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The Influence of Cultural Clash on Learning Dynamics in ESL and EFL Classrooms

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Resumen

Esta síntesis de investigación profundiza en el intrincado fenómeno del choque cultural y su influencia en la dinámica de aprendizaje en las aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) e inglés como segunda lengua (ESL). El choque cultural abarca la interacción de elementos lingüísticos y culturales en nuevos contextos geográficos, lo que conduce a una reconfiguración de los valores, creencias, ideologías y perspectivas religiosas de los individuos. El inglés, a menudo considerado una *lingua franca* global, desempeña un papel fundamental en la formación de estas dinámicas culturales. Sin embargo, la influencia del choque cultural en la educación de EFL y ESL sigue siendo un campo poco estudiado. Esta síntesis tiene como objetivo identificar los factores fundamentales que contribuyen al impacto de la enseñanza del inglés en las dinámicas de clase y el choque cultural.

Palabras clave: fenómeno de la educación, influencia entre culturas, lengua franca

Abstract

This research synthesis delves into the intricate phenomenon of cultural clash and its profound influence on the learning dynamics of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. Cultural clash encompasses the interaction of linguistic and cultural elements in new geographical contexts, leading to a reconfiguration of individuals' values, beliefs, ideologies, and religious perspectives. English, often considered a global *lingua franca*, plays a pivotal role in shaping these cultural dynamics. As the influence of cultural clash on EFL and ESL education remains an understudied domain, this synthesis aims to identify the fundamental factors that impact learning dynamics in the EFL classroom and lead to cultural clash

Keywords: educational phenomenon, influence between cultures, lingua franca

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Dedication

To my mother, my brother, my cat, and clowns…

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I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my family, who have been my unwavering support system throughout my academic journey. To the adversities I've faced; you've taught me resilience and invaluable life lessons always with a smile. A special thanks to PhD. Sandra Cabrera, my dedicated advisor, for her guidance and mentorship through this academic work.

Montejo

Chapter I

Description of the Research

1.1 Background

Cultural clash is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that refers to the influence of linguistic and cultural elements from the new geographical and cultural context in which the learner is immersed. That is, the extent to which the language and the culture of an individual can experience imbrication with a global influencing culture that brings with its inherited values, ideologies, self-awareness, and even religious aspects that allow a transaction between two or more cultures and thus an impact on education (Lee, 2016). Consequently, English, in this case, is often referred to as a *lingua franca* because of the number of speakers around the world using it for communication. However relevant the topic is, there is a lack of research studies regarding how English and the cultural clash that comes with it influences learning dynamics in EFL and ESL classrooms, as well as the processes their main actors (i.e., teachers and students) undergo while experiencing a plausible reformation of thoughts, beliefs, and learning elements. Furthermore, there is a need to analyze and discuss the country's values and the governmental administration of the teaching and learning of English and its relationship to cultural clash (Hayward, Priestley, & Young, 2007). Hence, this research synthesis aims to determine fundamental factors of the influence of the English language and its cultural clash on the learning dynamics of EFL and ESL students.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to the sources analyzed, there is a decaying awareness in ESL and EFL classrooms regarding learners' own culture and language. Furthermore, teachers' awareness of the roles of textbooks, how they are used for teaching and learning a language, and how this information can influence the reader socially and culturally must be addressed. For example, some students may feel to some extent segregated as their religion and values may not be considered when they read standardized texts provided by the government or their tutors, as they may be biased concerning, for instance, the information about Islam as compared to the Judeo-Christian social order and system (Hikawamati & Handayani, 2018). In fact, as illustrated in this particular example, some English textbooks are not in harmony with countries that practice different social orders, such as Islamic countries and other minorities such as the Midwest and some Asian countries. Considering the literature available, this research synthesis will include relevant sources to analyze how students tend to alter their cultural and linguistic construction of a foreign or second language as they experience a cultural clash. For example, the analysis of propaganda allows us to see the evident concern and discussion that

arise when a dominant language influences the mother language. When McDonald's first appeared in breakfast items in Germany in 2003, a German slogan was launched: 'Ich Liebe Es,' which caused a debate among teachers and students, who considered that a literal translation of the phrase was remarking that Germany was a country highly influenced by the English language. This expression meaning "I love you" has a deeply sentimental connotation for Germans due to the linguistic-cultural aspect of the abstract concept of 'love' in the country.

Many teachers and students agreed that in English, it was relatively quick to say 'I love you,' while in German, there are many Latin-French inflections that make the expression 'I love you' more gradable (Gareis & Wilkins, 2011). Hence, it can be easily inferred that teachers are concerned about their native language and its culture because of the rapid changes English has been causing to German linguistic aspects and thus to education.

Another example of the influence of the cultural clash in ESL contexts is the case of Hong Kong Chinese students who might lose their Confucian-Asian values while using English for communication. That is, Hong Kong Chinese students may become more individualized and selfsufficient as the target language changes their perspectives and the way they are expressed (Wang, Shao, & Li, 2010). Wang et al. have suggested that the use of English allow students to speak more fluently about their attributes and qualities than they could in their mother tongue— the conservativeness of Confucian values, especially for females, is essential in their context. These examples underscore the importance of analyzing how the cultural clash influences learning dynamics in EFL and ESL contexts.

