

CULTURE SHOCK AND COMMUNICATION ADAPTATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS AT SUMBAWA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRAK

Culture shock merupakan perubahan lingkungan baru atau proses perubahan yang dialami mahasiswa asing di Sumbawa Universitas Teknologi yang pindah dari negara asalnya ke Indonesia. Sedangkan adaptasi komunikasi adalah sebuah proses mahasiswa asing beradaptasi dengan lingkungan baru tempat mereka tinggal. Kejutan budaya dan adaptasi akan terjadi mengalami perubahan yang sama ketika mahasiswa asing tidak mampu beradaptasi dengan lingkungan atau masyarakat di tempat baru, menimbulkan stres atau kepanikan terhadap apa yang mereka hadapi di tempat adaptasi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui caranya mahasiswa asing mengatasi Culture Shock ketika beradaptasi dengan lingkungan baru. Metode yang digunakan penulis dalam hal ini penelitian yang dilakukan adalah Metode Kualitatif dengan pendekatan etnografi. Ada tiga jenis pengumpulan data yaitu penulis menggunakan: observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Dan berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang penulis Diperoleh, penggunaan bahasa dan budaya Indonesia menjadi salah satu kendala bagi mahasiswa asing untuk beradaptasi lingkungan Sumbawa.

Kata kunci; Komunikasi lintas budaya, *Culture Shock*, Adaptasi Komunikasi

ABSTRACT

Culture shock is a change in a new environment or a process of adjustment of a new environment by foreign students at Sumbawa University of Technology who move from their home country to Indonesia. Meanwhile, communication adaptation is a process of foreign students adapting to the new environment they live in. Culture shock and adaptation will experience the same changes when foreign students are unable to adapt to the environment or society in the new place, causing stress or panic about what they face in the place of adaptation. The aim of this research is to find out how foreign students overcome Culture Shock when adapting to a new environment. The method used by the author in this fesearch is the Qualitative Method with an ethnographic approach. There are three types of data collection that the author uses: observation, interviews and documentation. And based on the results of the research that the author obtained, the use of Indonesian language and culture is one of the obstacles for foreign students to adapt to the Sumbawa environment.

Keywords: Cross-cultural communication; *Culture Shock*; Communication Adaptation

1. INTRODUCTION

Sumbawa University of Technology (UTS) is a private university in West Nusa Tenggara. UTS has thousands of students from all over Indonesia and various countries, as well as hundreds of faculty members and researchers. They are a young generation equipped with strong abilities and knowledge and ready to achieve their dreams. UTS has the motto “UTS Down to Earth and Global”. Thanks to the GAS (Global Ambassador Scholarship) program which is available for overseas students, UTS is well known in several countries. Around seventy to eighty Indonesian embassies abroad were sent by UTS to inform them about the program and request aid to be distributed in their respective areas. A total of 2,476 students from 80 countries around the world registered for the Global Ambassador Scholarship program two months after registration opened. UTS provides full scholarships to foreign students from return tickets from their home country to UTS, pocket money and even a dormitory is provided for them to live in. Of the number of foreign students who registered, only around 29 students were selected to become UTS foreign students.

The presence of foreign students makes UTS more advanced of course, but it cannot be denied that every foreign student who comes to study at UTS will definitely experience changes in the living environment of their area of origin. Either they experienced culture shock or a very different adaptation and the adjustment took a long time, of course. Differences in culture, language, way of dressing and religion are things that foreign students at UTS really need to adapt to.

In Indonesian, “culture shock” means “culture shock”, a term used to describe a person’s condition and feelings when they are in a new socio-cultural environment that disturbs them. Cultural diversity is related to shock culture. This includes the shock of entering a new environment and adaptation to new habits. According to Ward et al. (2001), Culture Shock is an active process of dealing with changes in a new environment. The phase of adjusting to new habits in a new environment is certainly difficult because people enter the new environment with different cultural backgrounds, which makes students experience culture shock. The feeling of restlessness caused by losing all initial habits to adapt to a new environment is the cause of Culture Shock.

