

**Cultural Shock and Adaptation: A Phenomenological Study of
Indonesian Students Living Overseas**



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APPROVAL PAGE

Undergraduate Thesis

Cultural Shock and Adaptation: A Phenomenological Study of Indonesian Students Living Overseas

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PLAGIARISM FREE STATEMENT

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This statement is made truthfully and without any coercion from any party.

Yogyakarta, July 23, 2025

Sincerely,



Ayuni Putri Deana

DEDICATION PAGE

With deep gratitude and humility, I dedicate this thesis to:

1. My beloved parents For your endless love, prayers, and sacrifices. Your support has been my greatest strength throughout this journey.
2. My family Whose constant encouragement and warmth have always lifted my spirit.
3. My thesis advisor and all Communication Science lecturers Thank you for your guidance, knowledge, and support during my academic journey.
4. My friends and fellow fighters For the laughter, motivation, and shared struggles that made this path more meaningful.
5. Myself For not giving up, for pushing through the challenges, and for growing stronger every step of the way.

FOREWORDS

Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Alhamdulillah is the first word uttered in gratitude to the Creator. By Allah's permission, the author was able to complete the scientific work entitled "**Cultural Shock and Adaptation: A Phenomenological Study of Indonesian Students Living Overseas**" to the end. This work is expected to fulfill the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor of Communication Science degree at the Faculty of Psychology and Social Budaya, Universitas Islam Indonesia. This work is a thesis that examines the discourse of the phenomenon of culture shock experienced by migrant students, specifically Indonesian students who are the objects of this research. So many obstacles and challenges are part of the author's process to learn many things. Understanding that feels foreign to the author is certainly not an easy process to learn, but thanks to the encouragement and prayers of both parents, as well as people who support the author to continue working on this scientific work until the end. Therefore, please allow the author to give respectful greetings and thanks to:

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Yogyakarta, July 23, 2025

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ABSTRACT

Deana, Ayuni Putri(2022). *Qualitative Descriptive Study of the Phenomenon of Culture Shock Among Indonesian studied Overseas*. (Bachelor's Thesis). Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Psychology and Social and Cultural Sciences, Islamic University of Indonesia.

Relocating to and residing in an unfamiliar environment often presents significant challenges, as individuals must navigate lifestyles that differ markedly from those of their native culture and surroundings. Indonesian students pursuing education abroad are required to undergo a process of cultural and environmental adaptation. This study seeks to investigate the stages of culture shock experienced by Indonesian students overseas, identify the underlying factors contributing to this phenomenon, and examine the strategies employed to manage it. Utilizing a descriptive phenomenological approach, the researcher explores the lived experiences of participants through in-depth interviews, allowing the phenomenon to emerge naturally from the individuals' perspectives. The findings indicate that the culture shock experienced by Indonesian students generally unfolds in four stages: (1) initial enthusiasm (honeymoon phase); (2) psychological and emotional challenges (crisis phase); (3) gradual adjustment (recovery phase); and (4) eventual comfort and acceptance (adjustment phase). Contributing factors include significant cultural differences, particularly for students from North Sumatra who may face difficulties integrating into their new social contexts, as well as language barriers that impede effective intercultural communication. To cope with these challenges, students undertake several adaptive strategies, including actively learning the host culture to ease the transition and improving language proficiency to facilitate meaningful communication and foster social integration.

Keywords: Phenomenological Analysis, Culture Shock, Intercultural Communication

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Obtaining education abroad has become the main attraction for most students in Indonesia. There is a wide choice of universities offered abroad. Many people think that education in Indonesia is still not good, so the offer from within the country is finally not an option. Instead, parents and children started to consider choosing an existing university abroad with consideration of training children to be more independent, and get an education better with a more open mind. According to data from Kompas.com, United States Commercial Service, it is estimated that in 2019, there were around 69,000 Indonesian students who were studying abroad. The Indonesian International Education Consultants Association said that Indonesia sends at least 35,000 students to continue their education abroad every year. Studying or working abroad is a big dream for many people. Different state government policies, different rural and urban landscapes and air, different environments, like starting a new chapter of life again. When we look at individuals who have lived it first, we will assume that the person has lived the perfect life. But in fact, without realizing it, many things have been experienced as a process of the individual in order to be able to settle well in the country

There are several advantages for those who have the opportunity to obtain education abroad, including: they have the opportunity to get the best teachers in the world and use various facilities such as libraries and a more complete variety of books to support their learning activities. In addition, they also have the opportunity to get to know friends who come from various different countries. Apart from gaining global connections, they also get values of life that they may only discover when they are outside their comfort zone, such as: independence, tolerance, patience, and so on. These are some of the many benefits they get when they get education abroad. The term 'culture shock' has been defined in similar ways by some scholars in the field. Levine and Adelman (1993), for instance, define culture shock as the response that an individual may have in a new country; the person may feel confused and disoriented, and every aspect of life may be difficult. In the same vein, Guanipa (1998) states that culture shock is a term which describes the anxiety produced when a person

moves to a completely new environment. This term expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. Milton (2005) states that culture shocks happen in a different environment. The most severe and costly cases of culture shocks occur to individuals who live outside of their native country for an extended period of time such as international students.

Studying overseas and delving into unknown society indeed can be a daunting task for international students since many of them experience culture shocks while adjusting to a new culture. They might face culture shocks in academic and non-academic settings, which might be frustrating and challenging. In academic settings, the problems can be in terms of language and study: the different atmosphere of an overseas university, different attitudes of lecturers and students towards study and research, and the need to adjust their old study habits to a new way of working. In non-academic settings, the problems can be in terms of food, seasons, accommodations, homesickness, loneliness, and relationships with others where the life systems are very different. Humans in their lives will definitely face cultural events with different cultural backgrounds who participated in maintaining communication. Individuals who enter a new environment make intercultural contact and they will come face to face with people. In the new environment visited, intercultural communication becomes inevitable. Efforts to establish intercultural communication in practice is not a simple matter. We have to encode the message and decode messages in such a way that they will be recognized, accepted and responded to by the individuals with whom they interact (Lubis, 2012: 177).

Different reactions can occur in each individual based on the personal background he had before entering a new environment. When an individual has to survive in another country for a certain need then he must fight the culture shock that happened to him /adaptation. The adaptation approach was introduced by Ellingsworth in (Liliweri, 2001: 63), he argues that every individual is endowed with the ability for interpersonal adaptation. Therefore, each individual has the ability to filter which behavior should or should not be he did.

Reactions to a new culture vary. Yet, experience and research have shown that there are distinct stages in the adjustment process. Levine & Adelman (1993), Jandt (1998), Pavese, Bohlmann & Gladding (2003), Thomas (2001) identify the stages of culture shock as initial euphoria, irritation and hostility, gradual adjustment,

acceptance and integration. In initial euphoria, the new arrivals may feel euphoric and be pleased by all of the new things encountered. They may have some problems but usually accept them as just part of the newness. In addition, Schneider (2005) reveals that in the euphoria stage, everything is great, nothing is wrong and individuals are having a wonderful time. Therefore, in initial euphoria people are fascinated by everything in a new culture. However, this period did not last forever. In the irritation and hostility stage individuals are immersed in new problems. They may encounter some difficult times and a crisis in daily life. In this stage, there may be feelings of discontent, impatience, anger, sadness, and feeling incompetence. They may begin to feel aggressive and start to complain about the host culture. This happens when a newcomer is trying to compare the new culture which is very different from their own culture. The transition between the old methods and those of the new country is a difficult process and takes time to complete. During the transition, there can be strong feelings of dissatisfaction. At this point, a newcomer starts to reject the host country, complaining and noticing only the bad things. The same idea is also stated by Guanipa (1988), Thomas (2001), Ferguson (2002), and Schneider (2005).

In the gradual adjustment stage, individuals become more comfortable in the new culture. They begin to relax in the new situation and are generally easy to work with. Everyday activities are no longer major problems. They may not yet become fluent in spoken language, but they can now express their basic ideas and feelings. More things are predictable, people feel more in control and more comfortable and feel isolation. At this point, they are beginning to feel more at home in new surroundings and to accept norms and social codes around them.

In the acceptance and integration stage individuals have the ability to function in both cultures. It occurs when they feel at home in the host culture and have the ability to live successfully in two cultures. They become more comfortable with the language and with the customs of the host country. They gain some understanding of host culture. A new feeling of pleasure and sense of humor may be experienced. One may start to feel a certain psychological balance. They can now move around without feeling anxiety. A number of studies on culture shocks have been conducted by other researchers, such as Levine and Adelman (1993), Ballard and Clanchy (1996), who investigated culture shocks experienced by international students studying in the USA, Australia, and Canada respectively. Research done by Karjadi (2003) showed that

the most problematic problem experienced by Indonesian students studying overseas is language. This study is carried out to explore three research questions: 1) What stages of culture shocks did Indonesian students experience?; 2) How did culture shocks affect their life?; 3) How did they solve the problems of culture shocks?

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the following research question: "How does the phenomenon of culture shock affect Indonesian students studying overseas?"

C. RESEARCH PURPOSE

Based on the research question above, this study aims to:

1. Describe the stages of culture shock experienced by Indonesian students studying abroad.
2. Explain the causes of culture shock among Indonesian students overseas.
3. Identify the efforts made by Indonesian students to overcome culture shock while studying abroad.

D. RESEARCH BENEFIT

The benefits of this research are:

1. Academically, this research is expected to expand the research treasures in the field of intercultural communication in Communication, especially for students of the Department of Communication, FPSB UII.
2. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide broader knowledge to students and an interest in deepening knowledge about culture shock as a part of communication science.
3. Practically, this research is expected to be a source of information for Indonesian students experiencing culture shock.

E. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Previous Research

The first research was conducted by Mentari Ika Widyaningrum, a student of the Communication Science Department of the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta with the title "Adaptation of Foreign Students at the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta" year 2017. In this study, the researcher discusses the adaptation experienced by foreign students in the campus environment of the Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta by using a qualitative descriptive research method using purposive sampling technique. From this research it can be concluded that initially foreign students experience various kinds of pressures due to differences in environment and culture. Then they try to try, they handle the stress with all their efforts, so that in the end they are able to adjust and overcome it successfully. There are several main points in the adaptation of foreign students at UMS, namely, having the motivation to learn, making experience something valuable, making the environment comfortable through oneself, elements of mutual respect for religion and culture, facing fear, and respecting the host language with how to learn and practice it.

