

The Factors Influencing Technical University Students' Hospitality and Tourism English Vocabulary Learning

Chiung-Li Li, Ed. D.

Department of Tourism, Meiho University

23, Pingkuang Rd., Neipu, Pingtung 91202, Taiwan

Yi-Chien Lin, Ed. D.

Department of Tourism, Meiho University

23, Pingkuang Rd., Neipu, Pingtung 91202, Taiwan

Chienyan Hsieh, Ph. D. (Corresponding author)

62,Shenjhong Rd.,Yanchao District, Kaohsiung824, Taiwan

Email: mch@nkn.edu.tw

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Abstract

The purposes of the study were to examine technical university students' tourism and hospitality English vocabulary learning achievement and the factors influencing their hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. The subjects were 62 students from a technical university in southern Taiwan. The instruments included one questionnaire called TARGETT questionnaire consisting of seven factors about learning motivation on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary and one English test called Professional Vocabulary Quotient Credential (PVQC) on hospitality and tourism. The subjects accepted a 40-hour vocabulary learning training course. Then, the subjects took a 50-minute PVQC test and 10-minute TARGETT questionnaire on December 22, 2015; the researchers collected the data from the questionnaire and PVQC test and analyzed the data by descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The results revealed that most of the subjects liked to learn hospitality and tourism English vocabulary, and found that learning hospitality and tourism English vocabulary was important for the subjects. The results also showed that male subjects had significantly

different opinions from female ones in some factors of learning motivation. Moreover, female and male subjects significantly showed that teaching tasks, grouping activities, and evaluation had more effects on their hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. Finally, the researchers drew a conclusion based on the results and provided some teaching and research implications for the future.

Keywords: learning motivation, technical university, hospitality & tourism English

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

It is a trend for an industry to be globalized. To meet the needs in the workplace, technical graduates should possess not only professional skills but also English for specific purposes (ESP) (Yang, 2011), like tourism English or hospitality English.

Chen (2008) showed that ESP teaching can promote students' competitiveness, and English teaching in Taiwan should focus on ESP. Many scholars also agree that English instruction in university should include ESP teaching (Chen, 2006; Chen, 2008; Chou, 2008). In other words, it is necessary to pay attention to students' ability on ESP.

Based on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) report from Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Taiwan (shown as appendix 1 & 2), it is necessary for most technical university students and the employees in hotels, and restaurants in Taiwan to improve their English skills. Especially, promoting technical university students' workplace English is the key for them to succeed in the global workforce.

The researchers have taught English in technical university for more than twenty years and realized that promoting students' workplace English skills is crucial to increase their competitiveness in the future. Vocabulary is the core of language, and enlarging vocabulary size is the first priority to promote language competency. On the other hand, motivation is the key to learn; therefore, the researchers would like to examine which factors influence students' hospitality and tourism vocabulary learning.

1.2 Research Purpose and Questions

There were three research purposes in the study.

- (1) To examine technical university students' attitudes while learning hospitality and tourism English vocabulary.
- (2) To examine technical university students' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning achievement.
- (3) To examine if there were differences among technical university students with different background in hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning motivation and achievement.

According to the research purposes, there were some research questions as follows.

- (1) What were technical university students' attitudes about learning hospitality and tourism English vocabulary?
- (2) What was technical university students' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning achievement?
- (3) What were factors influencing technical university students' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning?
- (4) What were differences among subjects with different background in hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning motivation?

1.3 Definition

- (1) ESP vocabulary learning motivation

Hospitality and Tourism English is a part of ESP. In this study, the researchers applied TARGETT motivation model to examine subjects' ESP vocabulary learning motivation, including task, autonomy, being recognized, grouping, evaluation, time, and teacher expectations.

- (2) ESP vocabulary ability

In this study, the researchers used subjects' test scores on Professional Vocabulary Quotient Credential (PVQC) as their ESP vocabulary ability.

