

BRAZILIAN WAY: CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF EUROPEAN EXCHANGE STUDENTS AT PUC-RIO



<https://doi.org/10.56238/arev7n2-311>

Submitted on: 01/28/2025

Publication date: 02/28/2025

**Adriana Ferreira de Sousa¹, Nadja de Abreu Carvalho², Maria Carolina de Moraes³,
Flavia Friedrich Braun⁴, Giovanna Mendes Vianna⁵ and Larissa Maria David
Gabardo-Martins⁶.**

ABSTRACT

The Brazilian Way is a peculiar Brazilian social strategy of adaptation, involving dimensions such as corruption, creativity and the breaking of social norms. The objective of this research was to search for evidence that demonstrates which group of European exchange students is closer to the Brazilian way. 53 European exchange students from PUC-Rio participated in this research, 32 of Romance origin and 21 Anglo-Saxon. The instrument used for data collection was the Brazilian Way Scale. Data from the independent sample comparison tests revealed that there was no significant difference between the groups, even though the averages of Romance-speaking countries were higher. However, this result may have been influenced by the insufficient sample size, and by the fact that more French students participated in the research. Thus, future research should be carried out to diversify the literature.

Keywords: Brazilian way. Cultural adaptation. Exchange. Languages.

¹ Dr. in Letters - Language Studies and Coordinator-teacher of Portuguese as a second language for Foreigners

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

² Lawyer

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

³ Nutritionist

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

⁴ Publicist graduated in social communication and specialist in Marketing

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

⁵ Student of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology at PUC-Rio;

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

⁶ Professor of Psychology at PUC-Rio.

Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro / PUC-Rio, Brazil.

INTRODUCTION

The expression *jeitinho brasileiro* refers to a typically Brazilian, improvised and informal way of solving a practical problem through a creative solution that is outside social norms (Barbosa, 1992). From this perspective, it is common to use phrases such as "break a branch", "good will", "waist game", "one hand washes the other", or "there is only no remedy for death". According to Flach (2012), this cultural behavior is considered a formula for adapting the Brazilian people to historical conditions and heritage.

Another important aspect is that the phenomenon of the "Brazilian way" has deep cultural roots, originating in the colonial era, in which the Portuguese colonizers instituted a system of exchange of favors called cronyism, thus emerging as a response to the hierarchical social structure and the often arbitrary laws and norms imposed by the Portuguese elite. The need to find creative solutions to address these constraints led to the development of a culture of flexibility and adaptability, where formal rules were often circumvented through personal relationships and favors. This system was perpetuated over the years, integrating itself into Brazilian culture (Barbosa, 1992).

Anthropologists DaMatta (2005) and Barbosa (1992) state that the Brazilian way can have an ambiguous value, and can be seen in a positive way, associated with the cordial and sympathetic side of Brazilians, as a cheerful and playful, affective, tropical and extroverted people. Or in a negative way, characterized by traits of distrust or even corruption. The negative judgment would reveal a certain disbelief in Brazilian norms and more than "a way", there is, in this case, a "favor" that suggests an exchange of actions and a relationship of dependence.

According to Barbosa (1992), the phrase "please, can't you find a way?" is one of the expressions most used by Brazilian society. The anthropologist also states that there is a clear distinction between "dar um jeitinho" and the "jeitinho brasileiro". For her, the first has a more functional character, related to a social drama, while the second represents a paradigmatic element of our social identity. In any case, it must be admitted that the precise definition of the *jeitinho* is extremely difficult, as there are several contextual elements that can characterize it as a favor, if the discourse is positive, or as corruption, if it is negative.

In this sense, the author states that the best thing would be to establish a *continuum* between favor, *jeitinho* and corruption, where only the context and the type of

relationship established between people can define what actually happens. The favor, for example, is not usually asked for from strangers, but the *jeitinho* does not depend on the knowledge to be requested. The favor also often suggests more formal contexts, while the *jeitinho* is configured in more informal environments, almost always accompanied by appeals to emotions and personality. These appeals are presented with sympathy, cordiality and humility. Therefore, arrogance and authoritarianism do not work with the way, because it is necessary to create an atmosphere of familiarity, denoting proximity between those involved in the situation. Barbosa (1992) cites expressions such as "my brother", "friend", "uncle", "compadre", "dear", "partner", "companion", among others, to ratify the informal nature of proximity existing in the contexts in which the *jeitinho* is used.