The second research, conducted by Nathalia Perdhani Soemantri, a student majoring in Communication Science, Pancasila University, Jakarta with the title "ADAPTASI BUDAYA MAHASISWA ASAL INDONESIA DI AUSTRALIA" in 2019. In this study, the researchers discussed seeing the cultural adaptation process of Indonesian students in Australia. This study uses a phenomenological approach with descriptive qualitative methods using interview data collection techniques conducted on two Indonesian students studying in Australia. From this research, it can be concluded that the cultural adaptation carried out by Indonesian students in Australia is easier to pass with the advancement of information technology and the era of globalization. Students from Indonesia can make thorough preparations, so that when carrying out the adaptation process, feelings of hopelessness and depression are rarely encountered due to difficulties in adjusting to a new culture. Regarding the stages of cultural adaptation, we can conclude that there was an enculturation process that occurred when the socialization was taking place where Indonesian students began to try to apply new cultural thinking in their daily lives that they had previously studied.

The third research, conducted by Tinka Fakhriana, a student majoring in Communication and Business Sciences, Telkom University Bandung, with the title “Adaptasi Budaya Pada Mahasiswa Asing Di Indonesia (Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mahasiswa Asing Di Kota Bandung)” in 2018. In this study, researchers discussed cultural adaptation strategies and strategies used by foreign students to achieve effective intercultural communication while studying in Indonesia. The research method used in this research is phenomenology with interview and observation data collection techniques. From this study it can be concluded that in the process of cultural adaptation, foreign students experience cultural adaptation phases, namely the planning phase, the honeymoon phase, the frustration phase, the readjustment phase, and also the resolution phase. The four foreign students who study in Indonesia go through all phases from planning to resolution.

The last research was conducted by Ilham Prasetyo, a student of the Communication Science Department of Diponegoro University with the title "Understanding Communication Behavior in Adapting to Newcomer and Host Cultures."based on Etnisitas" in 2015. In this study the researchers discussed the competence of intercultural communication between immigrants and host culture. The research method used is a qualitative research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection techniques were obtained through in-depth interviews with four immigrant students and four host culture people. From this research it can be concluded that the intercultural communication competence of both immigrant and host culture students must go through several important points, namely seeing from the motivation, knowledge and skills. Based on the results in the field, it is known that there are factors related to the competence of intercultural communication from newcomers, including the lack of initiative in blending in with the environment, lack of information related to the new environment that is the destination area, the difficulty of adjusting the behavior that is often carried out in the area of origin with the norms that are used. apply in society. Meanwhile, the factors that affect the intercultural communication competence of the host culture, including the host culture's perception of the appearance of newcomers, affect the motivation to communicate with newcomers. Lack of knowledge about the bad habits of migrants, lack of ability to manage conflicts with migrants.

2. Theoretical Frameworks

a. Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, or emotions among people who have different cultural backgrounds. This information exchange occurs both verbally and in writing, as well as through body language, personal style or appearance, or other surrounding elements that clarify the message. (Liliweri, 2013). According to Mulyana (2003), intercultural communication is the process of exchanging thoughts and meanings between people from different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication has three socio-cultural elements that have a significant and direct impact on the meanings formed in perceptions as follows:

1) Values

Values in a culture manifest in the behavior of its members, as required by the culture. These values are referred to as normative values.

2) Beliefs

In intercultural communication, there is no right or wrong when it comes to beliefs. Each belief system shapes how people communicate.

3) Attitudes

Beliefs and values contribute to the development of attitudes. These attitudes are learned from cultural contexts. No matter what our environment is like, it will shape our attitudes, our readiness to respond, and ultimately our behavior.

b. Culture Shock

Culture shock is a condition in which a person or group experiences a psychological or mental shock due to an inability or lack of preparedness to accept foreign cultural elements that are vastly different from their own culture, arriving unexpectedly. Sudden changes can cause a person to feel pressured, hopeless, or even powerless to adapt or keep up with the changes. Culture shock is not only associated with the phenomenon of entering a new culture, such as a foreign country, but also when a person enters a new cultural environment, such as a new religion, educational institution (school or university), new workplace, or a new extended family (the family of a spouse) (Ridwan, 2018). Culture shock is triggered by anxiety caused by the loss of

social cues and symbols. For example, when should we shake hands, what should we say when meeting someone, when and how should we tip, how to shop, when to decline or accept invitations, and so on. These cues, which may be in the form of gestures, facial expressions, habits, or norms, are learned throughout our lives since childhood. When a person enters a foreign culture, all or almost all of these cues disappear. They feel like a fish out of water. People lose their bearings and experience frustration and anxiety. Initially, they may reject the environment causing their discomfort, criticize it, and view their home country as better and more important. People tend to seek refuge by gathering with friends from their homeland, forming groups that often become the source of emotional accusations, leading to stereotypes in a negative way (Mulyana, 2006). Generally, the reactions that may occur in individuals experiencing culture shock include the following:

- 1) Feelings of sadness, loneliness, melancholy, frustration, anxiety, and disorientation, leading to the emergence of negative stereotypes about the new environment.
- 2) Worry about health. People from more developed countries are often more sensitive to cleanliness issues in their new environment. They may refuse to eat or drink local food due to concerns about diseases and doubt the hygiene of the food and the local population.
- 3) Physical pain caused by psychosomatic issues, such as allergies and other health problems like diarrhea, ulcers, headaches, etc.
- 4) Changes in temperament, feeling depressed, weak, fragile, and helpless.
- 5) Feelings of anger, irritability, regret, and reluctance to interact with others.
- 6) Constantly comparing their home culture and excessively idolizing their original culture.
- 7) Losing the ability to learn and work effectively.
- 8) Homesickness or longing for their old home or environment.
- 9) A loss of identity, questioning the identity they have believed in for so long. If they once believed they were intelligent, they may suddenly feel like the most foolish person, strange, unattractive, and so on.

- 10) Trying too hard to absorb everything in their new environment (due to anxiety about understanding the new culture), which can lead to feelings of overwhelm.
- 11) A loss of self-confidence.
- 12) A desire to continue relying on people from the same culture.

Experiencing culture shock is actually a normal phenomenon that many individuals face when in a culturally different environment from their original one. However, the level of distress experienced by individuals varies from one person to another, depending on the factors within the individual. The culture shock experienced by newcomers is part of the routine adaptation process to cultural stress and represents a longing for a more predictable, stable, and understandable environment, similar to what they experienced before.

c. Intercultural Communication Barriers

Intercultural communication barriers can originate from both the communicator and the recipient. Cultural differences are one of the most fundamental barriers because communication is inherently influenced by culture. In intercultural communication, individuals' negative and evaluative reactions to a culture can create communication barriers (Novinger, 2001). Negative evaluations lead to dislike and avoidance because the "foreign" culture is perceived as "deviant" or "different" from the norms we adhere to. Communication barriers, or communication obstacles, refer to anything that hinders effective communication (Chaney & Martin, 2004). The types of intercultural communication barriers include:

- 1) Physical barriers: These stem from time constraints, environmental factors, personal needs, and physical media.
- 2) Cultural barriers**: These arise from ethnic differences, religion, and social distinctions between cultures.
- 3) Perceptual barriers: These occur because each individual perceives things differently.

- 4) Motivational barriers: These relate to the listener's level of motivation. In other words, whether the listener is motivated to receive the message or not can significantly impact communication effectiveness.
- 5) Experiential barriers: These occur because individuals have different life experiences, which lead to different perceptions and conceptual understandings.
- 6) Emotional barriers: These relate to the listener's emotional state. When the listener is in a negative emotional state, communication becomes more difficult and the barrier increases.
- 7) Linguistic barriers: These arise when the sender and receiver use different languages or when unfamiliar words are used.
- 8) Nonverbal barriers: These are barriers that are not expressed in words but still hinder communication. For example, an angry facial expression from the receiver may make the sender feel hesitant or uncomfortable sharing the message.
- 9) Competition barriers: These occur when the receiver is engaged in another activity while listening, such as answering a phone call while driving. Multitasking can reduce the quality of message reception.

d. Communication Accommodation Theory

This theory was first introduced by Howard Giles and his colleagues in 1973. It explains how and why we adjust our communication behavior when interacting with others (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009:222). Accommodation refers to the ability to adjust, modify, and regulate one's behavior in response to others—often done subconsciously (West & Lynn, 2008:217).

Sociologists use the term accommodation to describe a process of forming social relationships, which is essentially the same as adaptation. In a social context, adaptation is understood as a process of adjustment carried out by individuals or groups who initially have conflicting positions (Soyomukti, 2010:343).

There are several ways to adapt within the Communication Accommodation Theory, including convergence, divergence, and over-accommodation (West & Turner, 2008:222). According to Morissan (2013:211), both convergence and divergence can occur in all forms of

communication behavior—such as tone, speed, accent, volume, word choice, grammar, body gestures, and more. These can be mutual if both speakers align, or partial if only one party moves away. Convergence is often received positively when someone tries to match their communication style to that of the listener, but it can be perceived negatively if done excessively (Morissan, 2013:212).

Basic Assumptions of the Communication Accommodation Theory West and Turner (2008:220) identify the following assumptions underlying this theory:

- 1) Similarities and differences between communicators during conversations, shared experiences and communication behaviors are shaped by diverse backgrounds and determine the extent to which individuals accommodate others.
- 2) The way individuals perceive others' speech and behavior. This perception influences how people evaluate a conversation.
- 3) The impact of language on others. Language has the power to communicate status and group membership among communicators in a conversation. The language used tends to reflect individuals with higher social status.
- 4) Norms and issues of social appropriateness. Accommodation varies in the degree to which it aligns with the speaker's behavior and social norms. These norms play a vital role in defining the limits and acceptability of accommodative behavior in communication.

e. The U Curve Theory

U-Curve Theory outlines the stages of psychological and emotional adjustment individuals typically experience when encountering a new culture. According to Kim (as cited in Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, & Roy, 2017, p. 393), individuals must progress through four distinct phases before achieving a sense of equilibrium comparable to their original state. These stages are described as follows:

- 1) **Honeymoon Phase** – This initial stage is marked by enthusiasm, excitement, and a sense of fascination with the new cultural environment (Hall, Covarrubias, & Kirschbaum, 2002, p. 289).

