

THE PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ALUMNI ON STUDYING  
ABROAD

THESIS



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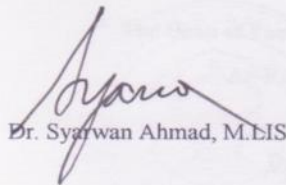
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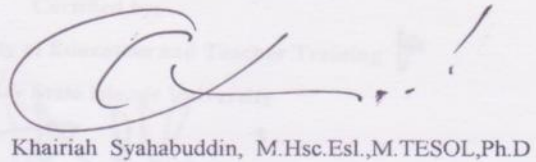
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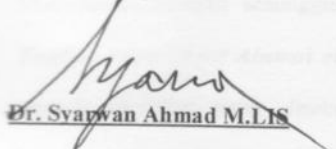
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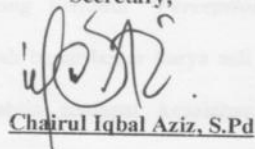
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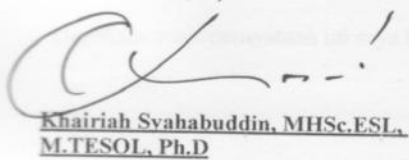
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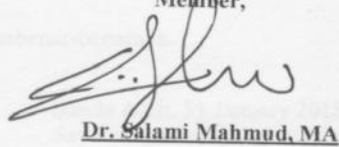
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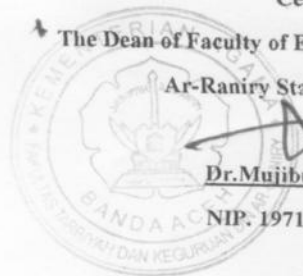
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Menyatakan dengan sesungguhnya bahwa skripsi yang berjudul "*Perceptions of English Department Alumni on Study Abroad*" Adalah benar-benar karya asli saya, kecuali lampiran yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, seluruhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya.

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Saya yang membuat pernyataan,



  
(Tri Yulianda Dewi)

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the perceptions of English Department alumni on studying abroad. The aim of this study was to know the perception of English Department Alumni on studying abroad and found out the advantages and the challenges of study abroad. Five alumni were chosen as participants. The qualitative research approach was used for exploring and understanding the participants' perception regarding the benefits and challenges of studying abroad. This study used semi-structured interview as the technique to collect the information of from five English Department alumni who finished studying abroad. The first results showed that most of the alumni agreed that studying abroad was interesting experience for students to obtain new knowledge about foreign language. The second, studying abroad has several advantages for students, such as: learning new languages, experiencing different cultures, finding foreigners, developing work skills, forming relationships with native peoples, expanding critical thinking, and creating future job opportunities. The challenges that students faced while studying abroad are academic difficulty, different culture, language difficulty, and stress living in new environment without families or close friends, adaptation with new social life, unfamiliar food, and financial difficulty. The problem could be solved by adaption with new social environment, interaction with domestic foreigners, and preparation the material for learning in classroom. In conclusion, the alumni had positive perceptions on studying abroad.

Keywords: Perception, advantages of study abroad, challenges of study abroad

## TABLE OF CONTENT

### DECLARATION LETTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	viii

### CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study .....	1
B. Research Question.....	5
C. The Aims of Study .....	5
D. The Significance of Study.....	6
E. Terminology.....	6

### CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition of Perception.....	8
B. The Influencing Factors of Perception.....	9
C. Studying Abroad .....	11
1. The Definition of Studying abroad.....	11
2. The Variations Program of Studying Abroad .....	11
D. The Advantages and Challenges of Studying Abroad .....	13
1. The Advantages of Studying Abroad .....	13
2. The Challenges of Studying Abroad .....	17

### CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design.....	20
B. Participants.....	21



C. The Technique of Data Collection .....	22
D. The Technique of Data Analysis.....	24

**CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISSUSSIONS**

A. Research Finding.....	25
B. Data Analysis Procedure .....	26
C. The Analysis of Interview .....	28
D. Discussion .....	49

**CHAPTER V: CONLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION**

A. Conclusion .....	51
B. Suggestion.....	52

**REFERENCES..... 53**

**APPENDICES**

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

## **LIST OF TABLES**

4.1 The information of the participants interviewed times and places.....	26
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## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

1. Appointment Letter of Supervisor
2. Interview Questions
3. Transcript of Interview
4. Autobiography

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents background of study, research questions of study, aim of study, significance of study, and terminology to provide a better understanding of the study.

#### **A. Background of Study**

Studying abroad becomes a popular case toward college students. Studying abroad is an activity where students leave their home country to another country and feel the foreign educational system. It was supported by Roy (2014), studying abroad is an educational program that takes place in a foreign country where students are offered an opportunity to gain international academic experience. Similarly, McKeown's (2009, as cited in Bandyopadhyay. S and Bandyopadhyay. K, 2015) told that studying abroad is an academic experience which students physically move from their home country to engage study in foreign institute. Then they required following some host country activities, for instance social interaction with local people. In the same way, Costello (2015) added that studying abroad is interesting experience for college students because the students are allowed visiting another country to study in a foreign institution. Studying abroad is an educational program that provides an opportunity for students to experience learning international system. From this

experience, students obtain opportunities to learn about foreign language, new cultures, and new knowledge.

Based on the definition above, studying abroad program has so many benefits. For instance, they can explore new places, interact with new cultures or native people, learn a deep understanding of foreign language, obtain new knowledge, develop their careers, and improve their professionalism. Thus, it makes the students to enroll the program. Similarly, Smith (2013) said that the positive impact of studying abroad will include opportunities to travel in new country, learn new languages, experience different cultures, find foreigners, develop work skills, form relationships with native peoples, expand critical thinking, and create future job opportunities. It happens because of differences in curriculum and learning systems, different culture, and different language between the host country and the home country. Studying abroad provides many benefits for students, not only influence their mindset to be more critical but also change their behavior.

In the other hand, Sanchez, Fornerino, & Zhang (2006, as cited in Loberg, 2012) stated that students encounter many of barriers while they are studying abroad such as, finances, time of graduation, cultural background, and lack of family support. Besides the difficulty of obtaining a scholarship program to study abroad, it is not easy to live in another country which has different culture, language, and people without family. So, the hard thing to do for international students are understanding new culture, interacting with new friend where sometimes local students create

distance in friendship with foreign student, understanding of a foreign language, and feeling away from family. Students have to solve the problems in order to they can survive and finish their studies. It was supported by Milian, Birnbaum, Cardona, and Nicholson (2015), the common challenges that international students faced when they go abroad are discrimination, limited social support, feeling of isolation from family and friends, financial difficulties, adaptation to new cultural and social norms, potential culture shock, challenges to adapt to new educational and learning styles, and adapting to a new cultural lifestyle.

Students who enroll to study abroad program increase in each year. In 2011, there were almost over 4.3 million college students enrolled themselves to study abroad programs (OECD, 2013). The total numbers of foreign students applying 53% is represented by Asian Students which mostly are students from China, India and Korea. It is also happened in Indonesia. According to Indonesia International Education Consultant Association (IKPII), there were 50 thousands of Indonesia students studying abroad in 2012 and 2013 (Harahap, 2015).

Before continuing to study abroad, students have to prepare some requirements. It is set by the host institute or sponsor that provides scholarship program. It becomes the determinant of the students whether they are eligible or not to continue studying abroad. The main requirements are test proficiency language skill, such as TOEFL and IELTS; motivation letter; personal statement; and study objective. They have to complete the requirements before studying abroad. It can be a

reason why most of students who take scholar to study abroad are from English Department. UIN Ar-Raniry is one of favorite university at Aceh. UIN Ar-Raniry has so many departments, but the graduates from English Department students are the most dominant who continue study abroad. Thus, some alumni of English Department continue their studies in abroad university after they graduated from the department.

Every individual must have their own ideas about one object that had been observed. In the science of psychology, there is term processing information received from the observations and the term is called "perception". Sugihartono (2007) said that perception is an ability of brain to process stimulus in translating about an object or event by human physical senses. It can be something they can see, hear, or touch. The term perception gives the sense of observations, argument, and understanding or responding to something. In this study, the writer wants to describe English Department alumni opinion on study abroad and how their impressions of it. It includes the positive and negative impacts of studying abroad. In terms of psychology, disagreements on individual are very interesting to study, because every individual has different perceptions on one same object. From here, the writer tries to find out what the perceptions of English Department alumni on studying abroad are. Knowing alumni perceptions on this matter is very important, because it explores how much students' interest who had graduated from English Department on study abroad.

