

EFL Student Perceptions of the International Internship Program based on the Edupreneur Perspective

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Abstract

This study aims to identify EFL students' perceptions of international internship programs based on an edupreneur's perspective. This study employs descriptive qualitative methods. There were five students involved in this study who were selected purposefully. They are EFL students who have attended international internships in Thailand. Data collection was carried out by conducting interviews. The results of this study show that the majority of students stated that this program was very useful. Both academically and non-academically. From the entrepreneur perspective, it was found that students who were involved in the internship program received a salary, facilities, and experience that could train their independence. Even though there are several problems, this is only a technical aspect that can be improved.

Keywords: Edupreneur, EFL Students, International Internship.

1. Introduction

The term KKN (Community Service Program) for a student who is enrolled for 5-7 semesters is common in the student community. There are two types of community service programs, regular and international internship programs. The community service program is one of the prerequisites for taking a closed exam, they must take it to complete their undergraduate studies. To put it another way, a community service program is a type of volunteer work. In this instance, students who participate in community service activities do so either alone or in groups for a variety of reasons (Lutfi, 2020). The community service program is implemented for a period of one to two months, depending on the school policies. Additionally, a community service program is crucial for students' personal growth since it allows them to interact with people from other backgrounds who, depending on where they are placed, have personalities, lifestyles, cultures, and ethnicities. The ability to confront those in high positions with confidence would then be beneficial (Anwas, 2011). Taufik (2017) argued that the international internship community service program is an activity in the realm of education or a form of higher education activity carried out by students abroad, to be precise in southern Thailand. Students who take part in this program are students who can integrate aspects of *Catur Dharma* higher education, namely: education and teaching, research, and community service. Then the academic activities carried out by these students are international activities. Murtaadla (2020) argues that the international internship community service Program is part of the campus curriculum where students will be placed outside the campus and serve the local community according to their placement. Students will assist the community in managing and utilizing natural resources as well as available human resources. Students who take part in the international Internship community service Program placed in different countries such as Cambodia, Brunei Darussalam, and also Thailand have their reasons. Such as building a relationship between countries, getting an

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acknowledgment that they are from abroad, their academics, developing their competencies as well as their knowledge and the most important thing is getting new experiences when they take part in this program. Saehu et al. (2018) argue that the international internship community service program is a campus activity in which it is one of the student's obligations to apply or apply what they have learned while still in college. All of that must be applied to the community regarding the knowledge and competencies they get. An international internship community service program is the establishment of a cooperative relationship with educational institutions abroad by marking it with an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding). This is because universities are required to cooperate with organizations, institutions, the global community, and also people from different countries.

In Thailand, the international internship community service program collaborates with both Islamic and public schools. Instead of teaching a population in a hamlet or village as is customary, students in this international internship community service program are placed in schools in regions like Songkhla province and Krabi province. Following their arrival in their respective regions, the students will be separated into several schools. For instance, in the province of Songkhla, students will be sent to Miftahudden and Srina Karin Schools, among others. In Thailand, students occasionally recite the Al-Quran in addition to teaching English and Arabic. The placement of the students varies; some are assigned to junior high school, elementary school, or senior high school. However, it is typically referred to in Thailand as Anuban (3 years), Prathom (6 years), and Mattayom (6 years).