- 2) **Crisis Phase (Culture Shock)** – In this phase, individuals experience disorientation and distress as they confront significant differences in cultural norms, values, behaviors, and expectations, which challenge their existing perceptions of reality (Hall et al., 2002, p. 289).
- 3) **Recovery Phase** – At this stage, individuals begin to adapt by demonstrating openness to cultural differences. They make efforts to understand and integrate into the new culture, both through verbal and nonverbal communication, indicating a growing cultural acceptance (Hall et al., 2002, p. 289).
- 4) **Adjustment Phase** – The final phase represents a deeper integration in which individuals not only adapt but also develop an appreciation for cultural diversity. They begin to engage meaningfully with the host culture, discover new perspectives, and expand their sense of identity through intercultural interaction (Hall et al., 2002, p. 289).

F. METHODOLOGY

1. Research Paradigm

This study employs a phenomenological approach, which seeks to describe the meaning of life experiences shared by several individuals concerning a concept or phenomenon (Creswell, 2014:51). Phenomenological research aims to uncover the essence of a fundamental experience and emphasizes the intensity of consciousness, where experiences are shaped by memory, imagery, and meaning (Creswell, 2014:52). It seeks to answer questions about the meaning of a phenomenon. Essentially, phenomenological research focuses on two main aspects: 1. Textural description of what the research subject experiences regarding a phenomenon. This includes objective aspects, factual data, and empirically observable events. 2. Structural description of how the subject experiences and interprets those experiences. This includes subjective elements such as opinions, judgments, feelings, expectations, and other personal responses related to the experience.

Phenomenology has four defining characteristics: description, reduction, essence, and intentionality. As stated by Tom Donoghue and Keith Punch Ed., the phenomenological method includes these four key components common to all types of phenomenology. It focuses on what is experienced within individual consciousness—referred to as intentionality. Intentionality describes the relationship between processes occurring in consciousness and the object of focus. In phenomenological terms, consciousness is always “consciousness of something”; seeing is seeing something, remembering is remembering something, and judging is judging something.

2. Types and Research Approaches

This study complements the phenomenological approach with a qualitative research method, which is used to explore and understand the meaning derived from social issues as experienced by individuals or groups (Creswell, 2014:4). The obstacles encountered during the cultural adaptation process are considered social issues, experienced by individuals studying abroad. With this approach, the researcher aims to explore what occurs and provide a detailed depiction of the cultural adaptation process of Indonesian students overseas. Therefore, this study is classified as descriptive research, which, according to Neuman (2016:44), provides a detailed picture of a situation, social arrangement, or relationship.

3. Time and Location of Research

The research was conducted from July to August 2023. The research location refers to the place where the researcher gathered data and factual information. The study was conducted with Indonesian students who are currently or have previously studied abroad.

4. Research Participants/Informants

According to Sugiyono (2013:218), the purposive sampling technique involves selecting data sources based on specific considerations. It is used to choose subjects who meet particular characteristics deemed relevant to the population being studied. The main objective of this technique is to find samples that fulfill the predetermined criteria set by the researcher. The selection of informants for this study

is based on the principle that participants must be knowledgeable about the issue, possess relevant data, and be willing to provide complete and accurate information. Informants must meet specific criteria to ensure they can provide the information needed by the researcher (Sugiyono, 2016). The key informants in this study are Indonesian students who are currently or have previously pursued education abroad. The researcher selected informants based on the length of their study, assuming that students nearing the completion of their studies or who have recently graduated have gone through the entire adaptation process. Here is the table of the subject research:

Table1.C.1 Research Informant Data

No	Continent	Country	Length of stay abroad
1.	Europe	Scotlandia	2 Years
2.	Europe	Russia	3 Years
3.	Europa	England	1 Years
4.	Asia	Japan	6 Month
5.	Asia	Thailand	1 Years
6.	Asia	Malaysia	2 Years
7.	Amerika	United State	3 Years

5. Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique used in this study is:

a. In-depth Interviews

This involves asking questions directly to parties related to the topic being studied. The researcher establishes direct interaction with individuals considered capable of providing relevant information. Through this interview technique, the researcher conducts a detailed and in-depth question and answer session to obtain data and insights about the research subject.

The type of interview conducted is a structured interview. This method is used when the researcher knows precisely what information is needed and has prepared a list of written questions with specific answer options. In this format, each respondent is asked the same questions, and their answers are recorded (Sugiyono, 2016).

6. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of systematically organizing collected information to facilitate the researcher in drawing conclusions. According to Bogdan (in Sugiyono, 2016), data analysis involves searching for and systematically arranging data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials so that it is understandable and the findings can be shared. Qualitative data analysis is inductive, meaning it is based on data obtained from the field. According to Miles & Huberman, qualitative analysis consists of three concurrent activities:

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data from field notes. This occurs continuously throughout the research process. Data reduction begins when the researcher decides on the conceptual framework, research problems, and data collection methods. During data collection, further reduction occurs (e.g., summarizing, coding, identifying themes, clustering, partitioning, memo writing). This process continues even after fieldwork, until the final report is complete. Data reduction sharpens, classifies, directs, discards unnecessary data, and organizes it in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. Data reduction in qualitative research does not imply quantification. Instead, it simplifies and transforms data through strict selection, summarization, or categorization into broader patterns.

b. Data Display

Miles & Huberman define a data display as an organized set of information that allows for conclusion drawing and action-taking. They argue that better data displays—such as matrices, graphs, networks, and charts—are

key tools in valid qualitative analysis. These tools help to integrate and present data in an accessible form, enabling analysts to see what is happening and decide whether to draw conclusions or continue analyzing.

c. Conclusion Drawing and Verification.

According to Miles & Huberman, drawing conclusions is part of a complete configuration of activities. Conclusions are also verified throughout the research process. Verification may be as simple as a fleeting thought while writing or as complex as reviewing field notes or conducting peer discussions to develop intersubjective agreement. It may also involve extensive efforts to confirm findings using other data sets. In short, emerging meanings must be tested for their truthfulness, robustness, and relevance, which reflects their validity. Final conclusions are not drawn solely during data collection but must be verified to ensure accountability.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. INDONESIAN STUDENTS OVERSEAS

People around the world today have access to a wide range of information and foreign cultures, including in Indonesia, through technological advancements and developments. According to Friedman, the world is currently entering the globalization era 3.0, characterized by the ability of individuals worldwide to collaborate and compete on a global scale (Charles, 2007). Based on data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2021, a total of 53,604 Indonesian students were pursuing their studies abroad, and this number is projected to continue increasing annually (UNESCO, 2022). The statistical results from the UNESCO survey highlight the significant number of Indonesian students enrolled in educational institutions abroad.

Encountering a new environment and culture is regarded as a valuable life experience. Studying abroad offers various benefits for those who undertake it. These advantages include personal growth and skill development, building self-confidence, mastering various skills for effective work performance, gaining deeper self-awareness, and preparing oneself to face ambiguous situations. Such benefits serve as strong motivations behind the increasing number of Indonesian students initiating or continuing their studies overseas. However, on the other hand, many Indonesian students also face considerable challenges in adapting to their new environment. They often experience emotional fluctuations over time while living abroad for educational purposes, whether they are beginning or continuing their academic journeys (Ghaniyy & Akmal, 2018).

B. CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock as the consequence of strain and anxiety resulting from contact with a new culture and the feelings of loss, confusion and impotence, that caused loss of accustomed culture cues and rules. People, especially those who do not have family of friends from their home country as a social support network, might avoid social event, show little to no interest in anything but what is from their home culture, isolate themselves from others, complain about being tired, and sleep excessively, which are ultimately signs of depression (Oberg, 1960; Winkelman;1994).

Yost and Lucas (2002) assert that the degree to which immigrants experience culture shock is influenced by multiple variables. These include prior exposure to other cultures, the level of preparedness and expectations regarding cultural transitions, the presence of social support systems, the extent of cultural difference between the home and host cultures, and individual personality traits. The greater the cultural gap between one's country of origin and the host country, the more challenging the process of acculturation tends to be (Yost & Lucas, 2002).

1. Stages and Symptoms of Culture Shock

Numerous scholars have identified various stages of culture shock, which individuals experience at differing intensities and rates. Despite the variation in terminology, many of these models are fundamentally consistent with Oberg's (1960) original four-stage framework of cultural adjustment.

a. The Honeymoon Stage

According to Oberg (1960), the initial phase of cultural adaptation resembles a honeymoon period, typically marked by enthusiasm, curiosity, and admiration for the new cultural environment. During this stage, individuals are captivated by the novelty and positive aspects of the host culture. Their limited engagement with institutional structures and formal societal expectations contributes to this optimistic outlook. Newcomers often encounter warm hospitality and are delighted by initial interactions, similar to the excitement experienced during a vacation. This positive perception is also reinforced by the fact that many individuals relocate voluntarily, contributing to their favorable initial impressions.

b. The Crisis Stage

Oberg (1960) describes people in this stage as revealing a hostile and aggressive attitude towards the host country and developing stereotypes. After the positive effect of the novelty starts to fade away and everyday situations are to be dealt with, people begin to encounter ambivalent situations they do not know how to handle and are overwhelmed with. A crisis may occur, which could be the result of increasing problems and negative experiences. Immigrants, sojourners, international students, and other newcomers to a new culture may develop feelings of helplessness and confusion to go along with the lack of control and the wish to go home (Oberg, 1960).

c. The Stage of Development of a Positive Attitude

At this stage people have usually been abroad for some time and have realized that as a kind of survival mode they have to accept differences and deal with them with humor. Experiences that used to be bothersome and depressing to the individual person are seen differently. What once created hostility towards the new culture is still seen critically but taken with more humor about how the host culture is doing certain things often accompanied by saying, "I can't believe ..." and "That's so funny ...". People can laugh about their miscommunications and differences and realize that they cannot expect the natives of the country they moved to to change their ways of thinking/operating in their own culture. The initial problems with the new environment still exist, but people from foreign countries start adjusting and are positively meeting the challenges of how to function in the new culture (Oberg, 1960). and deal with them with humor.

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realize that they cannot expect the natives of the country they moved to to change their ways of thinking/operating in their own culture. The initial problems with the new environment still exist, but people from foreign countries start adjusting and are positively meeting the challenges of how to function in the new culture (Oberg, 1960).

d. The Stage of Adjustment

In this stage, individuals begin to genuinely accept the host culture as a valid and alternative way of life. Over time, newcomers come to understand that the cultural norms and practices of the host country are not subject to their influence or change. They begin to interpret these cultural differences within the appropriate context and acknowledge the need to adapt to a new, unalterable environment. Although they may continue to hold on to their personal values and beliefs shaped by their native cultural background, they increasingly accept that full cultural assimilation is rarely achievable. Instead, many individuals develop a bicultural identity, enabling them to navigate both their original culture and the new cultural setting effectively (Oberg, 1960; Winkelman, 1994).