Based on background above, the writer is interested in knowing the English Department alumni perceptions about studying abroad, through this study. The title of this study is: **“Perception of English Department Alumni on Studying Abroad”**

## **B. Research Question**

Based on the background above, the writer formulates research questions as follow:

1. What is English Department alumni’s perception on studying abroad?
2. What are the advantages and challenges of studying abroad?

## **C. Aim of the Study**

The aims of this study are as follows:

1. To know English Department alumni’s perception on studying abroad.
2. To know the advantages and challenges of studying abroad program based on alumni experience.



#### **D. Significance of the Study**

This research is expected for new students in preparing to study abroad, such as:

1. The students

It gives the motivations and information to the students for studying abroad and some tips that will help them in obtaining the scholarship programs to study in foreign institutes.

2. The English Department

The achievement of students who are studying abroad can support to increase accreditation of the department. In addition, the important point of this study in English Department can design appropriate curriculum to help students in preparing to study abroad after they know and understand alumni perception.

#### **E. Terminology**

1. Perception

Based on Oxford living dictionaries, perception is an ability to see, hear, and understand about something through the physical senses. Sugihartono (2007, as cited in Prabowo, 2010) suggested that perception is the ability of the brain to process stimulus in translating about something that goes into human physical senses which it something can be seen, heard, and touched. Human perception has the differences viewpoints in sensing. There are positive and negative perceptions will influence human actions that appear or real. Whereas, Waidi (2006, as cited in Prabowo, 2010)

argued that perception is the point of views that done by a person in understanding a thing which is happening around of them. In the other hand, Bimo Walgito (2004, in Prabowo, 2010) pointed out, perception is a process of organizing, interpretation of the stimulus received by the individual to be something meaningful. It is also an activity integrated within the individual. Hence, every human has different thinking or viewpoint about same objects. It can be affected by many factors, such as knowledge, experience, age, and gender.

## 2. Studying Abroad

According to McKeown (2009, as cited in Bandyopadhyay.S andBandyopadhyay.K), studying abroad is an academic experience where college students physically leave their home countries to engage in college study, cultural interaction, and other related pursuits of knowledge in a foreign country. Costello (2015) stated that studying abroad is university experience for students' college. It allows them to travel to another country or continent to study in a foreign institution. Students expect to learn the foreign languages and cultures. Then, they possibly have opportunities to learn the language and immerse themselves in cultural experiences. While, Bodycott (2015) said that study abroad provides students an opportunity to develop and cultivate their personal ability and social identities.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses some theories which have relevance to this study. This chapter is divided into several sections: definition of perception, the influencing factors of perception, studying abroad, the benefits, and challenges of study abroad.

#### **A. Definition of Perception**

There are many theories about perception. Reitz (n.d as cited in Kashyap, 2006) stated that perception is all of processes which are going through by an individual in receiving information about the environment through senses, such seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. Similarly, Boeree (2016) argued that perception involves the senses, seeing, hearing, touching, feeling, that starts with the stimulation of sensory nerve cells. Moreover, Boeree told that the perception does not only accept passive information, but also an active process that involves not only the eye to see or ears to hear but involves all part of body.

Meanwhile, Unumeri (2009) claimed that perception is defined as an action which obtain through physical sensation that espoused by stimulation and experience. Individual's experience about an objects or events can be a way to collect information. In addition, Jalaludin (2005, as cited in Yaqin, 2015) defined that perception is individual's experience about an object or event that is obtained by

collecting the information and decoding the messages. It means someone can make opinion about an object or event that he or she has passed.

Perception is the final process of observation that begins with the sensing process namely the process of receiving stimulus by the sense device, forwarded to the brain, and the individual is aware of something perceived. Based on the experts' definition, perception is a process of the stimulus interpretation that is received by individuals sense device. Thus, it becomes something meaningful and integrated activity to the individual. Everyone has a tendency in seeing that same thing or events in different way. These differences can be affected by many factors, including knowledge, experience and point of view, age, and gender. Perception is related on a individual's point of view toward a particular object in different way by using the sense device, and then they try to interpret it. Every individual have their own ideas about one object that have been observe. It includes the positive or negative opinion of each individual toward object that has been observed.

### **B. The Influencing Factors of Perception**

In the other side, Gibson (1997, as cited in M.A.Yaqin, 2015) pointed out there are six factors that influence the perception. These are:

1. Physiological, where information is obtained through the sensing devices, then the information can be processed and give a meaning to the environment.

Everyone has their own capacity in sensing, and it can impacts to differences of opinion from each individual in interpreting their environment.

2. Attention, the condition where individual require energy to focus on physical form and mental facilities that exist in an object. The energy of each person to one's attention to the object is different and it affect to differences of individual to give perception of an object.
3. Interest, perception of an object depend on how much energy and perceptual awareness encourage to perceive. Perceptual awareness is tendency of an individual to focus or pay attention to particular type of stimulus that may be mentioned as interest.
4. Needs, this factor can be seen from how strong an individual looking for objects or messages that may provide suit answers to them.
5. Experience and memories. The experience is an event that has been passed by individuals which are saved in the memories and individuals can recall their past events to determine the stimulation in the broad sense.
6. Mood, emotional states affect a person's behavior. Mood shows individual feeling that will affect how individual in receiving, responding and remembering.

Based on the influencing factors of perception above, it can be concluded that everybody has different perception about an object or event. In this study, the writer asks some of questions to know the perception of English Department Alumni on

Study Abroad to find out how their experiences of study abroad, what difficulties they are experiencing there, and what the positive impact of it.

### **C. Studying Abroad**

#### **1. The Definition of Studying Abroad**

Studying abroad is defined as one of the learning programs that students follow the learning activities or complete their undergraduate programs through education activities abroad. The activities include classroom studies, research, and other college activities. Studying abroad is interesting experience to students because they obtain an opportunity to visit another country and learn about foreign language, new cultures, and new knowledge (Costello, 2015).

In same way, McKeown (2009, as cited in Bandyopadhyay.S and Bandyopadhyay.K, 2015) stated that studying abroad is an academic experience where college students physically leave their home countries to study in foreign college, and at the time students will learn cultural interaction and new knowledge about language in foreign country.

In short, study abroad is a learning program that requires students to stay in another country far from their home country. They are required to be able to adapt to the new environment. Based on, the program the students are expected to be able to obtain an academic experience, understand new cultural knowledge, and improve foreign language.

## **2. The Variations Program of Studying Abroad**

There are several kinds of studying abroad program. It is divided into two parts, namely: based on the time of study and scholarship programs from the institution.

### **a. Based on time period**

The varieties program of studying abroad are influenced by the period of time their stay in foreign country. The time period is divided in two parts, those are: long-term and short-term (Bodycott, 2015). In short-term program, students stay or study at an overseas institute just a few weeks, months, a semester, or a year. It is usually used by exchange students who engage themselves in studying in foreign academics for one or two semesters. Meanwhile, long-term program, students will stay or spend several years to complete their studies to obtain an undergraduate or postgraduate degree.

In the other hand, The Institute of International Education (2013) classified that studying abroad program in terms of duration is divided into three categories: short term (summer, or eight weeks or less), mid-length (one or two quarters or one semester), and long-term (academic or calendar year).

### **b. Based on institute programs**

Jenkins (2007, as cited in Niser, 2010) classified that study abroad programs can be divided into three categories:

### 1. Exchange

In exchange, two educational institutions, between foreign institutes and home institutes, have cooperation to exchange their students on average for a semester or a year.

### 2. Direct enrollment

Direct enrollment program is students directly enrolled themselves to study in foreign university. In this program, students usually pay tuition, rent a room, and etcetera with their personal money directly to the host institute.

### 3. Program run by studying abroad provider

In this category, the institute offers a program to study abroad for their students with all expenses provided by sponsor or provider. The program is provided by the home institute or sponsor and it is usually paid directly to the host institute.

## **D. Advantages and Challenges of Studying Abroad**

### **1. The Advantages of Studying Abroad**

The impacts of studying abroad program are classified generally into some categories such as, academic, personal, cultural, and language. Racicot (2016, p. 2) defined:



“study abroad can be used to enhance learning opportunities, improve interpersonal skills, foster personal growth, and develop a deeper understanding of other cultures and international business practices”

Similarly, Smith (2013) said that the positive impacts of studying abroad will include opportunity to travel, learn new languages, experience different cultures, find foreigners, develop work skills, form relationships with native peoples, expand critical thinking, and create future job opportunities.