1.3 Rationale

Given the above discussion, the author of this research synthesis foregrounds that there are vast situations regarding cultural clashes in the EFL and ESL classrooms. This phenomenon demands not only the discussion of cultural influence but an analysis of the demographic aspects of their agents, as well as their attitudes and beliefs, including sensitive aspects such as religion, racism or sexism and their relation to learning background, social standards, and the standardization of the teaching and learning of English. Again, all these aspects and issues embedded in the phenomenon of cultural clash must be analyzed to determine their influence on the learning dynamics of EFL and ESL learners.

Research Questions

1. How does cultural clash influence learning dynamics in EFL and ESL classrooms?

Objectives

General objective:

1. To analyze how the phenomenon of cultural clash influences learning dynamics in EFL and ESL classrooms.

Specific objectives:

1.   To determine the social factors that emerge from cultural clashes in ESL and EFL classrooms.

2.   To critically analyze the influence of those factors in ESL and EFL learning dynamics.

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Chapter II

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

    2.1.1 Cultural Clash.

Historically, the term culture has been widely analyzed due to its high influence on education and societal issues. Consequently, researchers have been studying the major effects of culture in educational contexts. Sperrazza (2012), for instance**,** has emphasized the tendency of cultural analysis within education as the result of an unstoppable globalization of the dominant language throughout human history. Taking Sperrazza's research into account, this paper has emphasized the spectrum of the continuous combination of 'culture' and 'language' that students struggle to identify and which shape**s** their identities due to its influence on their background, considering that this might lead to a global understanding and tolerance of those factors and their uniqueness. Henceforth, students and teachers might treat these elements with a critical point of view and thus study them with total knowledge of their essence in differing views and beliefs.

Some scholar communities are likely to accept their methodologies and avoid confusion and bias on a subject that has been changing through the construction of globalization's influence on culture and methodology techniques and knowledge. In EFL classrooms, the reflection of culture represents an issue that sometimes might be confronted by learners. However, the usage of appropriate methodologies by the teacher releases an impact on students' ideas about the reality of culture.

Berrarbi and Bahous (2018) have pointed out students' positive results in terms of intercultural skills. Indeed, authentic material such as short stories have positively influenced interaction and learners' opportunities to express themselves through discussions by exercising cultural adaptation and parallelism, as they believe, these texts portray life stories and zero content related to the acquisition of a foreign language, as commonly addressed in English textbooks. Consequently, EFL learners are less likely to be biased toward the target language.

On the other hand, the usage of non-authentic material in EFL classrooms might be negatively affected by the educational agents involved. Bahrami (2015) has suggested that the use of 'Total

English Books' creates barriers to involving learners in a significant learning of the foreign language as it gives a hegemonic perspective based on Western cultures.

In ESL classrooms, theories of educational reforms have demonstrated that teachers do not add to the societal context which is related to constant changes in academic reforms.

CurdtChristiansen and Silver (2012) stated that there are several accountabilities to take into consideration at the moment of making reforms: the possibility of using new materials, the possibility of using new teaching approaches, and the possible alterations of values. Even though the policies might change, teachers are those who change classroom practices. That is, it does not matter if teachers have to change their methodologies or materials to enact knowledge to their students unless they have difficulties understanding the pedagogical assumptions that are underneath the new reforms.

2.2 Literature Review

Many studies have analyzed the relationship between culture and language. Nonetheless, only a reduced number of research studies have focused on the influence of culture on language and how this relationship influences the learning process of a foreign or a second language. Therefore, the weight of culture at the moment of acquiring a target language has been underestimated and thus it becomes necessary to delve deeper into the influence of cultural aspects on language learning.

2.2.1 Sociocultural Factors and their Impact on Learning Dynamics

This section analyzes the relationship between traditional classrooms' use of group work and its influence on learning dynamics that implicitly impact learners' sociocultural factors. In educational environments, sociocultural influences are crucial in determining the dynamics of learning. This idea recognizes that social and cultural circumstances have a significant impact on learning and that learning does not happen in a state of inertia. Sociocultural influences include a wide range of components, including language, cultural values, status, background, and societal standards.

ESL students whose background has led them to traditional approaches by teachers may lead to harsh consequences if educators expose them to 'informal' teachers' roles commonly used in countries like Canada or the United States of America. Students might face difficulties when group work is part of the teaching procedure due to the minimal instructor participation or interaction. In fact, group discovering learning has had broad interpretations when culture comes to the scene; some cultures define group work as a way of improving students' achievement individually (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2016).

On the other hand, many researchers and teachers have foregrounded that the use of group work to facilitate learning is based on teachers' approach to certain fields of culture. Asadi

(2016) has mentioned that EFL teachers have had control over time to assert cultural power without knowledge. Perhaps, teachers' influence on culture might cause cultural clashes that, as a result, will hinder learning EFL. To clarify, Middle-East Asian societies —India and the Middle East— have been tempted to stop learning a foreign language, as they consider this may lead learners to stop speaking their native language, and prioritizing the target one. Thus, people have started to create divisions among those who speak English and those who do not. Due to this, the appreciation of these cultural clashes between students who were exposed to ESL and EFL— in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia— has demonstrated the effects of social divisions amongst those students who have used English as a second language and the ones who have studied English as a foreign language. As a result, the "group discovering" learning approach was complicated to perform due to the divided opinions, perceptions and beliefs among students with different learning backgrounds.

