

CULTURE SHOCK AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS: A CASE-STUDY OF THAI STUDENTS STUDYING AT UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PALEMBANG

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Abstract

The phenomenon of culture shock has some impacts on foreigners (i.e. psychological impact and intellectual impact), especially for foreign students studying in a new country. This research is aimed at figuring out the dominant aspects of culture shocks faced by the three Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* and how they cope with it. Descriptive-qualitative method was used in this research. To collect the data, the researchers used interview and questionnaire. Coding technique was used in analyzing the data. The results showed two dominant aspects of culture shocks found, namely: academic shocks (i.e teacher's role and attitude, poorly organized program and classroom organization, and local students' attitude). and social shocks (i.e. women-men relationship, community bonding, habits in social gathering). Generally, the three Thai students coped with the shock by preparing mental and psychology, as well as learning academic destination.

Keywords: *culture shock, foreign students, acculturation*

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Introduction

At the beginning of this writing, this research deciphers about culture. Culture derives from the Latin *colere*, which itself had various meanings, including to cultivate, inhabit, protect or worship, and the first of these meanings was taken up by the Latin *cultura*, and subsequently the French *culture*. (Cuddon, 2013, p. 179). In addition, Hornby (2010) states that culture is the customs and belief, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or group. (p. 357). In short, culture is considered as what people usually do and believe as a tradition to show off their social details of a certain group. As this research concerns with culture shock to be analyzed, it will be much better to begin by defining what culture shock is actually about.

As the matter of facts, culture shock is primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual

reinforcement from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding for new and diverse experiences. (Belhadi & Ayad, 2016). It means that culture shock is basically such a form of emotional moves created by stimulating of a new culture to someone's own culture having no sense and considered as a new experience. Furthermore, there are two core aspects that make culture shock happen. Poedjiastutie (2009) categorizes aspects of culture shocks into two, (i.e. academic shocks, social shocks) in line with teacher's role and attitude, poorly organized program and classroom organization, local students' women-men, community bonding and habits in social gathering. (p. 27-31). In stead of culture shocks aspects, some symptoms are also indicated to see the culture shocks.

Zoel (2013) states that there are nine symptoms of culture shocks for

instances: feeling hatred with new environment, loss of determination, feeling of refusal, having stomachache and headache, homesick, longing for family and friends, loss of identity, being selfish, and feeling sensitive. (p. 1). From the stated explanation, it can be inferred that symptoms of culture shock related to someone's regular feeling caused by something weird or strange that makes him or her frustrated.

Aside from the symptoms, there are also some stages or periods that will be faced by a newcomer or a foreigner. Kartikawati, (2010) divides the stages of culture shocks into four parts, such as eager expectations, everything is beautiful, everything is awful and everything is ok. (p.1). Kartikawati, (2010) further states:

Eager expectations is like an optimism phase or stage that makes people plan to be enthusiastic coming to a new place, having no worry, while everything is beautiful is like a honeymoon phase or stage that makes people feel more enthusiastic and curious about new things. Everything is awful is such a hard phase or stage that makes people frustrated, depressive. everything is ok is such a comfortable phase or stage that makes people feel accustomed with new things such as the views, food, and attitude of the local people. (p. 1)

In addition, there are four common stages of culture shock experienced by a foreigner, for instances: honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment. (Belhadi & Ayad, 2016). The first stage of culture shock is the honeymoon period. In this stage or

period, the researchers assume that the foreigners or newcomers are amazed with new things they find as they firstly arrive in a new place. They attempt to set out studying a new language. They think that people in all over the world are the same and everything looks normal and it makes them pleased with anything they see. The second stage of culture shock is the crisis period. In this stage, the researchers think that the foreigners or newcomers gradually feel shock as they start to notice or ponder the dissimilarities between the new country and their own country. The researchers believe that the feelings of the foreigners will alter or change and everything looks weird or ambiguous. It is such an uneasy time for them as crises in everyday life, and it makes them develop such an unfriendly behaviour towards the new culture they encounter.

