



## THE ROLE OF INDONESIAN STUDENTS IN LEARNING AND ASSISTING OPENING CEREMONIAL USING THREE LANGUAGES AT SPORTS EVENTS IN THAILAND

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### ABSTRAK

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**Abstrak:** Pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman dan keterampilan mahasiswi Indonesia dalam mendampingi acara seremonial internasional dengan penggunaan tiga bahasa, serta mengidentifikasi tantangan dan strategi efektif dalam komunikasi lintas budaya. Pendampingan dilakukan melalui empat tahapan utama, yaitu koordinasi awal, perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan bahwa penguasaan bahasa Thailand, Inggris, dan Indonesia serta pemahaman budaya sangat berperan dalam kelancaran acara. Penggunaan ketiga bahasa tersebut memastikan komunikasi yang efektif di antara peserta dengan latar belakang berbeda. Strategi pembimbingan, seperti pelatihan intensif, simulasi, dan pemanfaatan teknologi, terbukti mendukung peningkatan keterampilan mahasiswa. Meskipun terdapat tantangan dalam penguasaan bahasa, perbedaan budaya, dan kesiapan menghadapi perubahan mendadak, pendekatan kolaboratif dan evaluasi berkala membantu mahasiswa tampil lebih percaya diri dan profesional dalam menjalankan peran mereka. Dengan demikian, pengabdian ini menegaskan pentingnya keterampilan komunikasi dan pemahaman budaya dalam mendukung keberhasilan acara seremonial internasional serta mengembangkan kompetensi mahasiswa dalam interaksi lintas budaya.

**Kata Kunci:** *pendampingan; komunikasi lintas budaya; tiga bahasa; seremonial internasional.*

**Abstract:** *This service aims to improve the understanding and skills of Indonesian female students in assisting international ceremonial events with the use of three languages, as well as identifying challenges and effective strategies in cross-cultural communication. Assistance is carried out through four main stages, namely initial coordination, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The results showed that mastery of Thai, English, and Indonesian as well as cultural understanding were instrumental in the smooth running of the event. The use of the three languages ensured effective communication among participants with different backgrounds. Mentoring strategies, such as intensive training, simulation, and technology utilisation, proved to support the improvement of students' skills. Despite challenges in language acquisition, cultural differences, and preparedness for sudden changes, the collaborative approach and regular evaluations helped students perform more confidently and professionally in their roles. Thus, this service confirms the importance of communication skills and cultural understanding in supporting the success of international ceremonial events and developing students' competence in cross-cultural interactions.*

**Keywords:** *mentoring; cross-cultural communication; trilingualism; international ceremonies.*

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian students have a strategic role in various international activities that not only represent academic achievements, but also contribute to strengthening the nation's image at the global level (Hudini, 2017). Their involvement in various international forums and events is clear evidence that Indonesia's young generation is participating in building relations between nations (Wardhani, 2023). Through this participation, they not only gain valuable academic and professional experience, but also play a role in introducing and preserving Indonesian cultural values in the international arena (Azizah et al., 2024).

One form of significant contribution in international activities is through cultural diplomacy, where female students act as intermediaries in strengthening relations with other countries (Musa et al., 2022). In this context, they not only carry their academic identity, but also represent Indonesian culture through social interaction, cross-cultural communication, and involvement in various official activities. The existence of student activities and participation in an international scale, not only provides benefits for individual development, but also becomes a strategic means of strengthening cooperation between countries in various fields (Vidyarini, 2018).

Assistance in ceremonial events plays an important role in creating an atmosphere that is formal, structured, and in accordance with prevailing cultural values and norms. The role of the escort includes coordinating the course of the event, smooth communication, and adjusting to the traditions and etiquette of the host country (Bahardur & Afrinda, 2024). In international events such as Sukan in Thailand, the use of three languages is a form of habituation that is carried out to familiarize students with languages other than the language they speak. With this assistance, it can effectively provide information clearly to all exchange participants from various countries. In addition, mentors are responsible for maintaining professionalism, preventing communication errors, and creating positive experiences for all parties involved (Kamlasi & Salu, 2019). Thus, mentoring is not only technical, but also plays a role in bridging cultural differences and strengthening relationships between countries.

Based on devotion and research that is relevant to the topic raised, many previous researchers have done, namely Wulandari & Djausal, (2024) the results of their research show that there is effectiveness in applying the CPDL method in increasing the competence of participants in the field of protocol and MC. It is necessary to do repeated training for participants by being actively involved directly in ceremonial activities held by the organisation to

support strengthening competence as a professional MC. Meanwhile, Aulya Rahman et al., (2023) found that MC training by applying the SIUUL model well in accordance with the principles and stages of the desired model.

Previous studies and services focus more on student involvement in participating in training with learning models. So that in the service carried out, especially in cultural diplomacy and competency improvement through MC training. Therefore, this service aims to develop the understanding and skills of Indonesian students in assisting international ceremonial events with the use of three languages and identify challenges and effective assistance strategies in cross-cultural communication. Thus, this service is also expected to provide recommendations for educational institutions in preparing students to face the demands of global competence, especially in the fields of protocol and international communication.

## B. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

On the exchange programme of Indonesian students to Thailand to support learning and mentoring in the field of education (Azwar et al., 2024). One of them is the application of opening ceremonial assistance using three languages at a sports event in Thailand. This event took place for one week, starting from 25 November to 29 November 2024 at Suntisart Wittaya School, Thailand. This mentoring activity aims to develop the understanding and skills of Indonesian students in assisting international ceremonial events using three languages and identifying challenges and effective mentoring strategies in cross-cultural communication. The mentoring method is as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Mentoring method.