Regarding group work and learning dynamics, Sato and Storch (2022) found that students tend to develop certain attitudes toward group task performance and interactional behavior in EFL and ESL classrooms. In addition, collaborative tasks and their goals are formed considering the complexity of pre- and post-tasks. Henceforth, learners' cognition is affected by their attitudes toward their peers as well as the complexity of the task itself. Thus, it can be suggested that social factors like learning styles and their influence on students from different backgrounds have had an impact on the acquisition of a target language inside classrooms, denoting specifically group work. In addition, students' adaptation to a new culture has caused segregation among peers of the exact origin, creating negative emotions at the moment of conforming to work groups while learning a language.

2.2.1.1 Euphemisms and Dysphemism: Social Connotations and Denotations in Classrooms.

This section discusses the use of language in educational settings to soften or heighten the meaning of terms related to sensitive or forbidden topics—that is, the use of euphemisms and dysphemisms. To be polite or less uneasy, euphemisms provide softer or more indirect terms. For example, "passed away" is used instead of "died." Dysphemisms, however, utilize harsh or direct language that could be offensive or uncomfortable. For example, using the word "crippled" instead of "physically challenged." Given that language distinctions can substantially impact communication and the emotional dynamics among students, educators must be able to comprehend and navigate these linguistic choices in the classroom if they are to promote an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Euphemisms and dysphemisms are constantly moving synchronically with society and the norms that represent a community. According to Sabir, Ali and Azeez (2023), euphemisms and dysphemisms come together since both represent a valid use of language as perceived by its speech community. Even though the use of both terms depends on the speaker, these language phenomena share a hint to conceal or disregard clarity. Sabir, Ali and Azeez (2023) measured the impact of the connotations and denotations of these terms in an English as a foreign language classroom (EFL) in countries located in East Asia and found that, firstly, the use of such lexicon styles modified how Saudi Arabian and Kurdish students communicated in English. This study first suggested that students and teachers come from being tediously biased by the use of a foreign language when referring to sensitive topics. That is, people would rather avoid using the target language when a taboo subject might affect the listener; that is, as to diminish controversial issues and reduce social pressures. Second, Sabir, Ali and Azeez (2023) methodically observed how language functions concerning social roles are employed in communities and mother tongues, which act as a link between language and folklore. However, the article argues that to prevent students from acquiring "psychological endurance," teachers must constantly offer feedback. This will help students understand how to correctly use language to make uncomfortable situations that call for euphemisms in English sound more natural when they use the target language.

In general, the outcomes were highly positive in classrooms where the implementation of social connotations and denotations on the target language were applied. Both teachers and students used language in a respectful way, which played a huge role in the classroom to shape students' reactions, leading participants to higher levels of confidence and creativity.

2.2.1.2 Ideologies and English learning.

China has struggled with EFL and ESL in recent years since students have lost their sense of self-image. That is, in China, a person's perspective, ideas, and cultural influences, which determine their identity within the larger social and historical context of the Chinese society, are referred to as their self-image. Gao (2020) has traced the continuous steps of the national curriculum in China in reference to the teaching and learning of the English language since its population has shown a ubiquitous doubt and a negative perspective towards the learning of this language.

Pupils indeed have attempted to understand and meet the goals of the English classroom, but society is not willing to do so. Students depend on knowing English to learn about US and UK culture, even though China is doing everything it can to adopt Confucian ideals in a foreign language. Since the national curriculum leads to the learning and appreciation of the national

culture rather than the foreign culture, students feel that the subject contradicts moral and values due to the Chinese government's constant push toward the application of English as a "mediator" between cultures (Gao, 2020).

Ideologies in the English classroom are a clear example of how sociocultural factors influence learning dynamics, allowing us to understand cultural clash as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. The Chinese curriculum and the implementation of English as a foreign or second language illustrates such influence. Therefore, Pakdaman, Alibakhshi, and Baradaran (2022) have suggested that the learning process of the target language must be done in an autonomous path where the role of teachers is to guide with enough care and attention. That is, Asian culture and values might be respected and consequently the implementation of the national curriculum must consider a learner-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered approach. Focusing on the student's learning process rather than creating an imposing dominant authority as teachers may cause distress (Pakdaman, Alibakhshi, & Baradaran , 2022).

In conclusion, ideologies are pivotal to the understanding of cultural clash and how they shape the dynamics of EFL and ESL classrooms. Thus, the role of teachers becomes essential in the process of identity construction, since a language of power might influence learners' perspectives regarding a culture and its language. Therefore, students might create conflicts against the foreign language when the topics are not related to the language of interest but to ideologies that 'try' to protect students' culture.