Ferreira et al. (2011), in turn, suggest that the Brazilian way is subdivided into three dimensions: corruption, creativity and transgression of social norms. Corruption was defined as the use of illicit means to obtain personal advantages, such as bribery or embezzlement of resources. Creativity, in turn, is a constitutive dimension of the Brazilian way and involves the use of innovative solutions to solve problems with a tendency to seek positive interactions, without necessarily violating laws or social norms.

Finally, breaking social norms would function as a problem-solving strategy, which often entails transgressing pre-established social norms, such as cutting lines or using connections to obtain preferential treatment. This practice is widely accepted as a mechanism of social interaction, especially when it involves sympathy to minimize the interpersonal cost of violating these norms, thus avoiding direct conflicts (Ferreira et al., 2011). The population, in general, recognizes that the use of this practice is morally questionable and that, ideally, it should not be used. Even so, there is an implicit acceptance that the practice is widespread and carried out by virtually everyone. The *jeitinho* is a complex sociocultural strategy with different functions at the individual and social levels, which can be used to solve everyday problems, circumvent rules, and create creative solutions in various situations.

Although the concept of *jeitinho* was developed based on strategies used by Brazilians (Ferreira et al., 2011), this construct can be assimilated by foreigners who live in the country and have a great deal of contact with Brazilians. An example that can be

cited is European foreigners from Romance-speaking countries, who come for student exchanges.

The formation and behavior of a society are anchored in language and culture. These two pillars are not only communication tools, but also the foundations on which identities, values and social relations are built. Language is one of the main means by which people express their ideas, feelings, and experiences and goes beyond the transmission of information, it shapes the way we think and perceive the world. (Hofstede, 2010). In this sense, the forms of linguistic communication function as a vehicle of culture, carrying traditions, histories and wisdom accumulated over time (Geertz, 1973). Through it, cultural practices are transmitted from generation to generation, contributing to social cohesion and community identity.

The concept of the Brazilian way, therefore, historically guided by linguistic manifestations, most likely preserves and keeps alive particularities belonging to a linguistic group of the same origin. The fact that language, culture, and behavior are intrinsically linked demonstrates that the way a society deals with conflict, celebrates important events, and interacts with other cultures is profoundly influenced by its own culture. (Flach, 2012).

