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## **The Intercultural Communication Competence of International Students in Indonesia: A Case Study Approach of Darmasiswa Program**

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**Abstract.** Currently, there are many international students come to Indonesia to learn the language and culture. However, it is undeniable that they experienced a very diverse culture shock when they arrived in Indonesia. There are many differences that they experience ranging from weather, food, different ways of eating, time and delay problems to different type of toilet. This study aims to answer the questions on how they adapt to the new culture, and how to become competent in intercultural communication. This is a qualitative research with a case study approach. Data collection was obtained by semi-structured interviews with 8 international students who are studying language and culture in Indonesia. The results showed that intercultural communication competence can be possessed by international student if they have a motivation to learn that can make them more easily to adapt with new cultures and environment.

**Keywords.** Darmasiswa program, intercultural communication competence, international students

### **Introduction**

Currently, the number of students participating in youth exchange programs between countries is increasing, not only in America, Europe, Australia, but also Asia, including Indonesia. Currently, more and more international students are coming to Indonesia with various purposes, but the biggest one is to learn about Indonesian language and culture, and to take part in internships at various institutions and companies in Indonesia [1]. However, many international students who take part in activities in Indonesia also face acculturation stressors including emotional and dysfunctional stresses such as rejection, drug use, self-blame, and escape [2]. Foreign students who take part in this youth exchange program will enter the class and join students from Indonesia, so that they will become a minority. This will cause a sense of discomfort in the foreign student. When a person will be away from his comfort zone for a long time, there will be transfers of values which we usually call cultural adaptation [3].

This also happened to international students who received Darmasiswa scholarships from the Ministry of Education and Culture to study Indonesian language and culture in various provinces in Indonesia. The Darmasiswa Program was established in 1974 as part of an ASEAN cooperation initiative. However, over time, this program was expanded to countries outside the ASEAN region, namely by providing scholarships to young people from 117 countries to study in Indonesia, including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Mexico,

Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the United States. Until now, the number of students from various countries who are interested in studying in Indonesia continues to increase. In 2019, the total number of foreign students who have participated in Darmasiswa since 1974 is 7,852 people from 117 countries.<sup>1</sup>

The main objective of this Darmasiswa program is to promote and increase the interest of young people around the world to learn Indonesian language and culture. In addition, this program also aims to strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding among participating countries and will make its alumni as Indonesian Cultural Ambassadors in their countries [4]. The arrival of international students to study in Indonesia for at least one year make them experience various obstacles or problems, as happened to a student from South Korea who studied in Salatiga City. The student admitted that he was awkward when he first arrived in Salatiga, because of the cultural differences between Salatiga and his home environment. These cultural differences do not only occur in the language used, but also related to traffic regulations, weather, eating habits, to problems related to toilets [5]. Another example is international students studying Indonesian language and culture in Samarinda who come from the Patani-Thailand [6]. In the process of adaptation, the student experienced a cultural shock both in terms of differences in habits, climate, language and many other problems he experienced so that it affected his daily activities. These are some of the cases related to intercultural communication competence of the international students who received scholarships to study Indonesian language and culture through the Darmasiswa - The Ministry of Education and Culture.

Based on the description above and previous studies, it is evident that international students who have just arrived in Indonesia will experience culture shock and this affects their communication with their interlocutors, namely Indonesians. In order for the program to run smoothly, every foreign student must have intercultural communication competence. The intercultural communication competence of each foreign student is different. The problem that is still found by foreign students who are less able to adapt to the new environment is the obstacle in adapting to the new environment, so that foreign students often experience miscommunication or misperceptions when communicating with Indonesian people.

Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research related to intercultural communication competence which aims to answer the questions: (1) What kinds of culture shock experienced by international students when they arrived? (2) How did the international students adapt to the new culture? (3) How did international students gain intercultural communication competence? This research will make a great contribution not only to the Indonesian government which organizes the Darmasiswa program but also to international organisations which organizes many exchange programs.

### **Literature Review**

#### *Darmasiswa Program*

The main objective of Darmasiswa program is to promote and increase the interest of young people around the world to learn Indonesian language and culture by staying in Indonesia

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<sup>1</sup><https://darmasiswa.kemdikbud.go.id/>

for one year. In addition, this program also aims at strengthening cooperation and mutual understanding among participating countries and will make its alumni as Indonesian Cultural Ambassadors in their countries [4].