2.2.2 Students' Demographic Profiles and Teachers' Approaches

Cultural clashes in EFL and ESL classrooms might also happen due to students' demographic profiles and teachers' approaches. Students' perceptions of their learning atmosphere must be meticulously taken into account in relation to these two factors. The controversy over EFL and ESL students' learning conditions and environment is a concurrent topic of discussion among researchers. Perhaps, teachers may help students by supporting them with different standardized teaching methods even though these styles might not be suitable for some students due to their demographic profiles. That is, students are always spectators of their teachers' behavior, and they are even curious about their teaching approaches. For instance, ESL students might disagree with their teachers' method to build a proper rapport due to their demographic background. Consequently, demographic factors might create a gap between EFL and ESL classrooms. For example, Dimitroff, Dimitroff, and Alhashimi (2018) has demonstrated that there is a considerable amount of students who like to be instructed by

means of giving examples, demonstrations, and even explanations in their mother tongue while others prefer to separate the use of both languages.

At the moment of hiring an EFL or ESL teacher, many job recruiters aim to identify the most promising candidates by analyzing their background, yet not their effectiveness in future practices (Maynes & Hatt, 2013). In addition, teachers need to be aware of students' backgrounds to assess, or they will not build a proper rapport in the future. In addition, students prefer their teachers to be motivating, patient, friendly, relaxed, and professional.

Demographic factors and teachers' approaches can lead to cultural clashes. A clear example of this situation are post-soviet Russian students, who used to ignore teachers' decisions to work in a multicultural classroom in an ESL context. If we consider post-soviet students, there are quite a few topics to analyze on how students' backgrounds may affect classrooms, sometimes even without teachers' awareness. As these students were accustomed to translation methods and internal segregation, it was difficult for these students to acquire English as a second language through the approaches proposed in their classrooms. That is to say, the former Soviet Union teaching methodologies in the nineties were way excessively apart from those in the United States.

Additionally, Kor, Vosoughi, and Alemi (2019) have suggested that Filipino and Iranian students in ESL classrooms are very likely to show the same cultural behaviors, limitations, and even attitudes toward teaching approaches due to expectations based on the rewards and punishments used in their countries. Therefore, teachers may not be able to cope with those conditions as they may regard students as agents of their own learning process. Consequently, misbehaviors were commonly addressed in US classrooms, as students perceived their teachers negatively. Both Post-Soviet and Filipino students are examples of how different demographic backgrounds may affect the dynamics of learning environments and even create segregation due to the diversity existing among these students, creating therefore a vision of inferiority transmitted by their attitudes toward their classmates (Smith, 2000).

The mastering of a second language relies upon students' perceptions and attitudes towards the target language. That is, English teachers will be able to expand students' cognitive domains only if they are allowed (Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, & Alzwari, 2012)

2.2.3 Religion and Beliefs
Culture is a determinant factor in how an individual interprets the world. Henceforth, according to

DeCapua and Wintergerst (2016), each culture contains invisible factors or 'codes' of behavior that foreigners might not perceive without assistance from locals. As a result, students that come from different cultures might find it difficult to perceive which hidden 'codes' from their culture are correct to use in a different civilization; especially if these rules or codes are instruments that unfold forms of religion from a specific group of the society. For example, Hansen-Thomas and

Chennapragada (2018) have shown how a multicultural classroom without knowledge of those 'invisible' moral codes can encounter criticism for the teacher. In this case study, there was a lack of familiarity with Islamic rules that caused tension between students and their teacher. Arabic countries practicing Islamic rules and codes have established a background for students who study abroad, such as that women and men cannot study together; the Quran's language is sacred; women have to wear hijabs, and so on. Not knowing this may imply a hostile environment in the ESL classroom.

Of equal importance, Rana, Bhatti, and Mahmood (2021) have theorized that students who acquire a target language inevitably clash aspects of their own culture with the external culture until the stronger overlaps the previous culture. Furthermore, Rana et al. have also analyzed how Pakistani and Indonesian students have prioritized English influence over their language and

Islamic rules. In light of that, students have 'fallen' to the branches on which English dominates all over the world, minimizing their religious customs in ESL contexts.

On the other hand, Gobert (2014) foregrounded that most topics that ESL students have analyzed might result in offensive taboos in EFL contexts. For example, critical pedagogy methodologies for advanced students in English as a Second Language classrooms are a major matter of discussion for teachers in Gulf Muslim countries due to the number of forbidden subjects that are suggested, such as AIDs spread, same-sex marriage, kissing, heterosexuality and so on. These examples have caused the rejection of female students to produce written compositions regarding these sensitive topics due to their religious beliefs.

In ESL and EFL classrooms where teachers are well-trained, empathetic, and globally-minded, it is important to analyze situations that might cause ethical or moral dilemmas. HansenThomas and Chennapragada (2018) concluded that teachers might anticipate the several differences a classroom might encounter to avoid an inflamed conflict. In light of that, in EFL and ESL classrooms, it might be possible for teachers to recognize and foresee certain elements that could impact students' acquisition and learning of the target language.

2.2.3.1 EFL Textbook Visuals and Their Influence on Cultural Issues.

Taking into account that Asia is a culturally broad and diverse continent, the critical review of visual aids that books contain must be mandatory in their curriculum before wide-spreading their content in educational institutions. Cheng and Beigi (2012) have advocated for an endorsement of studies to explore various perspectives in which countries might differ from focusing on the role of religion in education, especially in Asia. Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that society and education go hand in hand. Therefore, to point out that a country is not following a particular social orientation while educating students is not an easy task unless we have a firsthand experience of such situation.