The third stage of culture shock is the recovery period. In this stage, the researchers presume that the foreigners or newcomers have got a positive behaviour towards the people of the new country they stay and the culture becomes more familiar. In other words, the foreigners feel enjoyable staying in the new atmosphere. The fourth or the last stage of culture shock is the adjustment period. In this stage, the researchers believe that the foreigners or newcomers have got accustomed and are able to adapt or socialize with the new environment. As a matter of fact, when someone is living in a new place or a new country for the first time, he or she certainly undergoes such a weird feeling that makes him or her such a very different person living in a new planet. This feeling automatically will be experienced by any strangers, and it is commonly related to a strange feeling of food, people, weather, customs, and so on. To make a foreigner or a sojourner get accustomed with a new

culture to reduce such culture shocks, there must be such an acculturation.

According to Hornby (2010), acculturation is such a process of learning to live successfully in a different culture. (p. 10). In conclusion, acculturation is such a process of great effort to be successful staying or living in a new place with different culture. Additionally, acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members related to social structures and institutions and person's behavioral repertoire. (Belhadi & Ayad, 2016).

From the stated theory, it can be summarized that acculturation is like a process of change of culture and and psychology of two or more groups with their social members that enable changes social structures and institutions, as well as someone's attitude or behavior. In this research, culture shock occurs among foreign students from Thailand studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* who took English Department at Faculty of Teachers Training and Education. There are three Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, two students are from the sixth semester, and one student is from the eighth of the last semester, and seem to have such culture shock when coming to Palembang and studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. In deed, culture shock mostly faced by the three Thai students for their first impressions arriving and staying in Palembang as their first learning journey.

In fact, culture shocks have some impacts on the foreigners, particularly to the three Thai students. The impacts have something to do with psychology (the disease model) and intellectuality (the growth model). The

two models, the disease model and the growth model focus not only on the short run effect to reduce the symptoms but also on the long run individual development to cultivate intellectual competence. (Belhadi & Ayad, 2016).

In relation to the explanation stated, this research presents a study under the title " *Culture Shock Among Foreign Students: A Case-Study of Thai Students Studying at Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*". This research was in line with some aspects of culture shocks faced by the Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, and their great effort to cope with it. In this research, two problems were formulated, as follows: (1) what are the dominant aspects of culture shocks faced by the Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang?*, and (2) how do they cope with the culture shocks?. Furthermore, the purposes of conducting this research were to find out the dominant culture shock aspects faced by the Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, and how they cope with the culture shock itself.

In addition, the results of this research not only give valuable information to the researcher himself about culture shocks, but also to all of university students who learn cross culture understanding (CCU) related to culture shocks. Finally, the results of this analysis were expected to be able to give more information to any readers who are keen on learning culture and its scopes to enlarge their knowledge and understanding about culture in new other countries or places, in order to be well-prepared travellers and also reduce such strange feeling as arriving in there. This research also gives recommendations to the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in terms of culture shock that helps the

teachers or lecturers of English design such teaching materials in teaching cross culture understanding to the students in the classroom.

Method

In this research, there were three subjects of the research involved who were all foreign students from Thailand, exactly from different provinces studying at English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, *Universitas Muhammadiyah* Palembang. The Three Thai students were all females aged around twenty two. To be detailed, Table 1 below presents subject of the research.

Table 1. Subject of the Research

No	Students	Semester
1.	1 st Student (RS)	VI
2.	2 nd Student (SK)	VI
3.	3 rd Student (DK)	VIII

Additionally, the instruments of the research that the researchers used to collect the data were through interview and questionnaires. The type of interview that the researchers made was that a qualitative interview. Creswell (2012) states that a qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants through some open questions and record the answers. (p. 217). In addition, Indawan, Sulaiman & Susanti (2017) state that interview is a technique of collecting the data through direct communication between the interviewer and the respondent. (p. 83). On the other side, the researchers also gave the questionnaires to the three Thai students in term of open-ended questionnaires which consisted of six essays in line with two major topics of the questions. The questionnaires were given to support the data of the interview, while the interview was

conducted to make the data of the questionnaires given were trustworthy.

