

**THE DYNAMICS OF “CULTURE SHOCK” IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
THE CASE OF FRESHMEN**

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan in English Education**



By :
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**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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MOTTO

“The only way to do great work is to love what you do”

(Steve Jobs)

ABSTRAK

Sistem pendidikan di sekolah menengah tentu sangat berbeda dengan di perkuliahan. Perbedaan tersebut seringkali menimbulkan culture shock bagi mahasiswa baru. Culture Shock adalah suatu kondisi yang dapat menimbulkan kebingungan terhadap lingkungan baru dan menimbulkan perasaan yang tidak menyenangkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki culture shock yang dialami mahasiswa baru jurusan Bahasa Inggris dan juga bagaimana mereka merespon culture shock tersebut. Partisipan penelitian ini melibatkan empat mahasiswa baru, dua laki-laki dan dua perempuan dari jurusan pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan dan Universitas Pekalongan. Untuk menyajikan data, penelitian ini menyajikan sebuah Narrative study untuk menceritakan kembali pengalaman yang ada pada mahasiswa. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa terdapat dua hal dalam penelitian ini. Yang pertama adalah lima jenis culture shock yang dialami mahasiswa baru. Yaitu jumlah mata kuliah bahasa Inggris yang diajarkan, cara mengajar yang berbeda, sumber belajar yang digunakan, frekuensi penugasan, dan ketidakpercayaan diri. Kemudian yang kedua adalah delapan strategi yang mahasiswa baru terapkan dalam menangani culture shock. Yaitu: memiliki gaya belajar khusus, tidak takut salah dan tetap percaya diri, sering bertanya kepada senior, memiliki keterbukaan diri, berani bertanya kepada dosen, memahami sistem pendidikan, tidak membanding-bandingkan dengan mahasiswa lain, dan membangun relasi dan pertemanan. Penelitian ini bermanfaat bagi mahasiswa baru. Karena mereka dapat belajar bagaimana meminimalisir munculnya perasaan negatif dari culture shock saat belajar bahasa Inggris. Sehingga nantinya mahasiswa baru dapat lebih siap dalam menghadapi perkuliahan khususnya di jurusan Bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci : *Culture shock, mahasiswa baru, Bahasa Inggris*

ABSTRACT

The education system in high school is certainly very different from that in lectures. These differences often cause culture shock for freshmen. Culture shock is a condition that can lead to bewilderment regarding a new environment and lead to unfavorable feelings. This study aimed to investigate the culture shock experienced by freshmen majoring in English and also how they respond to this culture shock. The participants in this study involved four freshmen, two males and two females from the English Education Department of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan and Universitas Pekalongan. To present the data was presented in a Narrative study to retell the experience of the students. The findings showed that there are two things in this study. The first are the five types of culture shock experienced by freshmen. They are the number of English courses taught, different ways of teaching, learning resources used, assignment frequency, and lack of confidence. Then the second are eight strategies that freshmen applied in dealing with culture shock. They are having a specific way of learning, not being afraid to be wrong and staying confident, asking seniors frequently, having self-disclosure, willing to ask the lecturer, understanding the education system, not comparing with other students, and building friendships and relationships. This research is useful for freshmen to learn how to minimize negative feelings from culture shock when learning English. So that later freshmen can be better prepared in facing lectures, especially in the English education department.

Keywords: *Culture shock, freshmen, English*

PREFACE

Praises and gratefulness are sent to Allah SWT who has poured His grace and His gift and bestowed me guidance, health, and patience so that the writing process of my final project research entitled **THE DYNAMICS OF “CULTURE SHOCK” IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE CASE OF FRESHMEN** could be completed. It was submitted to English Education Department, UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan to fulfil one of the requirements of the final project Course. This proposed study was accomplished because of many supports from several people. Therefore, on this occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

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TABLE OF CONTENT

COVER	i
LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI	ii
NOTA PEMBIMBING	iii
APPROVAL SHEET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
MOTTO	vi
ABSTRAK	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
PREFACE	ix
TABLE OF CONTENT	x
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of the Study	1
1.2. Formulation of the Problem	4
1.3. Operational Definitions	4
1.3.1. Freshmen	4
1.3.2. English Language Learning	4
1.3.3. Culture Shock	5
1.4. Aims of the Study	5
1.5. Significance of the Study	5
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1. Theoretical Background	6
2.1.1. Conceptualizing Culture Shock	6
2.1.2. Culture Shock in English Language Learning in Higher Education	7
2.1.3. Strategies for Facing Culture Shock in English Language Learning in Higher Education	19
2.2. Previous Studies	35
2.2.1 Previous study 1	35
2.2.2 Previous study 2	36
2.2.3 Previous study 3	37