Notwithstanding, countries where English is mandatory and fulfill the vision of a foreign language pursue global education rather than a local point of view. Visions of inequality wobble around institutions, educators, and learners since the political and educational perspectives diminish

Middle-East Asia's feasibility of Islam in countries where religion influences societal aspects (Cheng & Beigi, 2012). In fact, the previously mentioned article has suggested that Iran's Ministry of Education seems to care less about the role of women in terms of what is culturally desirable, as their textbooks illustrate women's freedom outside the boundaries of their religious and cultural acceptance, showing proximity to a Western perspective of physical and moral ideals.

In sum, we can say that unexamined EFL textbooks might alter students' perspectives about their relationship with religion and society. What is acceptable and regarded as normal in Western cultures may cause ethical and moral dilemmas in EFL and ESL contexts. Henceforth, ministries of education and educators in Middle-East Asia might carefully evaluate their textbooks if they want to avoid a cultural clash during the learning of English, therefore avoiding possible biases from Western perspectives.

2.2.3.2 The Influence of Gender Ideologies on EFL Textbooks: The Case of South Europe.

Nowadays, different gender ideologies are causing tensions in public educational settings, especially for those within orthodox societal groups. Although textbooks are normalizing the wave of LGBTQ+ people, Greek society, for example, does not feel comfortable with the spread of EFL educational textbooks in which these aspects seem to be freely analyzed. Koutsoupaki (2022) has emphasized that historically, when referring to marriage, Greek people have defined roles based on a cisgender perspective. That is, if you are a woman, then you should respect your role as a housewife while men should provide what is required for

that home. Notwithstanding, the commonality of wide-spreading gender flexibility (highly due to US capitalization) seems to have affected this Greek vision, to some extent.

Nowadays, public institutions seek neutral wording when it comes to gender and sexuality to avoid biases and conservative assumptions. Even though EFL textbooks are bought from native Anglo writers, the purpose of these textbooks may seem to sell and not to educate.

Koutsoupaki (2022) has stated that public institutions in Greece do not care about earning profits since their goal is to provide education publicly. Therefore, the Greek Ministry of Education prefers to edit these textbooks when it comes to people who do not identify themselves considering their biological sex but regard themselves as non-binary or belonging to the LGBTQ+ movement. Greece's manufacturing industry revolves around the family and religion, which are the foundations of heterosexual marriage and the household. As a result, state institutions accept and reinforce the revised EFL textbooks. After all, despite students' dismissal of these traditional laws as "oldfashioned," Greece has remained static due to the ban on same-sex unions.

Finally, EFL textbooks that are not revised by authorities might create biases in society. As we have analyzed, the edition of such instruments was a decision made by authorities since religious and moral concerns have raised questions and confronted members of the Greek. Therefore, learning dynamics might be influenced in EFL classrooms when cultural and religious issues and concerns must be addressed.

2.2.3.3 North America.

Even though the United States keeps education and religion clearly apart, it is important to acknowledge the innate reverence for people's ancestry in the context of the cultural conflict between EFL and ESL. Since it is expected that neither domain will interfere with the other, this division is essential.

Davila and Volz (2017) have analyzed how teachers and students behaved in a U.S. classroom when they were given heavily religious textbooks with a Mexican provenance. It is noteworthy that most of the pupils were studying English as a second language, and several sessions were used to gauge how they responded.

Indeed, teachers are not allowed to indoctrinate students in any religion, even though the majority of people in the United States are Christians. According to Davila and Volz's research, educators frequently experience a sense of limitation when introducing textbooks on subjects such as the tale of "La Virgen de Guadalupe." The researchers claim that having a religious discussion in the classroom can improve students' understanding of other cultures.

Nonetheless, they stress that in order to avoid misinterpretations in society, one should neither support nor oppose any one religion.

Middle school students who participated in the study responded favorably to the religious instruments and demonstrated critical thinking. They stated that in order to foster a wider understanding and prevent prejudicial opinions about the beliefs of others, there should be more narratives about people's religious and cultural backgrounds. This emphasizes how important it is to respect religious personalities, legends, and symbols, as Davila and Volz's study found.

When one looks at middle school kids' and instructors' opinions, one finds that the government is crucial in promoting cultural awareness. The main objective is for children to recognize and value the various cultures that exist in the United States, which will help to lessen the stigma associated with heritage and religion across the nation.

2.2.4 Social norms.

Students who have the opportunity to immerse themselves into the target language environment, so that they can accelerate the process of learning, might not perceive the social consequences of this action. Ota (2013) describes China's social norms to be collective, yet Chinese students who leave the country to continue their higher education in the United States switch the norm to an individual perception of the population. In light of that, ESL students who come from an ingroup or collaborative-spirit country are more likely to encounter difficulties in reforming their way of thinking in new academic and social contexts. Hence, as we mentioned earlier, the lack of curricular adaptation to the increasing number of diverse students in U.S. classrooms adds a barrier to students' educational performance. However, contrary to this situation, Liu (2011) suggests that a significant amount of EFL Chinese students have positive behaviors and attitudes toward the learning environment implemented in China's curriculum and the methodologies used by teachers to assess the acquisition of the target language. Indeed, the higher the scores of these students in English, the more positive their attitude toward the language.

