

THE ANALYSIS OF CULTURE SHOCK EXPERIENCED BY ERIN GRUWELL IN FREEDOM WRITERS (2007) MOVIE

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Abstract

This research aimed at finding out the phases, effects, causes of culture shock experienced by Erin Gruwell as well as her strategies to overcome it. The research method used was descriptive qualitative method. The data were taken from Freedom Writers experienced by the main character, Erin Gruwell. Based on the results of the research, it shows that there are four phases of culture shock experienced by Erin Gruwell in Freedom Writers namely the honeymoon Phase, the crisis phase, the recovery phase, the adjustment phase. The writer also found two causes of culture shock experienced by the character Erin Gruwell namely student factors and Injustice of School and Teaching Teams. Moreover, the result shows that there are two affects that is appeared through the phases of culture shock, they are the positive effects includes better awareness and empathy, forcing herself to innovate in teaching, self confidence, and building relationship with her students and negative effects including stress and emotional burden, personal sacrifice, and financial challenges. Furthermore, there are several strategies that Erin used, namely understanding and empathy, innovation in teaching method, and collaborative approaches.

Keywords: Culture shock, teaching, racial conflict, Movie

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui fase, dampak, penyebab culture shock yang dialami Erin Gruwell serta strategi mengatasinya. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data diambil dari film Freedom Writers yang dialami oleh tokoh utama, Erin Gruwell. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat empat fase culture shock yang dialami Erin Gruwell dalam Freedom Writers yaitu fase bulan madu, fase krisis, fase pemulihan, fase penyesuaian. Penulis juga menemukan dua penyebab culture shock yang dialami tokoh Erin Gruwell yaitu faktor siswa dan ketidakadilan sekolah dan pengajar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada dua dampak yang muncul melalui fase culture shock, yaitu dampak positif berupa kesadaran dan empati yang lebih baik, pemaksaan diri untuk berinovasi dalam

mengajar, rasa percaya diri, dan membangun hubungan dengan siswa, serta dampak negatif, yakni stres dan beban emosional, pengorbanan pribadi, dan tantangan keuangan. Lebih lanjut, ada beberapa strategi yang digunakan Erin yaitu pemahaman dan empati, inovasi metode pengajaran, dan pendekatan kolaboratif.

A. INTRODUCTION

A group of people, containing several groups or individuals from different backgrounds and experiences, can establish a new community as well as its culture. Different beliefs, customs, rules, norms, worldview are the concepts that shape this community. It is possible for them to be either aware each other or unaware. If not, cultural conflict can be happened between them. Eventually, if someone steps into this community, he or she has possibility to experience culture shock. Culture shock is the feelings of disorientation, confusion, uncertainty, or anxiety experienced by someone who moves to a new country or place with an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes.

According to Oberg (In Junaid & Pertiwi, 2015), culture shock is the

anxiety that is resulted from losing all familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. Meanwhile Novinger (2001:41) explained that interacting with a person from a foreign culture in the process of intercultural communication is often an unfamiliar experience.

According to Oberg (1960: 142), culture shock is a disease related to work or occupation suffered by people suddenly due to migrating or being moved abroad. In this case, the job or position can be associated with people who are interacting with different cultures. Like most diseases, culture shock has its own symptoms and treatment. This research uses *Freedom Writers* Movie as the object. *Freedom Writers* is an American drama Movie from 2007, written and directed by Richard LaGravenese. The Movie is based on the non-fiction book

published in 1999 and called *The Freedom Writers Diary*, a compiled diary of 150 students from Long Beach, California and their teacher, Erin Gruwell (Muzillo, 2010). Gruwell is an idealistic teacher who starts her first teaching job as an English teacher at a high school which two years earlier implemented a voluntary integration program. The program is the reason why Gruwell wants to teach at this particular school, and the classes Gruwell teaches consist of teenagers with different backgrounds and experiences.