While Oberg's (1960) model provides a clear framework for understanding the cultural adaptation process, the manifestation of these stages can vary widely depending on each individual's background, developmental experiences, and personality traits. Thus, symptoms commonly associated with culture shock must be considered within the context of personal variation and individual psychological responses.

2. Symptoms of Culture Shock

An analysis of the various perceptions associated with the different stages of culture shock reveals that this phenomenon is often accompanied by a range of psychological and physiological symptoms. Among the most

commonly reported is a profound sense of helplessness, arising from the individual's lack of familiarity with the cognitive frameworks and social cues of the host culture, coupled with an inability to perform culturally appropriate roles (Taft, 1977). Navigating a new cultural environment often requires individuals to seek guidance on local customs, social expectations, and acceptable behaviors in order to function effectively.

Another frequent symptom is the physical and emotional strain caused by the effort required to adjust—commonly referred to as “culture fatigue.” This manifests as irritability, dissatisfaction, insomnia, and psychosomatic issues (Smalley, 1965; Taft, 1977). The cognitive overload from constant information processing can hinder the learning process and, in some cases, result in resistance to acquiring the local language (Oberg, 1960; Smalley, 1965; Taft, 1977; Winkelman, 1994).

Newcomers often expend considerable effort in attempting to understand and communicate in the host culture's language, which can be mentally exhausting and physically draining. This exhaustion may lead to a need for increased rest or sleep and frequent pauses to process information. Language barriers necessitate repeated clarification, contributing to fatigue and frustration (Oberg, 1960). Furthermore, individuals may experience a deep sense of loss and disconnection from their home culture, often resulting in depressive symptoms and feelings of deprivation—missing familiar foods, recreational activities, professional roles, social status, and cultural stimuli (Taft, 1977). Many immigrants express a longing for familiar companionship and cultural familiarity, and in some cases, depression leads to social withdrawal or overindulgence in food as a coping mechanism (Smalley, 1965).

This reliance on one's home culture can foster feelings of alienation and result in either the rejection of the host society or a perceived rejection by it. These sentiments are often reciprocal, as the individual may exhibit low self-esteem and limited motivation to integrate (Smalley, 1965; Taft, 1977). Suspicion and mistrust toward members of the host culture may arise, with the foreigner fearing exploitation, deception, or harm (Oberg, 1960). These anxieties vary depending on the socio-economic context. For instance, visitors

to developing countries may worry about being overcharged or deceived due to local economic conditions, while those arriving in developed nations may fear job competition or being taken advantage of due to unfamiliarity with institutional systems.

A further common symptom is confusion regarding one's social roles and identity, often resulting in inner conflict or a diminished sense of self. This uncertainty can range from mild indecision to more serious psychological conditions such as phobias, depression, or psychosomatic illness, although the severity of such symptoms is generally less than commonly assumed (Taft, 1977). Oberg (1960) also observed that newcomers may become more preoccupied with minor ailments and illness during the adaptation process. The emotional reaction to perceived cultural differences—including anxiety, surprise, frustration, or even moral discomfort—can emerge when individuals encounter norms that conflict with their deeply held values (Taft, 1977).

Additionally, newcomers may struggle to find a supportive community that reflects their cultural beliefs and values, leading to a sense of isolation. This perceived lack of acceptance by the host society can intensify feelings of alienation, even if these perceptions are not entirely accurate. Consequently, individuals may develop a strong desire to return to their home country in search of familiarity and emotional comfort. Ultimately, the extent to which individuals experience these symptoms of culture shock is influenced by personal psychological traits, such as self-confidence, adaptability, and self-efficacy (Oberg, 1960; Winkelman, 1994). These individual differences must be taken into account when developing strategies to support immigrants, international students, and other cultural newcomers as they navigate the challenges of cross-cultural adjustment.

3. International Students and Their Adjustment to the foreign culture

For Indonesian students, pursuing education abroad can present both stimulating and challenging experiences. While the novelty of a new cultural environment may initially bring excitement and curiosity, many students often encounter frustration upon facing significant cultural differences. International students—whether they are immigrants or temporary students enrolled in short- or long-term academic programs—commonly experience culture shock as part of their adjustment process. This phenomenon is frequently accompanied by stress, anxiety, and psychological tension, which may negatively affect their academic performance, social interactions, and emotional well-being.

Engaging in meaningful conversations, sharing personal experiences, and fostering connections with members of the host culture are vital strategies for mitigating these challenges. Such intercultural interactions play a crucial role in dismantling cultural barriers and enhancing mutual understanding between individuals from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds. Successful intercultural communication depends heavily on reciprocal awareness of cultural origins, communicative norms, and behavioral patterns. Establishing this mutual understanding is essential to building inclusive, respectful, and effective cross-cultural relationships (Myburgh, Niehaus, & Poggenpoel, 2002).

a. Cultural Differences and International Students

International students are often confronted with the complex task of navigating an unfamiliar cultural environment while maintaining their sense of identity. Core aspects such as religious beliefs, traditional practices, social norms, values, and the economic context of one's home country significantly contribute to an individual's cultural self-conception. Upon arrival in a foreign setting, students quickly become aware of how their behaviors, attitudes, and expressions—readily accepted in their native culture—may be misunderstood or misinterpreted in the host culture.

This heightened cultural awareness often emerges as part of the adjustment process, wherein students gradually recognize both their cultural uniqueness and the distinct features of the host society. The experience and intensity of culture shock vary among individuals, influenced by personal traits and the degree of cultural congruence or divergence between their home and host environments (David, 1971).

b. Personality of International Students and Cultural Adjustment

Given that Indonesian students voluntarily choose to study abroad, it may be inferred that they possess a relatively high level of self-efficacy at the outset. However, existing literature indicates that self-efficacy is not a fixed trait; rather, it is dynamic and can evolve through positive experiences and successful navigation of challenges (Berry & West, 1993). Although some studies have explored the potential role of personality traits in the experience of culture shock and in the process of cultural adjustment, the current body of research remains largely theoretical, lacking sufficient empirical evidence to support definitive conclusions.

c. Language Difficulties of International Students

Due to the multifaceted nature of culture shock and the process of cultural adaptation, it is imperative to account for various contributing factors, including the duration of residence in the host country, age at the time of arrival, ethnic and cultural identity, as well as language proficiency. Among these, the ability to communicate effectively in the host country's language constitutes a significant source of stress for many international students. While a number of students may have received some instruction in the target language prior to arrival, such exposure is often limited and may not adequately prepare them for real-world communicative demands. Moreover, it is crucial to distinguish between learning a language in a classroom setting and employing it as a practical tool for everyday interaction. In addition, modes of communication and interpersonal engagement are influenced by individual personality characteristics,

including self-efficacy, self-confidence, assertiveness, and traits related to extraversion or introversion (Poyrazli et al., 2002).

d. Social Support Network of International Students

Effective social interaction requires more than just language proficiency; it also depends on intercultural competence and the ability to navigate cross-cultural contexts. International students, including those from Indonesia, often experience a decline in their perceived social status upon entering a foreign country, as they are no longer able to fulfill the social roles they previously held in their home environment. This transition necessitates a redefinition of self within a new cultural framework. University administrators frequently express concern regarding the ability of Indonesian students to adjust both academically and socially within the host institution. As such, university counselors play a vital role in addressing the loss of established social networks among these students and are tasked with facilitating the development of new interpersonal relationships (Hayes & Lin, 1994).

In response to these challenges, many international students tend to seek out peers who share similar ethnic or cultural backgrounds, often forming or joining ethnic communities. These communities provide a sense of familiarity and support that eases the psychological burden associated with cultural transition. However, this inclination may also stem from a fear of rejection by members of the host culture, particularly among students whose cultural identities are visibly distinct. Al-Sharideh and Goe (1998) observed that, among international students in the United States, increased bonding with co-ethnic peers may inversely affect the development of self-esteem and adaptation to the host culture.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Prior to conducting the research, the author sought informants who were willing to participate in the data collection process. The researcher conducted preliminary interviews to identify individuals who matched the research framework. Informants who met the criteria were approached personally to ensure they felt comfortable and were willing to share their experiences with the researcher. Those who agreed to participate were then invited to proceed to the formal interview stage. At this stage, the researcher provided a detailed explanation of the study in order to obtain informed consent from the participants.

In-depth and structured interviews were conducted to collect data from the informants. The researcher followed an interview guide consisting of pre-determined questions to ensure the discussion remained aligned with the objectives of the study. However, the questions could be further developed in response to points that the researcher deemed important for enriching the data. During the interviews, a digital recorder was used to capture the responses. The recorded interviews were then transcribed verbatim and organized into tables that reflected the data collected from each research site.

The researcher segmented the literal transcripts into meaningful units to identify themes across the responses of all informants. The categorized data helped eliminate overlapping or irrelevant statements. In the final stage, the researcher presented a thematic table summarizing what was explored and how the phenomenon was tested. This table represented the consolidated findings in a generalized structure. Lastly, the researcher discussed the individual experiences of each informant in depth.

A. Research Findings

This study employed a set of criteria for the selection of informants, specifically Indonesian students who had been studying abroad for a minimum of six months. These criteria resulted in the collection of descriptive data and the identification of a general structure. The general structure was composed of three key elements: The characteristics of culture shock experienced while studying abroad.,

The underlying causes of culture shock., The strategies employed by the students to cope with culture shock.