Students from other countries who join through GAS certainly need to adapt to get used to the culture and communication of the surrounding community and avoid Culture Shock. Foreign students must be able to communicate fluently in Indonesian in order to interact with local students. Culture determines communication. “It is impossible to think about communication without thinking about its cultural context and meaning,” said Edward T. Hall (Kress, 1993:13 in Mulyana, 2010:3). Communication and culture both influence each other’s development. Where communication creates culture and culture creates communication. One of the new experiences that must be followed or faced by someone who adapts to that place is talking or speaking with people from different cultures. Despite different cultures and ways of communicating, humans need other people because their nature is always changing.

Not all foreign students who move from their home country to a new country experience Culture Shock; many of them are able to adapt to their new environment, so they don’t experience this, but quite a few foreign students are also unable to adapt to the environment of their new country. So it is not uncommon for international students to experience shock and stress because they are in a different environment. Sometimes, being an individual is difficult to adapt and leave the environment that causes discomfort and consider the previous environment better. Individuals tend to seek protection and gather with people from the same country (Mulyana, 2006).

The basic concept of this research will be analyzed from the perspective of Cross-Cultural communication and examined through the Culture Shock Theory put forward by Oberg (1960). Oberg describes cultural shock as fear caused by losing symbols of familiar social relationships (in Frandawati, 2009). According to Alo (2009), the aim of cross-cultural communication is to reduce uncertainty among other people, namely:

- 1) Pre-contact phase, or the phase of forming an impression, through verbal and non-verbal symbols.
- 2) Initial contact and impression, initial contact and impression, which is an additional response to the initial impression.
- 3) Closure, implicit personality development and attributes allow you to open up your previously closed self.

Then, looking at the process that causes culture shock itself, according to Samovar (2010) in Sekeon (2011), there are 4 stages of Culture Shock :

- 1) Honeymoon Phase, In preparation for adapting to a new culture, the honeymoon phase is filled with excitement, optimism and euphoria. This is the phase that everyone loves.
- 2) The pain phase in the culture shock phase is the crisis phase when a new environment begins to develop. At this point, foreign students face a very difficult situation. They may feel uncomfortable, anxious, or want to deny what they feel, but be unable to do anything.
- 3) The adaptation phase is when a person begins to understand his new culture and can predict what is happening in his environment.
- 4) Adjustment Phase, after going through such a long adaptation period, foreign students no longer experience difficulties in the adjustment phase, where they have understood the important aspects of their new culture.

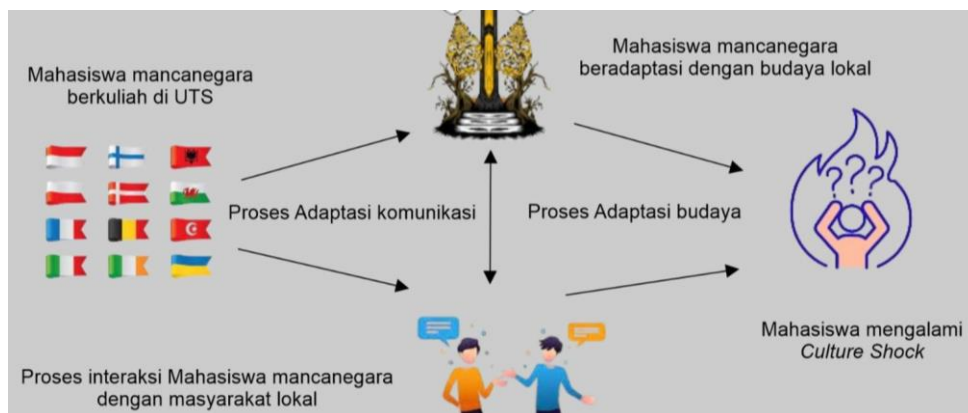
So from the explanation that has been explained, the aim of this research is to find out the Culture Shock that foreign students face when in their new environment and how the communication process of foreign students adapts when they are in their new environment.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative research methods and uses an ethnographic approach to understand how people in a community interact and what is seen in their daily lives. Ethnography looks at human behavior and the evolution of communication technology in certain socio-cultural contexts. According to Sugiyono (2018), qualitative research is a type of research based on philosophy that is used to study scientific conditions (experiments).