Freedom Writers deals with topics such as empowerment, tolerance, ethnicity and race, and highlights the importance of overcoming racial inequity and focusing on agency and the importance of making each individual's voice heard. Erin Gruwell helps troubled Hispanic, African American and Asian teenagers to find their path in life.

The researchers use Ward's theory (2001) about culture shock. Ward et al., (2005) stated that process of adaptation of culture shock consists of four phases include: Honeymoon, Crisis, Recovery, and Adjustment phase.

This research is interesting to study because it can provide insight into how culture shock affects teachers working in multicultural environments, how Erin Gruwell faced challenges when she first taught in a school with very diverse ethnic, social backgrounds, and experiences. It can also provide a reference for teachers who are or will later experience a similar situation, so that the same or more effective strategies can be developed to support them, especially in terms of policy making, how to overcome culture shock and adaptation to improve student learning outcomes.

The objective of this research;
1) To analyze the phases of culture shock experienced by Erin Gruwell

when she first taught in a multicultural environment. 2) To identify the positive and negative impacts experienced by Erin Gruwell, as well as at what phase these impacts occurred. 3) To observe specific factors that cause culture shock, and strategies used by Erin to overcome culture shock.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first research is from Beatus et al, (2021), entitled “Culture Shock Experienced by Christopher Mccandless in *Into The Wild* Movie: A Psychological Approach”. This research aims to analyze the phases and causes of culture shock experienced by Christopher Mccandless in *Into The Wild* Movie. This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The result of this research is that there are four culture shock phases experienced by Christopher Mccandless in *Into The Wild* Movie, such as honeymoon phase, crisis phase, recovery phase, and adjustment phase. The causes of culture shock experienced by

Christopher Mccandless are stress reaction, cognitive fatigue, role shock, personal culture shock.

The second research from Fitriah (2021) entitled “Analysis of Culture Shock in English Movie: A Cross Cultural Understanding”. This research aims to analyze culture shock in English Movie. This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The researcher uses indicators based on Ward’s theory about culture shock. The result of this research is that Shashi is experiencing culture shock and the four phases including Honeymoon, Crisis, Recovery, and Adjustment phase.

The third previous study is “An Analysis of Culture Shock Faced by Dre Parker on *Karate Kids* 2010 Movie” by Dewi (2021). The purposes of the research are to know what culture shock is faced by Dre Parker in *Karate Kids* Movie, to know how Dre Parker solved the problem, and to give the beneficial information

for the students who read this research. The method used by the researcher was qualitative research with observation and documentation as the instruments. The results of the research were based on Winkelman's theory. There were four stages in culture shock. Those were the honeymoon or tourist phase, the crises phase, the adjustment and reorientation phase, and the adaptation; resolution; or acculturation stage.

The next previous study is by Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) entitled "Culture Shock Experienced by Main Character in Lauren Kate's Novel "Torment" by Using The Psychology of Culture Shock by Collen Ward". This research analyzed processes and affects of culture shock by main character in Lauren Kate's novel "Torment" when she enters to new country through U-curve theory by Collen Ward. This research used descriptive qualitative method. The result shows that the phases of culture shock experienced by the main

character are honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment phase. There are two affects that is appeared through the phases of culture shock, they are the positive effects includes amazement, excitement, self confidence, good social interaction and life changes and negative effects including nervousness, fearness, confusion, feeling isolated and homesick.

Overview of Culture Shock

According to Oberg (1960: 142), culture shock is a disease related to work or occupation suffered by people suddenly due to migrating or being moved abroad. In this case, the job or position can be associated with people who are interacting with different cultures. Like most diseases, culture shock has its own symptoms and treatment. Culture shock is also caused by anxiety, loss of signs, and symbols in social interaction. Culture shocks are individual anxiety as a result of the loss of culture signs and symbols known in social interactions, especially

when a person lives in a new culture for a long time (Kristian, 2013:10, Oetey and Franklin (2009: 151).