The following is gGeneral profile description of the informants in this study:

1. Informant 1

Country : Malaysia

Table 3.1 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 1

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	<i>"At that time, I wanted to challenge myself to be more independent and seek new experiences.."</i>	Fatigue	Experiencing fatigue due to a busy routine, and there are some foods that don't suit you.
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"When I first came, I was really excited, even though the culture isn't that different, I was still happy."		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	<i>"Because the culture is not too different, overall I feel comfortable living in Malaysia"</i>	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"Even though the cultures aren't that different, there are still bound to be differences. Homesickness also plays a role because everything is usually	Depression	Feel lose family, friends, and status ownership

		provided at home, while at that time I was expected to be independent."		p
	Constraints and Consequences	"The majority of people in Malaysia are Muslim, just like in Indonesia, but the hijab styles of Indonesians and Malays are quite different, and Malaysians can usually tell the difference. And sometimes that's what makes us a bit ostracized by the local community... they'll only be friendly to Indonesian students, but not to the Indonesian workers who work there."	Anxiety	Feel confusion about roles, expectations and self-identity
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"I started to understand the culture, understand the language and always remember that I have to fight here..."	Feeling III	Feel often sick head
	Inhibiting Factors	"It's homesickness that's sometimes hard for me to handle..."	Negative Feelings	Feelings lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"My main motivation was my parents and my future, so at that time I tried to be strong..."	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

2. Informant 2

Country : Thailand

Table 3.2 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 2

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"I applied to many countries for my master's studies. And thank God, Thailand was the country I ultimately chose for my master's degree."	Fatigue	experiencing confusion because Thai language is very complicated
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"Firstly, I was very excited, because the atmosphere was still a holiday atmosphere, right?"		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"I really struggled with the language, and I had to be careful about what I ate. Some of the lecturers there also had difficulty speaking English, which really confused me."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"language, food, and environment because the majority there are Buddhists"	Depression	feeling homesick, language difficulties
	Constraints and Consequences	"I think Thai is very complicated because there are so many letters. You also need to be smart about finding halal food."	Anxiety	feeling anxious about life while in Thailand
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"I spend more time taking Thai language courses so that it will be easier to adapt"	feeling ill	often tired and have difficulty sleeping

	Inhibiting Factors	"Because it's too complicated and foreign to the ear, it takes a while to understand Thai."	Negative Feelings	feeling lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"want to finish my studies soon"	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

3. Informant 3

Country : Japan

Table 3.3 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 3

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"At that time, I just tried to apply, thank God, it turned out to be a blessing"	Fatigue	Experience fatigue Because difference area such as climate, temperature and weather
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"Who doesn't like Japan? Honestly, at that time I was very happy and very excited to explore Japan."		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"Because I wasn't near the capital at the time, I couldn't explore much because the village I lived in was so far from Tokyo. So sometimes I felt bored with the routine."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"Japanese people are very individualistic and don't want to be disturbed"	Depression	Feeling the loss of the environment that has been formed in Indonesia
	Constraints and Consequences	"In Japan, I actually rented a house with three of my friends. As you know, Indonesian people love to gather with anyone else... someday we have to celebrate something in our house,	Anxiety	Feel confusion about one's abilities

		<p>so that's like eight until ten people come to our house I guess... Actually it's just a get-together for a meal without alcohol and we didn't make any noise either – but can you guess what happened, there were three police that came to our house and how shocked we were at that time... It turned out that our neighbors reported to us that we were causing a commotion, so after the police warned us, my friends immediately went home and until now we have never held a gathering like that again... It was one of the most annoying experiences I've ever had in Japan... In Indonesia, if our neighbors feel like we are disturbing them, they will come to us and warn us politely... "Because of the language barrier, I often had difficulty ordering food. I lived in a fairly remote town in Japan, so they barely spoke English. And even buying food was still done manually and traditionally, unlike in big cities, and that was quite a challenge while I was there."</p>		
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"Just tolerate each other and understand their personalities. Because of the language barrier, I sometimes use Google Translate when	Feeling III	-

		communicating."		
	Inhibiting Factors	"Because I'm not very fluent in Japanese, sometimes I still have difficulties"	Negative Feelings	Feelings lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"Japan and all its culture are very comfortable, so I really want to learn the culture, language and want to focus more on completing my studies."	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

4. Informant 4

Country : Russia

Table 3.4 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 4

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"At that time, I chose Russia because it was one of the best places to study design, and I was also interested in the country, so I finally decided to study here."	Fatigue	Experience fatigue Because difference area such as climate, temperature and weather
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"nervous, a little nervous too"		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"I'm under a lot of stress here, because I wear the hijab and people see it as something strange, so it makes it difficult for me to make friends."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"Apart from language, they don't like to smile, they don't like small talk, which is also different from Indonesians who are very friendly."	Depression	Feeling the loss of the environment that has been formed in Indonesia
	Constraints and Consequences	"The people here are very Individual... In Indonesia, especially after class, we used to go hang out or get to know	Anxiety	Feel confusion about one's

		<p>each other, but in this country people just come to class after that and go to their home... even if they start a conversation it is just for discussing a task or homework” .</p> <p>“In here, I see people freely getting drunk everywhere even in the afternoon, which is very different from our country”.</p> <p>“People here are very individualistic, they never chit-chat like we used to in Indonesia”.</p> <p>"difficult to make friends, difficult to adapt on campus until finally going to a psychiatrist provided by the government for Indonesian students"</p>		abilities
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"Because of the help of the psychiatrist, I slowly began to understand the Russian perspective and began to interact without fear with the students there."	Feel III	often tired and have difficulty sleeping
	Inhibiting Factors	"feelings of shame, anxiety, fear of being rejected when starting communication with other students"	Negative Feelings	feeling lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"Even though there are many struggles, I have to complete this study quickly and accurately"	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

5. Informant 5

Country : America

Table 3.5 Structure of Informant Interview Results 5

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"I am very interested in the country, and I am also curious because America is one of the most powerful superpowers in the world, and I am interested in studying there."	Fatigue	Experience fatigue Because difference area such as climate, temperature and weather
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"I'm really excited, happy that my dream of studying in America has finally come true"		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"There was some culture shock regarding language and slang."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"It's really hard to find food there, there's only junk food or fast food everywhere, and the taste doesn't suit me at all. That's quite a struggle for me"... "The language too,I think the funniest thing here is when someone says,	Depression	Feeling the loss of the environment that has been formed in Indonesia

		<p>“I’ll call you” ... “I’ll call you later.” That means not tonight in the evening, that means whenever ... before I die, they will call you later, some day probably ... that’s the truth... that’s what I had problems with in the beginning when I came to the United States; because when someone said, “I’ll call you later” I thought it was the same day ... but it’s not later ... someday ... whenever ... We keep in touch, but I know this now. ”</p>		
	Constraints and Consequences	"Because it was difficult to find suitable food, I lost quite a bit of weight. As a result, my immune system weakened while I was there, and I got sick easily."	Anxiety	Feel confusion about one's abilities
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"I often buy my own cooking ingredients, so I cook for myself while I'm there. When it comes to slang, I'm starting to get used to it so I don't easily misunderstand what they mean."	Feeling Ill	often tired and have difficulty sleeping
	Inhibiting Factors	"Because cooking and buying ingredients myself takes quite a bit of time and the prices are also more expensive, so I have to set aside some of my pocket money and allocate more for food."	Negative Feelings	feeling lazy and lonely

	Motivation	“I want to focus more on my education, so I really prioritize my health, so I can focus more and not interfere with my academics.	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confiden t
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Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

6. Informant 6

Country : Scotlandia

Table 3.6 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 6

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"I really like Europe, and coincidentally this is also one of my dream campuses, and my parents also agree, so why not?"	Fatigue	Experience fatigue Because difference area such as climate, temperature and weather
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"Even though I've been here before, I still feel excited because now I'm here to live and settle for several years to study."		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"As expected, everything is fun and according to expectations, but sometimes I feel homesick. Even though it's comfortable here, I still miss Indonesia."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"I'm very close to my family, so it's a bit of a problem, and sometimes I feel sad because I miss home and Indonesia. And I often miss the food, too."	Depression	Feeling the loss of the environment that has been formed in Indonesia

	Constraints and Consequences	"Because I really like home cooking, I lost my appetite a bit while I was here, but the result was quite good."	Anxiety	Feel confusion about one's abilities
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"Yes, because I realized I couldn't stay sad all the time, I looked for a solution. Sometimes I hunted for Indonesian restaurants once a week so I could cure my longing for home cooking. Sometimes I asked my mom to send Indonesian food like chili sauce here. And I often kept in touch with my family in my free time to cure homesickness."	Feeling Ill	have difficulty sleeping
	Inhibiting Factors	"For everyday use, I often eat European food, which is very bland and doesn't suit my palate. And it's also more expensive."	Negative Feelings	feeling lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"I want to enjoy myself more here, so I don't want to think about things that can make me down so I can focus better."	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

7. Informant 7

Country : England

Table 3.7 Structure of Interview Results of Informant 7

General Structure	Indicator	Results	Symptoms of Culture Shock	
Stages of Culture Shock	Reasons to Study Overseas	"I've been eyeing this campus for a long time, and I've also done a little research about the environment, so I chose to study there at that time."	Fatigue	Experience fatigue Because difference area such as climate, temperature and weather
	First feeling of arriving at the destination country	"I'm definitely very happy, especially since studying abroad is on my wish list." “		
	Feelings when living in the destination country	"It's as expected, according to the research too. So far so good."	Hyperirritability	Tension there is an effort to adapt psychologically
Causes of Culture Shock	Reason	"In the campus environment, they really prioritize equality and are very concerned with humanity. Apart from that, during the study, the assignments were really very complex, to the point of being quite stressful."	Depression	Feeling the loss of the environment that has been formed in Indonesia
	Constraints and Consequences	"I often feel it's impolite to call lecturers by their names directly; it's awkward and uncomfortable. But if I call them "Mr./Ms." It	Anxiety	Feel confusion about one's abilities

		actually makes them uncomfortable... Besides, the many and complex assignments really stress me out. Plus, when I was there during COVID, it was difficult to leave the dormitory, and I felt really stressed."		
Efforts to overcome culture shock	Supporting factors	"My family often encourages me, my friends in Indonesia also often keep in touch to encourage me while in England."	Feeling Ill	often tired and have difficulty sleeping
	Inhibiting Factors	"At that time, COVID-19 meant I often thought about my family. COVID-19 also made it difficult to make friends. Most native English speakers are hard to approach, so most of my friends are from Asia, especially students on exchange programs."	Negative Feelings	feeling lazy and lonely
	Motivation	"I want to complete this study well, I want to finish it quickly too, so as much as possible I don't overthink things that make me worry."	Self Doubt	Feel less than Not confident

Source: Processed Primary Data (2024)

B. Research Discussion

Culture shock is a phenomenon experienced by individuals who suddenly relocate or move to a new living, working, or activity environment. It results from anxiety caused by the loss of familiar cues and symbols in social interactions. Culture shock is defined as a persistent sense of anxiety stemming from the disappearance of all known social signs and symbols—including the countless ways that guide us through everyday situations. Based on the research findings, several factors contribute to the experience of culture shock among students from Indonesia who move to another country for educational purposes and must interact with a new cultural environment. One of the primary contributing factors is:

1. Cultural Differences Between the Previous and New Environment.

The differences between the students' original and new environments—including customs, traditions, social norms, language, community characteristics, culinary habits, and overall surroundings—lead to the experience of culture shock. These cultural contrasts can disrupt the students' ability to carry out their academic activities smoothly in their host country or region. Culture shock can become a serious issue when individuals are unable to overcome it or have difficulty adapting to their new environment..As conveyed by Informant 4 (Russia)

...”“The people here are very Individual... In Indonesia, especially after class, we used to go hang out or get to know each other, but in this country people just come to class after that and go to their home... even if they start a conversation it is just for discussing a task or homework”... “In here, I see people freely getting drunk everywhere even in the afternoon, which is very different from our country”... “People here are very individualistic, they never chit-chat like we used to in Indonesia”.... "difficult to make friends, difficult to adapt on campus until finally going to a psychiatrist provided by the government for Indonesian students"...