The Darmasiswa program was established in 1974 as part of an ASEAN initiative. But over time, this program was expanded to other countries. To date, there have been 117 countries that have participated in the Darmasiswa program managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United States. In the early 1990s, this program was further expanded to include all countries that have diplomatic relations with Indonesia.

Data on the Darmasiswa website reveals that the interest of international students participating in the program is increasing. The number of alumni which in 2008 reached 2,037 from 85 countries continues to increase rapidly. Until 2019, the total number of international students who have participated in Darmasiswa since 1974 is 7,852 people from 117 countries.<sup>2</sup> Data from the Bureau of Planning and Foreign Cooperation (BPKLN), Secretariat General - Kemendikbud revealed that for 2018 around 6700 students from various countries registered to be program participants. However, only 750 of those successfully passed the selection to join the program for one or two semesters. The Darmasiswa participants who came from 77 countries were distributed to 59 universities throughout Indonesia

In 2016, 6,967 Study Permits were issued by the Directorate of Higher Education Institutional Development, Ministry of Research Technology and Higher Education. Study Permit is one of the main requirements for foreign students to obtain immigration documents in the form of Student Visa and Limited Stay Permit or ITAS issued by the Directorate General of Immigration, Ministry of Law and Human Rights [7]. For the 2017-2018 academic year, 665 foreign students from various parts of the world were recorded as studying or around 2.5 percent of local students [7].

#### *Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC)*

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is a person's ability to communicate with other people who have different cultural backgrounds. The word 'competence' is a state of being capable, or can be interpreted as a condition that shows a person's capability or ability so that he can function in urgent and important ways [8]. [9] provide instructions for achieving competence, namely the competence of intercultural communication is contextual. This results in appropriate and effective behaviours (appropriateness and effectiveness) and requires sufficient knowledge, appropriate motivation, and the ability to act (knowledge, motivation and action). Currently, Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) is a concern both internationally and among domestic cultures residing in multicultural countries. However, it needs to continue to be developed not only at the theoretical level but to a practical stage that can help others succeed in their intercultural encounters [9].

One indicator of competent communication according to Gudykunst and Kim is minimizing misunderstandings. So, according to Gudykunst and Kim, the smaller the misunderstanding, the more competent communication will result in a sense of satisfaction and positive judgment between individuals. Gudykunst and Kim have their own views regarding the components of intercultural communication competence, namely: motivation, knowledge,

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<sup>2</sup> <https://darmasiswa.kemendikbud.go.id>

ability. Motivation itself is understood as the desire to communicate appropriately and effectively with others, and motivation is divided into 3 important needs, namely, the need for the ability to predict the behaviour of others, the need to avoid behaviour that spreads anxiety, and the need to sustain self-concept. While the knowledge component is specifically divided into knowledge of how to collect information, knowledge of group differences, knowledge of personal similarities, knowledge of alternative interpretations. Skills start from the ability to be mindful in intercultural communication, the ability to process anxiety, the ability to empathise, the ability to adapt behaviour, the ability to make accurate explanations and predictions [10].

According to [11], there are five components of intercultural communication competence, namely: motivation, knowledge, skills, sensitivity and character. Meanwhile [12] offer a model of intercultural communication competence that aims to increase the ability of interactants to understand, appreciate, tolerate and integrate cultural differences, so that they are ready to become members of the world community. This model presents a transformational process of symmetric interdependence that can be explained through three perspectives: (a) affective or intercultural sensitivity, (b) cognitive or intercultural awareness, and (c) behavioural, or intercultural skills. These three perspectives are equally important, cannot be separated and form a holistic picture of intercultural communication competence.

Opinions of experts on intercultural communication competence can be seen in the following table.

Table 1  
Components of Intercultural Communication Competency

Gudykunst and Kim (2003)	Samovar, Porter, Mc.Daniel (2010)	Chen & Starosta (1996)
Motivation	Motivation	Affective (Intercultural Sensitivity)
Knowledge	Knowledge	Cognitive (Intercultural Awareness)
Competence	Competence	Behavioural (Intercultural Competence)
	Sensitivity	
	Character	

Source: Authors' compilation

According to [13], competent individuals in intercultural contexts must have the capacity, among others: knowing their own cultural values and those of others, showing positive feelings, respecting, and even accepting cultural differences and being able to behave appropriately and appropriate in the context of intercultural interaction.