On the other hand, Zerman (2014) argued that because of studying abroad program student can gain experience in different educational systems, engage in other learning processes, and feel different cultural description. Different curriculum and learning style can be an excellent opportunity to capture their academic, personal and career aspect for student. Zerman added, personal gain can influence academic aspects, cultural impacts can influence personal impact and integrated curriculum can increase students' critical thinking to help international student learning.

Based on the explanation above, every impact that student obtain in participating the program has interconnected with other impacts. For instance, the impact of increasing critical thinking will influence the academic impact, the impact of foreign language acquisition can influence social impact, and understanding foreign cultures can affect individuals and their social activities. Students who participating on studying abroad will experience difference learning styles in host country and it can acquire critical thinking skills. It is categorized as a personal impact because forming a critical thinking ability that can be beneficial in terms of academic achievement (A. Demir and S. Demir , 2009, as cited in Zerman, 2014).

Meanwhile, Ingraham and Peterson (2004, as cited in Zerman, 2014) reported that studying abroad had a greater impact on personal growth, academic performance and intercultural awareness compared to professional development. They also indicated that studying abroad is a significant factor in student decisions to pursue international careers. Furthermore, S. Bandyopadhyay and K. Bandyopadhyay (2015) pointed out there are four benefits of study abroad program for international students, these are:

1. Intercultural Awareness

Intercultural awareness allows students to understand and adapt with new culture. Studying abroad is expected to encourage learning and understanding of host country cultures that have not been known. Studying abroad provides an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in a foreign culture through experiential learning to interact and communicate directly with local people in host country, and learn local customs. Besides improving students' ability to understand and adapt with other cultures, studying abroad also can help in enhancing students' understanding of their own culture by comparing it to the culture of the host country.

2. Personal Growth

Personal growth refers to increasing self-confidence to participants who study abroad. It will improve students' leadership skills, problem-solving skills, and an ability to cope with difficult situations. Studying abroad teaches students to be

responsible for their own decisions because they are far from family and cannot rely on other adults to make decisions.

### 3. Professional Development

Professional development involves the selection of career and development of the awareness students' future profession. The acquisition of cross-cultural skills can help students to be an effective professional in job field.

Career development is a significant reason for students to participate in studying abroad program. Studying abroad has an impact on the careers of students who participating because studying abroad can develop students' professionalism. It will affect the success of the students' job field in future career.

### 4. Intellectual Growth

According to Ingraham and Petersons' (2004, as cited in S. Bandyopadhyay and K. Bandyopadhyay, 2015), the expected intellectual growth of studying abroad program is divided into two things: language learning and academic achievement. The main purpose of study abroad is to study and has proficiency in a foreign language. The best way of learning and having a foreign language skill are making interaction and communication directly with local communities who regularly speak foreign language. Meanwhile, for academic achievement, studying abroad can develop students' cognitive skills because the curriculum and learning systems that exist in foreign institute is designed to improve students' critical thinking skills. In the

same way, McKeown (2009, as cited in S. Bandyopadhyay and K. Bandyopadhyay, 2015) claimed that to academic achievement students who are participants of the studying abroad program will be able to develop their cognitive skills.

In short, some benefits of participating study abroad programs are increasing students' multicultural awareness, foreign language abilities, professional and personal development, and academic performance.

## **2. The Challenges of Studying Abroad**

Studying abroad has many barriers such as, culture difference, language difficulty, stress living in new environment without family or close friend, adaptation with new environment in social life, and financial difficulty. Smith (2013) claimed that the negative aspects will focus on unequal opportunities for certain ethnic groups, financial costs, culture shock, separation from family, and language barriers. In the other way, Milian, et al (2015), argued that the common challenges that international students are faced when they go abroad included discrimination, limited social support, feeling of isolation from family and friends, financial difficulties, adaptation to new cultural and social norms, potential culture shock, challenges to adapt to new educational and learning styles, and adapting to a new cultural lifestyle that include unfamiliar drinks and foods.

Whereas, Alghamdi (2016) pointed out that the general problem that international students encounter when participating study abroad program, such as: language problem, academic difficulty, social issue, and financial difficulty.

1. Language problem

Most of international students experience language difficulty while studying abroad. Language difficulty will greatly affect students not only on students' international academic achievement, but can also affect their psychological and social adjustments. Lack of English language ability can limit students to interact socially with their local friends and share or learn new cultures. Consequently, language difficulty can prevent students from adjusting to new environments and getting friends.

2. Academic difficulty

Academic difficulty can be experienced by some international students while studying abroad. It happens because different curriculum and learning systems between home and host institutes. The other academic difficulty is the lack of students writing research skills or essays in western style.

### 3. Social Issue

Besides academic and language difficulty, international students also confront some social culture barriers during studying abroad. The barriers are experienced such as, lack of participation in social activities, difficulty form relationships with native people from host country, and culture shocks (Alghamdi, 2016).

It happens because forming friendships with local students is very difficult because of the difference in social interaction and also the status of international students as temporary visitors causing social exclusion (Paltridge et al., 2012 as cited in Alghamdi). It could be negative impact for students because it will limit students to develop understanding of foreign cultures and increasing their foreign language proficiency.

### 4. Financial difficulty

Financial problem becomes one of the challenges while studying abroad. It happens because of different currency. Asian currency is much lower than currency in western countries. If international students obtain scholarship, it is a bit helps, but if using personal funds, students will be difficult to fulfill living expenses and tuition costs.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, the research methodology is explained. The chapter discuss about the research design used in this research. Following this is a section which provides a description of participants and the technique of data collection. Descriptive technique used in data analyses is presented.

#### **A. Research Design**

In conducting this study, the writer used qualitative method to solve the problems. It is one of the methods that is used to explore and understand issues related to some social aspects, and the method of data collection used such as, interview, observation, and group focus (Bricki and Green, 2007). As well as, Creswell (2009) declared that qualitative method means exploring and understanding about an issue in society that concerned with human problem. Qualitative is one of the research procedures that produce descriptive data in oral or written form about behavior or experience of participants who become a problem to be studied.

Then, qualitative method could help to interpret and understand the data distinctly in a complex reality. In the other hand, Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, and Namey (2011) asserted that one advantage of qualitative methods in exploratory research is that use of open-ended questions where participants have

opportunity to respond to questions in their own words, and then the information obtained is more complete and specific.

The writer chose qualitative method in this study because it would explore the perception of alumni on their studying abroad experience. The writer believed that qualitative methods would provide sufficient data to answer the research question. In addition, qualitative method was used to obtain the specific information from the participants. It also used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of the participants. In this case, qualitative research meant alumni opinions about their experience on Study Abroad.

## **B. Participants**

In this study, the writer took 5 alumni to be the participants. The alumni were chosen by snowball sampling. The snowball sampling technique is a sampling method in which the sample is obtained through a rolling process from one respondent to another. Sugiyono (2001: 61, as cited in Tri, 2013), Snowball Sampling is a sampling technique that is initially small in number, then the sample was asked to choose his friends to be sampled so on, so the number of samples will enlarge.

The writer chose 5 participants in this study because several reasons. First was the difficulty finding data and alumni contact that have completed the master degree which there was no data in the form of documents or alumni contact information. Second, the average alumni who have completed the master degree work as lecturers



and have many works in other places. So, it is too difficult to meet because they did not have spare time. Finally, only 5 participants had the time and willingness to be interviewed.

In this study, the writer chose participants who already had study abroad experience and had the information. The experience would be able to answer the research problem. The participants selected were participants who study abroad in a different foreign country and they must be fresh graduation of foreign university. There was nothing special in selection of which foreign country that they visited.

### **C. The Technique of Data Collection**

#### **1. Interview**

In this study, the primary source to collect the data was using interview. According to Bungin (2007), interview is a process of obtaining data by asking questions directly to participants, face to face and orally. Interview is a technique to gather information to achieve the aim of research using answer question by face to face between interviewer and interviewee. In the other way, Creswell (2014) added that qualitative interview is a process of researcher conducts face to face interview with participant, it could be by telephone, email, or engage in focus group interviews with six to eight interviewees in each group. This interview involved semi-structure interview and generally open-ended questions. It meant to gain opinions from

participants, the writer had to use interview to get a lot of information about certain topics from the participants in more depth.