This was also conveyed by informant 3 (Japan) as follows:

...”“In Japan, I actually rented a house with three of my friends. As you know, Indonesian people love to gather with anyone else... someday we have to

celebrate something in our house, so that's like eight until ten people come to our house I guess... Actually it's just a get-together for a meal without alcohol and we didn't make any noise either – but can you guess what happened, there were three police that came to our house and how shocked we were at that time... It turned out that our neighbors reported to us that we were causing a commotion, so after the police warned us, my friends immediately went home and until now we have never held a gathering like that again... It was one of the most annoying experiences I've ever had in Japan... In Indonesia, if our neighbors feel like we are disturbing them, they will come to us and warn us politely... “Because of the language barrier, I often have difficulty ordering food, because in Japan I live in a fairly remote city, so they can hardly speak English. And when buying food, it is still manual and traditional, unlike in big cities, and that is quite a difficult problem while I was there”.....”

Differences in forms, symbols, and communication styles present significant challenges for students who study outside their home regions. Distinct cultural backgrounds result in different approaches to communication, especially in managing and resolving the differences that may arise during intercultural exchanges. These differences are not limited to language alone but also include customs, traditions, and food—all of which contribute to the occurrence of culture shock, as experienced by the students mentioned earlier. Such fundamental differences lead to culture shock within the processes and dynamics of communication and significantly affect the learning experience of Indonesian students abroad. When interacting with peers from various countries—each with its own customs and cultural systems—students may encounter negative impacts. Culture shock may manifest in the form of a **loss of identity, anxiety, irritability, depression, and reluctance to engage with individuals from different cultural backgrounds**. Consequently, these factors can disrupt the comfort and well-being of Indonesian students, whose primary goal is to pursue higher education abroad to achieve success and receive a better quality of education.

2. Intercultural Communication Among Indonesian Students

When individuals come into contact with and communicate across cultures, they naturally bring different cultural backgrounds into the interaction. These cultural contrasts often lead to discomfort, both psychologically and physically—commonly referred to as culture shock. Every person inherently maintains connections with others. Within any social relationship—especially among students—conflict and misunderstanding are inevitable aspects of communication.

Such miscommunication is common when individuals first arrive in a new cultural environment and leave behind their original culture. Visiting students frequently face difficulties, and some even experience **psychological distress** when struggling to adapt and overcome cultural differences. Misunderstandings can easily arise during interactions and communication with fellow students abroad, particularly when expectations and norms are culturally misaligned.

As conveyed by Informant 5 (America) as follows:

I think the funniest thing here is when someone says, “I’ll call you” ... “I’ll call you later.” That means not tonight in the evening, that means whenever ... before I die, they will call you later, some day probably ... that’s the truth... that’s what I had problems with in the beginning when I came to the United States; because when someone said, “I’ll call you later” I thought it was the same day ... but it’s not later ... someday ... whenever ... We keep in touch, but I know this now..”

Apart from that, informants who live in Russia also experienced several struggles while on campus.

...”When I first came to Russia I had a lot of struggle, especially to communicate with native... But it’s more complicated when it comes to adapting to the campus and class environment... Since I am majoring in Motion Design, that has a lot of practice. In the first year it makes me go crazy because there's a lot of language that I cannot understand so I can not do my

tasks to the fullest... It also affected my GPA that time... Since I have an introverted nature that makes me stressed and depressed at that time, but thankfully the Indonesian government provides a therapist for me, so I constantly keep in touch with the psychologist for a year, so I can adapt with all of my problems.”...

Based on the statements provided by the informant, it can be understood that intercultural communication between Indonesian students and students from other countries often takes place within the university environment or during academic activities. Intercultural communication occurs when the message sender belongs to one cultural group and the recipient belongs to another (Mulyana, 2005). It is the process of sharing information, ideas, or emotions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This sharing occurs through spoken and written language, as well as through body language, personal style, or other contextual cues that help clarify the message. According to Mulyana (2003), intercultural communication is the process of exchanging thoughts and meanings among people from different cultures.

3. Communication Accommodation.

Referring to the Communication Accommodation Theory previously discussed in the literature review, it can be concluded that Indonesian students studying abroad make adjustments in their communication behaviors to align with those of the local community. They observe and learn the commonly accepted communication norms in the host culture and adjust accordingly—particularly when initiating conversations. For example, they learn that in many Western cultures (e.g., Europe, the United States), it is customary to avoid starting conversations with personal questions. Instead, people typically begin with general topics such as the weather or by asking how someone is doing. This aligns with what West and Lynn (2008:217) stated—that individuals tend to regulate their behavior in relation to others, allowing them to adapt and modify their actions appropriately.

The type of accommodation most frequently applied by Indonesian students is convergence, where they adapt to the speaking pace, pauses, facial expressions

(such as smiling), eye contact, and both verbal and non-verbal behaviors of their counterparts. Indonesian students note that many people in the host countries tend to be more individualistic and less inclined toward small talk. However, they also observe that people—particularly from East Asia, Europe, and America—sometimes perceive Indonesians as smiling too frequently or inappropriately during conversations. While such smiling is considered a form of politeness and respect in Indonesian culture, it may cause confusion in cross-cultural contexts.

Therefore, convergence is a selective process in which individuals do not always apply every element of accommodation. Similarly, Indonesian students selectively adopt certain behaviors depending on the situational demands of their adaptation process. Drawing from the assumptions of Communication Accommodation Theory, we can observe that Indonesian students rely on observation and lived experience as they adapt. They also evaluate the accommodation strategies they use and assess the outcomes of their adaptation efforts. Ultimately, they engage in accommodation by integrating the norms of their native culture with their experiences abroad, aiming to construct an appropriate and respectful style of communication.

4. The U Curve Theory

When individuals are far from home—or from what they perceive as "home"—away from the environment in which they were raised and the routines they are accustomed to, they are inevitably exposed to new experiences or must learn new things in order to adapt and survive in their new surroundings. For Indonesian students, the challenges caused by culture shock experienced in external environments often lead to various emotional and psychological difficulties, including physical discomfort. These reactions commonly arise when individuals enter a new region or sociocultural environment that is different from their place of origin. Those who feel uncomfortable in their new surroundings may struggle to thrive as migrants, particularly in the context of academic life. This discomfort is closely related to their ability to adapt during the social adjustment process, which can become a burden for students—especially those from Indonesia significantly

influencing their cross-cultural experiences. Based on the research findings discussed in the previous chapter, the characteristics of culture shock experienced by Indonesian students can be categorized into four stages, particularly among Indonesian Students : Feeling enthusiastic and excited about exploring a new environment (Honeymoon Phase) , Experiencing difficulty in dealing with culture shock (Crisis Phase), Feeling capable of adapting to the new environment (Recovery Phase), Feeling comfortable and settled in the new environment (Adjustment Phase). The following is a detailed explanation of each phase:

- a. Feeling Enthusiastic (Honeymoon Phase). This phase occurs just before and shortly after arriving in the host country. Students generally feel excited, optimistic, and eager to experience new things. The novelty of the environment, people, and culture generates a sense of adventure and positivity. During this phase, challenges may be underestimated, and interactions are often approached with enthusiasm and curiosity. Hal tersebut dialami oleh informan 6 (Scotlandia) .."Even though I've been here before, I still feel excited because now I'm here to live and settle for several years to study"..."

Apart from that, informants who studied in America also shared their experiences when they first came to America.

... "I am very interested in the country, I am also curious because America is one of the most powerful superpowers in the world and I am interested in studying there"... "I am very excited, happy that my dream of studying in America has finally come true"...

- b. Experiencing Difficulty (Crisis Phase). In this phase, Indonesian students begin to face the reality of cultural differences, and their initial excitement may turn into stress or confusion. The ways in which students respond to misunderstandings or communication breakdowns vary widely. Conflicts and misunderstandings occur not only with fellow students but often also within the broader community. These issues are often rooted in differences in social norms, values, and

expectations—particularly in areas such as living arrangements and neighborhood dynamics. This phase—also referred to as the crisis stage emerges when students realize that their expectations do not match the reality they encounter, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. Everything in the new environment may appear difficult, unpleasant, or even overwhelming. The duration of this stage depends on the individual’s ability to cope. Hal tersebut dialami oleh informan yang studi di England,

...”In my first year of college, I had concerns about making friends with natives, because they are difficult to approach ... Most of them are very individualistic, and find it difficult to open up to new people, especially from other countries, especially Asians ... they don't like small talk like us Indonesians ... I don't have too many native friends here, in fact I have more friends from other countries, most of whom are Asian ... I've only made a few friends with natives, and that's because we've had projects together or had to do assignments together ...

There’s also Indonesian students that have lived in Russia for 5 years who mention about her struggle to adapt with the Russian language that made her suffer from stress and depression for a year.

When I first came to Russia I had a lot of struggle, especially to communicate with native... But it’s more complicated when it comes to adapting to the campus and class environment... Since I am majoring in Motion Design, that has a lot of practice. In the first year it makes me go crazy because there's a lot of language that I cannot understand so I can not do my tasks to the fullest... It also affected my GPA that time... “

From the in-depth interviews and observations conducted, it is evident that many Indonesian students face significant difficulties during this stage, including feelings of discomfort, stress, and confusion as they attempt to understand and adapt to their new environment.

- c. **Feeling Capable of Adapting (Recovery Phase)** In the recovery phase, students begin to develop coping mechanisms and adapt more effectively to their new environment. This phase is marked by a gradual sense of mastery, as students learn how to navigate the social and academic systems in the host country. Most of the Indonesian students interviewed expressed a growing sense of competence in adapting to their host culture. They began to understand local norms, adjust their behaviors accordingly, and engage more confidently in daily activities. Hal tersebut dialami oleh informan yang studi di Skotlandia,

..."Yes, because I realized I couldn't stay sad forever, I looked for solutions. Sometimes I would hunt for Indonesian restaurants once a week so I could cure my longing for home cooking. Sometimes I would ask my mom to send Indonesian food like chili sauce here. And I often kept in touch."