#### *Culture Shock Theory*

Since its introduction for the first time, various concepts of culture shock have evolved to extend this definition as proposed by Adler (1975) and Pedersen (1995, 1970) in [14]. According to Adler (1975) cited by [14] culture shock is an emotional reaction to unexpected cultural differences and misunderstandings of different experiences that can cause feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fear of being cheated, hurt or ignored. Culture shock is an emotional phenomenon caused by a person's cognitive disorientation, causing a disturbance in identity or dissonance [15]. At first the definition of culture shock tended to be a mental disorder condition. Bowlby in [16] describes this condition as similar to sadness, grief and loss, so that it can be related to the condition of a person when he loses a loved one. When we enter and experience contact with other cultures, and feel psychological and physical discomfort due

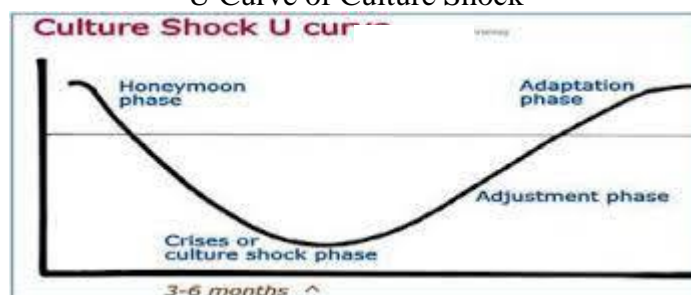
to the contact, we have experienced shock/culture shock as stated by Littlejohn in [17]. Through the concept of culture shock introduced by Oberg (1960) which was later refined by Furnham and Bochner (1970) it showed that culture shock occurs usually triggered by one or more of the following three causes, namely: 1) Loss of cues or signs that known.

Whereas cues are part of everyday life such as signs, movements of body parts (gestures), facial expressions or habits that can tell someone how to act in certain situations. 2) The breakdown of interpersonal communication both at a conscious level which leads to frustration and anxiety. The language barrier is the obvious cause of this disorder. 3) Identity crisis by going out of one's area, a person will re-evaluate the picture of himself [16]. Edward Hall in [15] describes culture shock as a disorder when things that are commonly encountered in the place of origin become completely different from the things encountered in a new and unfamiliar place.

Since its introduction for the first time, many concepts of culture shock have expanded this definition. Adler in [14] suggests that culture shock is an emotional reaction to unexpected cultural differences and misunderstandings of different experiences that can cause feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fear of being cheated, hurt or ignored. Culture shock is an emotional phenomenon caused by a person's cognitive disorientation, causing a disturbance in identity as stated by Stella in [15]. According to Kim in [14] that culture shock is a process that arises whenever the components of a living system are insufficient for the demands of a new cultural environment. Furthermore, culture shock is the stress and anxiety experienced by people when they travel or go to a new social and culture as stated by Odera in [18]. Almost all international students face a range of acculturation stressors, including language barriers, educational environment, socio-cultural situations of discrimination, loneliness, and lifestyle or practical stressors [19], [20]. [19] suggested that what is meant by socio-cultural situations include difficulties in appropriate accommodation, financial difficulties, difficulties in food and different eating habits, high academic demands and challenges to adapt to the culture. It also makes the foreign student adjustment process more fragile and risky [21].

Meanwhile [22] suggested that the difficulties of adaptation faced by foreign students can be seen from the six aspects in the Sojourner Adjustment Measure, which are classified into positive factors and negative factors of adjustment. Positive factors include social interaction with people in the destination country, cultural understanding and participation in the destination country, development and use of the language of the destination country, and identification of the culture of the destination country. While the negative factors include social interaction with individuals from the country of origin, and homesickness, namely feeling uncomfortable in a new environment and wanting to return to a well-known home environment. [11] state that people typically go through four levels of culture shock. These four levels can be described in the form of a U curve, so it is called a U - Curve, namely:

Figure 1  
U Curve of Culture Shock



Source : Larry A. Samovar (2010)

The *optimistic* or *honeymoon* phase is the first phase depicted at the top left of the U curve. This phase contains excitement, hope, and honeymoon as an individual anticipates before entering a new culture. The second one is *cultural problems* or the second phase in which problems with the new environment begin to develop, for example due to language difficulties, new traffic systems, new schools, and others. This phase is usually marked by feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction. This is a period of crisis in culture shock. People become confused and dumbfounded by their surroundings, and can become frustrated and irritable, become hostile, irritable, impatient, and even incompetent. The third is *adjustment phase* where people begin to understand about their new culture. At this stage, people gradually make adjustments and changes in the way they cope with the new culture. Adaptation efforts are already starting to show results. Routine activities are no longer a problem for them. After that, enter the adaptation phase, and the fourth is *mastery phase* which is the last phase, at the top right of U, people have understood the key elements of their new culture such as values, special manners, communication patterns, beliefs, and others.

