

Culture Shock And How To Overcome It So You Can Adapt: Case Studies On Summer Courses Program Participants At Rajamangala University Of Technology Krungthep

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ABSTRACT

The main problem faced by summer courses students is the problem of communication with Thai people, the majority of whom use the Thai language due to cultural differences. Therefore it is necessary to make adjustments in order to communicate effectively. This research was conducted to find out the form of culture shock experienced by the summer courses participants and how they tried to adjust themselves in dealing with this phenomenon.

This research is a qualitative research using ethnographic methods, namely research conducted to find out the meaning and form of socio-cultural in a society that has diversity. The results of this study are that the first-time summer courses students experience two aspects of culture shock, namely environmental aspects and social aspects which include language, food, weather and communication with the community around the environment where they live. The effort they make is to keep trying

Keyword : *summer courses, communication, culture shock, languange, student*

INTRODUCTION

Student exchange programs abroad can produce many good changes. However, they can only produce a few written products when participating in a program that is elevated

in the form of scientific research in order to encourage other students to take advantage of the program.(McKay et al., 2022)

In 2023, ADRI in collaboration with Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep (RMUTK) organized a Student Exchange Program (summer course) The program was created with the aim that students gain new experiences related to cultural diversity between the two countries Indonesia and Thailand.

However, when a person arrives in a new environment with differences in culture, language, habits, food and so on, that person will be able to experience (Cultus shock) especially for those who are traveling outside the region or abroad for the first time.

Culture Shock is the feeling of shock that someone when visiting a place that they have never known before / new because of differences in culture, lifestyle, or habits in everyday life. (Castillo et al., 2016)

When cultural shock occurs to a person, it can have a good or bad impact on the person himself. Because the results of the interactions arising from culture shock that each person will experience are different. When the person can adapt well to new situations and conditions in his environment, it will produce something good in him. (Rohma Wulandari, n.d.)

There are many ways a person can deal with culture shock, one of which is by continuing to learn the culture and language of the country.

The purpose of this study is to describe the culture shock experienced by students participating in summer courses and how to adapt and adjust to this phenomenon.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a Qualitative research using ethnography method, which is a research conducted to find out the meaning and socio-cultural forms in a society that has diversity.

People in a region or country usually have a number of differences, such as differences in beliefs. This difference is a socio-cultural aspect that needs to be researched to find out how the community interacts. In addition to beliefs, other differences can also be a topic of research. The results of the research will help find out the positive impact of diversity and how to deal with it wisely that can be proven true.

The subjects of this research were Indonesian students participating in a summer courses program at RMUTK that lasted for 28 days in Bangkok, Thailand. The research subjects lived for 28 days in Sathon district, Bangkok.

Data was collected through observation in the form of short interviews with participants while participating in the summer courses program.

The data collected is then presented systematically and then conclusions are drawn.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After conducting an interview process with 5 students participating in summer courses as a research sample, but in this study the informant as the subject and the researcher agreed not to mention the name but only the initials of the name, namely MG, MD, EW, SR, DE, the five students came from different regions and study programs, their goal of participating in the summer courses program was to gain experience and learn new

knowledge from other countries. The students are very interested in the culture and language in Thailand, especially for those who have never experienced traveling abroad.

Table 1
Student motivation and condition

Informan	Motivation	condition
MG	Increase knowledge	Happy, excited
MD	Gain experience	Happy, excited
EW	Gain experience, relationship	Happy, proud
SR	Increase knowledge, experience	Happy, excited
DE	Adding experience because I have never been abroad	Happy, cool

From the table of motives and conditions, it indicates that the students as tourists are in the phase of excitement because they are new outside the country. In this phase they have not felt any culture shock, the first impression when they arrived in Bangkok Thailand was a sense of joy, enthusiasm, and pride in their new environment. It can also be concluded that students in general still have no idea what kind of country they will live in for the next 28 days, the characteristics of the people, the culture, the language, and so on. This means that their knowledge about the culture and social place where they carry out the Summer course is only formed after they interact in their new environment.

Adolescent students are particularly vulnerable to culture shock when moving from one cultural environment to another, such as moving from one home to another or from one school to another, The effects of culture shock on adolescent students can include communication defectiveness, academic retardation, conflict, emotional imbalance, deviance, aloofness, and withdrawal from peers(Akarowhe, 2018)

When someone is in a new place or country, there will be interaction and communication with new people in that place. From the results of interviews with the five students they experienced culture shock when they first arrived in Bangkok, Thailand, cultur shock began in terms of language because most residents in Bangkok are not too

fluent in English so to communicate they rely on google translate, as well as the habits of residents in Bangkok which are certainly very different from those in Indonesia.