Phases of Culture Shock

Phase of Culture Shock Ward, Bochner, and Furham (2001: 81), culture shock can be described as consisting of four distinct phases: honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment. These phases are explained based on U-curve theory, where many theories describe how people adapt to the new culture environment. (1) Honeymoon phase Dealing with excitement, wonder, and euphoria and the so-called 'Honeymoon' emphasizes the first reaction of attraction. (2) Crisis phase is a situation with which one does not know such as nervousness, anxiety and confusion arises. Martin and Nakayam (2010: 328) define this phase as a feeling of relative disorientation to environmental unfamiliarity. Furthermore, Ward, Bochner, and Furham (2001:81) cite that the crisis is seen from the feeling

of anxiety by the way habits and fears of someone who is not known by some differences in the new country. (3) Recovery phase is the stage where people will try to understand culture in the new environment and adapt to habits in the environment. Ward, Bochner, and Furham (2001:81) state that recovery is including crisis resolution in culture learning. (4) adjustment phase. In the Adjustment stage, Kevinsky (2010:8) explains that people will start to adapt and accept new cultures in new environments as new lifestyles

Effects of Culture Shock

According to Junaid & Pertiwi (2015), The effects of culture shock can be shown when the persons are far from their own country, they are far from the place that is considered as "home", and they far from the environment and their own custom. Based on these conditions, they cannot be able to participate in their new life so that it can bring the negative effect to the

person. But persons will learn the new condition to continue their life. It is called as adaptation. If persons can accept the dissimilarity and learn the new environment, they will get the positive effect of culture shock. culture shock not only brings the negative side but also it will become the positive effect for Sojourners after they accept and adapt their new culture patiently. The positive effects of culture shock include the capability to manage self, self Confidence, good social interaction and life changes.

Moreover, Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) explained that the positive effects can be reached in honeymoon and recovery phase. Those effects include excitement, amazement, good social interaction and life Changes.

Ward (2001:268) discussed the negative effect of culture shock as follows: The culture learning or behavioral component of 'culture shock' is also related too much of the negative affect associated with culture

contact. Conversely, people who are nervous, depressed and withdrawn are less likely to make efforts to develop culture-appropriate skills. Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) concluded the explanation above that the negative effects of culture shock can be shown in the crisis phase. The effects occur when persons feel the customs that are different from their own custom.

Marx (1999:24) also described the negative effect of culture shock as follows: In unfamiliar situation we often feel anxious. We have no idea what is going to happen and we do not know whether we will be able to cope. We have no automatic responses in international encounters. It is therefore normal to feel nervous and to worry. Those effects include nervousness, fearness, confusion, feeling isolated and homesick.

Causes of Culture Shock

Ligandi & Sugiyartati (2023) stated that culture shock occurs because of the culture gap and

differences, such as habit, behaviour, values, religion, tradition, and other cultural aspects. According to Winkelman (1994:122), there are several causes of culture shock namely stress reactions, cognitive fatigue, role shock, and personal shock. (1) Stress reactions. According to Winkelman (1994:122), the reaction that causes stress is when in a new environment and increases the body's physiological reactions that will cause dysfunction in increased adrenal pituitary activity. Stress induces various physiological reactions that involve mass release of the sympathetic nervous system, impaired immune system function, and increased susceptibility to all diseases; (2) cognitive fatigue. The main aspect of culture shock and the resulting stress is cognitive fatigue. The new culture requires a conscious effort to understand things that are processed unconsciously in one's own culture. Efforts must be made to interpret the meaning of new languages and new

nonverbal, behavioral, contextual, and social communication. The shift from a function that is usually automatic, unconscious, without effort in one's own culture to the conscious effort and attention needed to understand all this new information is very tiring and results in mental or emotional exhaustion or fatigue, such as tension headaches and the desire to isolate yourself from contact social, especially in the later part of the day as cumulative information overload increases, (3) role shock. It is related to a person's identity which can affect well-being. A person's identity is maintained in part by social roles that contribute to well-being through structuring social interaction. In new culture settings, previous roles are largely eliminated and replaced by unknown roles and expectations. This leads to surprise roles due to ambiguity about one's social position, loss of relationships and normal social roles, and new roles that are inconsistent with