2.2.4 Previous study 4	38
2.3. Conceptual Framework	39
CHAPTER III RESEARCH PROCEDURE	42
3.1. Research Method	42
3.2. Research Context	42
3.3. Setting and Participants	42
3.4. Data Collections	43
3.5. Data Analysis	43
CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	45
4.1. Results	45
4.1.1 Culture shock in English language learning in higher education	47
4.1.2 Strategies to respond to culture shock in English language learning	49
4.2. Discussion	57
4.2.1 Culture shock in English language learning in higher education	57
4.2.2 Strategies to respond to culture shock in English language learning	59
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION	66
5.1 Summary of Findings	66
5.2 Recommendation	67
REFERENCES	69
ENCLSOURE	81

TABLE LIST

Table 2.1 Scoring system 30

FIGURE LIST

Figure 1. 1 The Conceptual Framework	Erro
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The transition from high school to university is a common thing for freshmen. However, often these transitions cause anxiety and confusion because they are faced with something new and unfamiliar. Because there is so much pressure, it is claimed that taking lectures at the higher education level is a stressful time. For this reason, it is frequently referred to as the horrible phase (Gayatri, 2007). This is because challenges of all types will arise for freshmen as they adjust to life in university. These issues include stress related to schoolwork, money issues, loneliness, interpersonal issues, difficulty adjusting to change, and issues with self-development (Gajdzik, 2005).

Freshmen must adjust and pick up new skills when attending a new and unfamiliar university. Freshmen will modify in this regard to be adaptable to the social milieu in which they are (Hutapea, 2014). Schneiders (in Rohmah, 2004) contends that self-adjustment is a process of one's mental abilities and conduct in dealing with demands from both within and outside of oneself. There are internal and external adjustments. They must adjust by learning content in their major in university that is unavailable to them in high school.

In the English education department, freshmen will learn more about various English skills than they learned in high school. This is because learning English in tertiary institutions is more specific than in high schools which is still general in nature. This means that the material taught in high schools in

general English. English skills learned in the university include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. These four skills are divided into receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (writing and speaking). In addition, there are also teaching skills which consist of courses related to teaching science and other professional abilities which include literature, linguistics, and tourism (Adnyani, 2016). Even though the Government of Indonesia places English as a subject starting from junior high school to the tertiary level, it is undeniable that learning English at university still creates shock for freshmen majoring in English. Such shock is commonly known as culture shock. Culture shock is a condition that can lead to bewilderment regarding a new environment and lead unfavorable feelings (Hutapea, 2014).

Edward Hall in his book *Silent Language* (1959, in Hayqal, 2011) characterizes culture shock as an illness that happens when familiar experiences are radically different from those in foreign and unfamiliar environments. According to Oberg (in Mulyana, 2008), culture shock is worry and dread brought on by pupils not being accustomed to a new society. Neither a clinical phrase nor a medical ailment, culture shock. When a person moves from a familiar culture to one that is new and unusual to him, they may feel confused and uncertain. This is known as culture shock (Kingsley and Dakhari, 2006). Freshmen who can gradually adapt themselves will be able to protect themselves from the negative psychological effects of culture shock. Freshmen' struggles with adjustment may affect learning activities in several different

ways. This modification is crucial since it is essential to the success of the learning process (Novera, 2004).

Every freshman often experiences culture shock due to moving from their old environment, the high school environment to the new environment, the university environment. Habits in a new environment can cause pressure and result in freshmen's academic competence in learning English (Maisaroh, 2017). Culture shock in learning English includes academic problems, feeling difficulty, and anxiety (Siddiqua, 2010). It could also be negative feelings such as insecurity which may encompass loneliness, anger, frustration, and self-questioning competence that arises when faced with new material and many are more unusual than before in learning English (Serliah et al, 2021).