In fact, Hong Kong students' perceptions of English as a target language might create a cohabitation of productive skills and their empowerment in receptive skills. It is of general knowledge that the Popular Republic of China and its republics have a population whose values and norms are based on a Confucian philosophy. According to Wu (2012), there is a balance between the different skills involved in English as a target language; and thus, for example, ESL students find it attractive to analyze authentic material to learn more about the

language. Nevertheless, Hong Kong students prefer not to produce oral tasks or even practice the language outside the classroom due to a series of societal biases regarding what some people may perceive as a 'showing off' of their foreign language knowledge. In this context, Wu's study underscores the participants' preference to use audio and visual materials only in the classroom to avoid being perceived negatively as the target language may be considered as a tool for rewards and power.

2.2.4.1 Milieu and the cultural clash.

Students' behavior may be strongly influenced by the immediate environment. Certain students' attitudes about various subjects may cause close friends or family to actively obstruct them, while other students might minimize or hesitate when it comes to a topic that is being presented. Concerning the foregoing topics, English and instructional individuals in ESL or EFL classrooms might unconsciously convey sensitive thoughts to a milieu that was previously set by people who are close to the student. Kormos, Kiddle, and Csizer (2011) have examined how factors such as family, friends and overall contextual elements affect motivation, beliefs, and perseverance in learning. In addition, the authors have highlighted that those external factors such as school environment including classmates' behavior and the materials teachers provide may subsequently affect the aforementioned aspects and therefore learning as a whole due to an implicit cultural clash existing in the classroom.

Students' behavior is greatly influenced by their immediate surroundings and their perspectives toward different issues are shaped by their close friends or relatives. Sometimes people would deliberately hinder some students, and other times people will hesitate or show less interest in the subjects that are being taught. Within the framework of ESL or EFL classrooms, English and teaching personnel may unintentionally communicate sensitive ideas shaped by the pre-existing environment created by the student's immediate family.

The study by Kormos, Kiddle, and Csizer (2011) investigates the effects of social context, family, friends, and the general environment on learning motivation, beliefs, and persistence. The authors emphasize that outside variables, such as the classroom setting, student conduct, and teacherprovided materials, might have an impact on these elements and thus cause an implicit cultural conflict.

The methods and strategies used in the classroom are also impacted by the surroundings. Socially acceptable methods can have an impact on learning a target language; nevertheless, ESL and EFL societies have different attitudes on this matter because of the different needs of their learners. The comparison of English instruction in Chile and Australia by Sato and

Storch (2022) has highlighted cultural conflicts and the results of various approaches. The article describes how societal expectations drive ESL learners to learn the target language in order to advance personally and make contributions to society. EFL students, on the other hand, are driven to use the language to learn about different cultures and people. In addition, Sato and Storch (2022) have examined how some EFL learners typically favor teachercentered methods that emphasize identifying grammatical structures and encouraging students to construct English grammar rather than having students practicing the target language.

Pragmatic transfer is another important aspect to consider. According to AlTarawneh (2015), pragmatics should be taught in situations where speaking a foreign language is required. Because of how society views important elements like facial expressions, words and intents, teachers might not be sufficiently equipped to impart this type of knowledge. Therefore, teaching with a focus on pragmatic competence is essential in the EFL and ESL classroom to allow students to raise their awareness and perception of the target language.

At last, depending on different needs, the environment may influence students' perspectives and language learning. While EFL students aim to comprehend different cultures and people, ESL students concentrate on enhancing opportunities and making contributions to their society. The appropriate awareness in teaching English as a second language helps avoid cross-cultural interference and confronts pragmatic transfer challenges, in which people's perceptions and understanding of important elements, such as facial expressions and movement, may differ from one another during conversation.

Chapter III Methodology

3.1 Research design

This research synthesis involved an explanatory research to obtain, analyze and interpret valuable information about the influence of cultural clash on learning dynamics. To do so, the researcher followed the model of a research synthesis, which is essentially characterized by the comparability of projects' results afforded by research works that empirically provide sustainable and solid information to set the basis of another research work (Ortega & Norris, 2006). The data was found in fundamental databases such as Scholar Google and ResearchGate, which have been essential academic sources with valuable information for this work.

Data collection and analysis procedures

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This research synthesis included the analysis of twenty scientific papers considering the following inclusion criteria for their eligibility in relation to the social factors that come with cultural clash in EFL and ESL contexts and how they influence learning dynamics.

1. Scientific papers published after 2010.

2. Papers based on either qualitative or quantitative approaches.

3. Papers analyzing cultural elements and their relation to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language.

4. Papers analyzing social aspects of the cultural clash that influence the process of learning in EFL / ESL contexts

All papers that did not fulfill these requirements were excluded from the analysis.

Relevant keywords and terms for this research were the following: EFL, culture, clash, education, behavior, teaching, learning, the spread of English. Also, the following journals were reviewed: Academia, Taylor & Francis, JSTOR, TESOL Journal, MATEC. All this information was analyzed and classified into categories that allowed the researcher to provide a response to the research questions established for the development of this work.

Chapter IV Results and Analysis

Table 1

Year and Country of Publication from 2010 to 2023.