### **Research Method**

This research uses a qualitative approach, with a case study approach. [23] state that a case study is a method to understand an individual that is carried out comprehensively in order to obtain a deep understanding of the individual and the problems he faces with the aim of solving the problem and obtaining good self-development. Based on these limitations, it can be understood that the limitations of a case study include the research targets which can be in the form of people, events, settings, and documents. These goals are studied in depth as a totality according to their respective settings or contexts with the aim of understanding the various relationships that exist between the variables. [24] states that the purpose of using case study research is not just to explain what the object under study looks like, but to explain how it exists and why the case can occur. In other words, case study research is not just answering research questions about "what" the object being studied, but more comprehensively and comprehensively about "how" and "why" the object occurs and is formed as a result and can be viewed as a case. That is why this research uses a case study approach because it is in accordance with the objectives and scope of the research.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. To assist researchers in obtaining in-depth data, researchers used the case study method as a research method. "This is because the case study is a more suitable strategy when the subject matter of a research relates to the *how* and *why*, when the research has little opportunity to control the events to be investigated, and when the focus of the research lies on contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts" [24]. The case study is used to explore problems faced in the implementation of the Darmasiswa Program. Thus, the case study is a qualitative design that is very appropriate because it will gain real experience in the process of implementing Darmasiswa programs [24]. In this study, the sampling technique used is purposive sampling, namely the sampling technique of data sources with certain considerations. In this study, researchers chose semi-structured interviews because they were more flexible and open. The interviewer can ask more questions, if the answer is not as expected, it can still be developed while in the field [25]. Interviews were conducted on 8 people, with the following criteria: (a). 4 students from High Context Culture countries consist of 2 male students from South Korea and 2 female students from Japan, (b) 4 students from Low Context Culture countries consist of 2 male students from Germany and 2 female students from the Netherlands. This category of informants was created with the aim that researchers can see if there are differences between

students from high context and low context countries in terms of their experience of culture shock and their opinions on intercultural communication competence.

In this study, researchers chose semi-structured interviews because they were more flexible and open. The interviewer can ask more questions, if the answer is not as expected, it can still be developed while in the field [25]. According to [24] there are five data analysis techniques in case study research, namely pattern matching (equation of patterns), explanation building (building explanations), time-series analysis (time series analysis), logic model (model logic), and cross-case synthesis. This research uses pattern matching data analysis techniques or pattern matching. According to [24] Yin by using this technique, researchers develop existing theories as a form of operational explanation of research. This technique is done by comparing the pattern of foreign students' answers based on the data that researchers have collected in the field with the prediction pattern that was previously set. Analysis using this technique is carried out to check whether the answers from foreign students who come from High Context Culture and Low Context Culture countries are in accordance with the theory or concept used.

## Results

The results of interviews with informants are summarized in the following table:

Table 2  
Results of Interviews with International Students

No	Themes	Country	International Students' opinions
1.	Motivation to join the Darmasiswa program	Korea (Male)	Learning Indonesian Language and Culture
		Japan (Female)	Learning about Indonesia and explore its famous culture
		Germany (Male)	Learning Indonesian Language and Culture
		The Netherlands (Female)	Learning about Indonesia and explore Indonesia and its cultural diversity
2.	Feelings experienced by international students: - Before leaving for Indonesia (Before departure) - 1st month in Indonesia (1st month) - After 3 months in Indonesia (After 3 months)	<b>Korea (M)</b>	
		Before Departure	Very happy, well prepared for departure
		1 <sup>st</sup> month	- Experienced culture shock a lot - The process of learning and adapting
		After 3 months	- Has started enjoying life in Indonesia - Has got a lot of friends - Has understood people's habits - Has got accustomed to the environment
		<b>Japan (F)</b>	
Before Departure	Very happy, well prepared for departure		