The female student who studied in Japan mentioned that ,

..."I don't have any difficulty making friends here, at first there might be a language barrier but then I got used to it quickly and they Japanese don't close themselves off to us either...the key is don't be shy to start the conversation first, because most of them are shy(actually they want to start a conversation but are too shy)"...

Feeling Comfortable (Adjustment Phase). A positive outcome is observed when Indonesian students successfully adapt and integrate into their new environment. However, if adaptation fails, culture shock may negatively affect their physical and psychological well-being. Initially, most Indonesian students encounter culture shock upon entering a new cultural environment. Over time, however, and with successful adaptation, they begin to feel more at home and comfortable. This sense of belonging requires a prolonged adaptation process, which varies based on each student's resilience and strategy for overcoming the crisis stage. At this point, students have entered the adjustment

phase, characterized by emotional stability, satisfaction, and functional competence in their new cultural setting. A student who studied in Japan also shares her experiences while living in Japan,

... "Just tolerate each other and understand their personalities. Because of the language barrier, I sometimes use Google Translate when communicating." "Japan and all its culture are very comfortable, so I really want to learn the culture, language and want to focus more on completing my studies."

Based on the interviews and observations conducted during this research, it can be concluded that all participants eventually managed to adapt and integrate into their new environments. This ability to adjust ultimately gave rise to a sense of comfort and belonging, encouraging them to remain in and embrace their host countries.

5. Analysis of the Causes of Culture Shock that Occurs in Indonesian Students

a. Culture

Cultural differences play a significant role in contributing to the experience of culture shock among Indonesian students as they attempt to adapt to and integrate within a new social environment. The ways in which these students respond and behave during this adjustment process not only influence their interpersonal interactions but also contribute to the development of their self-concept and cultural value orientation. As Graham Murdock (1989) asserts, every social group is engaged in ongoing dialogue that constructs meaning and shapes the expressive dimensions of social life. These processes are essential in determining how individuals understand their identities and internalize cultural values, particularly in contexts involving cultural dissonance and psychological stressors.

Culture itself encompasses a broad range of social dimensions, including language, communication styles, behavior patterns, and

mechanisms for adaptation and interaction. Accordingly, the process of self-adjustment and behavioral response can be understood through an individual's perceptual, cognitive, and affective dimensions in interpreting their experiences of culture shock and cultural difference. The ability to adjust to one's environment and manage these challenges becomes especially critical in navigating social life within a new cultural setting. This is consistent with insights shared by Informant 3 during the following interview segment:

"Yes, it's comfortable and fits well, but it takes time to adapt, and everyone adapts differently. For me, I felt comfortable after 6 months." Japan and all its culture are very comfortable, so I really want to learn the culture, language and want to focus more on completing my studies."

Statement from informant 3 The above can be interpreted to mean that the process of adapting to a new environment takes time. The adaptation process usually requires an introduction stage after getting to know each other, then moving on to the understanding stage, and once you understand your new environment, you can adapt to the new environment.

b. Language

Linguistic competence and individual perceptions of a new culture represent two fundamental components in the process of interaction and adaptation within unfamiliar cultural settings. For Indonesian students, the adaptation journey involves an extended period of learning and engagement with the host culture. The use of language and the construction of self-concept in communicative interactions play a pivotal role in shaping social interpretations and judgments. In some cases, the specific language choices and self-perceptions expressed in communication may inadvertently exclude or undermine inclusive engagement across diverse social groups.

Language functions as a central medium in intercultural communication. Language barriers frequently hinder effective communication and cultural adaptation. In particular, a limited understanding of the local language, along with unfamiliarity with the communicative styles of certain cultural groups, can diminish Indonesian students' capacity to express themselves and comprehend others, especially in countries where English is not widely spoken in daily life. Moreover, reliance on digital translation tools such as Google Translate may shape students' interpretations of conversational norms, contributing to the development of their communicative behaviors and cultural self-concept in relation to the experience of culture shock and adjustment.

This idea was illustrated in the testimony of one participant—a male Indonesian student studying at Khon Kaen University in Thailand—who shared the following experience:

..” I think the hardest thing here was when I first came to this country. I feel sorry before, but don't mean to be condescending. Every time I hear a native do the conversation I always start to laugh because I'm not familiar with that language.... Then I also have to learn Thai letters which in my opinion are very difficult to understand... I also have the problem when I wanna buy something, even though our face is quite similar to the native, but they recognize that we're different from our language, so they try to make the price higher than the normal price”

6. An Analysis of Efforts Made by Indonesian Students to Overcome Culture Shock Abroad

a. Learning Culture

Each Indonesian student pursuing education abroad experiences culture shock in unique and personal ways. Despite encountering unexpected challenges and unfamiliar situations, these experiences do not typically deter them from continuing their studies or compel them to return to Indonesia. Instead, students benefit from

adopting an open and proactive attitude toward learning and understanding the new culture, including its differing norms and values, as a critical part of the adaptation process. Over time, as they become more acquainted with the cultural context—its values, communication styles, beliefs, and behaviors—they gradually begin to navigate social interactions with greater ease and even humor. A key milestone in this adjustment occurs when students discover foods that suit their taste and adapt to new climatic conditions, leading to increased feelings of satisfaction, independence, and well-being. This marks the final phase of culture shock, where individuals start to feel comfortable and competent within their new environment.

At this stage, newcomers often come to the realization that their host culture is neither superior nor inferior to their own, but rather different in its unique ways of addressing life's challenges. This recognition enables them to identify both the strengths and limitations of the new culture, using these insights as learning experiences to guide appropriate and adaptive behaviors. The integration of new cultural insights with existing values and knowledge fosters a sense of belonging and identity formation. Through this process, students redefine their self-concept, developing a more mature and nuanced understanding of themselves. Ultimately, successful adaptation leads to improved cross-cultural communication skills and the ability to thrive within a different cultural setting. This positive outcome illustrates that culture shock, while initially challenging, can contribute significantly to personal growth and intercultural competence. To facilitate this process, it is essential for students to adopt an attitude of openness, respect, and acceptance toward cultural diversity. Embracing cultural heterogeneity not only smooths the adaptation process but also enhances students' overall experience of living and studying abroad. The phenomenon of culture shock among Indonesian students studying abroad differs depending on their stage in the academic journey, with first-semester students tending to experience more intense cultural disorientation than those who are further along in their studies. This is particularly evident during the initial phase of adjustment, as new students are introduced to a foreign cultural environment that significantly contrasts with their familiar home culture.

This sudden exposure can result in feelings of discomfort, anxiety, and in some cases, psychological distress or trauma. In their home country, Indonesian students are immersed in a shared cultural framework that influences daily interactions, including shared values, beliefs, aesthetic norms, modes of expression, language, and behavioral and communication patterns. These cultural elements are deeply embedded in everyday life and continuously reinforced through communal living and social engagement within a culturally homogeneous environment. Therefore, when these students begin their studies abroad, particularly during the first semester, they are abruptly separated from their cultural grounding and must begin adjusting to a new social and cultural system. Encounters with individuals from different cultural backgrounds—whether through chance or planned interaction—further highlight stark contrasts in language use, nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions and gestures, and communication styles, all of which may differ significantly from what they are accustomed to in Indonesia.

b. Learning Language

Linguistic proficiency, along with individual traits and cultural beliefs, plays a fundamental role in shaping one's ability to interact and adapt effectively to new social environments. For students, particularly those from international backgrounds, the process of cultural adjustment necessitates sustained engagement and a gradual understanding of the host culture through interpersonal interaction and observation.

In this context, language use and the self-concept that emerges through communication with the surrounding social environment contribute significantly to how social meanings are constructed and interpreted. However, when language and self-perception within communication reflect a rejection—whether intentional or unintentional—of inclusive forms of dialogue, it may hinder mutual understanding and create communication gaps across social groups.

Language is a critical medium in intercultural communication, and linguistic barriers often pose significant limitations to cultural effectiveness. A lack of linguistic knowledge, combined with unfamiliar speaking styles of certain cultural groups, can impede Indonesian students' ability to fully understand themselves and others within a new sociolinguistic setting—particularly in countries where the primary language of daily interaction differs from their own.

Furthermore, the reliance on digital translation tools or internet-mediated language may shape a surface-level comprehension of linguistic expressions. This form of mediated understanding may influence how Indonesian students interpret conversational discourse, internalize cultural meanings, and construct self-concept in the midst of navigating culture shock. Thus, language not only serves as a communicative tool but also as a mediator of identity and adaptation in cross-cultural interaction.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

A. Conclusion

This study aims to determine the stages, causes, and efforts Indonesian students make in dealing with culture shock when continuing their education abroad. Based on the results of the research, the author reached the following conclusions:

1. The cultural adaptation process experienced by Indonesian students abroad typically follows four distinct stages of culture shock: (1) an initial stage of enthusiasm, commonly referred to as the honeymoon phase; (2) a period of difficulty and disorientation, known as the crisis phase; (3) a gradual adjustment stage characterized by growing adaptability, identified as the recovery phase; and (4) a stage of comfort and acceptance within the new environment, referred to as the adjustment phase.
2. Culture shock among Indonesian students studying abroad is primarily caused by **cultural differences** and **language barriers**. Cultural differences, including variations in social norms, communication styles, and daily customs, can create confusion and discomfort as students struggle to adjust to unfamiliar environments. These differences often lead to misunderstandings and feelings of isolation. Additionally, **language** plays a vital role in effective communication; limited proficiency in the host country's language—especially in non-English-speaking nations—can hinder academic performance and social interaction. These communication difficulties may reduce students' confidence and increase stress during the adaptation process. Together, these factors contribute significantly to the experience of culture shock among Indonesian students overseas.
3. **Efforts undertaken by Indonesian students to cope with culture shock abroad** typically include two key strategies: (1) **Learning the local culture**, which helps facilitate smoother adaptation by fostering greater cultural awareness and sensitivity; and (2) **Improving language proficiency**, which

enhances their ability to communicate effectively within the social environment, promoting mutual understanding and easing integration into the host community.

B. Research Limitations

This study has limitations, as there are still many areas that could be discussed in more detail regarding the phenomenon of culture shock for Indonesian students. Furthermore, the selection of a single source from each country is also a weakness of this study. It would be beneficial for researchers wishing to conduct similar research to draw on the limitations discussed in this study.