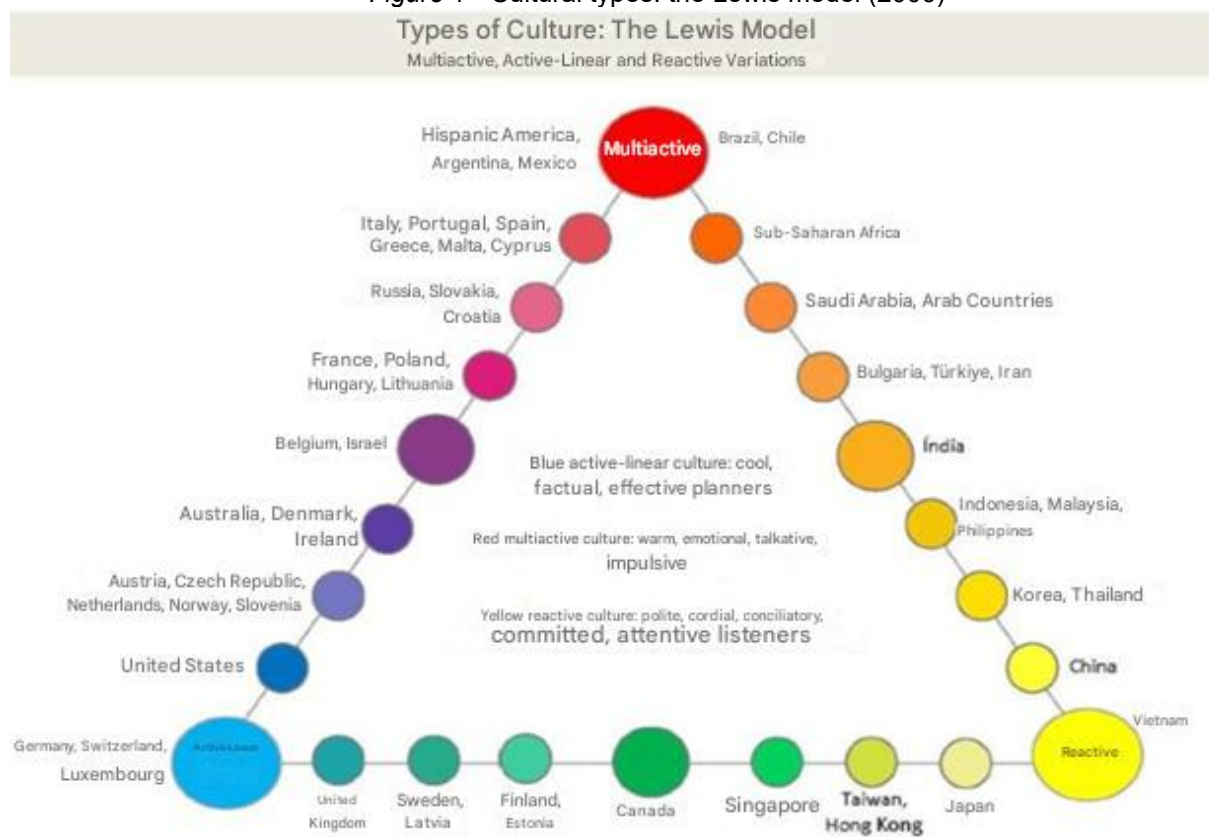
According to Hofstede (2010), societies that value collectivity, for example, can promote behaviors of solidarity and cooperation, while those that prioritize individualism can encourage the search for personal success. In collectivist societies, people tend to prioritize the group and cooperation, promoting supportive behaviors. In individualistic cultures, the emphasis is on personal success and autonomy, which can lead to greater competition and the pursuit of individual achievements. These cultural differences influence not only social interactions, but also the dynamics of work, education, affective relationships, competitions, etc.

The English researcher Richard D. Lewis (2006) classifies crops into three categories: multiactive, active-linear and reactive. Individuals from multi-active cultures value aspects such as family, hierarchy, interpersonal relationships, emotion, eloquence, persuasion, and loyalty. These values, for the aforementioned author, are manifested in social and professional behavior, and some common characteristics of these people include being talkative, questioning and warm. The author observes that punctuality and adherence to schedules are not priorities for them; although they try to appear to pay attention to these aspects, in the presence of individuals of the active-linear culture.

On the other hand, individuals from active-linear cultures give importance to facts, planning, products, schedules, and the relationship between actions and words, in addition to valuing institutions and laws. These values are reflected in their organized and planned lives, as well as in their professional guidance in various bodies and associations. Lewis (2006) argues that people from active-linear cultures tend to focus on one task at a time, dedicating themselves to accomplishing it within a set time.

Finally, individuals from reactive cultures tend to prioritize intuition, courtesy, networks, mutual obligations, collective harmony, and image protection. These characteristics are manifested in a very polite social and professional behavior, marked by the avoidance of confrontation and the search for harmonious relationships. According to Lewis (2006), reactive cultures, or cultures of attentive individuals, rarely initiate discussions or actions; They prefer to listen and let others take their stand first. Figure 1 presents the model proposed by the author.

Figure 1 - Cultural types: the Lewis model (2006)



Source: Lewis, 2006, p.46.

It is possible to observe in Figure 1 that the European countries that are closest to Brazil culturally are: Italy, Portugal, Spain, and are countries with Latin languages (group 1). In this sense, it is likely that students from these countries will adapt more easily to the Brazilian way. In turn, the other European countries, especially countries such as England, Wales, Scotland, Germany and Ireland, with languages from Anglo-Saxon, are closer to the active-linear and reactive categories, that is, more distant from Brazil culturally.