The focus of the research that will be carried out in the campus area is at the Sumbawa University Of Technology and will discuss how foreign students experience and deal with Culture Shock when adapting to their new environment. This research was conducted from September to December 2023.

In this study, the research subjects were informants related to communication with foreign students at Sumbawa University of Technology. According to Moleong (2006; 132) Informants are people who are thought to master and understand data, information or facts from a research object. In this research, informants will be selected purposively, which means taking samples based on certain considerations. This method can be described as the process of sampling and then selecting the sample based on a specific objective..



Picture 1. Adaptation process of culture and communication

2.1. Time and place

This research was conducted on the Sumbawa University of Technology campus, Moyo Hulu sub-district, Sumbawa Besar Regency, Nusa Tenggara Province West. And this research was also conducted online, because in part Some of the foreign students who were speakers were outside the island Sumbawa. The author has also communicated or promised in advance with sources via WhatsApp and Instagram media. This research Carried out in November-December 2023.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Cultural Differences

Foreign students may experience difficulties in communicating due to language differences, social norms, Value systems, and ways of interacting that are different from their home culture. Cultural differences Make foreign students experience obstacles in the culture in Sumbawa because the culture of their Country of origin is different from the culture in Indonesia, especially in Sumbawa. Like the opinion of the Interviewee who admires culture and admits that the culture in Sumbawa is beautiful and different. As the Source responded below:

".. The diversity of culture, local customs and traditions is truly beautiful.." (Sasa)

Interviewee D's opinion about the cultural differences that exist in his country and in Indonesia, Especially in Sumbawa, is very interesting, apart from making him proud with his kind and polite words, He also really attracts readers who see the results of the responses given. The opinions of the sources are As follows:

".. As an international student, my views on Sumbawa culture may vary. I find the rich culture fascinating, I appreciate the dynamic traditions, local customs and warmth of the people. The unique combination of Indonesian heritage, local practices and the beauty of Sumbawa's natural landscape captured my interest. I also face challenges in adapting to certain cultural aspects, such as the prevalence of gossip, Communication barriers, or the need to overcome trust issues in social interactions. Overall, my perspective Can include a combination of interest in the rich culture of Sumbawa and the complexity inherent in adapting to unique societal dynamics. (David)

Sumbawa is a small city, but it has a lot of natural beauty, customs and traditions that are still strong Among the people of Sumbawa, making resource person M like the cultural diversity that exists in Sumbawa, As the resource person responded, namely:

".. Sumbawa is a beautiful city and I love its cultural diversity, I had the opportunity to attend its cultural Day and was impressed by the amount of diversity this island has.." (Mogtaba)

There is no need to doubt the natural beauty of Indonesia, especially in Sumbawa. Even outsiders can Praise the natural beauty of Sumbawa, let alone the author, as the source said as follows:

"..It is a beautiful culture with many interesting unique traditions.." (Ahmed)

The conclusion of this discussion is the beauty of Sumbawa's natural diversity and its beauty which is still Very well maintained and preserved by the people of Sumbawa, making everyone *who sees it feel amazed And amazed by the beauty of Sumbawa's nature.*

3.2. Development of Cultural Awareness

Developing cultural awareness is the process of improving or maintaining people's habits while developing culture. Preserving the culture in Sumbawa and maintaining its sustainability. Foreign students really like unique cultures, if as local people they can preserve their culture, then foreigners will be afraid to destroy the culture that has been guarded and preserved. As stated by the following source:

".. As a foreign student, I really support increasing awareness in preserving culture, so that culture does not become extinct.." (Ahmed)

Interviewee S provided feedback on how to develop public awareness in order to preserve existing culture. The interviewee's opinion was as follows:

".. Always maintain culture, so that it remains preserved.." (Sasa)

Resource persons as foreign students can help the community to develop culture, how do they do it? By taking part in ensuring that culture is not damaged, this has become one way of helping resource persons. This is as stated by the resource person, namely:

".. Following organizations in society regarding culture.." (Arsalan)

Apart from that, a sense of mutual respect for cultures, even though they are different, must still be instilled so that they do not respect each other's differences. The resource person was very aware of always instilling respect for change. One of the things conveyed by the resource person was:

".. I always support every culture by respecting differences, and different cultures.." (Mogtaba)

Based on the explanation above, there is a process of developing cultural awareness for local communities and foreign students, so that foreign students do not go around mocking or destroying the cultures that exist in Indonesia, especially in Sumbawa.

3.3. Supports Adaptation

Adaptation is a process of self-adjustment, and the time needed for adaptation varies depending on how a person interacts with their new environment. Supporting adaptation, namely supporting individuals who have just come to a new environment so that they don't feel stressed and don't feel lonely, is one way of supporting individual adaptation. The same thing was conveyed by the resource person, namely:

".. Trying to communicate with local people or local students.."
(David)

Apart from that, resource persons can also always take part in activities in the community or activities on campus, therefore, as resource persons, they must be clever in taking care of themselves so that they can become familiar with the local community so that the community can get help in adapting. One of the students' opinions is:

".. I will take part in traditional or organizational events to get to know the local community.." (Ahmed)

Supporting each other even though they are from different countries is something that must be done in order to support each other in the adaptation process, as the resource person said that if there is support from the environment, the resource person will easily adapt to his new environment.

".. Yes, I want the community or other students to support me in adapting to this new environment.." (Sasa)

In the process of supporting adaptation, the role that is really needed here is the local community and students, who are able to support foreign students in adapting, because if there is no support from the local community, the students' self-confidence will be difficult to obtain and optimism will be prevented from being able to adapt more quickly. As imagined.

3.4. The Importance Of Communication Skills

Communication skills are the ability to listen and capture information correctly and convey information simply, without double meaning or ambiguity. In communication, skills also have an influence because a person will be judged apart from their language and also by their manner or skills when communicating. As the source said:

".. As a foreign student who has just come to Indonesia, especially in Sumbawa, I still maintain my communication skills, because that is also assessed by other people.." (Arsalan)

To always be skilled in communicating, the language used must be one that can be understood by the environment. As the source said:

".. That's how I feel, language must be understood. To not be an influence on language skills when communicating.." (David)

The resource person must have thoughts that can make him confident when in a new environment and always try to understand and try to maximize his way of communicating, so that the environment always sees that the resource person is capable of maintaining his communication skills. As one source said:

".. I, always want to learn to use Indonesian properly and correctly, to communicate with people in the environment where I live, and always maintain the way I speak to other people.." (Sasa)

To be able to have communication skills, good language is needed to be able to support communicating with people around us. Apart from that, the resource person also needs to have friends who can teach the language in their new environment, as stated by the following resource person:

".. Having friends is very good, it can help in understanding the language well so that you can maximize your ability to quickly adapt to the environment.." (Mogtaba)

From the results of the discussion above, the author concludes the importance of communication skills for foreign students in every new place, but there are quite a few who are still trying to be able to learn to use Indonesian correctly when communicating, because language is an important point in terms of communication in the Indonesian region, especially Sumbawa.