No	Themes	Country	International Students' opinions		
		1 <sup>st</sup> month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experienced a lot of culture shock</li> <li>- Felt anxiety and fear</li> <li>- Tried to learn and adapted</li> </ul>		
		After 3 months	Has started enjoying life in Indonesia Has got a lot of friends Has understood people's habits Has got accustomed to the environment		
		<b>Germany (M)</b>			
		Before Departure	Very happy. Searching for information about Indonesia and learning about what the do's and the don'ts are		
		1 <sup>st</sup> month	Experiencing culture shock but soon realized that the main purpose of going to Indonesia was to learn its culture		
		After 3 months	Getting used to the habits of people and enjoying life in Indonesia with its cultural diversity and natural beauty		
		<b>The Netherlands (F)</b>			
		Before Departure	Very happy. Trying to find information about Indonesia from various media.		
		1 <sup>st</sup> month	Experiencing culture shock but not excessive anxiety because they have often read about Indonesia.		
		After 3 months	Already familiar with the local culture, and really enjoying life in Indonesia		
		3.	Factors that create culture shock when arriving in Indonesia	Korea	(a) Traffic jam in Jakarta (b) Hot weather (c) Long delay / not punctual
				Japan	(a) Traffic jam in Jakarta (b) Hot weather (c) Long delay /not punctual
		Germany	(a) Traffic jam in Jakarta (b) Hot weather (c) Long delay/ not punctual (d) Eating without spoon and fork (e) Lots of spicy food (f) Squat type toilet		
		The Netherlands	(a) Traffic jam in Jakarta (b) Hot weather (c) Long delay/ not punctual (d) Eating without spoon and fork		



No	Themes	Country	International Students' opinions
			(e) Lots of spicy food (f) Squat type toilet
4.	Factors to be competent in intercultural communication	Korea	(a) Must have a strong motivation to learn. Don't be too anxious and worried. (b) If we have an understanding or knowledge of the local culture, this will minimize the occurrence of culture shock. We can also learn to adapt to new habits more easily. (c) If we already have knowledge about the culture of the people, we must practice it in life among them so that gradually we will become skilled at communicating between cultures.
		Japan	(a) Must have high cultural sensitivity. Have an awareness that our culture is different and we must be willing to learn to respect differences. (b) In the process of adaptation, learning must continue to be done so that our knowledge increases about the customs or cultures of others. (c) In the end we will also get used to it and can even be part of those with different cultural backgrounds.
		Germany	(a) We must have awareness that our culture is different. Therefore we must learn and have a high motivation to continue to try to understand the culture of others. (b) In the process of adaptation, learning must continue to be done so that our knowledge increases about the customs or cultures of others. (c) In the end we will have intercultural communication skills.
		The Netherlands	(a) We must have high motivation to learn different cultures, (b) By learning we will gain knowledge about the culture and no longer experience culture shock. (c) The adaptation process cannot be carried out without a desire to learn. Through the learning process, adaptation can be done more quickly which in turn will make us skilled at

No	Themes	Country	International Students' opinions
			communicating with people from different cultures.

### Discussion

From the analysis above, it is known that before international students left for Indonesia, they felt very happy. It could not be described in words because in general, those who register for the Darmasiswa program are those who have a strong desire to learn Indonesian culture. Therefore, they try to find as much information as possible about Indonesia before leaving the country. When asked about the culture shock they experienced, the eight students said that the main problems were traffic jams in Jakarta, hot weather, and long delays. Meanwhile, 4 students from low-context culture, namely Germany and The Netherlands, added culinary problems, namely the spicy food in Indonesia, eating habits that do not use spoons and forks, which for Europeans look less hygienic, and different types of toilets. From the answers given by the students, it can be seen that there is a difference between students who come from high context culture and low context culture. Students from Japan and Korea don't mind the taste of Indonesian food because they said that Korean and Japanese dishes are also spicy. Besides that, they also don't mind the way Indonesian people eat that don't use spoons and forks because according to them in Japan and Korea they don't use spoons and forks either but chopsticks. Besides that, in Japan and Korea, toilets are also not a problem because in their country there are also 2 types of toilets, namely sitting toilets and squatting toilets.

However, for students who come from countries with low context culture, toilet problems are the toughest problem, because they have never found this type of toilet in their country, so you can imagine how the culture shock experienced considering they had to live in Indonesia for 1 year, as stated by Adler (1975) quoted by [14] that culture shock is an emotional reaction to unexpected cultural differences and misunderstandings of different experiences that can cause feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fear of being cheated, hurt or ignored. Meanwhile, when asked about aspects that must be done so that we can have competence in intercultural communication, these 8 students agreed that the most important thing is to have a high motivation to learn and have awareness that every country has a different culture. Therefore, both before and after arriving in Indonesia, they still have never stopped learning.