previous self-concepts. (4) Personal shock. Personal shock is compounded by events in new cultures that violate one's moral sense and moral values, values, logic, and beliefs about normality and politeness. Value conflicts contribute to feelings of disorientation and unrealism, increasing the sense of conflict that is pervasive with one's environment.

C. METHODS

The researchers used descriptive qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2017: 13), a research design is plans and procedure for research that span the steps from broad assumption to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or group ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2017:14). The data source in this study was the Movie Freedom Writers in 2007 directed by Richard LaGravenese with the allotted

time of 2 hours 2 minutes 57 seconds. In collecting the data, some steps were adopted that watching Freedom Writers Movie by understanding the Movie and analyzing every motion and activity, and taking capture each scene to identify actions that refer to phases, causes, effects, and approaches of culture shock. After obtaining the data, the data were analyzed by classifying, discussing, and making the conclusion based on the analysis.

D. RESULTS

1. The Culture Shock Phases Experienced by Erin

a. Honeymoon Phase

According to Ward (2001:81), Honeymoon is the first stage that contains excitement, amazement, and



euphoria. Moreover, it emphasizes on the first reaction of fascination.

Erin met with Head of Department to introduce the class that she would teach. She told Head of Department



about her teaching method which would use in the class. She told to her very enthusiastically and excitedly.



After accepted to teach in the school, she finally started the first day of her teaching job. Erin woke up earlier and then asked her husband if she looked like a teacher. She went to the school happily. She always smiled from the entrance until entering the class.

b. Crisis Stage

Crisis stage means a stage of anxiety, disbelief, and anger where someone faces the real struggles of living outside the homeland (Ligandi & Sugiyartati, 2023).

After coming home from school, she daydreamed while taking off all the clothes she had worn from school and felt shocked and mixed with sadness which made her cry in her husband's arms. He was confused and wondered why the condition of the school where he had been teaching for just 2 days is not conducive. The students were fighting with each other, who were of different races.

c. Recovery

According to Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) Recovery is the stage where persons will try to understand the culture in a new environment and to adapt the habits on the environment. Moreover, recovery stage is important because it can develop problem-solving Skills for facing with the



culture. If persons begin to accept the culture's ways with positive attitude, negative reactions and responses to the culture will reduce.

In this phase, Erin finally understands the problem of gang conflict between her students. After understanding this, he then told them about a conflict that was bigger than the one they experienced, namely The Holocaust which is the conflict between the Nazis and the Jews. It aims to tell them about how amateurish they are regarding the world of gangs by comparing it with that dark history.



Furthermore, she got several ideas to more deeply understand her students as the representation of her understanding and adapting on the class.

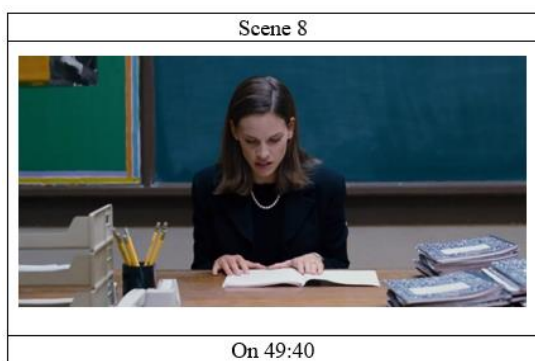
The first idea was making a game. Erin got the idea to create a game called "Line Game" (Scene 6), where she said a question, and when that question was experienced among her students, they had to go forward and back again for the next question. In the game, Erin asked several questions without her students realizing, this was Erin's way of finding out how her students were suffering as a result of the racial violence that occurred in LA.