C. Suggestion

1. For Indonesian students who wish to continue their studies abroad

For Indonesian students, cultural differences are crucial to understanding, as understanding other cultures will help them feel more comfortable in a new environment. Every student living abroad inevitably experiences culture shock. This can be overcome by learning about the culture they're living in and understanding its characteristics before settling in a new environment. Furthermore, conduct in-depth research on the country you're planning to study in. This will help prevent culture shock and potentially uncomfortable experiences in your new environment. Furthermore, learning the host country's language should be a key preparation before deciding to continue studying and settling abroad. This is because communication is a key pillar of social interaction.

2. For Further Researchers

In addition to in-depth interviews, future researchers can conduct research in the field of intercultural communication using quantitative methods through questionnaires and selecting a specific country with a larger number of informants. This will allow future researchers to obtain deeper, more complete, and more comprehensive field data and analyze phenomena more thoroughly and thoroughly.

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ATTACHMENT

A. Research Interview Draft

Interview Transcript

Informant 1

1. Malaysia
 2. Length of stay abroad: 2 years
- A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?
- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *At that time, I wanted to challenge myself to be more independent and seek new experiences.*
 - b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *When I first came, I was really excited, even though the culture isn't that different, I was still happy*
 - c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *Because the culture is not too different, overall I feel comfortable living in Malaysia*
 - d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *So far so good,*
- B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.
- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *The majority of people in Malaysia are Muslim, just like in Indonesia, but the hijab styles of Indonesians and Malays are quite different, and Malaysians can usually tell the difference. And sometimes that's what makes us a bit ostracized by the local community... they'll only be friendly to Indonesian students, but not to the Indonesian workers who work there*
 - b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *Even though the cultures aren't that different, there are still bound to be differences. Homesickness also plays a role because everything is usually provided at home, while at that time I was expected to be independent*
- C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?
- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?

- *It's homesickness that's sometimes hard for me to handle*
- b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *I started to understand the culture, understand the language and always remember that I have to fight here*
- c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *My main motivation was my parents and my future, so at that time I tried to be strong*

Informant 2

1. Thailand
 2. Length of stay abroad: 1 year
- A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?
- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *I applied to many countries for my master's studies. And thank God, Thailand was the country I ultimately chose for my master's degree*
 - b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *Firstly, I was very excited, because the atmosphere was still a holiday atmosphere, right?*
 - c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *I really struggled with the language, and I had to be careful about what I ate. Some of the lecturers there also had difficulty speaking English, which really confused me*
 - d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *At the beginning, yes, I was excited, there will always be a feeling of discomfort because we live in a foreign country and far from our family.*
- B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.
- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *language, food, and environment because the majority there are Buddhists*
 - b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *I think Thai is very complicated because there are so many letters. You also need to be smart about finding halal food*
- C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?
- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *I spend more time taking Thai language courses so that it will be easier to adapt*
 - b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?

- *language lessons were more intense at that time*
- c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
- *want to finish my studies soon*

Informant 3

1. Japan
 2. Length of stay abroad: 6 months
- A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?
- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *At that time, I just tried to apply, thank God, it turned out to be a blessing*
 - b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *Who doesn't like Japan? Honestly, at that time I was very happy and very excited to explore Japan*
 - c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *Because I wasn't near the capital at the time, I couldn't explore much because the village I lived in was so far from Tokyo. So sometimes I felt bored with the routine.*
 - d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *At first it was uncomfortable but after a while you got used to it*
- B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.
- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *Japanese people are very individualistic and don't want to be disturbed. In Japan, I actually rented a house with three of my friends. As you know, Indonesian people love to gather with anyone else... someday we have to celebrate something in our house, so that's like eight until ten people come to our house I guess... Actually it's just a get-together for a meal without alcohol and we didn't make any noise either – but can you guess what happened, there were three police that came to our house and how shocked we were at that time... It turned out that our neighbors reported to us that we were causing a commotion, so after the police warned us, my friends immediately went home and until now we have never held a gathering like that again... It was one of the most annoying experiences I've ever had in Japan... In Indonesia, if our neighbors feel like we are disturbing them, they will come to us and warn us politely... "Because of the language barrier, I often had difficulty ordering food. I lived in a fairly remote town in Japan, so they barely spoke English. And even buying food was still done manually and traditionally, unlike in big cities, and that was quite a challenge while I was there."*
 - b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?

- No

C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?

- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *Because I'm not very fluent in Japanese, sometimes I still have difficulties*
- b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *Just tolerate each other and understand their personalities. Because of the language barrier, I sometimes use Google Translate when communicating*
- c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *Japan and all its culture are very comfortable, so I really want to learn the culture, language and want to focus more on completing my studies.*

Informant 4

1. Russia
2. Length of stay abroad: 3 years

A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?

- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *At that time, I chose Russia because it was one of the best places to study design, and I was also interested in the country, so I finally decided to study here.*
- b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *a little nervous too*
- c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *it's not really a good fit, but I'm trying to adjust*
- d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *I'm under a lot of stress here, because I wear the hijab and people see it as something strange, so it makes it difficult for me to make friends*

B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.

- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *The people here are very Individual... In Indonesia, especially after class, we used to go hang out or get to know each other, but in this country people just come to class after that and go to their home... even if they start a conversation it is just for discussing a task or homework". "In here, I see people freely getting drunk everywhere even in the afternoon, which is very different from our country". "People here are very individualistic, they never chit-chat like we used to in Indonesia". "difficult to make friends, difficult to adapt on campus until finally going to a psychiatrist provided by the government for Indonesian students*

- b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *"I'm under a lot of stress here, because I wear the hijab and people see it as something strange, so it makes it difficult for me to make friends. Apart from language, they don't like to smile, they don't like small talk, which is also different from Indonesians who are very friendly.*
- C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?
- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *feelings of shame, anxiety, fear of being rejected when starting communication with other students.*
 - b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *Because of the help of the psychiatrist, I slowly began to understand the Russian perspective and began to interact without fear with the students there.*
 - c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *Even though there are many struggles, I have to complete this study quickly and accurately*

Informant 5

- 1. American
 - 2. Length of stay abroad: 3 years
- A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?
- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *I am very interested in the country, and I am also curious because America is one of the most powerful superpowers in the world, and I am interested in studying there*
 - b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *I'm really excited, happy that my dream of studying in America has finally come true*
 - c. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *There was some culture shock regarding language and slang.*
- B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.
- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *It's really hard to find food there, there's only junk food or fast food everywhere, and the taste doesn't suit me at all. That's quite a struggle for me" ... "The language too, I think the funniest thing here is when someone says, "I'll call you" ... "I'll call you later." That means not tonight in the evening, that means whenever ... before I die, they will call you later, some day probably ... that's the truth... that's what I had problems with in the beginning when I came to the United States; because when someone said, "I'll call you later" I thought it was the*

same day ... but it's not later ... someday ... whenever ... We keep in touch, but I know this now.

- b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *Because it was difficult to find suitable food, I lost quite a bit of weight. As a result, my immune system weakened while I was there, and I got sick easily.*
- C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?
- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *Because cooking and buying ingredients myself takes quite a bit of time and the prices are also more expensive, so I have to set aside some of my pocket money and allocate more for food.*
 - b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *I often buy my own cooking ingredients, so I cook for myself while I'm there. When it comes to slang, I'm starting to get used to it so I don't easily misunderstand what they mean.*
 - c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *I want to focus more on my education, so I really prioritize my health, so I can focus more and not interfere with my academics.*

Informant 6

- 1. Scothlandia
 - 2. Length of stay abroad: 2 years
- A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?
- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *I really like Europe, and coincidentally this is also one of my dream campuses, and my parents also agree, so why not?*
 - b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *Even though I've been here before, I still feel excited because now I'm here to live and settle for several years to study.*
 - c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *As expected, everything is fun and according to expectations, but sometimes I feel homesick. Even though it's comfortable here, I still miss Indonesia.*
 - d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *very comfortable although it takes some getting used to.*
- B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.
- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?

- *I'm very close to my family, so it's a bit of a problem, and sometimes I feel sad because I miss home and Indonesia. And I often miss the food, too*
- b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *Because I really like home cooking, I lost my appetite a bit while I was here, but the result was quite good.*

C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?

- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *For everyday use, I often eat European food, which is very bland and doesn't suit my palate. And it's also more expensive.*
- b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *Yes, because I realized I couldn't stay sad all the time, I looked for a solution. Sometimes I hunted for Indonesian restaurants once a week so I could cure my longing for home cooking. Sometimes I asked my mom to send Indonesian food like chili sauce here. And I often kept in touch with my family in my free time to cure homesickness.*
- c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *I want to enjoy myself more here, so I don't want to think about things that can make me down so I can focus better*

Informant 7

1. England
2. Length of stay abroad: 1 year

A. What are the stages of culture shock that occur to Indonesian students abroad?

- a. What are the reasons for continuing your studies abroad?
 - *I've been eyeing this campus for a long time, and I've also done a little research about the environment, so I chose to study there at that time.*
- b. How did you feel when you first came abroad? -
 - *I'm definitely very happy, especially since studying abroad is on my wish list.*
- c. Are the social and cultural conditions abroad compatible with those in your home country?
 - *It's as expected, according to the research too. So far so good*
- d. Do you feel comfortable studying abroad?
 - *It's as expected, according to the research too. So far so good*

B. Causes of culture shock among Indonesian students in Indonesia.

- a. In your opinion, what causes you to experience culture shock when you are abroad?
 - *In the campus environment, they really prioritize equality and are very concerned with humanity. Apart from that, during the study, the*

assignments were really very complex, to the point of being quite stressful

- b. Are you experiencing culture shock in every activity you undertake less than optimally? If so, why do you think this might be?
 - *I often feel it's impolite to call lecturers by their names directly; it's awkward and uncomfortable. But if I call them "Mr./Ms." It actually makes them uncomfortable... Besides, the many and complex assignments really stress me out. Plus, when I was there during COVID, it was difficult to leave the dormitory, and I felt really stressed."*

C. How do Indonesian students overcome foreign culture shock?

- a. What are the inhibiting factors that make the adjustment process take longer?
 - *At that time, COVID-19 meant I often thought about my family. COVID-19 also made it difficult to make friends. Most native English speakers are hard to approach, so most of my friends are from Asia, especially students on exchange programs*
- b. What are the supporting factors that make the adjustment process faster?
 - *My family often encourages me, my friends in Indonesia also often keep in touch to encourage me while in England*
- c. What is your motivation to continue studying abroad?
 - *I want to complete this study well, I want to finish it quickly too, so as much as possible I don't overthink things that make me worry.*