The study by Hofstede et al. (2010) on cultural dimensions corroborates the thesis that students from Romance-speaking countries tend to adapt more easily to the Brazilian context. In his analysis, Hofstede shows that cultures of high "power distance" accept and value hierarchies, considering them fundamental to the social order. To identify these characteristics, Hofstede applied the Values Survey Module (VSM), a questionnaire that captured attitudes toward authority and social inequality among employees of IBM, a multinational company, and later in other contexts. Their results indicated that, in cultures with a high power distance, status inequalities are seen as natural, and that individuals in positions of lower power show respect to superiors.

These values are reflected in social interactions and educational structures, where authority is widely respected, a cultural trait also present in Brazilian society. This similarity in social structures and shared values facilitates the adaptation of students from Romance countries, who feel more familiar with the hierarchical dynamics in Brazil. The study suggests that this cultural proximity not only facilitates the integration of these students, but also reduces the cultural shock they face when entering the Brazilian university environment (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In 1992, PUC-Rio began the process of international cooperation and today has consolidated agreements with more than 130 universities around the world, annually receiving foreign undergraduate and graduate students and researchers. In the second semester of 2024, the university received, according to the Central Coordination of International Cooperation (CCCI), a total of 370 exchange students. Of this total, 317 students come from Europe, 37 from North America, 13 from Latin America and the rest from Asian and African countries. The Scientific Technical Center (CTC) has eight students from Latin American countries in the graduate program.

In general, undergraduate students apply for one semester, with the exception of students from Germany and France, who do the double degree and, for this reason, can

stay for a period of up to two years. In the case of graduate students, the length of stay can be from two to four years.

The central coordination of International Cooperation informed us that the total number of European students accepted this semester is 317 in total. In the tables below, we inform the number of students from each country according to the division of groups proposed above.

Table 1 - Number of pupils from Romance-speaking countries

Country	Quantity
Spain	14
France	107
Italy	16
Portugal	100
Romania	1
Total	238

Source: Data provided by the Central Coordination of International Cooperation of PUC-Rio.

Table 2 - Number of students of Anglo-Saxon origin

Country	Quantity
Germany	30
Austria	2
Belgium	3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Denmark	9
Holland	9
Hungary	1
Latvia	1
Norway	3
Poland	1
United Kingdom	8
Czech Republic	1
Sweden	3
Switzerland	7
Total	79

Source: Data provided by the Central Coordination of International Cooperation of PUC-Rio.

To improve the social and cultural adaptation of exchange students studying in Brazilian universities, dimensions that bring students closer to Brazilian culture must be taken into account. The use of strategies of the Brazilian way can make it easier for European students to have a faster and more fluid cultural and social adaptation. Brazilian universities could take advantage of these strategies to develop integration programs and support students from different cultural backgrounds. The Brazilian way can be a powerful tool for the social and cultural adaptation of European students to Brazilian universities, but its effectiveness seems to depend on previous familiarity with similar cultural practices.

The objective of this research was to seek evidence that demonstrates which group of European exchange students is closer to the Brazilian way and, consequently, is easier to adapt to the cultural adaptation of Brazil. Two groups of European exchange students from PUC-Rio, from Romance and Anglo-Saxon languages, were chosen to carry out this research. It was hypothesized that students from European Romance speaking countries have a higher level of Brazilian Jeitinho when compared to students from Anglo-Saxon speaking European countries, due to linguistic and cultural proximity. Specifically, we sought to compare the level of the Brazilian way, in its three dimensions: corruption, breach of social norms and creativity.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS

53 foreign students who arrived in the second semester of 2024 to study at PUC-Rio participated in this survey, 35% of whom were male, 60% female and 5% preferred not to inform. The participants were divided into two groups: Group 1 - European exchange students from Romance-speaking countries (60%), and Group 2 - European exchange students from Anglo-Saxon speaking countries (40%). These participants were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses since August 2024, which: 18 students from the international relations course, 11 from Engineering, 5 from Administration, 3 from Architecture and 3 from Political Science, 2 from Design, 2 from Marketing and 1 from Criminology, Mathematics, Letters, Journalism, Psychology, Languages and Philosophy. Regarding the fluency of the Portuguese language, 26 students from beginner level, 21 from intermediate and 6 advanced students participated. The inclusion criteria were: being over 18 years old, being European from a country with a Romance or Anglo-Saxon language and being enrolled at PUC-Rio.