The next idea was giving journal books (Scene 2). After the Line Game game was finished, Erin explained that she would give all the students a journal which would become a diary where the students could write whatever they wanted, such as poetry, songs, even things they experienced in

a day, whether in the future. past, present and future.

d. Adjustment

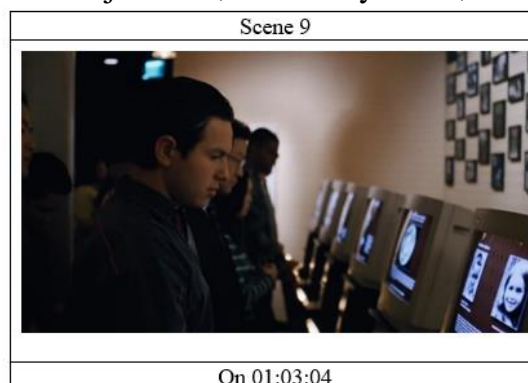
Adjustment stage is the final stage which means a stage of acceptance. Erin had discovered the solution of the cultural conflict and she had already



accepted the host culture habit. Furthermore, she had fully understood her students' racial conflict, overcome it, and been liked by her students.

After the meeting with the students' parents was over, Erin thought about checking the book storage cupboard that she had provided, maybe there were diaries that students were allowed to read. And after opening the cupboard, she was surprised to find that all of her students kept their journals, which meant that

Erin wanted to read their stories. She also read and understood the writing of these journals, one by one, the



problems of her students which made her feel sad, sorry, and touched by all their stories and struggles in facing the racial violence that occurred.

Erin invited her students to go on a study tour by visiting a museum and having dinner with Holocaust survivors at a hotel where Erin worked. There they had many experiences that related to them, such as seeing Holocaust victims in museums, seeing visual stories of the Holocaust and hearing stories directly from survivors, which made them begin to realize that Erin really cared about the conflicts and feelings they were experiencing.

Furthermore, Erin always does various things to lighten the atmosphere in her class which makes her students have the spirit that they always have the right to live without pressure from any race. Since then, his students began to do good things, including a student named Eva who testified objectively at a verdict hearing, which was the beginning of peace between racial conflicts in their class.

2, The Effects of Culture Shock Experienced by Erin Gruwell

The culture shock's effects are divided into two, namely positive effects and negative effects.

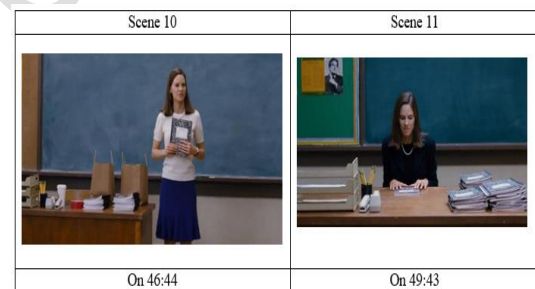
a. The Positive Effects

Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) stated that culture shock not only brings the negative side but also it will become the positive effect for Sojourners after they accept and adapt their new culture patiently. The positive effects of culture shock include the capability to manage self, self Confidence, good

social interaction and life changes. Moreover, the positive effects of culture shock can be shown in adjustment phase.

1. Better Awareness and Empathy

Culture shock helped Erin develop better awareness and empathy for her students' conditions and backgrounds. She came to better understand the challenges they faced outside the classroom, such as gang violence, racism, and social injustice.



(Scene 10) Erin Gruwell gave her students journal books for them to write whatever they want every day. (Scene 11) Erin Gruwell read their journals and finally came to understand better the challenges they faced outside the classroom that made them behave the way they did in class.

2. Forcing Herself to Innovate in Teaching



The experience of culture shock when facing the dynamics to the class encouraged Erin to adopt teaching methods that were innovative and relevant to her students' lives.