The crisis stage of culture shock is the second stage and is marked by difficulties in adapting to cross-cultural differences in communication, transportation, and disappointment and rejection from the new culture (Herdi & Handayani, 2020)

Table 2

Forms of culture shock experienced when entering the crisis stage

Informant	Social aspect	Environmental aspect	Reaction
MG	Language errors due to accent difficult to understand	Language, Food, hot weather	Trying many new foods and causing diarrhea
MD	Language is difficult to understand	Hot weather, language	Reduced interaction, skin darkens
EW	Difficult accent	Language, weather, food	Reduced interaction, sadness
SR	Difficulty understanding the language	Language, food,	sad, eating less often
DE	Language and accent difficult to understand	Food, weather, language	Sad, Trying new food and engaging in conversation

The form of culture shock experienced by students is divided into two, namely on social and environmental aspects, Culture shock in environmental aspects is felt by all student respondents, especially in the fields of language, weather, food. The majority of residents in Bangkok adhere to Buddhism which can also have an impact on the variety of culinary in Bangkok which on average is non-halal food, and coincidentally the five resource students are Muslims who will definitely have difficulty finding halal food in Bangkok, as well as with different flavors, for example dishes that are more seasoned, how to serve and how to eat which of course will be different from in Indonesia can also cause culture shock from some student respondents who experience diarrhea and some even become lazy to eat. Next, in addition to food, there is also the aspect of weather which is also different from in Indonesia, Furthermore, in addition to food there is also a weather aspect that greatly affects the cause of student culture shock, Thailand is also a tropical country like Indonesia which has hot weather but in June when the summer course program takes place the weather in Thailand is very hot even at night which causes students to experience culture shock, so students feel their skin is getting darker.

In addition to food and weather, language is also the main cause of culture shock experienced by students because Indonesian students who generally only speak Indonesian

as their main language and English as their second language, but it turns out that most of the population in Bangkok does not master English which ultimately makes students difficult and takes a long time to adapt.

The next aspect that causes culture shock is the social aspect, especially in the campus environment and the environment where students temporarily live. At the time of the communication process of the students participating in the summer courses with lecturers on the RMUTK campus and between students and local residents caused the dynamics or changes that occurred in students, but from the results of the study despite experiencing difficulties the students continued to try to engage in conversation in order to quickly adapt.

From the description above, it can be said that the culture shock experienced by students is quite diverse, both physically and psychologically, the thing that is felt the most is interested, causing students to continue to try to engage in conversation to make the adaptation process faster.

In addition, physical reactions also occur which cause students to have diarrhea, also because of the hot weather their skin becomes darker, finally students carry out the process of accelerating adaptation.

How to overcome culture shock in order to adapt

When aware of experiencing culture shock, students finally make many changes in order to adapt to the surrounding population and also to facilitate the teaching and learning process during the summer course program, most students continue to interact by engaging in conversation.

Based on the Curva U recovery process, in this third phase where people begin to understand and understand about their new culture, at this stage people have also begun to make self-improvement towards the new culture they have received and then begin to feel more comfortable and confident in communicating more effectively in their new environment.

Realizing the need for the recovery efforts of students is based on several factors and the main factor is because the purpose of the students going to Thailand to carry out learning and gain new knowledge.

There are several ways that students do in carrying out the stages of self-adjustment and recovery seen in (Table 3)

Table 3

Efforts in self-adjustment and recovery

Student	Efforts made
MG	Trying to keep up interactions, trying to familiarize with local food
MD	Learning the language, protecting the skin with sunscreen and wearing comfortable clothes when leaving the house
EW	Communicating more intensely, looking for food that best suits the tongue
SR	Learning to understand the language, more support from family
DE	Expanding network, learning to communicate more intensely

Based on the results of the interviews contained in the table, the efforts made by students vary from trying to continue to interact, learning to understand the language, familiarizing themselves with local food which is mostly richer in spices to getting full support from the family.

The efforts made can also bring good results to the culture shock experienced by students, after this process is carried out there are changes felt by students compared to the crisis stage, students begin to improve their language skills, especially when doing learning and transactions when buying basic necessities around the place of residence.

In the final stage of Curva U is the adjustment process (Adjustment), namely at this stage students begin to understand related to the new culture they face, so that they can adjust and be comfortable in their new environment, even though in some ways they still feel uncomfortable but they can overcome their discomfort.

Table 4

Adjustment process timeframe

Student	Time	Adjustment
MG	2 Weeks	Start Adjustment
MD	1 Week	Start Adjustment

EW	1 Week	Start Adjustment
SR	10 Days	Start Adjustment
DE	1 Week	Start Adjustment

The time it takes for students to adapt and adjust varies, from five students on average it only takes 1 week to adapt, although the character of each student informant is different starting from mental and physical but the feelings that were previously felt began to decrease and began to feel comfortable, and from the results of the adjustment now students can communicate comfortably both in the campus environment and in the surrounding environment, establish interpersonal relationships, and start to like some typical Thai food, some students also began to have changes in accent when communicating with local residents.

The results of this study can be concluded that from culture shock, self-adjustment efforts, to the stage of adjustment experienced and felt by each student is different, in this process communication skills, socialization, and the character of each person greatly affect the culture shock they receive.

CONCLUSION

Culture shock will be experienced by most people who are in a new environment that they have never visited before, as well as those experienced by the informants. However, even though they experienced culture shock in Thailand, they were able to try to adjust. This is evidenced by the results of interviews with the five student informants who have begun to get used to the culture in Thailand over time.

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