This research was considered as a descriptive-qualitative method used to describe the existing phenomenon without manipulating. Tavakoli (2012) states:

A descriptive method in descriptive research is to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyze, and interpret the entities and the events that constitute their various fields of inquiry. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views, or attitudes that are held; processes that are going on; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing. At times, descriptive research is concerned with how what is or what exists is related to some preceding event that has influenced or affected a present condition or event. (p. 160)

In this case, descriptive research was used to establish the existence of phenomenon by explicitly describing them. It is important to emphasize that while this type of research may begin with a question or hypothesis, the phenomenon it describes are not manipulated or artificially elicited in any way. In analyzing the data of this research, the researchers applied coding technique. The technique that was used to examine and describe the data and label certain expressions. (Daymon and Holloway, 2008, p. 428).

In this context, the researchers used some procedures, for instance:

interviewing the three respondents through video tapping and then asking them to give respond to the open-ended questionnaires. Afterwards, the researchers read the responses given by the respondents. Finally, the researchers transcribed the data from interview using videotapping and also the data from questionnaires to find out the dominant aspects of culture shock faced by the three Thai students, and the efforts or the ways they did to cope with the culture shock itself.

Results and Discussion

After analyzing the data obtained from interview and questionnaire, the researchers found out two aspects of culture shocks that were basically occurred. There two aspects of culture shocks dominantly faced by the three Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. The two aspects had something to do with academic shocks as in teacher’s role and attitude which have something to do with teacher’s characteristics on teaching performance in the classroom and his or her responsibility on the improvement of students’ skills. While, poorly organized program and classroom organization that are in line with the information schedule, subject descriptions, syllabus, rules and regulations, and local students’ attitude has a connection with students’ attitude and behaviour with friends and teacher or lecturer during the lesson. Table 2 below shows academic shocks on teacher’s role and attitude.

Table 2. Academic Shocks on Teacher’s Role and Attitude

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
I’m actually happy studying at University of	I’m glad to study in here, most teachers or lecturers	My experience as a student of Muhammadiyah University,

Muhammadiyah ah, Yet, to my surprise, some teachers are lack of focus on improving students’ skill not in Thailand, teachers are mostly responsible for providing students’s skill. They sometimes are absent for the lesson. After students’ presentations, only critics come not summary or explanation	use English when teaching not in Thailand. Yet, some lecturers are usually late for the lesson, it is quite different from lecturers in Thailand, they usually come on time for the lesson	I found out that some lecturers are usually late for the class eventhough they finish the lesson on time, not in Thailand where many teachers or lectures teach but they are not late for the lesson.
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Table 2 shows that the three Thai students mostly had or faced such the same academic shocks in term of teacher’s role and attitude, especially in the classroom activities. They felt shock as they saw some teachers were late for the lesson. Some others were often absent for the lesson and having no information or even having no such a substitute lecturer. They did not give an assignment to the students. They usually finished the lessons in time. They thought that the lecturers tended to be irresponsible. They also thought that the lecturers tended to be lack of focus or concern about the improvement of students’ language skills or ability, especially after the students presented their materials in groups, the lecturers only gave critics instead of giving a summary of the presentation, and it was quite different from the lecturers who taught in Thailand.

They said that most of the lecturers who taught at universities had big responsibility to the students’ study progress. They were never late for the class. They always came in time. They

were seldom absent, and if they were absent they would find the substitute lecturer and also gave an assignment. The lecturers would give the information to the students. They further stated that most of lecturers in Thailand seldom criticize the students' presentation. They would give the concluding remarks and appreciated it. Yet, they realize that not all the lecturers at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* did such bad things. For them some lecturers were good, especially those who taught English for them.

Moreover, they were so surprised as they found out most of lecturers who taught English at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, usually spoke English during the lesson in the classroom. It was very different from the lecturers who taught English in Thailand, they tended not to master speaking, so they often used Malay or Thai language during teaching English. That was why, it motivated them to speak English.

Another academic shock was poorly organized program and classroom organization. Table 3 presents academic shocks on poorly organized program and classroom organization.

