AN EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAZILIAN

STUDENTS' FLUENCY OF ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

by

Margaret Huntingford Vianna

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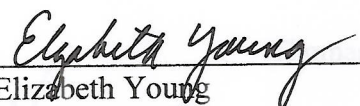

AN EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAZILIAN

STUDENTS' FLUENCY OF ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The general research question was: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency? A purposeful sample of seventeen participants evidenced the factors that influenced the seventh and the eighth grade Brazilian students' English fluency. Data were collected through 17 interviews, tape-recordings, interview transcriptions, document analysis, and 17 member-check interviews. Data were coded and analyzed through the NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta. The seven themes of external influences that emerged from the data of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency included: English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities, Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency, Parents Participate in the Learning Experience, Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English, Parents Set High Standards, the Curriculum, and Teachers' Competency Influences English Fluency. One sub-theme resulted: Parents' Motivate through Example. The two internal themes included: (1) Students are Naturally Interested in English, and (2) Students Enjoy Learning. The findings of this study supported the literature that ecological factors influence students' learning, specifically the family, the school, and the community. Identifying and understanding the positive interactions that influenced the students' learning of English in this case may benefit teachers and families, to improve the students' learning a foreign language for success in the Brazilian context.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving sons, Nolan and Dylan, who sparkle my days with good humor and smiles. You have both been patient with my frequent absences during family gatherings and playtime. Cheers to Dylan's frequent question, "when are you going to get done being a doctor," and to Nolan's interest in, "how many more interviews do you have until this is over?" Envision your dreams and continue thinking forward.

I am grateful to my dear husband, Gustavo, whose assistance during twinkling-star hours to sunrise hours and back around again made completion a reality. With Gustavo's fierce support and expert ability to juggle work, family, and domestic activities, I was able to focus during each stage and work with clarity. Thank you for accompanying and tumbling with me through this humbling process. I promise that I will probably not invent anything post doctorate. Eu te amo para sempre.

To my parents, George and Sharon, whose love and encouraging words, "you can do it, you'll get it done," reassured me in moments of doubt.

In memory of my grandmother, Sally, whose love for reading and education lives on in my academic pursuits; and to my grandfather, George, with whom I look forward to our Sunday talks on the phone, and his telling me, "It sounds like you are right next door, dear!"

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PREFACE

Brazil is one of the developing BRICS economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), identified for the rapid economic and social growth (Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich 2014; Schrooten, 2011). Despite the increase in social progress, Brazilian students ranked 46th of 54 countries, and lowest among BRICS counterparts on the PISA Education First/English Proficiency Index (EF/EPI) (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). Borker (2012) ascertained English fluency as a marketable skill in the world market. Brazilian students' lack of English fluency reduces job opportunities in the global market. English is the language of international communication (Koru & Akesson, 2011; Lima & Brown, 2007; Marcondes, 2013). Although English is a curricular requirement for Brazilian students that initiates in the fifth grade (MEC, 1998), a disconnection among students' performance and instruction exists. Understanding why some students gain high English fluency and others do not frames educational leaders' concerns of improving instructional practices and student achievement in foreign language aptitude (Vargas, 2012; Bohn, 2003). Understanding the positive didactic influences that contribute to Brazilian students' development of English acquisition was the target of this holistic single-case study identified by high English fluency.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In a rapidly emerging global economy, there is a growing emphasis for students to learn English as a foreign language in the BRICS countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (Bohn, 2003; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012; Vargas, 2012). The general problem is that the educational systems in Brazil have challenges and priorities, which yield a broad range of English fluency rates. Brazilian students ranked 46th of 54 countries worldwide on the PISA Education First/English Proficiency Index (EF/EPI), and the lowest of the emerging BRICS countries (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012; Koru & Akesson, 2011). Brazil's competitive edge is challenged in the world market by low English fluency rates (Borker, 2012). Understanding why Brazilian students' English fluency is low is a subject that could move Brazilian students into the competitive global arena.

The problem of the challenges the Brazilian educational leaders face in producing English fluent students was addressed by studying students who were fluent to discover the internal and the external influences on their successful acquisition of English. The specific problem under investigation in this study was that there may be ecological influences such as the family, the school, and child interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' ranking the lowest among the competing BRICS countries in the global economy (Benetti & Roopnarine, 2006; Bhering, 2002; Bohn 2003; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Vargas, 2012). The phenomenon in this study was defined as the external and internal influences that contribute to the Brazilian students' development of English fluency.