Figure 1 explains the method of implementing assistance in this activity through four main stages, namely initial coordination, planning, implementation, and evaluation (Anwar et al., 2024). The initial coordination stage involved a meeting with the organising committee to understand the mechanisms and needs in the opening ceremonial and location observation to ensure the readiness of facilities and infrastructure. The planning stage includes the preparation of mentoring strategies, division of tasks,

determination of roles in the use of three languages, and simulation of scenarios that may occur during the event. In addition, students were briefed on protocol etiquette, cross-cultural communication, and translation and interpretation techniques in the context of formal events. In the implementation stage, students carried out the mentoring role by ensuring smooth communication between participants, committees, and invited guests from various countries, providing direction, and conveying information in three languages to bridge intercultural interactions. The last stage of evaluation was carried out to assess the effectiveness of mentoring and identify obstacles faced through reflection with the mentoring team, organising committee, and participants.

## **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Overview of the Opening Ceremonial of Sports Events in Thailand**

The Sukan event in Thailand is a sports competition that involves participants from various countries, especially in Southeast Asia, namely Thailand. The opening ceremony plays a significant role in signalling the start of the competition and introducing sportsmanship and cultural values to participants and invited guests. The structure of the event includes various sequences, such as the contingent parade, official welcome, flag raising, cultural performances, athlete and referee oaths, torch lighting, and the official opening declaration. Each of these events is designed to strengthen relationships among participants, build solidarity, and increase appreciation for cultural diversity amidst the spirit of sporting competition.

In the implementation of the Indonesian to Thai student exchange programme, they acted as ceremonial masters by using three languages, namely Thai, English, and Indonesian in the opening ceremony to ensure effective communication among all participants. Thai is used as the official language of the host country, while English serves as an international language that allows for greater understanding on a global level. In addition, Indonesian was chosen due to the large number of participants and delegates from Indonesia and Malay-speaking countries, thus increasing the accessibility of information for them. The use of multilingualism reflects the spirit of inclusivity and strengthens cooperation between countries, especially in the field of sports and culture.

### **2. Student Strategies in Improving Mentoring**

Students have a strategic role in learning and assisting opening ceremonies at Sukan events in Thailand, especially in the use of three languages. In order to increase the effectiveness of mentoring, students need to master Indonesian, English, and Thai through intensive training,

both independently and with guidance through lecturers and teachers who master the language. Not only mastering the language but also understanding the cultural norms and communication ethics of the local community is very important so that interactions run professionally and in accordance with local values. The sports activities guided by students are as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Opening Ceremony from Students.

Figure 2 depicts a student who acted as an emcee in the opening ceremonial at the Sukan event in Thailand. In doing so, students used three languages, namely Thai, English, and Indonesian, to ensure that all participants and invited guests could clearly understand the course of the event. In this activity, students demonstrated good communication skills through the delivery of remarks, introduction of invited guests, and explanation of the series of events. Thai was used to honour the host and local participants, while English served as an international communication tool that reached participants from various countries. Meanwhile, the use of Indonesian reflected the students' identity and strengthened Indonesia's representation in the global forum.

Guidance strategies with a collaborative approach can also be applied through group discussions and event simulations to strengthen language skills. Utilisation of technology, such as translation software and language learning apps, can support understanding of official terms and important phrases in ceremonial events. Periodic evaluation through reflection and feedback from mentors or other participants is an important step in improving the quality of mentoring. By applying these strategies, students are expected to make an optimal contribution in supporting the smooth running of the opening ceremonial at the international event.

### **3. MC Obstacles and Challenges in Conducting MC Guidance**

In guiding Indonesian students as Master of Ceremony (MC) in the opening ceremonial using three languages at a sports event in Thailand,

there are various challenges that must be faced, both in terms of linguistic, cultural, and technical aspects. From the linguistic aspect, the main challenge is to master Indonesian, English, and Thai fluently. Not only do students need to understand all three languages, but they also need to be able to use them with intonation, pronunciation, and sentence structure appropriate to the official context of the event. Errors in language delivery can hinder audience understanding and affect the smooth running of the event.

In addition to the language barrier, cultural aspects are also an important challenge in MC mentoring. Every country has different communication rules and public speaking etiquette. In the context of events in Thailand, an understanding of local customs, politeness norms, and official protocols is necessary. Students must be able to adjust to the prevailing manners, including in how to address invited guests and the use of appropriate body language. If these aspects are not considered, misunderstandings can occur which affect the continuity of the event.

MC need systematic training so that students can master the text of the event, adjust the tone of voice, display the right expression, and control emotions when speaking in front of the public. In addition, readiness in dealing with sudden changes in the event arrangement and skills in coordinating with the committee are crucial. To overcome these obstacles, effective mentoring methods are needed, such as repeated practice, simulation of real situations, and continuous evaluation and feedback. With the right mentoring strategy, female students can be more confident and professional in carrying out their duties as MCs in international events (Mashudi et al., 2020).

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The conclusion of this service shows that the opening ceremonial performed by the students at the Sukan opening event in Thailand shows that communication skills in three languages as well as cultural understanding are very important in organising international events. The use of Thai, English, and Indonesian served to ensure smooth communication among participants from different backgrounds. The mentoring strategies implemented, such as intensive training, simulations, and the utilisation of technology, proved effective in improving students' abilities. Despite obstacles in language acquisition, cultural differences, and readiness to face sudden changes, the collaboration-based approach and regular evaluations helped students perform more confidently and professionally in carrying out their roles.

To improve the quality of mentoring in future service, a more intensive language training programme is needed, with an emphasis on pronunciation, intonation, and the use of formal language appropriate to the context of the event. Understanding of Thai culture and communication ethics also needs to be deepened through study and simulation so that students can adapt well.

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