

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

As an introduction, this chapter contains six subsections; they are background of the study, focus of research, research questions, objectives and significances of the research, and the definition of the key terms.

### **A. Background of the Study**

The fast growing of academic mobility in recent time has been concerned of the researchers to study either from the education, linguistics, or from other related study such as sociology and anthropology. A number of study on academic mobility, for example, reported that mostly academic sojourners experience culture shock (Yukselir 2018; Wu et al. 2015; Brown and Holloway 2008). Wu et al. (2015) in their study of Japanese students studying in the U.S University, for example, indicates that they experience academic problems in terms of language issue. The Japanese students get lack of communicating with American students due to the different accents, speed and pronunciation. One of the issues of culture shock experienced by academic sojourners is that feeling far away from home (Brown and Holloway, 2008). This feeling makes the sojourners feel depressed, fed up, down and sad. Moreover, Yukselir (2018) asserts that being far away from home affects the academic achievement of the sojourners that is very low compared to the home students. In more specific, Yukselir argues that international students, particularly Syrian students, tend to feel uncomfortable during classroom practices due to missing their homeland that eventually affects their academic performance. Instead of being far away from home, culture shock is also about the adaptation to academic situation, particularly international students studying in higher education. Mostly the challenges as has been explained by Zhou et al. (2008) are about the different role of student and teacher in the classroom.

The different role of student and teacher has been explained by Hsieh (2011) when examining Chinese students' adaptation in United Kingdom (UK) universities. In the view of Chinese students, the students should pay more attention to the teacher. In this regard, paying attention to teachers is perceived to be showing respect, as

Chinese students tend to regard their teachers as parents. However, from the view of British students, a good role of students is they need to actively interact with the teacher due to teacher is considered as organiser and facilitator for student's need. Hsieh also asserts in his study that, in the view of Chinese students, a good teacher should guide and tell them what to do in order to help the students in having difficulties within the classroom practices. Otherwise, this condition is considered as rude by British students and makes them feel oppressed.

Instead of different roles of students and teachers, intercultural adaptation is also one of the prominent factors of culture shock experienced by international students (Ye and Edwards 2015). In Chinese people's perspective, for instance, it is very common to help colleagues do their unfinished business. This is due to that it is one of the Chinese culture to socialize and help with other people. However, British people will regard this condition as an impolite behaviour in social life, they need to mind their own business.

In addition, the language issue is also being the critical aspect to culture shock. Yanagi and Baker (2016), for example, find that Japanese students studying in Australia universities find themselves in difficulties particularly in oral communication skills within the classroom. The identified factor contributing to this condition is that they did not invest oral practicing with their teachers and peers in their country. Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) who often put emphasize that English should be Native English bring consequences to the students in that they feel afraid of making mistakes in speaking English. As a result, when they are required to demonstrate their ability in speaking for classroom communication in Australian universities, they tend to be passive and remain keep silent. Apart from the ideological aspect, in the case of Japanese teachers of English, Yeh and Inose (2010) note that the sojourners who possess higher English language proficiency incline to feel more comfortable to participate in academic activities. They communicate actively in discussing, debating or arguing that makes them less experience culture shock than those who have lower English language proficiency.

However, not all sojourners experience culture shocks, they just experience culture bumps (Wu and Hammond, 2011). Wu and Hammond explain in their study involving East Asian students in the

UK universities, that culture bump is the when the sojourners find themselves in difficult circumstances, yet they remain motivated to meet new challenges and are willing to explore a wide of strategies to improve their academic ability. Furthermore, the culture bumps experience which the sojourners encounters are like having some involvement with campus societies, getting emotional and academic support from other sojourners and being proactive during the study. Moreover, Langley and Breese (2005) argue that American students in Ireland higher education obtain positive experience during their study although they, at the first time, tend to feel like a tourist than a traveller – the former being interpreted as a guest and the latter interpreted as an explorer. This means that the sojourners find themselves in uncomfortable circumstances, nevertheless, they are able to handle it by participating more during the academic activities. Having involved in extracurricular activities, for instance, makes the sojourners enjoy their study in Ireland higher education. As a result, the sojourners have good relation with the home students in terms of learning the cultures.

In regard with culture bumps, Yuan (2011) in her study about Chinese students studying in the US, showed that although they found a lot of differences in the academic setting, however, it does not bother them to contribute within the classroom. In the US classroom, the students tend to be active in the classroom such giving opinions, debating and so forth. Nonetheless, the understanding of the host country helps the Chinese student participate, engage and learn more.

The study about academic sojourners is mostly reported from a single case, for example, Chinese students studying in the UK universities, Japanese students studying in Australian universities, or African students studying in Chinese universities. There has been a dearth of research which examines the cross-cases of academic sojourners in the English speaking-countries. In this regard, comparative study about academic sojourners should be undertaken. This study aims to explore Indonesian academic sojourners' experiences in the UK and Australian universities. In more specific, this study focuses on how Indonesian academic sojourners' experience pursuing master degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in the UK and Australian universities.

**B. Limitation of the Study**

The scope of this study is Indonesian academic sojourners. There are many disciplines of subject and country that can be employed for this study, thus, it needs limitation. The discussion of the study, therefore, is limited to master degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programme in the UK and Australia.

**C. Research Questions**

By recognizing the important of perceiving the international students' experiences in overseas institutions, this study aims to investigate the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of Indonesian academic sojourners pursuing Master degree in TESOL in the UK?
2. What are the experiences of Indonesian academic sojourners pursuing Master degree in TESOL in Australia?

**D. Purposes of the Study**

Based on the research questions that are shown above, the objectives can be described into these two parts:

1. This main purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the experiences of Indonesian students in the UK master TESOL programme.
2. This study aims to investigate the experiences of Indonesian students in Australian master TESOL programme.

**E. Significances of the Study**

There are several important areas where this study makes an original contribution to as follows.

1. For students, this study provides an important opportunity to advance the understanding of studying abroad, both the benefits and the challenges.
2. For institutions, this study offers some important insights into the understanding of the necessary services for international students.

**F. Definition of the Key Terms**

This part functions to make this research get clear. There are difficult terms that have to be defined contextually to make the reader

understand the meaning. There are some definitions that can be considered.

1. Academic Sojourners

Academic sojourner is a term employed for international students who live and study temporarily in overseas and intent to achieve satisfactory academic achievements within a limited period of time. (Arifeen, 2013)

2. Cross-Case Analysis

An analysis that examines themes, similarities, and differences across cases. Cross-case analysis is used when the data of analysis is a case, such as an individual, group, artifact, place and so forth.

3. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Programme

A programme for learning how to teach English to people from other countries or speak other languages as a professional activity that requires specialized training.