Country	Years		Number of Articles	
	2010	2023	1-3	4-6
From 2010 to 2014				
China	2010		1	
Chile	2011		1	
China	2012		2	

Singapore	2012	1
United Arab Emirates	2012	1
China	2013	1
Canada	2013	1
United Arab Emirates	2014	1
Cyprus	2015	1
United States of America	2016	1
Saudi Arabia	2016	1
United States of America	2017	1
Turkey	2018	1
United States of America	2018	1
Iran	2019	1

Pakistan	2020	1	
China	2021	1	
Australia	2022	1	
Chile	2022	1	
Greece	2022	1	
Iran	2022	1	
Iraq	2023	1	
Total		23	0

Note. This table shows that the number of articles published in relation to cultural clash in EFL and ESL classrooms and their influence on learning dynamics covers a period of five years with a total of nine articles. The majority of articles dealing with this criterion were published in 2012. Additionally, Table 1 suggests that Asia and North America are the regions in which the research of this issue has been given more relevance. Nevertheless, Latin America can be regarded as the region in which this type of issues is given less importance.

This table shows that between 2015 and 2020 the number of articles decreases within a period of five years with a total of eight articles. This table also suggests that between 2016 and 2018, the majority of articles were published. Hence, Asia and North America are again the regions where cultural clash and its influence on learning dynamics in EFL and ESL classrooms are highly analyzed. It is worth mentioning that Latin America appears with no articles published about this topic.

Furthermore, this table suggests that the number of articles regarding the analysis of cultural clash has decreased since the very beginning of the last decade, i.e., between 2020 and 2023

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with a total of six articles published in a period of 3 years. Consequently, Asia is the region that does the utmost research on this phenomenon, while Latin America requires a deeper analysis of cultural clash.

Table 2

Determining factors of Cultural Clash per Country

Factors	Impact on EFL and ESL settings	Countries
Social Factors	Teachers influence English-speaking contexts.	Saudi Arabia
Social Connotations	Students use out-of-context language.	Turkey.
Ideologies	Perspectives of L2 damaging L1 heritage.	China.
Psychological Factors	Students' perception of L2 affects their interests.	Iran.
Demographic Profile	Teacher-student rapport, student backgrounds, and demographics affect L2 learning and responses.	Turkey, Canada, Philippines & Iran, Lebanon.
Religion and Beliefs	Disagreement between students' own culture and religion and those of the target language.	The United States of

		America, Pakistan.
Social Standards	Students who study abroad abruptly change social perceptions, norms, and behavior.	China, Hong Kong, U.S.A.
Milieu	Students' overall contextual factors affect their perseverance to learn differently.	Chile, Australia.
Pragmatics	L1 and L2 comprehension relies on students comparing contextual expressions.	Cyprus.

The first determining factors influencing learning dynamics in the EFL or ESL classroom are social and they have an impact on the learning dynamics of language courses. This is especially evident in the way group work affects multicultural settings and their circumstances. When ESL students interact informally with other people, there may be cultural conflicts, while unintended cultural influence from EFL professors might obstruct language learning as well. Therefore, cultural conflicts that impact group dynamics have, at the same time, an impact on students' viewpoints and cooperation, highlighting the relationship between sociocultural elements and successful group learning in language acquisition and the dynamics of such learning process.

The second determining factor of cultural clash has to do with social connotations as they have an impact on how euphemisms and dysphemisms, for instance, can influence language usage and learning dynamics, especially when discussing sensitive topics and controversial subjects. In fact, students exhibit a range of communicational styles in diverse language classrooms, which highlights larger social consequences for language learning, including positive or

negative outcomes in relation to self-assurance or inventiveness, thus making evident the significance of educators to mediate appropriate language use in sensitive situations.

The third factor of cultural clash has to do with ideologies which have an impact on language education, as demonstrated by the difficulties encountered in EFL and ESL programs in China, for example. Tensions between embracing global languages and preserving regional traditions are reflected in societal resistance. Consequently, in order to promote a pleasant language learning environment, teachers play a critical role as they may consciously or unconsciously promote a variety of cultural values and foster a learner-centered approach.

The fourth and fifth factors concerning the influence of cultural clash on learning dynamics are psychological and demographic profiles, and their analysis must focus on how they have an impact on learning and might raise conflicts between different cultures in language classes, whether in EFL or ESL contexts. The ongoing discussion about the best learning environments emphasizes how important it is for educators to modify their teaching strategies to take into account students' diverse preferences and foster positive relationships with them. The relevance of comprehending varied student expectations is highlighted by the significant impact that teachers have on learning and cultural awareness. Then, inconsistencies in cultural practices can lead to difficulties in managing a classroom, highlighting the complex relationship between students' attitudes and successful language acquisition.

The sixth factor leading to cultural clash and thus to a change in classroom dynamics aligns with religion and beliefs. Conflicts between cultures over religion and beliefs have a big influence on how people acquire languages. Pupils, for example, may regard religion-based invisible norms as to be difficult to follow since they may belong to different backgrounds, which can lead to controversial interactions in multicultural classrooms. Language acquisition is therefore impacted by the conflict between pupils' cultural values and those of their peers. It is crucial for teachers to be aware of and sympathetic toward students' religious beliefs when discussing taboo subjects, such as AIDS and same-sex marriage, as this can destabilize the foundation of an inclusive learning environment.