2. Literature Review

2.1 English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

English for specific purposes (ESP) is a learning-centered teaching approach, but not a teaching product (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Yu, 2006). ESP is based on different teaching contents and learning purposes.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divided ESP development into some phases. In 1960s, researchers focused on register analysis, discourse analysis in 1970s and 1980s, and need analysis in 1980s. Needs consist of necessities, which refer to the professional English for learners to use in some specific situations, and wants, which refer to the professional English terms learners think they need. In order to make ESP curriculum meet learners' needs, instruction designers should know the gap between learners' professional language ability they have and they have to own.

Some previous ESP studies focused on students' background and learning goal (Frodesen, 1995), some on teachers' viewpoints (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1983; Johns, 1981), but learners' needs were rarely taken into consideration. Later on, some studies found that need analysis became the key to ESP teaching (Harding, 2007; Hutchinson & Waters, 2002). And need analysis on ESP got attention by many researchers (Chang & Oyang, 2007; Chang, 2009; Hsieh, 2007; Hsu, 2008; Hu, 2009; Kang, 2013; Lin, 2007; Liu, 2010; Shen, 2009; Shen,

2008).

On the other hand, some studies focused on the relationship between vocabulary and language performance (Al-Nujaidi, 2003; Henriksen et al., 2004; Hilton, 2008; Qian, 2002; Stæhr, 2008; Zhang, 2008) or the difficulty of vocabulary learning (Yoet al., 2000). Most studies indicated that technical college students' English vocabulary was insufficient and should be improved urgently (Huang, 2001; Huang, 2004; Huang et al., 2006; Lai, 2005; Yang, 2002). Liang (2014) employed Vocabulary Size Test designed by Nation & Belgar (2007) to examine freshmen' English vocabulary and found their English vocabulary should be extended. Most research showed that technical college students' English vocabulary should be improved. Therefore, the study would focus on professional English vocabulary.

2.2 TARGETT Motivation Model

Carol Ames (1990, 1992) showed that six factors influencing students' learning motivation, including task, autonomy, being recognized, grouping, evaluation, and time. In 1993, Maehr and Anderman added teacher expectations and formed TARGETT model. The model emphasized meaningful learning task, students' participation and autonomy, grouping learning environment, different learning paces, more flexible time, and teacher expectations.

2.2.1 The Value of Task

Meaningful tasks can arouse students' learning motivation. Hunter (2004) showed that there was significance between meaningful teaching materials and learning motivation and achievement.

2.2.2 The Value of Autonomy

Autonomy focuses on student-centered learning. Students can decide their learning goals, contents, and schedules; they can choose learning skills and methods, monitor learning process, and evaluate learning by themselves. Teachers provide students with support, freedom, and respect in the process. Dafei (2007) showed that students' language competency was influenced by their autonomy and found that students' English ability related to their autonomy positively. Shih (2008) also showed that autonomy had positive effects on learners' learning.

2.2.3 The Value of Being Recognized

If students make progress, and show creativities in learning, teachers should encourage them and recognize their performance to enhance learners' self-confidence.

2.2.4 The Value of Grouping

Cooperative learning can help students improve social skills, communicate with others, and work with others. Grouping activities have positive effects on learning and teaching process. Well-designed cooperative learning activities can arouse learning motivation, increase students' self-esteem, and promote encouragement and acceptance among team members. Ma (2002) found that grouping activities can stimulate students' learning motivation. Lin (2010) also found that grouping reading had positive effects on elementary school students' English reading ability, and vocabulary. Yang (2003) and Li (2011) found that cooperative learning can promote learners' learning achievement.

2.2.5 The Value of Evaluation

Paying attention to learning instead of scores would make students focus more on the value of learning. Lin (2002) showed that employing appropriate evaluation could activate teaching and promote students' learning motivation.

2.2.6 The Value of Time

Few students have sufficient time to learn in school. Teaching by schedule often interfere students' thinking and learning motivation. Some studies indicated that there was positive significance between teachers' time management and students' learning achievement (Britton & Tesser, 1991; Hunter, 2004; Macan et al., 1990; Pagliaro, 2012; Schuler, 1979).