3.5. Honeymoon Phase

The honeymoon phase is when someone has lived in a new place and is trying to adjust to the new culture and environment. At this stage, a person is still very interested in a new atmosphere and full of enthusiasm, according to Ibnu Hamid (2013:376). In this phase, resource person D gave his opinion about the difficulty of adapting to a new environment because of the local people who often gossip and were seen directly by source D, so that person D felt uncomfortable with the gossiping habits of the Sumbawa people, as stated by the source as follows:

".. exploring Sumbawa University of Technology has several challenges. Gossiping about uncertain things is common, making it difficult to find open-minded people. Many approach you solely to gather information for further gossip. The rise of fake friendships and other deceptive behavior adds to the complexity of the situation, creating difficulties in building trustworthy relationships. These experiences make it difficult for us to navigate the environment, because humans have proven themselves untrustworthy.." (David)

The difference in language is one of the difficulties of adjustment for foreign students, as felt by resource person A who still has difficulty speaking Indonesian, making it difficult for A to communicate with Indonesian students, especially Sumbawa students. As stated by resource person A as follows:

".. The most important thing is to learn Indonesian by communicating with local residents.." (Arsalan)

The different opinions of the interviewees are very dominant, because each resource person has a different way of adapting, such as resource person M, whose process of adapting to his new environment is in lectures, which according to him is very difficult to adapt as quickly as imagined. What was conveyed by the resource person was as follows:

".. The lecture and learning system was initially difficult to understand in terms of tasks or how to carry out something.." (Mogtaba)

From the initial stage of the interview process, the interviewees had different and unique adaptation processes, the most prominent process was the use of a language that was different from their initial environment, so that the interviewees found it quite difficult to adapt, let alone communicate with local residents.

3.6. Frustration phase

The frustration phase is the stage where feelings of enthusiasm and passionate feelings turn into feelings of frustration, anxiety, annoyance and even hostility and being unable to do anything because the actual reality does not match the expectations held at the beginning of the stage, Ibnu Hamad (2013 :376).

From the explanation above, interviewee A does not feel anything like the above because his native culture and Indonesian culture, especially Sumbawa, are almost similar, as expressed by the interviewee as follows:

".. No, because my culture and Indonesian culture, especially Sumbawa culture, are almost similar.." (Ahmed)

Interviewee M has no problems with the problems described above, because M is not yet in this phase or you could say he doesn't feel like this, as stated by the source as follows:

".. I have not encountered this kind of problem.." (Mogtaba)

Meanwhile, the opinion of source A is very different from the opinion of the previous source, in fact person A really experienced the things mentioned in the explanation above and felt very uncomfortable with what he felt when the incident occurred. As the source said as follows:

".. Yes, there is clearly pressure on communications, seafood, and remote areas.." (Arsalan)

Interviewee D experienced many of the changes faced at Sumbawa University of Technology, as the interviewee stated as follows:

".. As an international student, I face many challenges in Indonesian culture, especially in Sumbawa. One of the most significant challenges here is the gossip system, which is a fundamental pillar that harms society and hinders individual progress. Engaging in such behavior can lead to the decline of society, because in more advanced societies, people do not associate themselves with people who engage in such behavior. It is important to address this problem by being proactive in educating the public to develop a more enlightened and realistic perspective of society.." (David)

Just like other sources, S also has almost the same thing in adapting, whether it's difficulties in terms of time or other things, as the source said as follows:

".. Yes, it was a bit nerve-wracking from the start and it took time to fully adapt.." (Sasa)

From the results of the interviews, what the author can conclude is that it is difficult for the interviewees to adapt to a new environment that is different in culture and the behavior of the people. So it took a long time for the interviewees to adapt.