The writer used semi-structured interview. According to Sugiyono (2013), semi-structured interview is type of interview that included in the category of in-depth interview where in the implementation is more free compared with structured interviews. This type of interview aimed to find the problem openly that the interviewee was asked a question previously completed by the interviewer and they freely answered it. In conducting this interview, the writer needs to listen carefully and record what the informant says.

The writer prepared several questions related to the research problem that were made. The question was perceptions of English department alumni who had experienced on study abroad.

During the interview process to facilitate the collection of information from the interviewees, the write recorded it in hand phone recorder. The common problem while recording was sometimes voice of the participants would be unclear. So, the writer would take notes for important points during the interview to minimize problem during the transcription process.

**D. Technique of Data Analysis**

The writer qualitatively analyzed the result of data collection which used interview. The results of the data was analyzed and described in words and sentences form. To the result of interview, the writer would present the data with thematic analysis based on what participants said about their perception and comments on study abroad experience. The data was divided into several sections. Each section was arranged into sub-section. The writer analyzed the data by reading in several times and conducting an analysis each time. Each time the writer read the data and it developed a deeper understanding of the information that was supplied by participants

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This chapter consists the conclusion and suggestions of the study. In this section, the analysis of the data and the discussion of the result would be reiterated and summarized accordingly. Some suggestion are presented regarding the proposed study and recommended future works related to the study that could be conducted by other researchers.

#### **A. Conclusion**

Based on data interview, the alumni of English department at Ar-Raniry State Islamic University had similar perception toward their experiences while study abroad. According to them, studying abroad is important for students because it will improve their understanding about foreign language, increasing students' intercultural understanding, and developing students' ability for their professional career. Nevertheless, while studying abroad program, there are some challenges that students will face, such as language difficulty, academic difficulty, social difficulty, financial difficulty, homesick, weather, and unfamiliar with food in host country. It can be a problem for students who are difficult to interact with new people. For example, one of the participants said that many of his friends surrendered and returned to their

home country. It happens because students are less preparation when going to study abroad. There are some suggestions that are given by the participants, such as making preparations by finding lots of information about the country to visit, adapting to everything host country, interacting with the native speakers by following several meetings and organizations, and trying to share the problem with friends there. In conclusion, study abroad has many advantages and challenges as well, but the challenge will be easily overcome by preparation, adaptation and not giving up.

#### **A. Suggestion**

The writer suggests the possible limitations or weaknesses of the study and makes recommendations for further research. One of the first limitations of this study is the sample size. Only five participants in the study restricted the generalization of these findings. Then, another shortcoming is the references that the writer obtains for a more in-depth discussion.

Implications for future research, the writer hopes that the next researcher will continue this study by conducting further investigation, increasing participation of participants to obtain more information from alumni of English department who had study abroad experience, and seek many references to support the information. Finally, hopefully this study can be a reference for students who want to continue study abroad.

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**SURAT KEPUTUSAN DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY**  
**Nomor : UN.08/FTK/PP.00.9/390/2017**  
**TENTANG**  
**PENGANGKATAN PEMBIMBING SKRIPSI MAHASISWA FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**  
**UIN AR-RANIRY**

**DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY**


- Menimbang : a. bahwa untuk kelancaran bimbingan skripsi dan ujian munaqasyah mahasiswa pada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, maka dipandang perlu menunjuk pembimbing skripsi tersebut yang dituangkan dalam Surat Keputusan Dekan;
- b. bahwa saudara yang tersebut namanya dalam surat keputusan ini dipandang cakap dan memenuhi syarat untuk diangkat sebagai pembimbing skripsi.
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2. Undang-undang Nomor 14 Tahun 2005, tentang Guru dan Dosen;
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4. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 74 Tahun 2012 tentang Perubahan atas Peraturan Pemerintah RI Nomor 23 Tahun 2005 tentang Pengelolaan Keuangan Badan Layanan Umum;
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9. Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 492 Tahun 2003, tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang, Pengangkatan, Pemindahan dan Pemberhentian PNS di Lingkungan Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia;
10. Keputusan Menteri Keuangan Nomor 293/KMK.05/2011 tentang Penetapan Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh pada Kementerian Agama sebagai Instansi Pemerintah yang Menerapkan Pengelolaan Badan Layanan Umum;
11. Keputusan Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Nomor 01 Tahun 2015, tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang kepada Dekan dan Direktur Pascasarjana di Lingkungan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;
- Memperhatikan : Keputusan Sidang/Seminar Proposal Skripsi Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Tanggal 4 Januari 2017

**MEMUTUSKAN**

- Menetapkan :  
**PERTAMA** : Menunjuk Saudara:
- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Dr. Syarwan Ahmad, M.Lis                          | Sebagai Pembimbing Pertama |
| 2. Khairiyah Syahabuddin, M.Hsc. EsL., M.TESOL, Ph.D | Sebagai Pembimbing Kedua   |
- Untuk membimbing Skripsi :
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| Program Studi | : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris                                      |
| Judul Skripsi | : The Perception of English Department Alumni on Studying Abroad |
- KEDUA** : Pembiayaan honorarium pembimbing pertama dan kedua tersebut diatas dibebankan pada DIPA UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Tahun 2017;
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Ditetapkan di: Banda Aceh  
Pada Tanggal: 10 Januari 2017

An. Rektor  
Dekan

  
Dr. Mujiurrahman, M. Ag  
NIP. 197109082001121001

## Appendix 2

### Interview Question

1. Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?
2. What is your awesome experience during study abroad?
3. What did you prepare before going to study abroad?
4. What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?
5. What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?
6. Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?
7. What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?
8. After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?
9. How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?
10. Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

## Appendix 3

### Interview with the Participant 1

Date: December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 (16.20 WIB)

Location: KIES (Kangaroo International English Service)

Length: 16 minutes

Interviewee: Participant 1

Interviewer and Transcriber: Tri Yulianda Dewi

[I] = Interviewer

[P] = Participant/Interviewee

I: Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?

P: I think for... ehm all students, especially students who are majoring in English. Study abroad is necessary. It is eumm. People say that language is culture. It is not complete to learn about language if you don't really learn about the culture of the speaker who speaks the language. The best way to learn the culture is to live with the people who practice the culture, and it's the best way to learn English and learn about English culture is fluently with people speak English.

I: What is your awesome experience during study abroad?

P: Awesome experience, well ehm being able to study abroad itself. It is awesome experience but I think eumm the experience, it's still unforgettable for me, is being able to cooperate with my lecture from United State and being able to achieve good grade from them. I mean, I submit my research and then I receive some reward, some prize from them. And then I got a good grade and until now we are still contacting each others. And.....eummm... I even, they even offered me to, you know, come back to University and do my Ph.D in same university, but I'm still thinking. I'm still considering my option ehm but, yah, basically I think being able to travel is a awesome experience itself, but more specifically being able to cooperate with my fellow students, with lecture. It is very awesome material

I: What did you prepare before going to study abroad?

P: Eumm.. I have to prepare myself physically and mentally. The weather was going to be

tuft, because they have different season. And then food is going different and then the culture and eum of course the language, but mostly I try to find some information about eumm Indonesian community and United State and then halal food access. And then mosque and then emm.... And more specifically I have to prepare special clothing like jacket –jacket for winter and then glove and then shoes. Basically, yah, I prepare myself physically and mentally and a long. It is some others, reading, clothing, that's all

I: What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?

P: the scholarship was called Fulbright Master Scholarship Program. It opens continually. It is offered by United State department of State. I was selected for the regular program. I mean that is specific program for Papua, there is specific program for people from some specific part in Indonesia. But I try to apply for the regular Fulbright Program and I got accepted. Eumm, well how did I earn it? I earn it, first I try to gain a lot of more information, a lot of information about scholarship. I ask people who have return from United State about the scholarship and then I try to find out what kind of requirement are needed for scholarship and I try to prepare myself, for example the TOEFL, Personal Statement, Study Objective, and then how to write, how to feel in the form perfectly and correctly. And then I stand in my application, I got accepted. They invited me for interview, I got interview then they ask me to take some couple of test including JRI test and then they ask me to apply, emm to send them the name of universities I would like to attend. And then they will try to apply eeh register me at those universities and they let me know of four universities two accepted then I have to pick which one I prefer from those two. I think to be accepted, to be selected for scholarship needs a lot of preparation. It needs early preparation. Eeemm so, I suggest for students if they really, really plant to study abroad, studying overseas, they should really prepare from now on. Some people ee really think about continuing study about pursuing degree overseas where after they graduate and they prepare after they graduate. I think that is not correct way to do if you really thing ahead you should prepare beforehand. So, I prepare it very, very long time. I mean, I have learned TOEFL for couple of years, I have to try to research on about, research on scholarship. I can still remember one of my lectures at UIN Ar-Raniry was talking about this Fulbright scholarship. He was also Fulbright scholar and Back then I

was encouraged. I try to find some information about it. I keep in my mind and I try to focus that, this will be scholarship that I going to earn and I work hard, learn hard, study hard and finally I attend.