While Edupreneurship is a combination of the word education and entrepreneurship. Edupreneurship wants to place entrepreneurship concepts and attitudes in the world of education. A realistic entrepreneurial setting is required to activate entrepreneurial competencies and inspire students to pursue entrepreneurship as a chosen career path since entrepreneurial teaching and entrepreneurial learning are not the same. According to Utama, et.al (2021), there are three typical entrepreneurs. The first individuals learn to live independently, for example by raising livestock, becoming traders, or running certain businesses due to limitations, poverty, dropping out of school, or being left behind by their parents. Second, a person builds a business because of the power that supports him. An example is someone who runs a business because he starts to see opportunities and opportunities, such as political policies and government facilities. Third, a person has set a vision of being successful and wealthy by building a business and business network because he is reluctant to become an employee. In the international internship community service program in Thailand, this has to do with edupreneur's because students not only train skills, gain new experiences, train their interactions, and build relationships with other people, but this is also useful in their entrepreneurship because international internship program students will get a salary every month. The international internship community service program and its application in various social spheres in Indonesia have been the subject of numerous studies, although it is uncommon to find research on EFL students who have participated in foreign internships abroad. Therefore, this study focused on Indonesian students who teach English as a foreign language to complete the community service program curriculum for around five months in Thailand. This study answers the question, "How are the students' perceptions in international internship program based on the edupreneur perspective?" The research aims to identify how EFL students view international internship programs from an edupreneur's perspective.

2. Methodology

The type of research in this study is descriptive qualitative research. It means that data is collected in the form of words and pictures, not numbers. The purpose of descriptive research is to make systematic, factual, and accurate predictions about facts. This research is used to find out how the student's perceptions of the international internship program are based on the Edupreneur perspective. The subjects in this study were three EFL students from three different universities in Indonesia who had joined international internships in Thailand.

The instrument used in this study was a list of interviews, which consisted of several indicators. Specifically, it proposed the benefits of the academic and non-academic aspects of participating in the international internship program, the problems they faced during the program and their hopes for the same program in the future. Researchers use structured interviews, in which an interviewer sets his problems and questions to be asked. This is intended so that the conversation in the interview is more directed and focused on the intended purpose and avoids talk that is too

broad. Interviews were conducted virtually because the location of the subjects was far from the location of the researchers. The interviews took place over three days, from December 17 to 19, 2022.

The data analysis used was descriptive-analytic, which describes the data collected in the form of words and pictures rather than numbers. Data derived from interviews, documents, and so on is then described to provide clarity on reality. The data analysis used in this study uses the Miles and Huberman version, which consists of three activity flows: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

3. Findings and Discussions

The data for this study were obtained from interviews with five EFL students from various universities in Indonesia who had attended international internships in Thailand. The placement locations for the five EFL students are also in different areas. In the interview, there were several items that became the subject of discussion. The following is the data from the interviews conducted with the five respondents.

Table 1. Interviewer Data

No.	Indicator	Response
1	Age	23 years: 2 students 24 years: 2 students 25 years: 1 student
2	Sex	2 Male 3 Female
3	Educational Level	Bachelor degree
4	Major	English Education English Literature
5	Placement internship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suntasart Wittaya School, Yala Southern Thailand. • Ban Huailuek Krabi Thailand • Eakkapapsasanawich Islamic School, Krabi Thailand • Darul Mujahideen School Thailand • Lantarach Chaprautid School Krabi
6	Benefit from the academic aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadening insight into teaching in the field of English language education • Knowing a lot of vocabulary from other countries (Thailand and Malaysia). in practicing pronunciation, writing, etc • Get to know a new culture and learning environment. • Assisting the process of completing KKN assignments, completing PPL assignments, and thesis research
7	Benefit from the non-academic aspect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help on the career path • Personal branding • Get a salary of 3,000 baht per month. • Get lodging facilities and other facilities • Practicing independence from the financial aspect.
8	Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language differences cause difficulties in communicating. • Bounding with students is still lacking.
9	Hopes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar programs will be maintained in the future. • Thai language training before departure for students who have passed the selection • More types of schools are included in this program

3.1. Advantages in the Academic Aspect

The international internship program held in Thailand involving EFL students significantly provides many benefits for them both in academic and non-academic aspects, for example from the edupreneur aspect. The data obtained from the interview results showed that of the five students interviewed, there were 2 males and 3 females. Their ages range from 23 to 25 years. They are EFL undergraduate students who come from several universities in Java and Sulawesi. They came from the majors of English education and English literature. These five students were placed in five different schools. There are some students who are placed in urban areas but some are placed in rural areas.