3.7. Readjustment Phase

In the readjustment phase, a person begins to look for various ways to adapt to the current situation and resolve the crisis experienced during the frustration phase. The readjustment stage is marked by a readjustment process, such as learning local language and culture. In this stage, the resource person must

be able to recover from the previous phase, where the resource person must be able to adapt to the new environment, whatever the conditions. As the source stated as follows:

“..Learn about the culture and participate in events and love festivals, learn the basics of the Sumbawa language, find friends with the same interests and travel around..” (Sasa)

To get to know the culture in a new environment better, the resource person must be smart in studying the cultures in Sumbawa. As stated by the following source:

“.. Adapting to Sumbawa culture as an international student involves learning about local customs and norms, acquiring language skills, and actively participating in community activities. Building relationships with local students and fellow international students provides a support system and insight into navigating cultural differences. Embracing resilience, adaptability, respect and an open-minded approach to cultural diversity are important aspects to ease the adjustment process in Sumbawa. Seeking support from academic institutions and community resources designed for international students can further assist in this cultural transition..” (David)

Just like the previous source, source M also wants to learn the language so that when he wants to travel or ask about a place, it is not difficult to get information because he already understands Indonesian, as the following source said:

“..Knowing where various items are available will help me a lot, because sometimes I have trouble finding things and spend time traveling and asking other people..” (Mogtaba)

From the interview results, there is a lot that needs to be changed about the resource person to be able to adapt to the Sumbawa environment, whether by looking for friends who are in line or socializing with local people and local students.

3.8 Resolution Phase

Foreign students try to adjust to their new cultural environment, which is the final phase of adaptation. Currently, the person has several options, such as:

1. Flight, namely when a person becomes unable to stand his environment and feels unable to make greater efforts to adapt.
2. Fight, namely an individual who enters a new culture and environment and feels uncomfortable, but he tries to survive and overcome everything that makes him feel uncomfortable.
3. Accommodation, a reaction that occurs when someone tries to accept and enjoy what is in their new environment. At first, the individual may feel uncomfortable, but he knows that entering a new environment and culture will cause tension.
4. Full participation, a reaction that occurs when someone begins to feel comfortable with a new environment and is finally able to overcome initial frustration.

In this phase, almost everything experienced by foreign students merges into one, where here the difficulties experienced are explained. From source A, the obstacle is the adaptation process which is very, very difficult to go through, as the source said as follows:

“..Language barrier..” (Ahmad)

Interviewee A in this question session had language difficulties, the same as the first resource person who was the same regarding language, the interviewee's opinion was as follows:

".. Yes, new Indonesian words and infrastructure.." (Arsalan)

This resource person has previously explained the phase above, but this opinion only focuses on friendship, as the resource person said below:

".. I have discussed adjusting to the new environment at Sumbawa University of Technology, mentioning the need for open-minded friends who share the same values and contribute positively to cultural learning.." (David)

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that language is one of the obstacles in adapting to a new environment, because the lack of understanding Indonesian makes it difficult for resource persons to communicate with local students or with the local community, due to a lack of understanding in Indonesian.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and analysis above which the author wrote clearly and concisely, the researcher concluded that after some time, culture shock and communication adaptations caused foreign students to experience these things, such as differences in language, customs, culture, weather and the mindset of local people. Who is still not wise. Therefore, foreign students at Sumbawa University of Technology need quite a long time to be able to deal with culture shock and adapt to a new environment, especially on the Sumbawa University of Technology campus. Foreign students also need to know the points above so they know how to adapt quickly and easily.

In the theories of culture shock and communication adaptation that have been written above, the influence of language and culture is one of the biggest impacts felt by foreign students at Sumbawa University of Technology when they want to communicate or adapt to local society or local students. The importance of understanding Indonesian and the culture in Indonesia, especially the language and culture in Sumbawa, is very influential for the continued adaptation of foreign students in Sumbawa. Foreign students must be able to master Indonesian to guard against unwanted things, so that when they want to communicate with the community or local students, foreign students are able to balance what the community or local students say with their communication partners.

To get the results desired by foreign students at Sumbawa University of Technology, the surrounding community must support the adaptation pattern of foreign students so that these foreign students do not feel ostracized when they want to join organizations in society or want to participate in the customs that occur in the existing culture. In Sumbawa. Support from the community or local students to foreign students so that they feel cared for and supported in adapting to their environment.

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