I: What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?

P: Okay, eumm food the first one emm.. halal food is not available in anywhere, so, emm back there halal food was only available at one day in a week, every Friday after Jum'at prayer. So, sometime I ran of halal food stock. So, I had to contact my friends, but luckily because I found some of Muslim friend very friendly and very helpful. I get a lot of help and another one is about the weather. At first I thought the most challenge weather as gonna be winter for me but then it turn out that the most challenge weather for me was summer. Because it was really...really hot, I mean, I could stand winter, I prepare my jacket –fix jacket and I've train physically but when we come to summer, it was really..... really hot. It was couple of times, I mean, I could barely stand, but yah, thank God eee bill have a lot of air conditioner, I mean, my apartment also have a lot of conditioner. I mean my bill- my mostly bill will raise but it was fine.

I: Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?

P: I think eee I try a lot to assume eumm.. I always ask question whenever I don't understand something, I mean being able to speak English itself is not enough eumm sometimes event I said the sentence correctly. I make correct statement but they will understand it differently. In the different way but I always emm encourage myself to ask question and I try to not assume eumm I mean its helpful sometime to use body language and facial gestures because that also helps and probably or in knowledge Americans are very lifely. They are very animated eumm so they use a lot of gestures and facial expression too. And I learn to use them too because I think they are really helpful in supporting aware verbal commutation itself.

I: What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?

P: okay, I think study abroad is much more challenging academically. You will receive a lot of reading. I mean the lecture will make sure that you do the reading, here the student will

-just ask the student 'I would like you to read this page for next meeting' but student don't really do the reading. But, professor overseas, they have – their own way to make sure that student really do the reading. They ask them to make journal, they ask them to do the exercise, they ask them to detail make presentation. And another thing is there will be a lot of writing, there will be a lot of research. I think this apply for every major. Writing is very common academic practice in foreign universities. Your lecture will ask you to do a lot of research –write, read, write, and read. And then, but the good thing is you can really; it is easy to find the lecture. I mean you can just come to their office make an early appointment then they will help you. And also sometimes the lectures are much more challenging. They will push you. Eum I mean they don't care that you feel shy in front of your friend or not. They will test you. They will ask you a question if you don't understand then they will just shift to another student. For example, 'okay Zul, what are you thing about this?' then I don't read, I can't answer, so he will take note time, you know taking care of rather shift to another student and it is easy to be put on the spot if you don't – if you are not prepare. So, to be in the class you really have to be prepared. The lecture will give you the syllabus early in the semester. The syllabus contents the list of writing, the list of reading, the list of homework in everything. Sometime students drop while the moment they see the syllabus. So, that how much challenging the learning is. But you got learn a lot.

I: After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?

P: Okey, emm surprisingly when I was, when I return to – before I return to Indonesia I got some offer to teach at some universities emm from my fellow student in their countries like I got an offer Saudi Arabia, I got an offer from Kattab. For me those offer would not be there in the first place if I had not gain and earn scholarship and but I decided that offers were not for me. And then I return and when I return yah, a lot more offer actually came. I feel more confident to apply in some places to teach like here for example. I feel more confident to apply and teach or do some research in some local and national organization in Aceh and in Indonesia. And I think being us to teach at the university is, that I am teaching now, is also eee the thing that I achieve because I achieve the scholarship because I went abroad.

I: How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?

P: I took it a while to cope with the reverse culture shock after you come back from your host country. The same thing that happens to you, when you arrive in the host country will happen to you when you return to your home country. But, as far as some concern, what I did when I return from United State. Back then, I was finding a community that pretty much had the same story with me. So, I try to contact some of my friends who pretty much had same feeling like me, his return from United State too. I try to, you know, sit and talk with them share our experience. Sometimes we also share about our frustration about home country after we return. Sometimes, we share our complains about our surrounding. And it seem like when you have someone or some people who share same feeling in term of reverse culture shock. I thing, it kind of heal you little bit. I mean, you are not only one who feels strange after you return from foreign country. There are also other people feel same like you. And when you are gathering like that, probably you can find a solution you know to cope with the reverse culture shock. I think, one of the ways to cope with the reverse culture shock is to find some people who have the same experience with you, ask them, and then talk to them, share your though, share your frustration – expression – experience with anything. It will help.

I: Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

P: okay, eumm some people are not ready for study abroad well most people will feel excited when they are to go abroad but that doesn't mean they are ready. You will know that you are ready to go abroad when you are there. Some people they will be a drive inside with to go home. That is not ready belong 'what are doing here? You should go home'. You will feel that faced and when you give up, that means you are not ready. Some of my friends they give up half way. They were more excited than me but then suddenly a couple of month half long the way I heard that they cry a lot, they miss their family, they want to return, they want to go home. So, for me that is sign, they are not ready. So, I mean that is one the disadvantages being abroad. Eumm the advantages is you are got to see the world. You got to learn English, if you are English students, from the tongue of speaker who speak the language. You got the see what you can't see here. You can do what you can't really do. Here I mean, and talking about all the thing that you can earn easily by living abroad compare what you can achieve. I give you an example it is easy to you, you don't have to go to store, you don't have to go to eumm everything is done very electronically

eee in foreign countries. You don't really have spent a lot of energy to do thing. Even studying, you can – there is an online class, there is e-book available, a lot of facilities are giving you a lot of advantages. But yah you will miss your family, you will miss your friend. You will sometime feel like a stranger, you will miss your food especially we gentlemen, we miss food ee but, yah, you got meet – you meet your new friend, you meet new college, you will learn a lot of new thing, and you will find by the time, you really want to go home but if you survive that faced when you are home, you will feel that you want to return.



### **Interview with the Participant 2**

Date: December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (13.30 WIB)

Location: Kantin Biro UIN Ar-Raniry

Length: 23 minutes

Interviewee: Participant 2

Interviewer and Transcriber: Tri Yulianda Dewi

[I] = Interviewer

[P] = Participant/Interviewee

I: Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?

P: Okay, based on my experience studying abroad is very valuable for our cultural awareness and also our multilingual skill development in another country. In addition, based on my experience study abroad increase you new perception of environment, yah, open new environment as well as new challenges life such as how to interact with the other people from the other countries not only from the target country. I mean from – for example in France, in my... how said it.... in my west university before, but also from the other international students. Okay, that's it.

I: What is your awesome experience during study abroad?

P: I still remember while I was there in France. I had such invitation to gather together with another international students having such party like welcoming party or something like that and we could have a very good interaction even though we have just know each other at the time. And also another experience is I could make friend with some strangers or some friends of native speaker early. For example when I was in a public transport or in train, I meet a family, public transport and then we interact each other, we discuss about life in Indonesia and also about our religious perception and they are quite open minded to discuss about it, another experience is when I was passing my Ramadan I mean fasting days in there they are really confuse when I didn't eat or didn't drink anything while they did it. That's it. It is really a new experience and it is unique experience. I don't call it very awesome or something but it is unique and interesting for me.

I: What did you prepare before going to study abroad?

P: before going to study abroad. Firstly, I prepare the admission, the admission requirement, or selected in university. For example, the improvement of my language skill such as English and French because my last institution is – I mean, they use French as language of instruction. And then, beside of academic or admission requirement also prepare eumm to fulfill the requirement of any perspective scholarship, such as latter motivation, also some work experience in organization in related to experience, yah, so that it fulfills the requirement scholarship and also university.

I: What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?

P: okey, I was in France, thank to the ministry of foreign, not foreign, The Ministry of Religious Affairs or KEMENAG “ kementrian agama” at the time. I apply for program of 5000 doctor, yah, 5000 doctor by MORA Scholarship or just say it The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia. The way I get it of course by fulfilling some requirement that they ask such as language skill especially skill to prove that we are a good candidate by participating or in all of the scholarship selection process such as interview, LGD, psychological test, ect. So that is it, of course one more thing is to prove that we had already got LOA (Later of Acceptance) from the host university and then some tips for students or some prospective students who want to study abroad especially by the scholarship. Firstly, if you want to study in western country generally you have to prove that you have special language skill include be English, French, German, or something it depend in language of the structure that university. And then beside of foreign languages skill, it could also the recommended to prepare their, how to say, their make sureness Living abroad have to be more independent especially by scholarship. For example you got Master Scholarship for two years or one year, you have to be well inform that you are only permitted to go home once study term. So, for some spoil students, you know, who miss the country so much and want to go home once a month. Okay, so just prepare your independent beside language skill and also to gain more information as much as possible not only from the Alumni, from students but also by self, self observation, self awareness. It could just find more information from internet or participating in the workshop or seminar of scholarship. Okay, and also be sure that your host university especially the faculty is really, really match with your previous knowledge or your future career. Okay

just it.