The first benefit that students can get is to improve their EFL teaching competence. During the internship, students act as teachers. They teach English, teach reading and also recite the Koran. In these teaching activities, students are trained directly on how to manage the class, compile learning materials, and apply the teaching strategies they have learned before. By experiencing directly and putting their knowledge into practice. The students are required to be able to think critically in dealing with problems when teaching in the classroom. The interesting thing about this internship is that students teach using two languages (Thai and English). They also encountered new things in teaching techniques in Thailand that were different from the teaching techniques they learned while in Indonesia. This is as stated by one of the respondents during the interview: *I gained new insights because when teaching I had to be able to use two languages, namely Thai and English, besides that the teaching system or technique used was different from the Indonesian teacher so I got something new in dealing with teaching problems.* This is in line with the research of Zulfikar et.al. which stated that through the internship program students developed their basic pedagogical skills such as communication skills, management skills (classroom and time management), and skills in preparing lesson plans (Zulfikar et al., 2020). Thus, this internship activity adds to the experience of students and becomes their provision when they become teachers in the future.

Another benefit of the academic aspect is that students can learn other foreign languages, such as Thai and Malay. They learn a lot of vocabulary from these two languages. When teaching in class, the language of instruction used by students is English. However, due to problems with the language aspect, the apprentices eventually learned Thai and Malay in order to be able to communicate with their students. One of the participants said that *'after participating in the international internship community service program, she gained valuable experience, especially in exchanging languages. I know a lot of vocabulary from other languages, both in terms of pronunciation and writing'*. It's the same as other respondents, who stated: *'I can learn several languages directly from native speakers just by following this one program.'* *I am not only able to develop English skills as well as my students, but I also learn new languages such as Thai and Malay. This international internship program provides great benefits for the students involved. By teaching in a different country, they acquire foreign language skills.* This is in line with a study that states that an increasing number of students complete an internship during their higher education studies in a country different from that of their home institution. The results show that many of the reviewed studies also reported learning gains in terms of practical knowledge and language proficiency (Di Pietro, 2022). Thus, this apprenticeship program not only benefits students' teaching abilities but also enhances their foreign language skills.

Joining an international internship program opens opportunities for students to learn about the culture of their destination country. They encounter many new things, such as people's habits, behaviors, and values that are different from those in their home country. By participating in this program, their intercultural intelligence will be further honed. The ability to adapt to changing environments adds to their experience. This is as stated by one of the informants: *"I got a good impression from the community and parents of students; I gained experience in terms of language and community culture."* *I also learned a lot about the culture of the Thai people, who are predominantly Buddhist.* Thus, students who have different cultural backgrounds can learn about other cultures by visiting new places. They can see how the traditional people of Thailand have cultural differences from Indonesian society.

In addition to the benefits listed above, students also get benefits related to their campus assignments. By being involved in international internship activities, several of their college programs can also be completed. One of the respondents stated that: *"I was able to complete my college assignments, such as assisting the process of completing community service program assignments, completing internship program assignments, and conducting thesis research."* This shows that after participating in the internship, many lessons were obtained by the students. They can be helped in completing their community service program reports, and even during their apprenticeship, they also

teach practice as part of their internship assignments. And what's interesting is that some of these students made their internship experience one of the topics of their thesis research assignment.

3.2. Advantages in the Non-Academic Aspect

Based on the findings above, there are several advantages to the non-academic aspect which means a positive perception of international internship community service program students in Thailand when participating in the program, such as Help on the career path, personal branding, getting a salary of 3,000 baht per month, get lodging facilities and other facilities as well as practice independence from the financial aspect.