2.2.7 The Value of Teacher Expectation

There are two kinds of teacher expectation in class. One is self-fulfilling prophecy, which means teachers did not know students' competency at first, but students' performance just matches teachers' wrong expectation. The other is that teachers really realize students' competency, and students' performance also matches teachers' expectation. Some studies found that teacher expectation had predictive effects on students' self-concept, achievement motivation, academic performance, and behavior (Kuo, 1980; Lin, 2007; Trouilloud et al., 2006; Vall, 2007).

According to the above, the researchers would like to find that if there is any relationship between TARGETT and students' tourism and hospitality English vocabulary learning motivation and achievement.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in two stages that took during the fall of 2015. In the first stage, a

pilot study was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the survey instrument (TARGETT questionnaire). The respondents in the pretest included 112 undergraduate students enrolled in a hospitality and tourism program at a technical university in Southern Taiwan.

The pilot study was conducted to gather respondents' feedback, uncover issues, hone the wording of the survey questions, check data collection results, and test the reliability and validity of the instrument. The reliability analysis to test the consistency of the measuring instrument found that Cronbach's alpha value was .916. According to Hair et al. (2010), the value is significantly above the recommended value of .70 and is considered very good. The TARGETT questionnaire can explain 61.67% of variance, which means the validity is good as well.

In the second stage, the focus of the study was to use TARGETT to examine technical university students' viewpoints to learn tourism and hospitality English vocabulary motivation.

3.1 Subjects

In the study, the subjects were 62 technical university students from Southern Taiwan who took Professional Vocabulary Quotient Credential (PVQC) on hospitality and tourism English in December, 2015. According to the researchers' teaching experience, the subjects belong to homogeneous group regarding to their general English competence or hospitality and tourism English.

3.2 Research Instrument

3.2.1 Professional Vocabulary Quotient Credential (PVQC)

Professional English is a key to succeed in most global workplace. Many universities in non-English countries take professional English as a graduation threshold. Key words always play an essential role in communication. If students possess professional vocabulary, they have access to the future workplace. Every professional field generally has 500-2000 key words or terms. If students are familiar with those terms, it is helpful for them to promote their professional communicative ability. PVQC is issued by Global Learning and Assessment Development (GLAD) in the USA. PVQC consists of six tests; Test 1 is read Chinese, then spell English vocabulary; Test 2 is read English vocabulary, then choose their Chinese meanings; Test 3 is listen to English pronunciation, then choose their Chinese meanings; Test 4 is listen to English pronunciation, then choose English spelling; Test 5 is read Chinese, then choose English pronunciation; Test 6 is read English vocabulary, then choose English pronunciation. In PVQC test, test-takers can choose to take Tests 1-6 in 70

minutes, and the total score is 600 points, and the threshold is 390 points, or they can take Tests 2-6 in 50 minutes, the total score is 500 points, and the threshold is 350 points with at least 70 points in every test. In this study, all subjects took Tests 2-6 except Test 1.

3.2.2 TARGETT questionnaire on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary

The researchers designed a self-administered structured questionnaire, which consisted of 21 items, to gather the subjects' responses about TARGETT on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning motivation. The 21 items were divided into seven factors, consisting of three items respectively. A Likert scale of 5=agree strongly, 4=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 2=disagree, and 1=disagree strongly was used to assess the respondents' viewpoints of TARGETT on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. The 5-point Likert scale was preferred to reduce Asian respondents' bias (Truong, Yap, & Ineson, 2012).

Data collected were analyzed using SPSS Version 19. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test hypotheses concerning the variances of group responses on dependent variables from task, autonomy, recognition, grouping, evaluation, time, and teacher expectation.

4. Results and discussion

The 62 subjects took the 50-minute PVQC test on hospitality and tourism English, and completed the TARGETT questionnaire (shown as appendix 3). The data collected from the PVQC test and TAGRETT questionnaire were used for further data analysis.