I: What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?

P: first of all, when I was there at first time, let's say, eumm for the first month or second month I feel... I still have to advance that... I had language, let's say, French, French language understanding, especially in classroom. So, the way I solve it, ijust try to improve my French, try to discuss it with my friends about what the lectures were explaining about, yah, in a more simple explanations and more simple situations. And then, beside of language challenge for first month or first few weeks. eumm I mean okay, I want to add something, beside of discussing with friends, I also still review my French language, yah, at home review about the material or lesson and step by step I could enrich my understanding and my vocabularies about certain subject explanation. Okay, another challenges, I think, it is about another life style, you know, in France, they have a lot of pet, let's say dogs. They take dog with them in public places. So, sometimes we could get any, you know, feces of dog, yah, almost anywhere in public facilities just like in the road or beside mall for example. So, you have to be really attention or you would get your shoes dirty or your sandal dirty because of it and also the clime yah. I had admitted that I live, that I had challenge in facing the clime in Europe, yah, especially during winter, it is very cold. So, I have to adapt myself with it until I could yah, live with it, with clothe eumm say sweater, yah, when you are walking outside your room, yah that's it.

I: Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?

P: because of it, I try... I was trying to keep interacting with them because for me to solve the barrier of linguistic or cultural differences with the people abroad. It is not a good idea to avoid meeting them and just stay at home or just gather with your Indonesia friends or PPI, you know, Persatuan Pelajar Indonesia, is not really good idea for it. So, just face it, just interact with them, yah, and the more and more you interact with them, the more you will understand about the culture and communication yah, language eumm their accent yah. so, I really suggest that someone who is studying abroad or who will be studying abroad to just faced, to just trying to that with their communication because it is, I think, it is the only solution for it and also it would highly improve our communication skill.

I: What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?

P: okay, my host institution is in France. So, the evaluation system, it is completely different with home institution not only in Aceh but also in Indonesia general. For example, in France in the higher institution we have the scoring from 0 (zero) to twenty (20) compare to Indonesia from 1 (one) to four (4), you know that GPE calculation system. So, I would like to say sometime it is –not sometime, it is really really hard to get the score ten (10) which is ten (10) is the minimum score, even eleven (11) or twelve (12) or thirteen (13), it is really - really hard. You have to be really, how to say, really detail of any interaction from your lecture, yah, from the assignment etcetera because they are quite objective. The lectures or the professors, they are really objective about evaluating our assignment. So, gaining score it is really hard compare to home country, our home country in Indonesia. And then, the differences between studying, another different would be in regular meeting. Based on my personal experience, I'm not talking about general universities in host country, I mean my host institution, but in my own institution I found that not all of students have to attend the regular course, they could work part time and not attending the course as long as they could prove that they got very-very good score in midtest, quiz, or something like final. They would sometimes got A or would got 17 or 20 of the test. Even though if, for example I attend the course oftenly or always, but I didn't answer the assignment or test correctly, I would not gain any additional score from my attendance. It is not based on our institution our institution in which we got 10% of attendance. Another different, it would be about the regular activities right there, I mean in my home, sorry, in my previous institution the improvement or the communication it is really daily activities in classroom. So, the interaction between students and lectures, or students and students is really normal situation right there. There is no lecture center communication but we communicate as well with the other students and I think in Indonesia sometimes, it also happened it is not really big different thing. That's it.

I: After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?

P: first of all, of course, If you are talking about academic achievement. We got an international degree, yah, you know, international certificate or, what say, diploma or something come from abroad which is really useful in our country, to be, yah, you know

to improve our personal branding if you are talking about business or something. But beside of it, another achievement beside of academic achievement, it also relate to personal or say international skill, you know, eum we or I especially I could feel that my way of interaction with the other not only with the foreignness as all ready improve. The way I think, how I describe my point of view, I could describe it in more clear way and in more flexible perception, you know, and for another achievement, okay lets me recall, I think it is also about, yah, about gaining more connection, you know, so until today I still have some contact with the alumni or the students all right there because I was there also for my study internship. So, I could have more interaction with the lectures or professors, the students, ex-students from my host country.

I: How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?

P: it is very interesting question. So, when I come back, is, yah, is true that I feel little bit different in this situation or this circumstance. Even though, I were living here all my long life, yah, but of course, it is easy to solve or to overcome this phenomenon when I come back by hangout with your friends, you know, by doing many activities, many outdoor activities, yah. Not only staying at home when you come back because you will feel ... so, just as when we are dealing with culture shock, yah, just how we are going to deal with the reverse culture. Just interact with the people around you, the society. Soon, you will overcome this phenomenon.

I: Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

P: yah, for the advantages, I could elaborate at least four or five advantages of studying abroad. First of all is the improvement of our language and cultural awareness or language skill. Second one is to improve our adaptability to adapt with different people, with different point of view, different life style, and different religion. And the third one is, it would improve our connection, we would interact with more people abroad. It could be home scholar or people in academic life. It could be with people who work in public area. And then, the forth one, I think the last, it could be consider as the main advantages is, it could also improve our financial skill, okay. The way how we manage our financial income and outcome, you know, I think you got it what I say. This is about the advantages and about disadvantages, of course, it could be related to advantages that I mention for example about the financial matters if you are pretty, how to say that, pretty some people

who more to shopping, you know, who love to eat something in restaurant. I think scholarship is not enough for you, yah forded lesson and forded activities. So, I think that would be disadvantages or not be a tread for someone who don't understands how to manage their money well. And then as I told you the language barrier for anyone who is mentally hard to adapt with other people, so, just I think the language and cultural factor it could be a trip for those of people are hard to adapt with the other foreign people. And the third, one contradictory to whatever we said about gaining more connection. If you are quiet a passive student in international community.

### **Interview with the Participant 3**

Date: December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 (16.10 WIB)

Location: LDC

Length: 18 minutes

Interviewee: Participant 3

Interviewer and Transcriber: Tri Yulianda Dewi

[I] = Interviewer

[P] = Participant/Interviewee

I: Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?

P: I guess, you know, studying overseas would be really important and one of stepping stone of my career too. I would say that not only in term of, you know, the knowledge that you gain as like as you know, you have different perspective on the.. specialty that you let to gain in you feel of interest, but also the experience to be able to mingle with – I went to Australia, what I found like, I got the opportunity to mingle with Australia and to build network with University Australia and as well as with the sponsorship which was in Master program Australia award scholarship. So, I think, we have more...more benefits and it does somehow help, you know, improve your personal development and career.

I: What is your awesome experience during study abroad?

P: I would say not only I gain - what I've gain in classroom, learning from native speaker but not simple the person who viable to speak English but also those who I experience, I expert in that felt. And you are told by researcher and those who – whose book you have cited for example. And also again you mingle with international students not only from Indonesia but from different part of the world and sharing or getting inside on hoard that – because my specialty is teaching and I getting inside and how they deal they classroom in different context really and reach your knowledge in term of language teaching and practices. Then, at the same time when the program is offer try to build the network guess I mention before. The network that you build with the professor, the university, and students as well as getting experience to be able to experience living in Australia Community and understand their culture and at the same time, yes, networking.”

I: What did you prepare before going to study abroad?

P: before going abroad, it would be, is a long process, yah, preparation, while on program, and to departure. Then, time when you spent in Australia and the same time when you come back. So, it is being a long process, almost, you know, couple of month. First of all would be, because I went there on scholarship, so, I will be dealing with scholarship first, preparing on documents needed, and the process in term of finding the right scholarship, and then preparing the documents and also proficiency test. And once you are accepted, like I got accepted Australia Award Scholarship. Then, I spent three weeks, oh three month in Jakarta attending pre-departure training and soon after then I got IELTS score. Then, the sponsor applied me for the university and then they grant me scholarship and the university accepted my application. And then, time of me to kind of prepare my departure including Visa, and as well as like, you know, you pack your things, and the ticket, and everything, and arrive there to start study

I: What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?