Brazilian researchers and educational leaders are beginning to examine the problems educators encounter in pedagogical practices in foreign language instruction, to increase students' participation in the competitive global marketplace (Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Sobrinho, 2006). Learning English is a national curricular requirement for Brazilian students, beginning in the fifth grade (MEC, 1998; Naves & Vigna, 2008). English fluency is the key to a country seeking to be a big player in the global marketplace (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). The purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The general research question for this study was: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency? The focus of the research was on the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The holistic single-case design was appropriate for producing revelatory data of the unit of analysis (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009), influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. Concentrating on a single phenomenon or multiple phenomena in a case study, the researcher seeks to describe the phenomenon in depth (Merriam, 2002).

The decision was made to conduct this investigation in a small, private school system in Goiânia, which has a high rate of English fluent students. The proposition of this study was that when the positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to achieve English fluency. Therefore, the investigation of high English fluency rather than low English fluency was chosen for gaining an understanding of the positive didactic interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency.

Consistent with Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009), a purposive sample yielded the most detail of the phenomenon under study. Although students' literacy was the target to understand, it was decided that the most reliable information would come from the parents and the teachers of the middle school children for identifying the factors. The rationale for interviewing only the parents and the teachers and maintaining the students as the target aligned with Jacobs' (2004) assertion that children often learn without recognizing the process of learning or exercising metacognition. Interviews with the parents and the teachers of the middle school children provided rich revelatory details of the phenomenon and of the multiple levels of ecological influences that contribute to Brazilian students' successful English fluency. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), multiple ecological influences begin with the didactic relationship of the student with the family, the organizational structure (school), and the environment within which the student functions. Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion that the influences begin with the family and organizational structures (the school), the parents and the English teachers of the qualifying seventh and eighth grade students were interviewed to ensure rich descriptive data of the ecological factors during interviews. Uncovering the influencing factors on Brazilian student's acquisition of English fluency could assist Brazilian educators in Goiânia to move students into participation in the global competition.

In Chapter 1, the significance of English fluency for Brazil, a powerful player among the emerging BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; Schrooten, 2011), contextualized the need to examine the factors that contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency. The significant topics pertinent to this holistic single-case study of Brazilian students' English

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fluency included the background of the general problem situated in the absence of global

competition for Brazil, the background of the specific problem, the purpose of the study,

the significance of the study to Brazilian students' participation in global competitiveness

and to Brazilian educators' leadership, and the nature of the study. An overview will

follow of the research method and research design, the conceptual and theoretical

frameworks, definitions, assumptions, the scope of the study, limitations, delimitations,

and a summary of important points to transition into chapter 2.

Background of the General Problem

Achieving an educational system that prepares students for participation in the

global marketplace is a priority for educators, but more specifically for educators in the

emerging BRICS countries, which include Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

(Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; Lima & Brown, 2007; Hildebrand &

Umeda, 2005). Globalization is an increasingly important concept, encompassing

understandings of how diverse cultures, technologies, companies, and governments

integrate ideas for economic and social progress (Hildebrand & Umeda, 2005).

Among the diverse definitions of globalization, Hildebrand and Umeda (2005)

and Lima and Brown (2007) cited globalization as an integration of information and

systems of communication around the world that lessens the distance among diverse

social, political, and economic systems. Globalization brings opportunities for citizens to

compete and to improve the social conditions in their country, while for others the

disparities widen among emerging economies competing for powerful positions in the

global marketplace.   For Brazilians to increase potential as an emerging power among

the BRICS countries, the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012) indicated Brazilian

students must improve English fluency to compete globally. India ranked highest among

the emerging BRICS countries, 14th on the English proficiency scale with English

identified as an official national language. Brazilian students' lack of proficiency in

English was a contributing factor that led to the low ranking of 46 among the 54 nations

on the largest educational system worldwide, the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index

(2012).

Background of the Specific Problem

The prospects to improve Brazilian educators' instructional techniques and

students' learning achievement in a global society where English is defined as the

international language of communication among diverse communication systems (Koru

& Akesson, 2011; Lima & Brown, 2007; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008;

Sobrinho, 2006) has become a national priority for Brazilian leaders (El Kadri &

Gimenez, 2013; Schwartzman, 2003). To address the deficits in the educational system,

Brazilian educational leaders created a specific National Curricular Parameters (PCNs) in

1996 for aligning the curriculum, instruction, and learning of English as a Foreign

Language (EFL) (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008). Appropriate

instruction for English learners requires that educational leaders and teachers have

knowledge of the different stages of language development, learning theories, and

effective instruction for students to acquire English fluency and achieve specific

requirements for high school graduation. However, the recent ranking of Brazilian

students' low English proficiency scores in the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index

(2012), and Bohn's (2003) assertion that Brazilians' lack of English fluency causes

exclusion from competition in the international marketplace, revealed a misalignment

exists among the national curricular parameters, instructional practice, and Brazilian

students' achievement in English fluency.