- She used diaries to help students express themselves (Scene 10).
- She directed them to read books like "The Diary of Anne Frank" to teach them about empathy and tolerance (Scene 12).
- Apart from that, Erin also took them on a study tour to change their views about what was out there. This is because he saw that most of his students had never been outside Long Beach (Scene 13).

3. Building Strong Relationships with Her Students



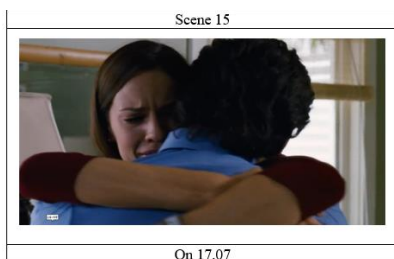
Through new insights and approaches, Erin has succeeded in building strong, trusting relationships with her students. This creates a more positive and inclusive learning environment, where students feel heard and valued. Until the peak, at Scene 14, all the students did not accept that Erin could no longer be their teacher in class 3 of junior high school because of the rules there.

B. Negative Effects

Junaid & Pertiwi (2015) stated that. The effects occur when persons feel the customs that are different from their own custom. Furthermore, everything that is found in the new place becomes horrible because they are not still used to the new environment and meet people with

whom they are not familiar every day. The negative effects of culture shock experienced by Erin Gruwell can be shown in the recovery and adjustment phase.

1. Stress and Emotional Burden



Facing class dynamics that are not conducive and full of challenges due to racial conflicts between students creates stress and a large emotional burden for Erin. She has to deal with the difficult and unexpected situation, which can be emotionally exhausting. She came home and hugged her husband and said that this was not what he had imagined (Scene 15).

2. Personal Sacrifice



Erin's dedication to her students led to sacrifices in her personal life, including problems in her marriage. Her husband felt neglected because Erin spent so much time and energy teaching and supporting her students. Erin's husband reluctantly had to decide to separate from her because of the reasons above (Scene 16).

3. Financial Challenges



To carry out her teaching methods, Erin often spends her personal money to buy books and study materials for her students. This created additional financial burden for Erin. Erin bought them books with her own money. He also had to work part time (Scene 17).

3. The Factors Caused Erin's Culture Shock

After becoming a teacher in the school, Erin was not only confused to her students in her class, but also to bureaucracy rules and other teachers.

a. Student Factors

From the beginning of the Movie, it can be seen how Erin discovered the dynamics of the class she taught. The class was not very conducive due to the cultural differences of the students in the class.

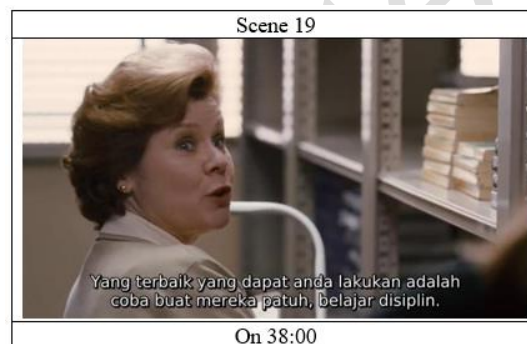


As a new teacher, of course this was beyond his expectations. This confusing class dynamic has dealt a major blow to teachers.

Erin was shocked when she heard her students give the reason why they hated each other, namely because they had different views. His students

felt that the white person had no heart. Erin, an innocent person, is hated by her students (Scene 18).

2. Injustice of School and Teaching Teams



When Erin went to the library to take some books which she thought were free and any teacher or student was free to read them. Apparently, Erin was wrong when she ask for permission to the principal. She was shocked by what the principal said that the students In class, especially 203, books cannot be given. Erin felt why there are schools that prohibit students from studying more advanced. Erin was also completely distrusted by the principal (Scene 19).



