

**PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THAI UNDERGRADUATE  
STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCE AT DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
EDUCATION UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SURAKARTA**



Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For Getting Bachelor Degree of English Education

by:

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MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA  
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**APPROVAL**

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## PRONOUNCEMENT

Here with, I testify that there is no plagiarism in this article publication. There is no other work that has been submitted to obtain the bachelor degree and as far as I concerned there is no opinion that has been written or published before, except the written reference which are referred in this papper and mentioned in the bibliography.

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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini membahas persepsi mahasiswa Thailand tentang pengalaman hidupnya di Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dan memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik terhadap mahasiswa Thailand di Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan Fenomenologi. Subjek penelitian ini mahasiswa Thailand di Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik wawancara. Hasil penelitian ini adalah: 1) Mahasiswa Thailand perlu menyesuaikan diri dengan peraturan di awal kuliah; 2) Mahasiswa mengalami kendala dengan Bahasa Indonesia; 3) Mahasiswa Thailand perlu menyesuaikan diri dengan beban belajar; 4) Mahasiswa Thailand perlu beradaptasi dengan makanan lokal.

**Kata Kunci:** Mahasiswa Thailand, mahasiswa internasional, pengalaman hidup

**Abstract**

This research discusses how Thai undergraduate students perceive their lived experience at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The purpose of this research is to explore and provide a better understanding of Thai undergraduate students in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Type of this research is qualitative that uses phenomenological approach. This research subject is Thai undergraduate students studying at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The data are collected by interview. The results of this research are as follows: 1) Thai undergraduate student needs to adjust the regulation in the beginning of college; 2) Thai undergraduate student experiences difficulty in using Bahasa Indonesia; 3) Thai undergraduate students needs to adjust the study load; 4) Thai undergraduate student have to adjust to local food.

**Keywords:** Thai students, International students, lived experience

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are many International students who studying in Indonesia. One of them is Thai International students. There are a lot of Thai students who study in Indonesia. According to Kementerian Riset dan Teknologi Indonesia, Thai become the third most international students who studying abroad in Indonesia.

Having numerous differences, obviously Thai undergraduate student as a foreigner need more time to adjust Indonesia's culture, custom even the value, during the adaptation Thai students may get some acculturative stress. Acculturative stress happens when students encounter difficulties and conflicts as a result of adjusting to unfamiliar social norms and custom of a new culture (Lin & Yi, 1997).

Meeaeng (2006) stated that Asian international students experience some difficulties in communication and interaction while studying in Colombia. On the other side, the international student in Australia experience a racial taunts, discrimination, and a difficulty in socializing outside their peer's cultural group. It causes them to have limitation of opportunities to practice their English and gaining experience of the Australian culture (Ashley (2015)). Thai students in Indonesia might have different experience from the other international students. It happens depend on where they live due to a different culture, social, economic, religion, weather and in every place, it will make some differences in Thai lived experience. This research is needed to understand the student lived experience. For this reason, since there was not been any research of Thai undergraduate student lived experience will be critical aspects to know this issue in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The current's study will use student's personal perspectives as the object of this study.

This research focuses on Thai students lived experience because there will be a different experience in the different place. It is better to know more about Thai students experience in Indonesia because a lot of

Thailand students studying in Indonesia. We almost never know what Thai student experiences during their study in Indonesia.

This research uses phenomenological approach with qualitative method. In this research, the researcher will conduct interview with Thai undergraduate students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta for the data.

## **2. METHOD**

The researcher uses qualitative method and hermeneutic phenomenological was used as an approach. According to Byrne (2001), Hermeneutic phenomenology is a research methodology that aimed to produce rich textual descriptions of the experiencing phenomena in the life world of individuals that are able to connect with the experience of all of us collectively. Hermeneutic phenomenological study was designed to explain the phenomena through human experience (Byrne, 2001). This is consistent with the purpose of this study aim to explain Thai undergraduate students perceive their lived experience at Department of English Education Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

## **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1. Thai undergraduate student need to adjust with the regulation in the beginning of college**

Thai undergraduate student needs to adjust with the regulation in the beginning of college is a situation that the interviewee need to adaptation with the regulation in the beginning of college. The interviewee tried to adjust the regulation while the interviewee is studying in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta in the beginning of college. The interviewee said that she needs to adjust there in the beginning.

The Interviewee said that:

*“hehe I miss there, in Lebaran like I want to cry hehe. We are not allowed to go home, it is a rule from the organisation, and I knew it before. The foundation rules too, it is to make... like if we come here and then in one semester we allowed to come back home there will a feeling want not to come back here. So if two years we cannot go home, it can make more patient here. So if it has been two years we can come back home, after it it's up to you to come home after one semester or one year, it's up to you but for the first two years must stay here. After the fourth semester and the fifth semester I come home. Yesterday I am not going home...internship. Tomorrow KKN, so I do not know when will go home”*

The interviewee needs to adjust in the beginning of the college where she was not allowed to go back to Thailand for 2 years as a rule from the organization. She knew the rule before, but the interviewee still feels sad because of it. Although the interviewee struggling adjusts in the beginning of the college, she still think positively with thinking about the benefit of the rule which is the rule can train her to be a more patient person.

### **3.2. Thai undergraduate student experiences difficulty in using Bahasa Indonesia**

The second theme is referred to experience difficulty. When the interviewee comes to the class she found a difficulty in the language used. There is another major idea which is related to this difficulty experience. This theme elaborated using following extracts from the interviewees.

The interviewee said that:

*“So the first class is Pancasila and I feel confused cannot understand, the language is different although I used Malay language there, but it is also different here”*

Based on the statement above, the interviewee found a difficulty in understanding the language used. Although she used Malay language

but Indonesian language is different. The interviewee finds a difficulty in understanding the lesson because of the language barrier she gets.

### **3.3. Thai undergraduate student needs to adjust the study load**

While the interviewee lived in Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, the interviewee lives in Pesma for a year. During lives in Pesma, she needs to adjust her study times.

Thai student said that:

*“Firstly I lived in PESMA, there is a morning class and night class. The morning class is held after Subuh prayer until 5:30, and at 07:00 the regular class here (UMS) is start. Then, I go back to PESMA and after Maghrib prayer there is a night class in PESMA. So the class is double, in PESMA and the regular class here”*

Based on the statement above, Thai student needs to adjust the study load while she lives in PESMA. The interviewee not only comes to the regular class but also to the PESMA class.

### **3.4. Thai undergraduate student have to adjust to local food**

When the interviewee lived at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta environments, the interviewee founds some problems. In this case, the interviewee mentions some problem which faced by the interviewee and her friend.

Interviewee said that:

*“Another friend is so difficult to eat. She cannot eat something with sauce. Because it taste is different. She only eats fried chicken, or something fry”*

The quote above mentioned that the interviewee’s friend have difficulties in eating the local food. Her friend cannot eat the local food with sauce because of the different taste between here and Thailand food. So the interviewee’s friend prefers to eat fried chicken or something that is fries.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this section the researcher draws the following conclusion to have a clear and brief picture of what the researcher has written in the previews analysis. The conclusions answer the problem statement of this research. The interviewee is Thai undergraduate student studying at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The interviewee tells about the lived experiences at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, the interviewee tells everything about her lived experienced while study at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Based on the interviewee, there are four themes to categorize her experience at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

From the result of the research, the researcher can present the conclusions. The data from the interviewees which analyzed raises into four themes, Thai undergraduate student needs to adjust with the regulation in the beginning of college, Thai undergraduate student experiences difficulty in using Bahasa Indonesia, Thai undergraduate students needs to adjust the study load and Thai undergraduate student have to adjust to local food

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