Recognition that Brazilian students are not becoming proficient in English compared to their peers, as evidenced in the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012), indicated a problem. A misalignment is evident in the students' performance and the National Curricular Parameters set in 1996 for Brazilian students to take English as a compulsory foreign language and to become proficient in English (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; MEC, 1998; Naves & Vigna, 2008). Research of a specific case where high English fluency is evident could assist local Brazilian educators to improve current instructional practices for more effective practices in the EFL classroom and increase achievement in English fluency. The data from this study provides insightful information that could assist local Brazilian teachers in Goiânia, the capital of the state of Goiás (Brazil, 2013). Teachers may advance understanding of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency for improved performance.

The limited findings on Brazilian education and effective techniques in students' learning resulted in two studies (Benetti & Roopnarine, 2006; Bhering, 2002) conducted in the public elementary school system. Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) examined elementary students' classroom performance in relation to parental involvement from middle-to-lower-income Brazilians in southern Brazil. The researchers assessed how fathers and mothers interacted with their children and differed in primary and secondary roles in educating their children. Bhering (2002) examined parental involvement in the child's education and teachers' preparedness for parental involvement in the early years (elementary). Bhering (2002) found Brazilian teachers have limited knowledge of how to include parents, and teachers make little effort to involve parents in supporting children's

educational learning needs. These studies added to the scholarship of instruction and parental involvement in public education.

Akkari (2013) and Schwartzman (2003) noted the quality of education at public schools serves underprivileged classes and is of inferior quality, compared to the private education offered to the elite or middle and upper class students. Children of economically underprivileged social classes attend public primary and secondary schools and are unprepared to attend the prestigious universities that are public paid institutions. Admission to public paid universities is permissible only with competitive scores in the vestibular (Akkari, 2013).

Although Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2002) examined parental involvement in middle-to-lower-income Brazilian children's educational experiences in the basic public educational system, the researchers did not investigate the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' development of foreign language, or English fluency. This holistic single-case study incorporated a new facet of influencing factors that Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2002) did not examine at the primary level of basic, public education. The investigation and understanding of Brazilian students' high English fluency at the middle school level, in a private school system in Goiânia during a time period when Brazil is emerging as a powerful player among the BRICS countries (Borker, 2012; Hildebrand & Umeda, 2005; Schrooten, 2011), has not previously been researched. This holistic single-case study adds depth to the developing research on Brazilian education of the ecological factors that contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school sector. Understanding the factors where high English fluency is the case is beneficial in a system

that is progressing and leveraging opportunities among the diverse social classes in Brazil.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. Yin (2009) asserted a proposition and a unit of analysis direct attention to the focus of a case study, to ensure sound parameters remain throughout the duration of the study. The proposition for this study was that when the positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to achieve English fluency. The focus of investigation was on the seventh and the eighth grade students' high English fluency rather than the low English fluency. Merriam (2002) noted the unit of analysis defines the case study. One particular program should be selected for study because it is typical, unique, or highly successful and representative of the phenomenon under study. The single-case design was appropriate for producing revelatory data of the unit of analysis (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009), the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. Ginsburg (2012) noted the qualitative design adds to the depth of descriptive quality of information recorded, rather than the quantity of information in numerical form. The aim of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, as opposed to quantifying factors applicable in quantitative research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), qualifying the qualitative method as most the appropriate method.

The holistic single-case study was appropriate for identifying and understanding the unit of analysis under investigation, the influences on high English fluency in the

private school in Goiânia. The holistic single-case study was appropriate for linking data

to the proposition (Yin, 2009) of the positive didactic influences between the child and

the family, and the child and the school that influence the development of Brazilian

students' English fluency. Current research of Brazilian students' low ranking of 46th

among 54 countries of English proficiency in the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index

(2012), indicated a lack of English fluency puts Brazilian students at a disadvantage in

entering the work force in the global market (Bohn, 2003). The Brazilian students' low

ranking on the international test is a social problem worthy of further scholarly research.