INSTRUMENTS

The Brazilian Jeitinho Scale (Ferreira et al., 2011) was used, consisting of three dimensions: the creativity of Brazilians, the breaking of social norms, and corruption. The instrument consists of 19 items, to be answered on an 11-point Likert Scale, ranging from 0 ("Not completely characteristic") to 10 ("Completely characteristic behavior"). The first, called "corruption", groups six scenarios; the second "creativity", nine; and the last, "breaches of social norms", six. Example item: "Carla was unable to organize herself

throughout the semester and, at the time of evaluations, there is a lot of content to be studied. Days before the test, he remembers that the course syllabus includes a very large book, which he will not have time to read. Thus, before the test, Carla reads the summary found on the internet, to at least get acquainted with the content of the book".

In addition to the scale, a sociodemographic questionnaire was used to seek information about the sample. This questionnaire addressed the following demographic variables: age group, gender, origin, education, undergraduate or graduate course, and level of fluency in the Portuguese language.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The data were collected in the classroom, according to the schedules provided by the volunteer participants, in addition to having been sent through *google forms* to be answered and then calculated. Initially, the Informed Consent Form (ICF) was presented. According to the acceptance, the form was applied, with appropriate language according to the level of fluency of the volunteer: the voluntary nature of the participation, the objectives of the research, the procedures to which they were submitted and how the information collected will be used.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, to characterize the sample and inferential. To this end, the groups of countries of Romance and Anglo-Saxon countries were compared using the T test for independent samples in the *Jasp* software.

ETHICAL PROCEDURES

The research was not submitted to the Ethics Committee because it was a study for an undergraduate course only. However, the investigation followed all the ethical precepts established for research with human beings. The participants' consent process took place through their acceptance contained in the Informed Consent Form (ICF). Acceptance occurred at the moment when the participants became fully aware of the purpose of the research. This authorization procedure is in accordance with Resolutions 466/2012 and 510/2016 of the National Health Council (CNS). Participants were informed about the objective of the project, the possible benefits, risks and procedures of the research, as well as about the voluntary nature of the research. Those who voluntarily chose to participate in

the study expressed their agreement with the term available online on Google Forms and then provided the answers to the items of the scales, which, at the end, were recorded and sent to the research database. Only respondents who agreed to participate in the research were accepted, through the consent of the Informed Consent Form. The participant was instructed to save a copy of this document. The confidentiality of the information provided was ensured to all participants.

RESULTS

In order to verify which of the groups of European exchange students, coming from Romance and Anglo-Saxon-speaking countries, enrolled at PUC-Rio, demonstrate greater proximity to the "Brazilian way", with regard to the dimensions of Corruption, Creativity and Breaks in Social Norms, the comparison test of independent samples was carried out. In the corruption dimension, the assumption of normality was violated. In this sense, the Mann-Whitney U test was used. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test ($U = 417.50$; $p > 0.05$) indicated that there was no significant difference.

It was also verified that the assumption of normality for the dimension of creativity was not violated, Student's t-test was used. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the samples were homogeneous. The results of the Student's t-test for independent samples ($t = 0.59$; $p > 0.05$) indicated that there was no significant difference between the groups.

Finally, it was verified that the assumption of normality of the dimension of breaking social norms was not violated, Student's t-test was used. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the samples were homogeneous. The results of the Student's t-test for independent samples ($t = 0.54$; $p > 0.05$) indicated that there was no significant difference between the groups.

Although there was no significant difference in the groups in the three dimensions of the Brazilian way, as can be seen in Table 1, the averages of students from Romance-speaking countries were higher when compared to the averages of Anglo-Saxon countries.