The first non-academic benefit aspect namely helps on the career path. by participating in this program students can help their careers in the future. For example, when you want to apply for a job such as a teacher, or tutor, or tutor you must have good skills in teaching. This also has an impact on careers because this program is one way to become a good teacher, to be a role model for their students later, and how students benefit from what their teacher teaches. Because the international internship community service program students teach in class is a form of training before becoming a good teacher because they have to understand situations and conditions that are different from those in Indonesia. This is based on the opinions of respondents such as *helping career paths and also providing real benefits to skills in the world of work, namely training of training how to be a good teacher in teaching, role models for students, and how students benefit from the lessons we teach to them.*

The second non-academic benefit aspect, namely Personal Branding. This advantage is very useful in the world of work. when alumni of the international internship community service program at work will get a plus and also be considered by their superiors when they want to serve at a higher level. so that the international internship community service program students will be well-known and easily recognized by other people because they have participated in international programs. It will differentiate from others who only have experience in the country. Based on the above, we can see the opinions of respondents, namely: *Being a personal branding in the world of work, where we are known as alumni of the international internship community service program in Thailand which is a plus and a consideration for superiors.* According to Muradla (2020), the students who have participated in the international internship community service program students can build a relationship with other countries, they will get an acknowledgment that they are from abroad and carry out an international program, broaden their horizons, can develop their competencies and their knowledge as well as their will get a very proud and valuable experience in their life because they have participated in this international program.

The third non-academic benefit aspect is getting a salary of 3,000 baht per month. The international internship community service program is very different from the community service program in general because international internship community service program students are paid a salary every month. They not only teach or serve, or create competition programs, but they are also paid a monthly fee of 3,000 baht or disbursed to IDR, around 1.5 million rupiahs per month. This is based on respondents who said that it was *not only the experience that I got but also very useful knowledge, of course. In addition, I also get a salary of 3,000 baths/ month. I use the salary for our daily needs in Thailand.* So that the international internship community service program is very good and useful for students in Indonesia, where they get interesting experiences and are also very useful for them in the future. They can share knowledge besides that they can also learn about Thai culture which is different from the culture in Indonesia and also gets a monthly salary of 3000 baht or the equivalent of 1.5 million rupiahs.

The fourth aspect of non-academic benefits is getting lodging facilities and other facilities. This is different from community service program in in general, where all the needs are borne by the community service program students themselves. However, the international internship community service program is different, where students get various kinds of facilities. In addition to the basic salary of 3,000 baht per month. international internship community service program students also get various kinds of facilities such as: providing housing, monthly shopping, school supplies, providing vehicles, visiting other people's homes, and also visiting famous tours in Thailand. All of that is free and paid for by the school and the principal. Not only that, there are many others, such as an offer to stay on teaching there after you finish your undergraduate studies. We can see this from the opinions of respondents such as *Alhamdulillah from this program it is not only the knowledge that is gained. Apart from being paid a salary, I also get adequate facilities and good facilities and lodging are also provided for us.*

The fifth aspect of non-academic benefits practicing independence from the financial aspect. Because this program is an international program where students from Indonesia have to go abroad to do a community service program which is one of the requirements for graduation. They are away from their families, they have to learn to be independent, and they have to be good at managing their finances. This is based on respondents who said *I use the salary for my daily needs in that country. Lodging is also provided for me, so my sense of independence is increasing, and most of us are far from our parents. so now I can lead a more independent life and also do anything on my own.* So, based on the fact that this program provides salaries to international internship community service program students, these students use their salaries for their daily needs while in Thailand. They should be able to manage their finances well, because the value of money and the price of goods in Indonesia and Thailand are very much different. Therefore, this program teaches students to be more disciplined, more independent, and also smart in managing their finances when they are in other people's countries, to be precise in the country of Thailand.