4.1 Student Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of subjects in the study. The characteristics and demographic data of the subjects were found to be as follows:

- .The significant majority of subjects (75.8%) were female, whereas 24.2% were male.
- .Most subjects (69.4%) reported that they liked to learn hospitality and tourism English vocabulary.
- .The significant majority of subjects (96.8%) reported that learning hospitality and tourism English vocabulary was important.

TABLE 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Subjects ($n=62$)

<i>Category</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Female	47	75.8%
Male	15	24.2%
Attitude toward Learning H&T English vocabulary		
Like	43	69.4%
Dislike	8	12.9%
Other	11	17.7%
Viewpoint of Learning H&T English vocabulary		
Important	60	96.8%
Unimportant	1	1.6%

Table 2 shows that most subjects (64.5%) passed the PVQC test on hospitality and tourismEnglish.

TABLE 2

The Results of PVQC Test ($n=62$)

The Result of PVQC		
Pass	40	64.5%
Fail	22	35.5%

Table 3 shows that the *mean* of Test 6 was the highest (96.82), and the *mean* of Test 4 was the lowest (77.47); the *mode* of Test 6 was the highest (100), and the *mode* of Test 4 was the lowest (75.00); the *standard deviation (SD)* of Test 4 was the highest (16.45), and the *SD* of Test 2 was the lowest. The *mean* of TOTAL scores was 419.15 being much higher than the

threshold (350). In other words, it seemed that passing the test was not too difficult for the subjects; however, over 35% of the subjects still failed in the test. The reason would be that the subjects had to get at least 70 points in every test; but some subjects were worse at some certain tests even their TOTAL was higher than 350 points. Based on the test results, most subjects did not perform well in Test 4 (listen to English pronunciation, then choose English spelling), because in Test 4, distracters are usually very similar to the answer; therefore, it is not easy for some subjects to choose correct ones. On the other hand, the subjects performed best in Test 6 (read English vocabulary, then choose English pronunciation) because the relationship between most English spelling and pronunciation is corresponding and predictable.

TABLE 3

 The Summary of PVQC Test Results ($n=62$)

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>SD</i>
Test 2	83.44	85.00	11.86
Test 3	80.73	85.00	12.13
Test 4	77.47	75.00	16.45
Test 5	79.87	68.00	12.69
Test 6	96.82	100	12.76
TOTAL	419.15	428.00	53.40

Note: The subjects did not take Test 1 (read Chinese, then spell English vocabulary) in the study.

TABLE 4

One-sample t-test between Gender & TARGETT

	gender	number	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	T-value
Task	male	15	13.067	2.251	-.860
	female	47	13.489	1.428	
Autonomy	male	15	13.333	1.877	-.207

	female	47	13.426	1.363	
Recognition	male	15	13.800	1.474	.572
	female	47	13.575	1.281	
Grouping	male	15	13.333	1.799	-.251
	female	47	13.447	1.427	
Evaluation	male	15	13.533	1.727	.354
	female	47	13.383	1.328	
Time	male	15	13.867	1.727	.782
	female	47	13.511	1.473	
Teacher Expectation	male	15	13.667	1.718	.405
	female	47	13.489	1.397	
Total Score	male	15	417.000	53.845	-.177
	female	47	419.830	53.825	

* $p < .05$

According to Table 4, there were no statistically significant differences between female and male group means as determined by one-sample t-test in whole TARGETT questionnaire. However, the researchers would like to further examine if there were any significant differences between female and male in different factors of TARGETT.

TABLE 5

Gender & TARGETT Chi-square test

TASK	AUTONOMY	RECOGNITION	GROUPING	EVALUATION	TIME	TEXPECT
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χ^2	15.068	10.197	2.668	16.923	13.200	4.518	6.614
<i>df</i>	6	5	4	5	5	5	4
sig.	.020*	.070	.615	.005**	.022*	.477	.158

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

According to Table 5, in regard to the TASK, $\chi^2 = 15.068$, $df = 6$, $sig. = .020 < .05$, it shows that teaching tasks significantly have more effects on female subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. In regard to the GROUPING, $\chi^2 = 16.923$, $df = 5$, $sig. = .005 < .01$, it shows that grouping activities significantly have more effects on female subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. In regard to the EVALUATION, $\chi^2 = 13.200$, $df = 5$, $sig. = .022 < .05$, it shows that evaluation significantly has more effects on male subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning.