Table 1 - Sample comparison test results

Dimension	Groups	Medium	T or U	p	Cohen's D
Corruption	Anglo-Saxon	6,303	U = 417,500	0,140	0,243
	Romanesque	5,722			

Creativity	Anglo-Saxon	6,304	$t = 0.598$	0,553	0,168
	Romanesque	6,075			
Breakdowns of Social Norms	Anglo-Saxon	6,364	$t = 0.542$	0,591	0,152
	Romanesque	6,088			

DISCUSSION

The objective of the present study was to analyze whether students from European Romance-speaking countries have greater proximity in cultural behavior to the Brazilian reality, compared to students from European Anglo-Saxon-speaking countries, due to greater linguistic and cultural proximity. However, the findings obtained here showed that there was no significant difference between the groups, although the averages of the Romance-speaking countries were slightly higher.

In view of the above, it can be stated that the hypothesis of the present study was not accepted. This fact can be justified by the insufficient sample size, since it corresponded to less than half of exchange students at PUC-Rio. In addition, it is presumed that a larger number of French students participated in the research, which represent almost half of the total number of exchange students. And according to Lewis (2006), it is observed that French students, even though they come from a Romance-speaking country, are in the third position of the figure in relation to the Brazilian cultural proximity, while the group of Italian, Portuguese and Spanish students is in the first position. In this sense, it is more likely that students from these countries will adapt more easily to the cultural context and the "Brazilian way".

Furthermore, Belletti (2017) argues that social practices that seek alternative solutions to problems and norms are common in various cultures; However, what distinguishes the Brazilian way is the symbolic value it assumes in Brazilian society, where it is considered a characteristic element of national identity. This understanding is corroborated by the research of Barbosa (2006) which shows that the expression "jeitinho brasileiro" is widely recognized and used by different segments of the Brazilian population. The author emphasizes that the *jeitinho* manifests itself as a special way of solving problems, often involving creativity, improvisation and the search for personal relationships.

However, Belletti (2017) recognizes that the *jeitinho* is not an exclusive characteristic of Brazil, since ways to circumvent rules and seek alternative solutions can be found in different parts of the world, motivated by political aspects or the need to adapt to unexpected circumstances. In this context, it is essential to remember that comparing

cultures is a complex process, which requires care to avoid generalizations and stereotypes. Each culture must be analyzed in its particularities, taking into account its historical, social and linguistic aspects.

Pimentel (2009) argues that the "Brazilian way" arises from the incompatibility between formal institutions, imported from external models, and the Brazilian informal environment, characterized by traditional and old values that do not fit the modern values of capitalism. In her analysis, the author compares the formation of capitalism in Europe with the development of Brazil, stating that the country has not fully assimilated the modern values of capitalism. It was seen that, throughout the historical formation of Brazil, especially during the Portuguese colonization, traditional and ancient values were ingrained in the culture. In addition, she discussed the morality of work in Brazil, highlighting that the Iberian heritage and the absence of the Protestant Reformation resulted in an aversion to regular work and utilitarian activities. This view reinforces the idea that the "Brazilian way" is a response to the incompatibility between formal institutions and the informal environment.

The "jeitinho" is defined as a way of dealing with bureaucracy and formal rules, using personal relationships and seeking exceptions to circumvent obstacles. Capitalism can be considered one of the aspects that explain the cultural difference between countries of Latin and Anglo-Saxon origin, especially when analyzed from a neo-institutionalist perspective (Pimentel, 2009). Also according to the author, the interaction between formal institutions and the informal environment is capable of shaping the culture and development of a society, suggesting that this tension influences the way Brazil relates to capitalism.

In Anglo-Saxon Europe and France, movements such as the Protestant Reformation, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution promoted the formation of capitalism, characterized by hard work, the pursuit of profit, rationality, individualism, and meritocracy. Protestant ethics, in particular, reinforced the idea of work as an aptitude and of capital accumulation as a sign of divine blessing. France, on the other hand, although it shares some aspects of European capitalism, has a tradition of strong state intervention in the economy and society, which has favored the creation of a social welfare system and the regulation of the market. The presence of a strong State and solid institutions works as a counterpoint to the "jeitinho", restricting the space for this type of practice (Pimentel, 2009).