Table 3. Academic Shocks on Poorly Organized Program and Classroom Organization

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
For me, some lecturers can change the schedule as they like. It seems that they are not responsible for the regulation and makes us make up the lesson, not	Based on my experience studying here, I feel so shock considering a messy classroom organization where some lecturers do not come for the lesson	I feel so shock as some lecturers do not attend without a reason and no substitute teachers come to substitute. It is different in Thailand, when a teacher or lecturer is

lecturers in Thailand.	in	without reasons. It is like they are not ready to teach, Thailand.	any	unable to come, he or she will aks an assitant to substitute or give assignment.	to
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Table 3 shows that most academic shocks in term of poorly organized program and classroom organization faced by the three Thai students had something to do with teachers or lecturers' teaching performance and the schedule that was often changed. In other words, they felt academic shock when the lecturers were absent without any information. They liked changing the course time table that was already fixed and signed by the Dean of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, and it made them to have a make up class, and it made them feel restless and frustrated with the course because it was hit by another fixed course and no time for them to have a break.

The facts were very different from the ones in Thailand where most lecurers were very discipline that they could not change the fixed schedule as they liked. They stated that the regulations were very clear and obeyed by all lecturers and students. They also said that the classroom atmosphere was very tidy and comfortable, no students made such a noisy and disturbed others. That was why, they were very panting and shock as they joined the lesson for the first time and it made them felt unwell, and something ever crossed their minds that they ought to stop studying and back home. Yet, they tried to work hard to make this place like their own homes, so they could stay longer. They further stated that they were also amazed with the students who were active in giving questions and

answering the questions from the lecturer.

Another academic shock was local students' attitude. Table 4 presents academic shocks on local students' attitude.

Table 4. Academic Shocks on Local Students' Attitude

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
Students in here are very noisy and loud to speak. They tend not to care with others. They tend to annoy during the lesson, not in Thailand where no students are brave to make noise or disturb others, otherwise, they can get punishment from the lecturers.	I do appreciate the students in here. They are very active in asking questions to the lectures during the lesson, it is different from students in Thailand, they are not active in asking questions during the lesson.	I feel good with the students in here. Eventhough some are like people who know everything, but as a newcomer I was welcomed by them warmly and they always try to give me a hand as I have problem with the lesson.

Table 4 shows that the three Thai students felt academic shock with local student' attitude, only during the teaching and learning process. They found out that local students were very noisy, annoyed and sometimes acted like a man who knows everything. They thought that the local students were such horrible persons and they were afraid that they could not make friends with them and cooperate one another, especially in a group presentation and discussion. They also thought that the students were very impolite with the lecturer since they sometimes did not paid attention to lecturer's explanation.

It was so different from the students in Thailand that they were very honoured with the lecturers, and friends. They never made such a bee class during the lesson.

On the other side, the three Thai students were also surprised with the local students who firmly welcomed them and respected them as their own local friends. They were also surprised to see the local students who were very active in asking questions to the lecturers and made the classroom activity interesting, and they usually helped them with course that they did not understand, yet. It was such a positive culture shock for them studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*.

Additionally, there were some other dominant aspects of culture shock in social shocks faced by the three Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, as in women-men relationship which was related to the relationship among women and men where they tend to activities in a group or in a party. On the other side, community bonding bears on characteristics of people in welcoming a foreigner when meeting, and habits in social gathering has relationship with the habit or tradition of people to be together in social activity or gathering. Table 5 shows culture shock in social shocks on women-men relationship.

Table 5. Social Shocks on Women-Men Relationship

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
In here, a dating is such a common thing happen between a girl and a boy, not in Thailand they are not allowed to do	I have no idea about women-men relationship in here. They can hang out together and it is not a big problem for	It is not a weird unmarried women and men to walk together and perhapd walk hand in hand, not in Thailand, no

that, especially in public. The parents forbid them.	them, it is so different in Thailand. Women and men can not hang out if they are not married because they are not mahram.	unmarried women and men are allowed to walk together or hand in hand.
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Table 5 shows that the three Thai students felt shock with the relationship of unmarried women and men in Palembang where they are not shy to hang out or walk together with their illegal couples. It seemed that they were free to do that and their parents did not forbid them. They further said that they were very shock every time they met some teenagers, a girl and a boy walked so close and even hand in hand in public without feeling ashamed. They were also shock as they got the information from their friends that it was a normal for them since they were lodgers and living far away from their parents.