TABLE 6

Gender & TASK & Grouping & Evaluation Chi-square test

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Eval 1	Eval 2	Eval 3
χ^2	3.608	10.17 5	9.463	4.324	6.741	.335	8.549	2.174	2.822
<i>df</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
sig.	.165	.006* *	.009* *	.115	.034*	.846	.036*	.337	.224

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Note: Task 1: Teaching tasks will influence my learning motivation.

Task 2: Meaningful learning tasks will arouse my learning motivation.

Task 3: Teaching tasks should connect with students' living experiences.

Grouping 1: Teachers should design grouping activities for students to practice.

Grouping 2: Grouping activities could help me know how to accept others.

Grouping 3: Grouping activities could promote my social skills.

Evaluation 1: It is important for me to understand teachers' evaluation criteria.

Evaluation 2: Achieving learning goals is important.

Evaluation 3: Teachers should consider students' opinions when scoring.

Based on Table 5, the researchers further analyzed the factors having significance between female subjects and male one as shown in Table 6. In regard to Task 2, $\chi^2=10.175$, $df=2$, $sig.=.006<.01$, Table 6 shows that meaningful learning tasks significantly have more effects on female subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning.

In regard to Task 3, Table 6 shows that teaching tasks connecting with living experiences significantly have more effects on female subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning ($\chi^2=9.463$, $df=2$, $sig.=.009<.01$).

In regard to Grouping 2, Table 6 shows that grouping learning activities significantly have more effects on female subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning ($\chi^2=6.741$, $df=2$, $sig.=.034<.05$).

In regard to Evaluation 1, Table 6 shows that understanding teachers' evaluation criteria significantly has more effects on male subjects' hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning ($\chi^2=8.549$, $df=2$, $sig.=.036<.05$).

TABLE 7

ANOVA between the Importance of English Vocabulary and TARGETT

Item		SS	df	F	Scheff
Evaluation1	Between	.363	2	.309	
	Within	34.733	59		
	Total	35.097	61		
Evaluation2	Between	2.622	2	4.622*	1>2
	Within	16.733	59		
	Total	19.355	61		

Evaluation3	Between	.422	2	.542	
	Within	22.933	59		
	Total	23.355	61		
Time1	Between	.860	2	1.655	
	Within	15.333	59		
	Total	16.194	61		
Time2	Between	2.501	2	3.515*	1>2
	Within	20.983	59		
	Total	23.484	61		
Time3	Between	4.452	2	5.715**	1>2
	Within	22.983	59		
	Total	27.435	61		

*p<.05, **p<.01

Note: Group1: The subjects think learning ESP vocabulary is important

Group2: The subjects do not think learning ESP vocabulary is important.

According to Table 7, in regard to Evaluation 1 (*Achieving learning goals is important.*), Time 2 (*Teachers should have more flexibility to arrange their teaching time.*) and Time 3 (*Teachers should let students learn at their pace.*), group 1 was significantly different from group 2.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study indicated that most subjects liked to learn hospitality and tourism English vocabulary, and professional English vocabulary learning was important for them. Furthermore, there were some differences about the importance of learning professional English vocabulary between female and male subjects.

In regard to TARGETT questionnaire, teaching tasks, and grouping learning activities had more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for female subjects than male ones. However, evaluation has more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for male subjects than female ones.

More specifically speaking, meaningful learning tasks have more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for female subjects than male ones. And teaching tasks connecting with living experiences also has more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for female subjects than male ones.

What's more, grouping learning activities has more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for female subjects than male ones. And understanding teachers' evaluation criteria has more effects on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning for female subjects than male ones.