In contrast, the Iberian Peninsula remained away from these movements, preserving a more traditional and hierarchical culture, which directly influenced the cultural formation of its colonies, such as Brazil (Pimentel, 2009). Thus, capitalism, when implemented in different cultural contexts, was shaped in different ways, accentuating the differences between Anglo-Saxon and Romanesque cultures. The Protestant ethic, the rule of law, and the impersonality of laws shaped Anglo-Saxon capitalism, while in Brazil, patrimonialism, informality, and personalism influenced the way capitalism developed, resulting, for example, in the "Brazilian way".

Also according to Pimentel (2009), the "Brazilian way" can then be seen as a synthesis of the cultural differences between countries of Romanesque and Anglo-Saxon origin. It represents the search for alternative solutions within a formal system often perceived as rigid and distant from social reality. The informality, flexibility, and creativity associated with the "jeitinho" contrast with the rigidity and impersonality generally attributed to Anglo-Saxon culture. However, it is important to remember that culture is a complex and constantly changing phenomenon.

Similarly, the study by Wachelke and Prado (2017) advocates that the "Brazilian way" is a ritual of cultural adaptation that reflects the encounter between the personalistic and hierarchical culture of Brazil and modern Western individualism. In this sense, it is suggested that the "jeitinho" involves the mobilization of social capital, that is, the use of personal relationships to obtain advantages, which tends to benefit mainly the upper classes. This practice is associated with a personalistic political culture, in contrast to countries such as France, England and the United States, where there is an appreciation of the impersonality of the laws and equality before the law.

In countries with an impersonal political culture, the rules are applied more rigorously and personal influence is less tolerated. The French Revolution, for example, consolidated the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity, as well as the separation of Church and State, contributing to a secular political culture that was less dependent on personal relationships. In Anglo-Saxon countries and France, social capital tends to manifest itself through meritocracy and professional competence, which limits the "jeitinho" (Wachelke & Prado, 2017).

In turn, the concepts presented in the study by Hofstede (2010), about cultural dimensions and the high "power distance" in Romance cultures, provide a theoretical basis that corroborates the thesis that students from Romance-speaking countries tend to adapt

more easily to the Brazilian context, especially due to the high "power distance" characteristic of these cultures. Hofstede (2010) defines "power distance" as the extent to which less powerful people accept and value hierarchy and social inequalities. Cultures that have a high power distance, such as those of many Romance countries (e.g., Portugal, Spain, and Italy), tend to view status inequalities as natural and to respect authority, which aligns with Brazilian social dynamics. In applying the Values Survey Module (VSM), Hofstede observed that in cultures of high power distance, social interactions and educational structures are marked by respect for authority. This characteristic is also present in Brazilian society, where hierarchies are often accepted and legitimized.

On the other hand, based on Lewis' (2006) theory of cultural types, Brazil is located to the right of the vertex of the triangle in the multiactive classification, indicating a tendency towards reactive culture. As a result, Brazilians can be classified as multiactive-reactive, reflecting a hybrid nature causing Brazilian culture to distance itself from French formality, preferring adaptation and improvisation to meet social demands (Paranhos, 2011).

France, in turn, would be far from the "Brazilian way" due to a combination of linear-active and multiactive characteristics, with a strong tradition of state intervention and valorization of formal institutions. While French culture values interpersonal relationships, which brings it closer to multi-active cultures, it also has a framework of robust rules and regulations, as well as a history of strong state intervention in the economy and society. This tradition of intervention has shaped a society where the State and institutions have a central and regulatory presence, limiting the space for informal or improvised solutions such as the "jeitinho" (Paranhos, 2011). This finding reinforces the idea that several elements can influence the interculturality of a country, even if the linguistic roots are the same.

Instead of seeking alternative solutions outside the rules, as is the case in Brazil, France adopts a regulatory system that values compliance and standardization, functioning as a counterweight to informality. Additionally, French culture tends to value debate and rational argumentation, preferring a structured approach to problem-solving. Even when the rules are questioned, the process is more formalized and aims to set legal precedents, in contrast to the Brazilian approach, which often resorts to flexibility and personal relationships. (Paranhos, 2011).