3.3. The Obstacles of The International Internship Program

Based on the finding that there are two obstacles found, namely: Language differences cause difficulties in communicating, and Bounding with students is still lacking. Language differences cause difficulties in communicating this is the most important obstacle that students of the international internship community service program face when they start teaching at school, especially during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. This is because Thai students still use their mother tongue or Thai language to communicate with students of the international internship community service program, sometimes international internship community service program students use body language to communicate with Thai students and vice versa. According to the respondent, *the obstacle is language to communicate with us. Only a few can speak English. So, we use body language or mix Malay and English for daily communication.* Then they also do not care when the teaching and learning process in this class is caused by students not understanding and not being able to use English. But some places can use Malay but the Malay language is slightly different from Indonesian so it is still a little difficult for international internship community service program students to understand what they are saying. This is according to the respondent if *I did not face many problems. It is just a bit difficult to communicate because the people there like most Indonesians do not all understand English, and I do not understand Thai either, what I rely on is the Malay language earlier which for me is also quite difficult to understand.* However, with such obstacles, the international internship community service program students can overcome problems based on situations and conditions so these students use Google translate to make it easier to communicate with Thai students. That is based on the respondent's perception of *the difficulty of the language of instruction and communication because the majority of students are more active in using Thai - the same is true for teachers. But it can be overcome with Google translate. So that the use of infrastructure and teaching materials is limited.* It is different in the Bounding with students is still lacking section where international internship community service program students find it very difficult to build chemistry between the Thai students they teach. This is based on the differences in the Indonesian language and culture. Although Indonesian students use English to communicate, it is very difficult to understand one another because Thai students still predominantly use Thai in communicating. Then the chemistry between international internship community service program students and Thai students is very lacking. Because of different languages and it is difficult to understand one another. This can be seen based on the respondent's answers, *namely because of language constraints in communication, in class students prefer to be indifferent and cannot follow lessons properly.*

3.4. Students Hope

After participating in this international internship program, students hope that similar programs can also be carried out. They think that this activity has a lot of benefits, not only from an academic standpoint but also in terms of training students' entrepreneurial skills. They can learn to live independently, take advantage of the knowledge they gain to earn income, and even add to networks that open up wider job opportunities.

In addition, they also hope that candidates who will take part in the international internship program will be given language training first. Language training according to each target country Most of the obstacles faced by apprentice students are in their language aspects. These students already have adequate English skills, but because their

destination country is not an English native speaker, they have to learn a new language according to their destination country. Because students' ability to communicate in the local language in the destination country is limited, their close relationships with other students and locals are strained. Students must make more effort so that they can build rapport with their students. They have to learn Thai again, orally or in writing. Therefore, one of the important inputs for the organizers of the next program is to provide language training according to the student placement location.

Another thing that students hope for is that more types of schools will be included in this program. In the previous program, the schools that became targets were madrasah-based. They hope that in the next program, the schools where the students will be placed can be both public and state schools. In this way, students can practice their cultural awareness skills, their pedagogical competence, and their ability to adapt to new environments. The problems that students face is mostly based on technical factors, which can be easily solved. This is in line with research conducted in other internship programs, which shows that students agreed that the internship program is mostly good. The problems during the internship program were mostly technical and could still be adapted and adjusted so that the learning and teaching activities could be done well (Wijaya, 2022).

4. Conclusions

The authors conclude EFL students' perceptions of international internship programs from an edupreneur's perspective based on the findings of the analysis and discussion of the data. The academic component has many advantages for students, such as enhancing their understanding of teaching in the field of English language education, learning a lot of vocabulary from other nations (Thailand and Malaysia), particularly for practicing pronunciation, writing, etc., familiarizing themselves with a new environment and culture, helping with the completion of community service program and internship assignments, and conducting thesis research. The advantages of non-academic features include: assistance with the professional route; personal branding for the subsequent job chance; and, notably for edupreneur, obtaining a monthly compensation of 3,000 baths. Get housing and other amenities to practice being independent on a budget. However, language barriers make it harder for them to connect with kids, which is a difficulty they must deal with. They expressed their wish at the end of the session that similar programs would continue in the future, that students who had made it through the selection process would get better Thai language instruction before leaving, and that more different kinds of schools would be included in this program.

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