Finally, those who think learning ESP vocabulary is important significantly differ from those who do not in some respects, like *achieving learning goals is important, teachers should have more flexibility to arrange their teaching time, and teachers should let students learn at their pace.*

6. Implications, Limitations, and Future Research

6.1 Implications

Based on the conclusion, the researchers provide some implications. To increase students' ESP vocabulary learning motivation, in class, teachers had better take students' gender into consideration, and provide students with meaningful learning tasks on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. Moreover, teachers could try to design teaching tasks connecting with students' living experiences on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning.

What's more, teachers could design grouping activities on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning to enhance students' learning motivation. Furthermore, teachers could let students understand their evaluation criteria even invite students to decide evaluation criteria on hospitality and tourism English vocabulary learning. Finally, teachers could make students set their own learning goals and encourage them to do their best to reach the goals; and teachers could give students more flexibility to arrange their learning time at their pace.

6.2 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One limitation of the study is generalization. The study used a convenience sampling method by selecting students from tourism and hospitality departments at the technical university the researchers teach, which makes generalizing the findings in the study a challenge. To address the limitations of the current study, future research endeavors can examine tourism and hospitality English vocabulary learning motivation of technical university students in Taiwan.

Another limitation of the study comes from the sample size. This study should be repeated in the future with a larger sample size to confirm the relationships between TARGETT and tourism and hospitality English vocabulary learning.

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Appendix 1

The TOEIC Scores of General University and Technical University Test-Takers in 2014 and 2015 & TOEIC Requirement for Workplaces in 2015

General University TOEIC test-takers' Score in 2014	General University TOEIC test-takers' Score in 2015	Technical University TOEIC test-takers' Score in 2014	Technical University TOEIC test-takers' Score in 2015
564	561	407	413
The Threshold of TOEIC for Recruitment in Different Industries in 2015			
Manufacturing	522.2		
Service	564.7		
Financial	652.5		

Note: revised from http://www.toEIC.com.tw/report_2015_01_02.jsp

Appendix 2

TOEIC Scores in Different Industries in Taiwan in 2015

Industry	Listening scores	Reading scores	Total scores
diplomatic affairs	348	306	654
trade	334	271	605

hotel/travel/ entertainment/hospitality/ restaurant	262	195	457

Note: revised from http://www.toEIC.com.tw/report_2015_01_02.jsp

Appendix 3

I. You are male female

II. Do you like to learn hospitality and tourism English vocabulary?

yes no unknown

III. Do you think learning hospitality and tourism English vocabulary is important?

yes no unknown

TARGETT Questionnaire of Hospitality and Tourism English Learning Vocabulary Motivation	A	A	N	D	D
	S				S
1. Teaching tasks will influence my learning motivation.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Meaningful teaching tasks will arouse my learning motivation.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Teaching tasks should associate with students' living experiences.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Students' autonomy should be paid attention in teaching activities.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Students' participation could promote learning efficiency.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Teachers should encourage students participate teaching activities.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Students should know their learning progress.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Teachers should provide students with challenging opportunities.	5	4	3	2	1
9. Teachers should provide students with innovative teaching activities.	5	4	3	2	1
10. Teachers should design grouping learning activities for students.	5	4	3	2	1
11. Grouping activities could help me know how to accept others.	5	4	3	2	1

12. Grouping activities could promote my social skills.	5	4	3	2	1
13. It is important for me to understand teachers' evaluation criteria.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Achieving learning goals is important.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Teachers should consider students' opinions when scoring.	5	4	3	2	1
16. It is important for students to control time in the learning process.	5	4	3	2	1
17. Teachers should have more flexibility to arrange their teaching time.	5	4	3	2	1
18. Teachers should let students learn at their pace.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Teachers should let students know their expectation for students.	5	4	3	2	1
20. Teacher expectation for students should be reasonable.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Teachers should let students modify their learning speed.	5	4	3	2	1

Note: AS: agree strongly A: agree N: neither agree nor disagree D: disagree DS: disagree strongly

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