The differences between countries of Latin and Anglo-Saxon origin go beyond the influence of capitalism, encompassing history, religions, politics, and geography, which adds nuances and exceptions within each cultural group. Finally, the present study had some limitations, such as not asking the country of origin, focusing only on linguistic origin, which limits the generalization of the results and may have culminated in its bias, given the high number of French people enrolled at PUC-Rio. In addition, a self-report scale was used, and other scales can also be used, such as the evaluation of student motivation. In addition, the survey was collected in a short period.

As a suggestion for future studies, investigations can be carried out that evaluate the country of origin and that consider other cultural aspects, in addition to the origin of the language. In addition, a longitudinal study that measures the fact that exchange students spend more time in Brazil can provide a greater overview of cultural adaptation.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study brings important reflections on the intercultural perspective and geographic linguistic origin. Although many studies indicate that the relationship between language and culture is inseparable, it is perceived that there are important determinants in this relationship, such as political, economic and even religious history. Since evidence was presented that there is a complexity of the cultural adaptation of foreign students to the "Brazilian way", identifying that, although the initial hypothesis suggested an easier adaptation for students from Romance-speaking countries compared to those from Anglo-Saxon-speaking countries, the results did not confirm this expectation. The differences in the three dimensions of the "Brazilian way" - corruption, creativity and breach of social norms - were statistically insignificant, indicating that other factors influence adaptation.

Despite some limitations found, the present study contributed to the understanding of the symbolic role of the "jeitinho" and its manifestation as a unique cultural solution. It was concluded, therefore, that future research should be carried out to diversify the literature, as well as to develop a research approach that already takes into account the limitations presented in this study that would expand the understanding of cultural variations and the effect of the "jeitinho" on the experience of adaptation in different contexts.

REFERENCES

1. Barbosa, L. (1992). *O jeitinho brasileiro: A arte de ser mais igual que os outros* (2nd ed.). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Campus.
2. Damatta, R. (2004). *O que é o Brasil?* (1st ed.). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Rocco.
3. Belletti, T. D. F. M. (2017). "O jeito era dar um jeito". A análise do conceito de jeitinho brasileiro em crônicas nacionais: Uma perspectiva intercultural com aplicabilidade para o ensino de português LE/L2 (Master's thesis, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro). Available at: https://www2.dbd.pucio.br/pergamum/tesesabertas/1512050_2017_completo.pdf. Accessed on: February 28, 2025.
4. Flach, L. (2012). O jeitinho brasileiro: Analisando suas características e influências nas práticas organizacionais. *Revista Gestão & Planejamento*, 13(3), 499–514. Available at: <https://revistas.unifacs.br/index.php/rgb/article/viewFile/1197/1852>. Accessed on: February 28, 2025.
5. Ferreira, M. C., Fischer, R., Porto, J. B., Pilati, R., & Milfont, T. L. (2011). Unraveling the mystery of Brazilian jeitinho. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(3), 331–344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211427148>
6. Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
7. Hofstede, G. (2010). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
8. Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
9. Lewis, R. D. (2006). *When cultures collide* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
10. Coordenação Central de Cooperação Internacional da PUC-Rio. (2024). Quantidades de alunos europeus intercambistas inscritos no segundo semestre de 2024 na PUC-Rio.
11. Paranhos, M. L. (2011). *Welcome to PUC-Rio!: Um estudo sobre alunos internacionais e interação cultural sob a perspectiva do design* (Master's dissertation, Departamento de Artes e Design, PUC-Rio, Rio de Janeiro). <https://doi.org/10.17771/pucio.acad.17531>
12. Régia, A. (2018). *Processo de adaptação cultural de estudantes em situação de mobilidade acadêmica internacional: Um estudo de caso na Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC)* (Undergraduate thesis). Available at: <http://www.repositorio.ufc.br/handle/riufc/37061>. Accessed on: February 28, 2025.

13. Wachelke, J., & Prado, A. M. (2017). A ideologia do jeitinho brasileiro. *Psicologia e Saber Social*, 6(2), 146–162. <https://doi.org/10.12957/psi.saber.soc.2017.31400>