They became shocker as they figured out that some parents of the teenagers were not angry or forbade them. It seemed that they were just easy going with their son and daughter's action, and it was very different in Thailand where teenagers, unmarried female or male were forbidden to walk together, hand-in hand. Eventhough, a man is not allowed to do hand shake when meeting one another. It was such a great tradition for them.

Another social shock was community bonding. Table 6 below shows culture shock in social shocks on community bonding.

Table 6. Social Shocks on Community Bonding

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
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People here are very friendly to talk and give attention to someone who comes from another country. It is not in Thailand where people are busy with their job and do not care with a foreigner or a new comer.	People in here are very friendly and like smiling and talking to a foreigner, Thailand, it is not a custom to be more friendly to a stranger.	People in here are very friendly and excited to meet foreigners. They like talking and introducing themselves, not in Thailand, nothing special about foreigners, and it is such a normal condition
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Table 6 shows that the three Thai students felt positive culture shock on community bonding when studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. They assumed that people in Palembang, especially their classmates were very friendly, liked talking to them, eventhough they were foreigners, and it made them impressed. To their surprise, as they firstly arrived and studied in the classroom, all of their classmates welcomed them very warmly and directly took them to be involved in their presentation group members. It was very contrarary from what they thought before that their friends would ignored them since they were all foreigners.

They were also surprised with a good friendship of local students as they were asked to take in part in every student program, such students association, and English came. For them, it was so different from what they know in Thailand where people there tended to be busy with their own jobs and did not care with other people, particularly the foreigners or sojourners. It made them feel like having a new

family and they certainly felt happy during the activity both inside and outside the classroom.

Another social shock was habits in social gathering. Table 7 below shows culture shock in social shocks on habits in social gathering.

Table 7. Social Shocks on Habits in Social Gathering

1 st Thai Student (R S)	2 nd Thai Student (S K)	3 rd Thai Student (D K)
People in here are less individual. They mostly like doing some activities in a community, and it is different from people in Thailand where people usually do their own activities.	For social gathering, people in here are always late for the appointment, not as people as in Thailand. Instead, people in here like doing activities in a group not in Thailand where people are busy with their own business	I think it is such a bad habit for the people in here who do not appreciate the time. They tend to be late for their promise or appointment, not as social gatherings in Thailand.

Table 7 shows that the three Thai students felt shock with bad habit of people in Palembang, not only the students but also the lecturers who were often late for their appointment. They also said that people in Palembang tended not to appreciate the time, only wasting time for doing such a useless thing. It was contrary with Thai people who tended to appreciate the time by doing something useful as in their business for earning their living.

On the other side, they said that people in Palembang are such good people because they liked doing some activities in groups or communities, not as in Thailand where people tended to do something individually and it seemed that they were such selfish or arrogant

people who did not need help from others. For this case, the three Thai students encountered such a positive shock that made them feel happy to adjust with others, especially local students in term of their classmates. They finally said that looking at this condition in which people often did some activities together, they became glad to stay longer.

In addition to the stated aspects of culture shock stated, the researchers also found out some information from the interview with the three Thai students for what they did before and after arriving in Palembang and studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* to cope with cultures shocks in line with academic shocks and social shocks. In this case, the three Thai students have done such great efforts or strategies, for instances pre-departure plan, knowing academic destination, keeping a contact with family and friends, having a good communication with their lecturers and classmates, and making a community. They further said that before studying abroad they prepare pre-departure plan in line with their mental and psychology by getting the information from other people who are studying or working in different countries. Afterward, they also accessed some information from internet to learn more on other countries culture through watching some videos of a soujourner, especially a foreign student who are studying abroad.

Additionally, they joined such a preparatory class for foreign students who wanted to continue their study in other countries. They got such a workshop and or short course within a week. They also said that there was such an interview with some lecturers from *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* who came there to figure out whether or not they were ready to study at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*.

They were also given some written tests which are used as considerations if they were deserved to get scholarship to study at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*.