“The most important thing is that when we experience culture shock, for a moment we do feel shocked, emotional, offended, annoyed and so on, but we must quickly change our attitude. Do not linger in a negative attitude because this will not make us better. We must quickly move on and learn from experience. By learning we can gain new knowledge that will later make us understand about other people's cultures. And gradually, without us realizing it, we are able to communicate like the local people where we live.” (RU – Germany).

“The main aspect is the awareness that every country we visit must have a different culture from ours. Even though Japan and Indonesia are both located on the Asian continent and in the eastern part of the world, they have different cultures. Therefore, it is important for us to motivate ourselves to want to learn other cultures, and always assume that differences are not an obstacle but a uniqueness. Thus the adaptation process becomes faster, compared to people who do not want to learn. From this learning process, our knowledge will increase and finally we will have skills in intercultural communication.” (IS - Japan).

This is in line with the opinion expressed by [10], [11], and [12] who revealed 3 things that became the basis of intercultural communication competence, namely: motivation, knowledge and skills. From the results of interviews with the four students, researchers obtained data that the stages of culture shock experienced by foreign students started from the honeymoon or optimistic phase before the departure of the students to Indonesia [23]. They all felt very happy, and prepared themselves by looking for information about Indonesia to learning Indonesian from *youtube*. When arriving in Jakarta, the honeymoon phase is also still felt, namely by the surprise of foreign students seeing and feeling the hospitality of the Indonesian people starting from the airport. They did not feel this when they were in their own country, as stated by students from South Korea and the Netherlands:

“Initially I thought, I would not experience culture shock when I arrived in Indonesia because I believe the conditions in Indonesia is not much different from Malaysia, a neighbouring country to Indonesia that I have visited. But it turns out I was wrong. There is one thing that makes me very surprised, namely the hospitality of the Indonesian people that I have felt since I set foot at the Jakarta airport. Indonesian people are not only friendly but also very helpful. When I asked where I could buy a card for my cellular phone, I was not only shown the way to the left or the right, I was even brought to the counter.” (KJ- South Korea).

“Indonesian people are very friendly. I've heard a lot from my parents about Indonesia, but I didn't think that in many places I visited, I always see people smiling. This is a very rare sight in my country, which is more individualistic. And also what makes me very excited is the nature of Indonesia which is so beautiful and green.” (LI - Netherlands).

Meanwhile, related to intercultural communication competence, all the international students agreed that the main aspect to have intercultural communication skills is the motivation to keep learning and correcting mistakes. Thus, we do not become people who are easily offended, easily angry, and always dissolved in sadness. The students also said that with a strong desire to learn, their knowledge will continue to increase and in the end they will have competence in intercultural communication.

“I have a strong desire to learn. Every day there is always something new that I learn. That way I've become aware of things that became the habits of Indonesians. I also continue to hone my Indonesian language skills so that it is easier for me to communicate with the local community, and after three months in Indonesia, I feel more comfortable. Indonesia has become a second country for me. I am also getting familiar with the language and culture. Even if I go to a city in another province, I still experience “culture shock” because in Indonesia, each region has its own local culture and language. So every time I go to another region or province, it always starts with euphoria because I saw or experienced something new. That's what I like from Indonesia, likewise with food or culinary. Many of the foods have become my favourites, and the people are friendly and helpful.” (JS- Korean)

“Very comfortable. Moreover, with my current Indonesian language skills, I no longer find many difficulties when communicating with Indonesians. I also have

many friends who are like family. Even in Yogya and Bali I have a host family who already consider me as their child and every vacation I always visit them. I can get this because from the start I have a strong motivation to learn, so every day I get new knowledge.” (ME – Netherlands)

This is in line with the components of intercultural communication consisting of motivation, knowledge, abilities, as proposed by [10] and [11], also opinion of [12] who say that affective (intercultural sensitivity), cognitive (intercultural awareness) and behavioural (intercultural skills) are the factors that can create competence in intercultural communication.

### **Conclusion**

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that international students experience a culture shock upon arriving in Indonesia, which is related to the weather, traffic, long delays, spicy Indonesian food, eating habit, and different type of toilet. However, these international students try to learn from the experience so that they are easier to adapt. The results of this study also show that international students can more easily adapt to new environment if they want to have high motivation to learn, so that their knowledge of new cultures and habits will increase. By doing so, they will have good intercultural communication competence. This study has a limitation namely it is only examining the competence of intercultural communication faced by international students who are studying in Indonesia. Therefore, the researchers suggest that further study should be conducted related to intercultural communication competence among Indonesian students who are studying abroad with a different approach.

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