The significance of conducting a holistic single-case study in a private school system in

Goiânia, which has a high rate of English fluent students, is the contribution to the

evolving literature on the pedagogical practices in the EFL classroom in Brazil, one of

the powerful emerging BRICS countries (Borker, 2012; Schrooten, 2011).

     Through the case study design, the meaning of the unit of analysis under study,

the influences on high English fluency in a private school in Goiânia, surfaced through

the participants' words and inquiries of the child, the family, and the school interactions

that influence Brazilian students' English fluency (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003), rather than a

numerical value of the factors that contribute to English fluency. The purposive sample

of parents and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers yielded significant inquiry

for themes to emerge during the data collection and data analysis, until saturation of

dominant themes had been reached in each category (Cutcliffe, 2000) pertaining to the

child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' English

fluency. Adding knowledge of factors that influence Brazilian students' successful

English fluency furthers the evolving literature on effective pedagogical methods to

improve instruction and learning for English learners in the Brazilian classroom, specifically in Goiânia, in the state of Goiás.

Significance of the Study to Brazil's Global Competitiveness

The general problem emphasized the educational leaders' challenges and priorities for students in emerging BRICS countries to gain English proficiency for entry in the global marketplace (Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014). The specific problem was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' acquisition of English in a case evident of high English fluency. The proposition for this study was that when the positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to achieve English fluency. Increased knowledge of high English fluency and of instructional methods may increase understanding to leverage Brazilian students' low English fluency, which places Brazilians at a disadvantage in the global marketplace (Bohn, 2003; Lima & Brown, 2007; Naves & Vigna, 2008). Brazilian students ranked 46th of 54 countries worldwide on the largest English proficiency examination, the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012), representing a need to improve English fluency skills. The benefits of English fluency in a global economy where English has been identified by many as the central language of communication (Bohn, 2003; Koru & Akesson, 2011; Lima & Brown, 2007) may enable future Brazilian students to compete in the international marketplace, rather than widen the gap of exclusion for students in an emerging BRICS country because of low English fluency (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012; Marcondes, 2013).

Paik (2009) asserted globalization is evident worldwide via rapid changes with technology and an international economy. Hildebrand and Umeda (2005) and Lima and

Brown (2007) described globalization as an integration of information and systems of communication around the world. Parents who want their children to encounter successful careers view globalization as a reason why their children must be prepared to communicate in English because English has been identified as the dominant language of communication, or the lingua franca, in the global market (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Friedrich, 2002; Naves & Vigna, 2008). Paik (2009) noted parents in Korea place high demands on educators to enroll children at five years old to begin learning English. Parents associate children's early English fluency with social attainment and academic achievement. As Paik (2009) asserted, Korean mothers believed learning English early will increase future opportunities, improve socioeconomic status, and ensure academic achievement. In other countries, such as Pakistan, Malaysia, and India, English is an official language and English fluency is required of students (EF/ English Proficiency Index, 2012). Early English fluency appears to put students at an advantage, compared to those students who do not attain English fluency.

Benefits of the long-term effects of two or more languages were also evidenced in a study conducted in Canada (Mady, 2011). Mady (2011) examined long-term effects of bilingualism, learning two languages. Anglophone and Francophone participants of Canadian exchange programs were interviewed about career advancement. The participants' fluency in the French language and the English language resulted in additional career opportunities and educational opportunities, compared to the monolingual participants. The expanded career opportunities are available for the participants with bilingual skills and these benefits extend beyond the boundaries of their native countries into the international marketplace.

English fluency is also a high demand skill for students who want to become teachers in the content area of English as a Second language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Corcoran (2011) concluded teachers who exhibited English fluency, in Brazil, increased their marketability as professionals if they had studied abroad to learn English, compared to teachers who learned English in Brazil. Brazilians who had studied English abroad believed their EFL position superior to those teachers who had never traveled or studied abroad, although they taught and spoke English with comparable fluency. The career opportunities for the teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Corcoran's (2011) study increased as a result of English fluency obtained through study abroad.

A detailed investigation of the Brazilian parents' and of the EFL teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence student's high English fluency at the middle school level in a private school system has not been examined in previous studies. The data from this study contribute to the literature on Brazilian EFL teachers' evolving instructional methods (Naves & Vigna, 2008; Marcondes, 2013; Schwartzman, 2003) and Brazilian students' English proficiency in the private education system (Mello, 2004). Although Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2002) examined parents' interactions with their children's learning in lower-middle income classrooms in the public school sector, the results of the two studies did not add to the scholarship of English as a Foreign Language literature.

