

The 45th START Program (Indonesia)

For around two weeks from August 26th to September 10th 2017, 23 first-year students participated in the 45th START program. Led by Associate Professor Naoe Kawamoto (Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences) and two other faculty members, the students studied at Universitas Brawijaya (UB) in Malang, East Java, Republic of Indonesia.

At UB, students attended lessons on topics from various angles aiming to help them to get to know the Indonesia today. Participants who felt uneasy attending lessons taught entirely in English at the beginning eventually overcame their fears of making grammatical mistakes and started to voice their opinions. Participants learned about the culture, history and society of Indonesia at the lessons, and by understanding the differences and similarities of Japan and Indonesia, they were able to increase their understandings of other cultures. Moreover, the students made use of the Indonesian language they learned in class in their daily life and interacting with the local students.

During the program, participants were divided into pairs and each pair was assigned with a student partner from UB. When they had free time after class, participants and their partners took trips into town together and the participants earnestly asked questions about anything they do not know by using their English and Indonesian, and occasionally hand gestures.

During their visit to a local elementary school, they introduced Japanese traditional pastimes such as Origami (the art of folding paper into various figures) and Kendama (cup-and-ball game) in English and Indonesian. They also sang Japanese songs together with the local school children.

Making social contribution through homestay is one of the core purposes of this program. The participants experienced agricultural work in a village about two hours away from Malang where UB is located. As most of their host families did not speak English, student partners from UB also stayed with them in the same houses during the homestay period. The students were initially bewildered by the difference in the local lifestyle, such as food habits and bathroom facilities. However, thanks to the hospitality of their host families,

each student gained a valuable experience unique to each household. At the optional tour to Mount Bromo, they witnessed the magnificent Indonesian scenery and were impressed by the splendor and strength of nature in Indonesia, something they cannot find in Japan.

On the last day of the program, participants made a presentation in English on topics they learned in UB by putting together data of interviews with teachers and students of UB and also their field work (topic examples: garbage problem, disability aid, traditional costume, national language education, etc). At the farewell party, they expressed their gratitude to the teachers and students of UB with their performance of the “Awa Odori” (dance and song). Both HU students and their hosts were sad to say goodbye to each other.

After returning to Japan, the students had a follow-up session and reflected on their progress using the global core competency index. There were feedbacks like “I want to continue studying English”, “I started watching the news” showing students’ motivation of learning and interests towards world affairs had increased. This shows that students were able to reflect and do self-assessment. Some students commented “I would like to go on other study abroad programs too”, “I hope to make use of this experience in future”, showing that students have naturally developed awareness towards studying abroad and their career in future and prepared to shift to the next step.



Students having fun while learning Indonesian language in class



Receiving a warm welcome at the local elementary school



Interacting with UB students after class



Breathtaking sunrise from Mount Bromo



“Awa Odori (Dance)” performance at the farewell party. UB students joined the dance.