P: So, the name of scholarship that I apply was called "Australian Development Scholarship (ADS)" and it now the name is Australian Award Scholarship. It is just new brand but the same thing. But, yah, this is Australian government scholarship for, not only master but also for Ph.D to students who interested to study overseas. And again that is one of the most privilege procedures scholarship and which over a lot of seat for applicants 300 or something every year. And since it reaches try to reach, you know, many elements of the community. So, it is kind try to provide channel for each person who, like to expose especially in professionalism. My suggestion would be again find out what you need to prepare like first its applications and then find out about the program, find out about the requirements, and the process because that is not instant process. You do have to prepare the documents requested long before your apply especially TOEFL score of application. So, really have time to, you know, craft your really good application with later on it make you a candidate of the program. Another tips would be find the area of priorities like some scholarship, especially Australia, now it's really consent with disability. So, if are in that area, I would really encourage you to apply because every year the kind of priorities of the ship priorities to different area. So try to locate to find out what they priorities for the year



you are applying. Another think would be broaden your experience and again try to kind of learn about application, what is ask for. Like in Australian scholarship, they really want to find the person who is, you know, currently working or fresh graduate, but you know, your area of interest and you know what the problem you encounter. Later on, relate that to university would like to apply like why you choose the university, and you also have to prove them, give them kind of statement that show a convinced that. Later on if you got selected open your written, you would be able to the community.

I: What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?

P: I say first of all would be food because that is in the first term, I would say in the first term. I'm not use western food like I was not really familiar with the city. Then, in the second semester since I met a lot of Indonesian especially Acehnese, and it been exposed to, like all the center or shopping center when you can afford something kind of similar to Indonesia food. So, then I can survive. Another challenge would be in term of the season. I think, winter is really long and it is also very cold. But then, again, even the condition is not really supportive but they try their best, the university and the accommodation and where you went really provide you with some facilities that help you cope the winter and summer, they provide what they call it, a kind of heater, yah their provide heater where you can feel a little bit a long. With reading, since master degree really quite independent work and list of what range of reading material, and home work, and writing assignment. But then what is good? Is that the professors were really approachable and they provide the procedure for learning of the semesters. So, even you are strangling with that, but the students will find the access where you can ask for help, they have students center that is, you know, available to give you hand, dealing your writing or presentation of construct.

I: Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?

P: well, I having like difference and, but from that I can appreciate the culture that I had been innate, you know, since I was born. I even become more proud of being Acehnese since in live in Australia at the time. How I adapt would be I join some clubs well I have very interest in dancing. So, I join on the some dance clubs. We try to promote Acehnese culture by performing dances in many festivals in schools, in universities and we attended

like public festival like Moon Lantern Festival. It is like Australia and Asia continent festival. So, they involve a lot of countries who representative state in Australia currently at the time. And then, the Acehese community, we representative Indonesia, we presented some dances in very big event. There are thousands of people watching and we were the kind of invited some more events after that. And to promote Acehese culture, I think by kind of try to accept differences, but at the same time you still have your own culture as you identity.

I: What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?

P: well, I would say because you live, you told by native speaker yah, that would be a challenge sometime if you encounter language barrier, one of the issue may be. Another issue will be the work a lot, you know definitely would be given a lot of homework , a lot of task, presentation, self study, and online learning, that somehow not disadvantages, I guess it would be a challenge not disadvantages because by doing that, you will be the kind of encourage to keep improving yourself. Another differences is that would be the facilities, in Australia, I'm not comparing but just say like this and there. Condition in Australia, they are more ready and they becoming more helpful for the students because they have range of, you know what ranges of readings, yah, reading material and references. And the libraries are very accommodative. And they are very already for that. While here, back home we really need to improve that areas and also, yah, people espoused to research, they are more –people overseas more excited or interested to develop science research than our country here.

I: After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?

P: I think, I earn a lot like I can advance much after I return from the program. The program is TESOL program. Then, since my return, I come back to UIN Ar-Raniry, even now I part-timer but I think I become more professional in any my profession and I can also contribute to community program like working in Kangaroo International English Service (KIES) where I teach English and also at the same time preparing Acehese who are interested to study in Australia. Then, I was given privilege to coordinate a program call Access Program. It is America program under US embassy and this is worldwide and then it allows me to collaborate with US embassy and university in Indonesia. And here

become representative of UIN Ar-Raniry and from that, I gain like building network. I know more people and learn more and be able to benefit more to the community.

I: How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?

P: Well, since I have a very good support system here. I don't think really difficult to come back to where I from. So, what I did, I join Australian alumni group and then I ..... And in a way they support me to adjust with the culture that we know, two years a way there, that have been a lot of changes too. But, the first, one or two weeks I return that we definitely culture shock since you have, you know, experience very advance. Live in Australia and then you kind of really happy with the advancement that they had with the facilities and systems and everything was really easy but then I, myself, when I was there, as I mention before, I also encounter a lot of problem, yah, with family since I live alone there. I had problem with education system but again when I come back here, since I have very good support system. So, I don't think it was problem – big problem. I just think that you need to adjust yourself with the floe wherever you go when you think it was not as you expected, what you have do is simply accepted and not complain but contribute to what you do to the system.

I: Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

P: the advantage is as I mention before, it can reach you in term of professionally like you knowledge, you ability to adapt and build new friends, and make relationship with different people overseas and at the same time when comeback you will be able to benefit where you live or maybe be different community that you are interested in helping. At the end it was support the government, the partnership between Australia and Indonesia government. The in term of disadvantage, I guess, I would say like some people are not ready on the departure. They would be in honeymoon season, considering that everything in Australia is beautiful, everything that they found there really amazing, but when they come back, they are not ready to face the reality. They forget what they go there for, like they start ti kind of compare Australian and Indonesia which actually is not the aim of scholarship. It is really to sent the right people to learn and at the end to solve the problem here. The disadvantage some people lose their identity in the way they becoming Australian or if they go to America, they become Americans and at the time the culture shock one of the problem. Another thing would be when people doing research in

Australia under Australia scholarship meanings all findings belong to Australia right. So, in that case one way it's really good because you expose Australia. But on the other hands, it also not good because you do not do research for your own country but you do research for them. While it is plus and minus but again that is nothing totally free in every kind of collaboration. So that why I say it's really important those applicants to really know about that became an applicant that has privilege but being privilege also had to be like you should not lose something which is much important. Then, privilege to study overseas.

### **Interview with the participant 4**

Date: December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (12.40 WIB)

Location: Ruang Baca PBI

Length: 14 minutes

Interviewee: participant 4

Interviewer and Transcriber: Muhammad Haris Mustaqim

[I] = Interviewer

[P] = Participant/Interviewee

I: Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?

P: eummm it is different, different as in, you know, almost everything like the quality of life, the culture, and the experience of the academic life and also you know financially everything is different. I would say it better... but most of the experience that I have is better in their

I: What is your awesome experience during study abroad?

P: Okay all right, study is not that awesome, you can feel that one too. Awesome experience because a proud because I live in big city there, in New York, I got to meet drivers people like people from definitely different background, people from countries that you never even hear like Maldives, Trinidad Tobago like that kind of people and then they become your best friend. And then you also get the chance to actually experience something that you saw on television, you know, going to Liberty Statue, or you know, going to Harvard and see how Harvard University is. So, yaps, eee going around visiting places that you can only see on your TV, meeting drivers' people and meeting awesome people. Awesome as in you have professor who have graduate from Harvard, you have professor who have graduate from MIT, you got friends who work on Google, you got friends who work as a teacher for longest times. So, this types of experience you will not get, I guess, here

I: What did you prepare before going to study abroad?

P: eumm the kind of, of course researching, include looking for information, most of the information that I got was from Google search like eummm specific to the university that I was about to go to, how was life in the city because I life in New York city. So, I needed

to know how expensive, it was the living expensive, how when I get, how say, how when I get eumm find the transportation everything. Like, eum okay, if I want to live there I need to know all the information about living in there.

I: What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?

P: okay, do I have to name it, the scholarship, so I really want to go to United State at the beginning. So I try to my hardest to get scholarship and Alhamdulillah I got three scholarship at the time. The first one is Fulbright. And the second one is – no, no. The first one is Aceh Government Scholarship. The second one is Fulbright and the third one is LPDP because of one two things, I decided to choose LPDP. How did I got that? I sent application, of course, and we went to follow training and leadership challenges that we had to train, so, I got it. Some tips, learn, always keep learning, and please remember that everyone has the same change, everyone has the same opportunity. It is not like because you're genius then get the scholarship I'm no one, you are someone, you know, you're studying, you almost finish your sarjana alright means that you are smart so it doesn't mean that okay I just got the TOEFL four hundred and fifty and then you won't a change of scholarship no, it is just coming back to you again. Do you want the scholarship the go first make an effort to get the scholarship.