Erin felt confused about the school, where other teachers thought that the students Miss Erin was teaching did not deserve to be at the school because they thought they were bringing the school's bad name because of them. Moreover, the teacher there insulted Erin that she didn't know anything compared to the other teachers who had been at the school for a long time

4. The Strategies Used by Erin to Overcome Culture Shock.

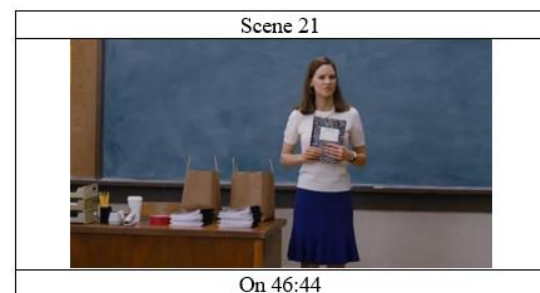
Erin was successful in overcoming culture shock as a new teacher when she started her first teaching job with challenge in terms of conflict among her students from different race and experience. She could adapt with her new environment

by establishing relationship with her students with several strategies.

1. Understanding and Empathy



Erin was a good listener to her students. She listened attentively to her students' stories and personal experiences. This helps her understand their background and the challenges they faced outside of school.



Erin introduced the concept of a diary to her students, allowing them to express their feelings and experiences honestly. This also helped her understand more deeply about their lives.

2. Innovation in Teaching Methods



Erin chose teaching materials that are relevant to her students' lives. For example, she used "The Diary of Anne Frank" to teach about struggle, resilience, and empathy.



Erin organized activities that encourage active student participation, such as group discussions to make learning more interesting and meaningful.

3. Collaborative Approaches



Erin sought outside help, such as inviting relevant guest speakers and organizing learning trips, to broaden students' horizons.

The data then explained into the analysis about how the culture shock shown by Erin Gruwell movie:

1. Erin Gruwell's Culture Shock Stages

In the *Honeymoon Phase*, Erin Gruwell is enthusiastic about her new teaching job and excitedly shares her approaches with her department head. Her viewpoint matches the honeymoon period of culture shock, when people are attracted and energized by their new surroundings. Erin is optimistic about her classroom influence, which drives her excitement. As is typical in the honeymoon phase, her initial enchantment fades as she adjusts to her new surroundings, which are very different from her expectations.

Erin faces her classroom dynamics in the *Crisis Phase*, a pivotal point. Her racially split students often fight and disrespect each other. This antagonism shocks Erin and makes her feel sad and helpless when she realizes her pupils' deep-seated difficulties. The cultural difference between her

students' experiences and her own upbringing further strains her emotions. The initial appeal of her job fades as she struggles with the situation's complexity, which are more difficult than expected.

In the *Recovery Phase*, Erin actively attempts to understand her students' lives to close this gap. She uses participatory games like the "Line Game" and writing to provide children a safe space to express themselves. Erin can understand her pupils' challenges using these ways. Erin learns to respect cultural acceptance, show empathy, and want to understand rather than criticize in this phase, which changes her adaptation process. Real cultural adjustment begins when she aligns her teaching with her students' realities, shifting from resistance to acceptance.

By the *Adjustment Phase*, Erin accepts her classroom's culture. Her unique teaching approaches, including Holocaust history classes, and extracurricular activities broaden her

students' viewpoints. These efforts build trust and respect among her students, making the classroom welcoming. Strong ties with her kids, who see Erin as an advocate and mentor, demonstrate her successful adaptation. She goes from exhilaration to a deep connection with her students while she goes through cultural shock.

2. Culture shock affects Erin
Culture shock affects Erin's personal and professional life both positively and negatively. Significant benefits include increased empathy and social awareness. Erin grows more sensitive to her pupils' terrible reality, such as gang violence, racism, and social injustice, which increases her comprehension of their behaviors and motivations. She creates more relevant and unique teaching methods out of empathy. Her students enjoy her assignments, such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* to highlight perseverance, empathy, and tolerance. Her openness to new methods helps her connect with

her kids and make them feel recognized and valued.