Studies on the effects of culture shock on freshmen who attend lectures have largely concentrated on describing the forms of culture shock, the causes of experiencing culture shock, and solutions for dealing with culture shock. However, most of the research only focuses on environments and cultures that differ from freshmen's hometowns to college. Particularly in the area of learning English, they have not yet extensively discussed the problem. As a result, the cultural shock that new English majors face when learning the language will be more specifically depicted in this study. This study is based on the researcher's problem when as a freshman in the English education department who experiences culture shock in learning English. The research focused on how the freshmen respond to culture shock.

By using a Narrative study, this research aims to retell students' experience of culture shock in learning English. The study took the participants from the first semester at the English Education Department of UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan and Universitas Pekalongan. This study is important because readers, in particular new English majors, can learn how to minimize the emergence of negative feelings from culture shock while learning English. So that later freshmen can be better prepared in facing lectures, especially in the English education department.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

The problems include:

1. What is the culture shock experienced by freshmen in English language learning in higher education include?
2. How do the freshmen respond to that culture shock?

1.3. Operational Definitions

Some keys terms in this research are briefly defined as follows:

1.3.1. Freshmen

Students who have only recently begun their first year of college or university (Collins Dictionary, 2022). The term "freshmen" can be used for both female and male freshmen.

1.3.2. English Language Learning

English language learning is engaging in academic activities (including teaching and learning) in the English language with the main

objective of instructing students who do not speak the language as their first language (Lawinsider Dictionary, 2022).

1.3.3. Culture Shock

A state of perplexity brought on by unexpectedly encountering a culture with unfamiliar traditions (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

1.4. Aims of the Study

This current study aims:

1. To find out the culture shock of freshmen learning English in higher education
2. To describe the responses of freshmen to the experience of culture shock in learning English in higher education

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is significant for several parties, including:

1. Faculty : Make regulations or policies for good learning so that freshmen can quickly adapt to lectures
2. Lecturer : Design a syllabus that is friendly and by the condition of freshmen. So that freshmen can easily adapt to learning English
3. Freshmen : Learn how to minimize the emergence of negative feelings from culture shock while learning English. So that later freshmen can be better prepared in facing lectures, especially in the English education department.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

The title of this research is freshmen' experiences of culture shock in learning English in higher education (A Narrative Study). This research focuses on freshmen' experiences of the culture shock faced in learning English in higher education, and the researcher is also curious about the participants' perceptions of how to deal with culture shock. These are the findings of the research goals:

1. This research concluded that there are five types of culture shock experienced by freshmen in learning English in higher education. They are:

The first is the number of English courses taught. According to the participants, the number of English courses in lectures is almost the same as the subjects in high school, not too much. The second is different ways of teaching. The difference in teaching between teachers in high schools and lecturers on campus is the teacher explains the material more than the lecturer. The third is the learning resources used. All learning resources in high school are available in the form of books. Meanwhile, on campus, lecturers usually only provide learning resources in the form of soft files. The fourth is assignment frequency. The participants thought that the frequency of assignments in lectures was higher than in high school. The fifth is lack of confidence. The participants do feel not confident about their own abilities.

2. The strategies to respond to culture shock for freshmen are as follows.

The first is having a specific way of learning. The participants usually like to watch English videos on YouTube and also summarize the material that has been explained by the lecturer. The second is not being afraid to be wrong and staying confident. The participants are confident and not afraid of being wrong to answer questions from lecturers. The third is asking seniors frequently. Usually, the participants ask about learning, courses, reference books, and learning materials. The fourth is having self-disclosure. The participants do not hesitate to tell their friends about the problems they face in lectures.

The fifth is willing to ask the lecturer. The participants usually ask about the assessment system, courses, and materials to the lecturer. The sixth is understanding the education system. The participants often ask friends, seniors, department staff, or lecturers about the class offers, input study plan cards, credits, and GPA. The seventh is not comparing with other students. The participants accept, realize their abilities, and are more focused on themselves. The eighth is building friendships and relationships. Some of the participants join major organizations because the goal is to gain relationships and friends.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the result of the research, the researcher adds some recommendations for further researchers who are interested to conduct a

similar study about this research. The recommendations for the research are as follows:

1. Further research is expected more participants because this research only had four participants, so further research can give more participants.
2. This research had limited references further research should have more references.

This research uses a narrative study because the participant had experienced culture shock. Further research is better to use a case study or field research. So, further research can analyze the participant when facing culture shock.

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