I: What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?

P: okay, eummm there is a lot of challenges but may be the most is the different in culture. The weather, I solve it is by adaptation, so I adapt to way worth that for example the conditional social life that daily. For graduate students who wanted to social life know each other the usually went to a bar or a café like a bar, drinking alcohol or what. So, at first I didn't really want to do that but I need to social life. So, I just warm about that but of course with no alcohol so served like that. But, yah, it just a few time in the first semester and then I was like, okay I didn't want actually do it anymore. And another thing is probably language barrier as some points because English that we learn here totally different with the English actually we use every day life so there was a lot of slang and you know idiom and they use daily English in that we didn't learn a while we were

studying in Indonesia. So, I actually had quite trouble with that but not that difficult. Another thing is culture of academic itself, is totally different there they expected you to be very active. Active participation is the main activity in university across America but here most of us mostly become more passive listener in their seat with your professor and also the kind of relationship between professors and students are totally different. In here with the kind of distance relationship like lectures is all above us and then the students lower than theirs. Right there the relationship between – but there the kind of forming partnership between lectures and students is not like I am old now and you are nothing but it is more like you know something and I know something let's exchange. The lesson let's exchange something the experience that we got, culture, life culture, and academic culture.

I: Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?

P: It is easy actually you know, you can actually adapt to any kind of situation that you earn in if you are willing to be open, you know, you are willing to welcome the changes in culture itself. So, for me like I said before, at some point I had to deal with the different in culture by actually in embracing these differences. For example like I don't know a lot of slang English but for me to be able to know that then I have actually be friend with domestic foreigners. So that is exactly what I did I join a lot of campus organization or join voluntary activities or I can actually mingle or told with foreigners.

I: What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?

P: okay, in term of academic challenges totally different like I told you before, like academic culture between here and there are totally different passive listening, most likely and is still teacher center is some point here. But there is very students center and very practical and also like I told you before active participation, like is the most important points when they wanted to score you is the active participation and also because the class itself, the atmosphere in the class itself is total different. It is more about the level, say you here, when I was studying here, I was an undergraduate students. But when I right there, I was doing my graduate study. And it is totally different between undergraduate studies and

graduate studies. When you are there, you were as graduate student, you were as to be independent learner, and you had to look for your own material, you had to look for all the answer by yourself, you had to look for, you know, the person that you want to interview and you had to do a lot of project, say here we did project but still guided by our lecture or our teacher but there we have to guide ourselves. Like okay, how do I want just to be, we have create, we have to design every project, every assignment ourselves and then, you know, be responsible with it by ourselves. So, teacher doesn't really help you with it. They just give you assignment, then how you would solve the problem, how you would solve the project themselves that would be a part of the evaluation and scoring from the teacher. So, it is very independent there.

I: After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?

P: I feel satisfy but the most of the time, I think I feel the change with my attitude. For example I use to be someone who very disturb and who doesn't really want to listen other people but now that I learn about how to social life with people of different, totally different opinion, totally different background. I've got to encourage to actually, you know, listen up okay, everyone has different reason, everyone has different, you know, perspective that you need to actually be respectful. So, the attitude of actually listening to someone who different than you and the achievement like complete achievement like, yah, GPE, and world I did get there.

I: How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?

P: just I had to use again, I think. And remember the years that I spent before going abroad. It was actually the reverse culture shock for me was more a parent than culture shock itself. Because in the culture shock we just got new culture, new habit, so is adaptation. But, when reverse culture shock is that you have to get back your own habit, your own experience that you already turn away. So, yah, what I did was, you know, just leave trip. May be when the first feel said like okay I couldn't do this part, for example my biggest reverse culture shock was traffic, you know, people just went over all over, even though is red light I couldn't do that and I still can't accept that right now but, you know, gradually to living here for months I start to accept.

I: Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

P: advantage of study abroad is like I said it before open mindedness. I got to say different



perspective and the positive change with my attitude of looking at the problem, problem solving and critical thinking and, yah most of all open mindedness. The disadvantage was somehow if you could not cope with the problems that you face especially when you are abroad, you feel distress. The kind of depression as some points like for example I worst of war in a big city that's very crowded. However, I felt, I search a point that very longer that's the kind of depression that I got especially when I felt like I was unsuccessful with the study, I was unsuccessful making friend the kind of feeling like depression is coming. So that is, I think, this is the disadvantages because you don't have your family with you, you are alone."

### **Interview with the Participant 5**

Date: December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 (16.20 WIB)

Location: Ruang Baca PBI

Length: 9 minutes

Interviewee: Participant 5

Interviewer and Transcriber: Tri Yulianda Dewi

[I] = Interviewer

[P] = Participant/Interviewee

I: Based on your experience, what is your perception on study abroad?

P: my perception are study abroad is something new for us, and this can increase our new thing also for example experience and our mindset also, and our academic skill also. It is a little bit different when we are study in our home country also it is create something a great opportunity in rather that we can communicate, we can share knowledge not only with our Indonesian friends but also amount country is there.

I: What is your awesome experience during study abroad?

P: there are a lot of experiences, that I got, for example I had a lot of friends from different countries such as not only from Australia but also from Arab, Iraq, Iran and then from America also, and New Zealand, many countries that in this university we know a lot of this is, how to say stereotype, we can change our stereotype for person from different countries. Okay.

I: What did you prepare before going to study abroad?

P: a lot of thing that we had to prepare before we want to go to abroad. For example we have to issue our visa first, our passport, something that term is, how to say that, administrative terms and after that we have to prepare ourselves, our physic, our finance, of course, and our material also. Even though we have to look for other sources there but also have to bring form this, our country.

I: What kind of scholarship you apply? And how did you get it? Do you have some tips for new students who want study abroad to get scholarship?

P: this is a kind of scholarship, you know, LPSDM, okay, this is cost work scholarship so

would not to research that just take a class and then I join exam, and then I not follow I mean, okay LPSDM only cover our cost work and living cost something like that. Okay, the first thing that you have to do is maybe you have to prepare, how to say, your English proficiency like TOEFL and IELTS, it is the first guide that you have to enter before you have this particular score, you will not allow to enter the new guide.

I: What are the challenges that you faced while you were studying abroad? And how did you solve it?

P: the first challenge is maybe a lot of the skill, I mean speaking, listening, skill, okay, the first thing that I found is little bit hard maybe when we were listening to native speaker from New Zealand for example and also from Australian. Because in Indonesia we use to listen to America accent but there we found a lot of accent, pronounce in New Zealand, British, and Australia also. It is may be a little bit challenging and also interesting.

I: Because of the different cultures and communication styles, how did you adapt and communicate with local people in the host country?

P: just try to adapt by around selves and try to our best, okay I want to learn new listening from different native speaker so why not I try to new accent, for example in this case let's try we can change the America accent to the Australia accent, why not, this is something new and also challenging right.

I: What are the differences between studying at home and abroad, especially in terms of academic challenges?

P: okay, that is a good question. In Indonesia, especially in our university in Aceh if you want to arrange something about academic staff, it little bit takes a lot of time, take a lot paper. Okay, right there they can survive quickly and it more paper less. So, everything is concretely computer and, how to say, you can save our time a lot and, yah, we can enjoy our study without have, you know, interrupting by something that useless, yah, like collect paper. You know what I mean

I: After studying abroad, what kind of achievement that do you earn?

P: there is a lot of opportunities that we can get after mastery – after we complete our master and for example I can teach in my department cause we still undergraduate degree this is not a lot to teach in our department. So when we have master degree,

this is, okay, welcomes teach here, why not?

I: How do you solve the reverse culture when you come back?

P: back to our identity, we have to – how to say, no, no- we have to be commit to keep our commitment to be, this, I'm a Muslim so just, just keep Muslim identity. So, that's all.

I: Based on your experience, what is the advantage and disadvantage of study abroad?

P: As the advantages like I said before, I had a lot of friends from overseas not only from Indonesia, Australia, but a lot of friend and also I had to contact a good lecture, a good professor there that I have never met before. So, this little bit good people, so I'm very lucky to have some information, some knowledge from them. And about disadvantage, of course