The seventh factor to be analyzed in relation to the influence of cultural clash on learning dynamics has to do with social standards. Social norms clash between cultures and have a big impact on language acquisition dynamics, affecting how pupils from different backgrounds adapt academically and socially to their learning, social and cultural settings. In fact, students face extra hurdles when curricula are not adapted for specific situations, and social forces

might prevent students from demonstrating their language proficiency outside of the classroom, highlighting the complex connection between language acquisition and culture.

The last determining factor of cultural clash and its impact on learning dynamics is milieu. In language learning environments, students' behavior and attitudes are greatly influenced by their immediate surroundings. In ESL or EFL classrooms, teachers could unintentionally share ideas that have been influenced by the current setting. The social setting inevitably affects the dedication, beliefs, and motivation to study. As a result, language learning outcomes are impacted by classroom approaches that are, in turn, shaped by social standards and the settings where they occur. In addition, pragmatic transfer is a key component of cultural clash in EFL and ESL contexts as such competence requires deep linguistic and cultural understanding. Generally speaking, there are a series of variables that play a role in the cultural clash that learners from different contexts may experience and thus the impact of learning dynamics that inevitably impact on students' attitudes, behaviors and points of view.

Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The impact of social factors on learning dynamics in ESL and EFL classrooms is a multifaceted phenomenon with far-reaching implications. Traditional teaching approaches and cultural clashes can have a significant influence on students' learning experiences (Asadi, 2016; Decapua & Wintergerst, 2016; and Asadi (2016), underlining the complexity of the learning process as suggested to occur in group work interactions that involve different learning styles and cultural backgrounds (Sato & Storch, 2022). In essence, the dynamics of learning in ESL and EFL classrooms are deeply intertwined with social factors. A comprehensive understanding of these influences is pivotal for educators and policymakers to create inclusive and effective language learning environments that accommodate the diverse backgrounds and needs of students.

A shift to a learner-centered approach, as opposed to a teacher-centered one, can yield more positive outcomes and reduce the impact of cultural clash, as a student-based approach may strengthen students' autonomy while guiding them through the language acquisition journey. As a result, it may significantly reduce anxiety and stress levels. By taking this approach, it becomes possible to integrate different cultures and values without creating conflicts between the foreign language and learners' cultural identity.

As expected, this research synthesis has provided a critical reflection on how cultural clash influences learning dynamics in EFL and ESL classrooms. This research has therefore

determined a series of interrelated social factors that play a significant role in shaping learning dynamics and awareness of ethical dilemmas and sociocultural issues. All these variables are essential elements of the learning process as they may be seen as either opportunities or threats to one's cultural identity within the classroom.

The analysis of the different factors addressed in this synthesis must lead educators to build effective rapport, emphasizing the importance of teacher effectiveness and the need for educators to possess motivating, patient, friendly, and professional attributes, as these qualities can significantly impact the learning environment (Maynes & Hatt, 2013) . Cultural and demographic factors, such as the influence of traditional teaching methods and internal segregation, can further complicate the language acquisition process.

As Kor, Vosoughi, and Alemi (2019) have explored, the acquisition of a second language is deeply intertwined with students' perceptions and attitudes toward that language. Hence, teachers play a crucial role in inspiring and shaping learners' attitudes and behaviors. In this sense, research has underscored that anticipated behavioral changes may not always align with the intended outcomes. Understanding the complex interplay between students' demographic backgrounds and language acquisition is, therefore, fundamental for educators to create effective and culturally sensitive learning environments.

Culture, as DeCapua and Wintergerst (2016) have suggested, plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' worldviews, with each culture harboring its unique set of hidden "codes" of behavior, which can be particularly challenging for students from different backgrounds to decipher when navigating a foreign civilization. It becomes evident that teachers need to be well-prepared to anticipate and address such cultural differences in order to foster an inclusive learning environment.

In ESL and EFL classrooms, educators must take into account the complexities brought about by students' diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, ensuring that the learning environment is inclusive and respectful for individual beliefs. It is crucial for teachers to be well-prepared, empathetic, and globally-minded, as they play a pivotal role in addressing cultural differences and guiding students toward successful language acquisition while maintaining respect for their diverse values and traditions. Consequently, it becomes essential for educators to bridge the gap between languages and cultures, particularly when addressing the complexities of politeness, impoliteness, and communication nuances. Understanding these contextual factors is crucial for educators to tailor their approaches and ensure a smooth

language learning experience that aligns with students' motivations and the cultural norms of their environment.

5.2 Recommendations

This research synthesis has underscored the impact of cultural clash on diverse students' learning dynamics, and thus the need for further research on this topic, especially in the Latin America context in which there is a lack of students regarding this issue. Indeed, such an analysis can enhance language learning in diverse cultural contexts, as it is crucial to provide cultural sensitivity training for educators, equipping them to understand and address potential cultural clashes. Additionally, customizing language materials and curriculum to align with the cultural and societal expectations of students, whether ESL or EFL learners, can enhance their engagement and motivation. Promoting cross-cultural awareness and communication through inclusive activities and open dialogues will foster an environment that respects cultural diversity and facilitates effective language acquisition while mitigating potential cultural clashes. These measures will create a more inclusive and successful language learning experience while honoring students' cultural identities and backgrounds.

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