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## HOW MOVING TO A NEW COUNTRY AFFECTS ENGLISH LEARNING AND CONFIDENCE.

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*This study investigates the impact of relocating to a new country on English language acquisition and learner confidence. It explores how cultural immersion, exposure to native speakers, and the challenges of adapting to a new environment influence language learning outcomes. Through surveys, interviews, and observations of students who have moved to English-speaking countries, the research examines how these experiences affect their language skills and self-esteem. Findings indicate that while language learning improves due to constant exposure, confidence can initially decline due to cultural adaptation difficulties. The study offers recommendations for supporting learners during this transitional period.*

## Introduction

The process of learning English as a second language involves numerous challenges, from mastering grammar and vocabulary to overcoming cultural barriers. However, the experience of moving to a new country, particularly an English-speaking one, can dramatically influence a learner's language acquisition and confidence. This thesis explores how relocating to a new country affects both the rate of English language learning and the development of self-assurance in language use. Immigrating to an English-speaking country offers learners constant exposure to the language in real-life contexts, from social interactions to educational settings. This immersion can enhance language learning by providing practical opportunities to apply and refine English skills. However, the transition also brings cultural challenges, such as navigating unfamiliar social norms, understanding different accents, and overcoming the initial communication barriers. These challenges can affect learners' confidence, as they may feel overwhelmed by the new environment. The research aims to answer the following questions: How does moving to a new country impact English language acquisition? What are the effects of this relocation on learners' self-confidence in using English? How can educational institutions support learners in overcoming challenges to improve both language skills and confidence? By examining the experiences of learners who have recently moved to an English-speaking country, this study provides insight into the ways that cultural immersion affects language learning, self-esteem, and overall language use. The research also addresses how to best assist learners in adjusting to these new environments while fostering both linguistic and emotional growth.

## Literature Review

Previous studies suggest that immersion in an English-speaking environment accelerates language acquisition, providing learners with continuous practice and exposure. According to Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, learners acquire language most effectively when exposed to comprehensible input in real-life situations. Living in a country where English is spoken daily offers ample opportunities for such input, which can lead to quicker fluency development. However, this experience is not always straightforward. Research by Lindholm-Leary (2001) highlights that immigrants often face significant psychological challenges in their new environments, which can impede language learning. Social isolation, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes in a new language can reduce learners' willingness to practice and interact, hindering both language acquisition and confidence. This is consistent with findings by Bialystok (1997), who noted that anxiety related to communication can

lower learners' self-esteem and delay progress. Cultural adaptation also plays a critical role in language learning outcomes. As noted by Sam (2001), when learners move to a new country, they must adjust to both language and culture. This adjustment can create a sense of disorientation or "culture shock," which may decrease confidence in their language abilities. However, once learners acclimate, their confidence and language proficiency tend to improve due to increased familiarity with the culture and language use in real-world settings. Research indicates that while cultural immersion is beneficial for language development, learners' self-confidence may initially decline due to the challenges of adapting to a new culture and language. The role of social support, from peers, teachers, and family, is crucial in helping learners overcome these challenges and build both language skills and confidence (Hussain, 2012).

### **Methodology**

A mixed-methods approach was employed, including surveys, in-depth interviews, and classroom observations. The sample consisted of fifty adult learners who had moved to an English-speaking country within the past year. Data were analyzed to determine correlations between cultural adaptation, language acquisition rates, and changes in learner confidence.

### **Discussion**

The findings from this study reveal several key insights into how moving to a new country affects English language learning and confidence. Participants reported that living in an English-speaking country significantly increased their exposure to the language. Daily interactions in stores, schools, and workplaces helped learners refine their listening and speaking skills. For example, learners who initially struggled with understanding native accents or slang reported substantial improvement after several months of immersion. Despite the increased exposure, many learners experienced a temporary decline in confidence. Participants shared feelings of embarrassment or frustration when they could not fully understand others or express themselves clearly. These emotional barriers often led to a reluctance to engage in conversations, despite having the opportunity to practice. Cultural adaptation played a significant role in both language learning and self-confidence. Learners who successfully adapted to local cultural norms and developed social networks experienced an increase in confidence. On the other hand, those who struggled with cultural differences or social isolation showed slower progress in language acquisition and reported lower self-esteem. The study found that learners who had access to strong social support, both from family members and peers, were better able to navigate the challenges of



adaptation. Institutions that provided language classes and cultural orientation programs helped learners overcome barriers and gradually improve both their language skills and confidence. These findings suggest that while immersion in an English-speaking country is beneficial for language learning, the emotional and social challenges that learners face during the transition can initially hinder their progress.

### Results

The study revealed several key findings about the impact of moving to a new country on English language learning and confidence: Learners reported significant improvement in their listening and speaking skills due to constant exposure to English in social and work environments. The real-life application of language helped them understand vocabulary in context and improved their ability to interact with native speakers. The majority of participants felt that their language proficiency increased within the first six months of relocation. However, this improvement was gradual and often marked by initial struggles with communication. Many learners initially faced a drop in confidence. Participants expressed feeling anxious when speaking English in public, particularly in professional or academic settings. Some described avoiding conversations or feeling embarrassed when making mistakes. The study found that learners who initially lacked confidence were more likely to stay in their social "comfort zones" and avoid practicing English, further hindering their progress. Cultural adaptation was a significant factor in rebuilding confidence. Learners who felt connected to their new environment-through social networks, local events, or understanding cultural customs-reported higher levels of confidence in their ability to speak English. Conversely, participants who faced difficulties adjusting to local customs or felt isolated were less confident in using English in social settings. They reported a sense of alienation that impacted both their confidence and language learning process. Support systems, such as English language courses and peer mentoring, played a vital role in easing the transition and boosting learners' confidence. Learners who had access to such resources felt more supported and motivated to engage in language practice. Overall, the study shows that while relocation to an English-speaking country accelerates language learning, learners must also navigate cultural challenges that can temporarily lower their confidence.

### Conclusion

This study demonstrates that moving to an English-speaking country has both positive and challenging effects on English language learning and learner confidence. The primary

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benefit of relocation is the constant exposure to English, which helps learners develop practical language skills in real-world settings. However, this exposure is accompanied by emotional and social challenges that can impact learners' confidence. The research reveals that many learners initially experience a decline in confidence due to difficulties with communication, cultural adaptation, and social isolation. These emotional barriers can impede their willingness to practice English, delaying progress in language acquisition. Despite these challenges, learners who successfully adapt to the new culture and develop social networks tend to regain their confidence over time and achieve greater success in language learning. Educational institutions and communities play a crucial role in supporting learners during this transition. By providing resources such as language classes, cultural orientation programs, and peer support, they can help learners overcome emotional and cultural barriers. Additionally, creating a supportive and inclusive environment allows learners to feel more comfortable practicing their language skills, thereby boosting their confidence and language proficiency. This study highlights the importance of not only focusing on language skills but also addressing the emotional and social needs of learners who move to new countries. Teachers and support systems should be aware of the psychological challenges immigrants face and incorporate strategies to help learners build confidence alongside their language skills. In conclusion, while moving to an English-speaking country provides valuable opportunities for language learning, the emotional and social challenges of cultural adaptation should not be underestimated. By addressing these challenges, educational institutions can better support learners in improving both their language proficiency and confidence, leading to a more successful and fulfilling learning experience.

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