However, culture shock has serious harmful impacts on Erin. She becomes emotionally exhausted by her students' difficult behavior and unexpected challenges. She feels emotionally exhausted after lengthy school days due to this stress. Her dedication to her students also strains her personal connections, especially her marriage, which suffers as she works more. Erin regularly uses her own money to buy educational resources for her students, which strains her finances. She sacrifices for her students, as these financial issues show. Culture shock increases Erin's resilience and teaching skills but costs her emotionally and financially.

3. Contributors to Erin's Culture Shock

Erin faces cultural shock for several reasons. Racist student conflicts create an unpleasant school environment for Erin. Erin, used to a more pleasant situation, struggles to

grasp her students' diverse social and cultural backgrounds and handle such severe disagreements. Her kids' hatred contradicts her instructional standards, which confuses and worries her. These discrepancies demonstrate the cultural divide she must overcome to improve learning.

School bureaucracy and teaching team differences also contributed to Erin's culture shock. Erin's coworkers' regulations and attitudes seem to limit her students' potential. Other instructors and administrators question her pupils' success and have low expectations. Erin feels isolated because she believes in her pupils' ability to develop and adapt, but the system seems to limit them. Systemic biases make Erin's cultural adjustment difficult as she tries to combat pessimism and give her kids optimism.

4. Erin's Culture Shock Recovery Methods

Erin uses several effective ways

to overcome culture shock, starting with her sensitivity and devotion to understanding her students. She lets individuals tell their tales and challenges by actively listening. Erin learns about her pupils' lives and struggles by encouraging them to journal. This sympathetic approach builds trust with her students, helping her understand and meet their needs.

Erin's second tactic is innovative teaching methods that reflect her pupils' lives. She uses course resources like *The Diary of Anne Frank* to discuss resilience and empathy since they reflect their hardships and aspirations. She also arranges group conversations like the "Line Game," which make learning more engaging and meaningful. Erin engages her students and connects their experiences to the curriculum using these ways.

Finally, Erin uses collaborative methods to broaden her students' horizons and help them grow. Guest lecturers and field trips provide her

pupils new views since she values experiential learning. External influences give her students firsthand experiences and broaden their worldview. Erin shows her dedication to kids' development and promotes classroom togetherness by giving them opportunities to look beyond their surroundings.

E. DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Culture shock in Erin Gruwell's tough school setting illustrates the complexity of cultural adaptation. After early discomfort and frustration, her journey shows that empathy, innovative education, and resilience can cross cultural differences and alter lives. Erin adapts her teaching style to become a student advocate and mentor. Her kids' skepticism turns into respect and camaraderie after this transition. Erin's story shows how cultural shock may spur growth, understanding, and sustainable transformation with patience and insight.

Erin's story also emphasizes

instructors' importance in identifying and valuing pupils' ethnic variety. Her deep involvement in her pupils' lives shows the significance of cultural knowledge and inclusivity in education. Erin increases her pupils' academic engagement and self-esteem by accepting their cultural realities and incorporating their tales into her teaching. Her techniques demonstrate how teachers can overcome cultural boundaries and foster an inspiring learning environment.

This story also illuminates the personal sacrifices and emotional struggles of a change-making educator. Her persistence in the face of systemic challenges including unsupportive coworkers and a lack of resources shows how to promote educational equity. Despite the strain on her relationships and finances, Erin's dedication shows how one committed teacher can change a neglected and underserved student group.

Erin Gruwell's narrative

highlights the need of empathy-driven and culturally relevant teaching in social transformation. Her method changes her students' thoughts and encourages them to fight injustice outside the classroom. This ripple effect of positive development shows how education can affect individuals and communities. Erin's story shows how empathetic and inventive teachers may inspire pupils to dream big. Her story inspires educators and change-makers that culture shock and adaptability may boost personal and professional growth. Her tale shows that genuine, respectful friendships may break down boundaries and create a more accepting and caring world.

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