Aside from joining a pre-departure class, they learnt more on their academic destination. In other words, before studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. They attempted to get the detailed information about the university they choose. They accessed the website of *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. They learnt everything inside the website, such as study programs, courses within semester, lecturers and and so on. As they found some interesting programs or departments, they coincidentally found an English department, as they subject interest. They opened every single space to get more understanding about the exact English department they choose as their learning journey. They also consider the course outline, credits that they should complete within four years.

Afterwards, they asked some information from their friends who had studied abroad first in Palembang, especially at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang* who took other departments or study programs, like Bahasa Indonesia, economic, technical engineering, and islamic education. They finally got many accurate data about campus atmosphere and learning culture as well as people in Palembang. These efforts made them well-prepared and ready to go abroad to continue their study in Palembang. They were sure that they would face such culture shocks during studying in Palembang, yet they believed that they could cope with that condition.

When arriving in Palembang, they were directly seen off by the staffs of *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, and got to the campus to look around. They were occupied at a

dormitory. They had such a campus orientation and were asked to give a speech in front of public to express their feelings or impressions as firstly arriving, and it was reported by a reporter from a TV station. They stay in a dormitory within a week or a month. After that they move to a rent house or a lodging house. As long as they stayed in a lodging house, they still kept in touch or kept in contact through phone calls or skype with their families and friends in Thailand to reduce their feeling of home sick and culture shocks. They also asked supports from their families, relatives and friends in order they could stay longer and finish their study on time.

As they started to study in the first semester in the classroom, they felt culture shocks with the lecturers who mostly spoke English during the lesson and the students who were active to ask the questions. To overcome the problem, they then tried to adapt by having good communication with their lecturers and classmates, either inside or outside the classroom. They thought that they were lucky to be able to study at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, since they met such friendly persons who were willing to welcome them and it made them a little bit easy to socialize. They further said that they still made good communication with lecturers and classmates up to now. They asked many things about the lesson, culture, tradition, food and some other tourism spots. They were also brave to make a presentation in front of the classroom, asking and answering the questions given. They were also able to speak Bahasa Indonesia and a little bit Palembang language, and of course, it helps them reduce or cope with the culture shocks their encounter.

The last effort they did, to cope with the culture shocks was making such a Thai student community that

consisted of some Thai students who were from different faculties or departments, (i.e. English, Economic, Technical Engineering). They did a briefing or a meeting every Sunday. They discussed and shared many things related to their study progress in the campus, family and friends. For them, this community was not only as a place to meet but also as a bridge to share their feelings of cultures shocks and how they could handle. They had a strong commitment to support one another during the process of learning at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, eventhough they were from different provinces in Thailand.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there were two dominant aspects of culture shock faced by the three Thai students studying at *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*. The two aspects had something to do with academic shocks (i.e. teacher's role and attitude, poorly organized program and classroom organization, and local students' attitude) and social shocks (i.e. women-men relationship, community bonding, habits in social gathering).

In addition, the results of this research showed that academic shocks faced by the three Thai students as they found out some teachers were late for the lesson, and sometimes absent without any information and having no substitute lecturer, tended to be lack of focus or concern about the improvement of students' language skills or ability, only giving critics on students' presentations, and the schedule was often changed, not like teachers or lecturers in Thailand who were on time and always got a substitute teacher or lecturer as he or she was absent. Additionally, some students were noisy and disturb others during the lesson. On the contrary, some students were very

active in asking questions during the lesson, not like students in Thailand who were not active during the classroom activity.

On the other side, social shocks that were faced by the three Thai students as they found out unmarried women and men were free to hang out or walked with. On the contrary, they also faced positive shocks as they found out that people in Palembang, especially their classmates were friendly, liked talking to them, eventhough they were foreigners, not like in Thailand where people do not really care with a foreigner. They also felt shock as people in here liked doing some activities in a group, and it was different from Thailand people who liked to be busy with their own business.

A side from the two culture shocks, there were some efforts that the three Thai students did to reduce or minimize their culture shocks in terms of academic shocks and social shocks, for instances: preparing mental and psychology, learning academic destination, keeping in touch with their families and friends, having a good communication with their lecturers and classmates, and making a Thai student community.

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