Based Learning Method

| | Pre-test | Project 1 | Project 2 | Project 3 | Project 4 | Project 5 | Post-test | % |
|------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|
| Min | 65 | 80.25 | 80.26 | 87.5 | 84 | 92.5 | 83 | 27.7 |
| Max | 86 | 84.25 | 94.73 | 92.5 | 96 | 97.5 | 100 | 16.3 |
| Mean | 75.25 | 81.81 | 89.14 | 90 | 91.75 | 95 | 90.87 | 20.8 |

From Table 2, the results showed that there were some improvements from the means of the pre-test, projects, and post-test. The percentages of improvement from the pre-test to the post-test were significant. The minimum scores were improved by 27.7%, the maximum scores were improved by 16.3%, and the mean of all scores were improved by 20.8%.

The details of the participants' score achievement are presented in Figure 1 as follows.

Figure 1 Participants' Score Achievement.



In this project-based learning method in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management class, there were two tests, at the beginning of the course and at the end of the course. Five projects were provided to hone students' competence in English skills and knowledge related to their major.

Students' stress and coping strategy

The study also conducted and dived deeper into the strategies that students implement in coping with their stress. The results of students' coping stress strategies during their study with Project-Based Learning Method in English for Specific Purposes course in English for Ecotourism and Hospitality Management class were presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3 The result of students' stress and coping strategies.

| No | Items | Results | | Description |
|----|--|---------|------|---|
| | | Mean | SD | |
| 1 | General self-efficacy | 3.50 | 0.66 | Their determination to overcome obstacles and difficulties. |
| 2 | Educational self-efficacy | 3.38 | 0.62 | Capability to survive during the course. |
| 3 | Perseverance | 3.93 | 0.80 | Dealing with challenges and problems while studying. |
| 4 | Reflecting and adaptive help-seeking | 3.78 | 0.86 | Reflecting and seeking support and strength from others. |
| 5 | Negative affect and emotional response | 3.10 | 1.10 | How to respond to and deal with unpleasant emotions. |

The participants showed a positive attitude on three items of coping stress strategies, namely general self-efficacy, perseverance, and reflecting and adaptive help-seeking. The participants' self-efficacy in common was in a good position with a mean of 3.50. Moreover, the participants' perseverance was the highest with 3.93 out of 5, meaning they were applying perseverance during the course using project-based learning. Furthermore, in terms of reflecting and adapting help-seeking, participants indicated 3.78 which means that they continuously performed these actions during their learning process. However, the results show that they put themselves in a neutral position on self-efficacy of education and respond to negative affect and emotion. The mean scores of educational self-efficacy were 3.38, which specified the condition when participants were sometimes able to perform well in one aspect but not in the other aspects. From the results above, the researcher could mention that the participants neither agreed nor disagreed on the negative effect and emotional response. The mean score was 3.10, the score means participants occasionally managed to overcome negative feelings, but also sometimes were overwhelmed with that. The standard deviation from the results indicated that the data were well spread. The lowest

was 0.62 from educational self-efficacy and the highest was 1.10 from item 5, negative affect and emotional response.

Discussions

The study aims to 1) assess the improvement of students' English knowledge and skills and 2) investigate students' coping stress levels while using the Project-Based Learning Method in English for Specific Purposes, specifically in the English for Ecotourism and Hospitality Management class. First, the study found that the project-based learning strategy for teaching English ecotourism and hospitality management showed positive enhancement. The results revealed some improvements in the mean of the pre-test, projects, and post-test. The percentages of improvement between the pre-test and the post-test were significant. The lowest scores improved by 27.7%, the maximum scores improved by 16.3%, and the average of all scores improved by 20.8%. These results were alignments with the study by Hidayati et al. (2023). In their study, there was a significant improvement in mean scores on the results of learning. This supports the previous study on the implementation of project-based learning in English for specific purposes in Indonesia.

Second, participants' coping stress methods were found to be beneficial during their study of the project-based learning method in English for specific purposes course in English for ecotourism and hospitality management. The participants demonstrated a positive attitude toward three coping stress strategies: general self-efficacy, perseverance, and reflecting and adaptive help-seeking. This result was in line with the study from Fabelico & Afalla (2020). Fabelico & Afalla found that participants tend to feel perseverance, self-efficacy, and positive attitude toward their performances. The participants' self-efficacy was generally good, with a mean of 3.50. Furthermore, the participants had the

greatest perseverance rating (3.93 out of 5), indicating that they used perseverance throughout the course while employing project-based learning. The study by Hilliard et al. (2020) mentioned that many participants experience anxiety during collaborative projects. Fortunately, this feeling can be reduced during participation and performance in the learning activity. This study also indicates that participants who have higher problem-focused coping strategies tend to be successful to deal with anxiety and negative feelings. Furthermore, participants indicated 3.78 for reflecting and adapting help-seeking, implying that they undertake these behaviors on a constant basis throughout their learning process. However, the results showed that they placed themselves in a neutral position regarding self-efficacy of education and responded to negative affect and mood. The reason why participants put themselves in neutral might be because they were not really familiar with dealing with negative feelings (Richards, 2022). The mean educational self-efficacy ratings were 3.38, indicating that people might do well in one element but not well in others. According to the findings, the participants did not agree or disagree on the unfavorable effect and emotional response. The mean score was 3.10, indicating that individuals were able to resist unpleasant feelings on occasion but were also overwhelmed by them at times. The standard deviation of the results suggested that the data was well distributed. The lowest was 0.62 from educational self-efficacy, while the greatest was 1.10 from item 5, the response to negative emotions.

Conclusion/Suggestion for study in the future

The implementation of the project-based learning method in English for specific purposes, specifically in the English for ecotourism and hospitality management class showed a positive outlook. These conclusions were drawn from quantitative data results gathered and analyzed in the previous sections.

The quantitative data was collected and analyzed using IBM SPSS statistics 25 and reported in the form of a graphic and tables. The results showed an optimistic improvement in participants' achievements ranging from 16.3% to 27.7%. Furthermore, the participants showed positive attitudes on three items of coping stress strategies, namely perseverance 3.93, reflecting and adaptive help-seeking 3.78, and general self-efficacy 3.50. However, the results stated that they put themselves in a neutral position on self-efficacy of education and responses on negative affect and emotion such as educational self-efficacy was 3.38 and for the negative affect and emotional response was 3.10. Therefore, it can be concluded that PBL was beneficial for participants in English for ecotourism and hospitality management.

Some limitations of this study were the number of participants only eight in the class since this was a complimentary subject for tourism track students. Therefore, not many students signed in for this class. In addition, this study was only conducted in one place, which is in Xavier Learning Community in Thailand. Consequently, the result of the study does not represent all students in Thailand in general. In the future, researchers may conduct a study with a larger group of participants and various levels and programs, so the outcomes might be more varied and richer. The voice from learning institutions' stakeholders such as lecturers and staff may also be included to respond to the students' problems and difficulties especially regarding the students' time and task management.

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