This holistic single-case study provides valuable information to local Brazilian leaders in education, to curriculum developers of the national parameters, and to the policy makers to support the development of appropriate curriculum and instruction for English learners in the Brazilian classroom. A dominant issue for Brazilian teachers in

lessening the gap between instruction and students' achievement is the lack of innovation in instructional techniques (Marcondes, 2013; Sobrinho, 2006). Teachers believe the most effective method for students' learning is to transfer content through lectures (Moreira, 2012). However, in addition to students' learning the content, McMillan (2008) noted teachers' need to understand students' learning abilities and learning styles prior to choosing instructional methods and deciding upon appropriate assessment. Fenner and Kuhlman (2012) cited appropriate instruction for English learners requires teachers' understanding of the distinctive stages of language development. The data obtained from this study of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school provide new information that may assist local teachers, in Goiânia, to understand their students' learning abilities and learning needs. Brazilian educators will benefit from writing appropriate curriculum that aligns with the various stages of language development and the contributing factors that influence English language acquisition, thus improving EFL instruction and increasing Brazilian students' English fluency to elevate participation in the global marketplace (Bohn, 2003; Borker, 2012; Lima & Brown, 2007). The aim of this holistic single-case study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency.

Significance of the Study to Brazilian Educators' Leadership

This study contributes to what little is known of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' development of English fluency in the EFL classroom in an emerging BRICS country such as Brazil (Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; Marcondes, 2013). Of the challenges facing Brazilian

educational leaders in elementary and secondary settings, one predominant challenge is to enable Brazilian students to develop English fluency for academic success and to increase job opportunities locally and globally (Bohn, 2003; Lima & Brown, 2007; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Stewart, 2010).

The research studies found regarding English fluency in Brazil were conducted primarily at the university level (El-Dash & Busnard, 2001; Keys, 2002). El-Dash and Busnardo (2001) examined Brazilian students' attitudes toward learning a foreign language at the university level and their perceptions of native speakers of the foreign language. Keys (2002) explored the influence of Brazilian students' first language skills on learning English at the university level. Mello (2004) examined the Brazilian students' first language abilities on the use of English in a private secondary school environment. With the primary research conducted at the university level and the secondary level in public funded schools, a need for a holistic single-case study in the private sector contributes to the evolving research of Brazilian education and the ecological factors that influence the development of English language acquisition for Brazilian students in middle school.

An exhaustive review of pedagogical practices in the elementary classroom revealed few researchers have examined educational practices and parental involvement at the elementary level in public schools in Brazil (Benetti & Roopnarine, 2006; Bhering, 2002). The recent low ranking of Brazilian students' English proficiency in the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012) worldwide revealed Brazilian students placed 46th of 54 countries. However, the EF/EPI data revealed numerical data rather than qualitative data of factors that influenced Brazilian students' low ranking. Research of English fluency development at the primary level when language acquisition skill

development is crucial for subsequent literacy development (Krashen & Terrell, 1995) will benefit developing scholarship on EFL strategies in the Brazilian classroom. This holistic single-case study of the unit of analysis under investigation, influences on high English fluency, may initiate the process of developing local interest from educational leaders and from scholars in the foreign language department at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) of Brazilian students' English fluency and Brazilian teachers' pedagogy to improve instruction and advance learning.

New information discovered from this holistic single-case study of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence middle school students' acquisition of English benefits local educational leaders and policy makers in the EFL field and adds to existing scholarship in Brazilian education. This study will benefit local educational leaders in this emerging BRICS country, Brazil, where the students' have exhibited the lowest English proficiency among the BRICS countries (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012), and Bohn (2003) affirmed that Brazilians students' lack of English proficiency excludes Brazilian students from seeking better jobs in the marketplace, nationally and internationally. Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) cited revelatory case studies allow insights into a social phenomenon that arises out of a social need at a particular point and time. Consistent with Merriam's (2002) and Yin's (2009) assertion of a case study that arises out of a need to understand a social phenomenon, the external and internal influences on the child's development of English fluency, Brazilian students' low ranking of 46th out of 54 nations worldwide in English proficiency (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012) indicated the relevancy of a case study to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) affirmed qualitative research is used when the researcher strives to understand interpretations of a constructed reality at a particular point and time. Rich descriptive evidence in the form of words or illustrations gleaned from interviews, field notes, excerpts from videotapes, documents, and focus groups rather than numbers will support understanding a social phenomenon. Further, a research problem initiates with a concern related to work, to family, and to a social or political issue. Yin (2009) asserted specific research questions, the unit of analysis, and a proposition, components of a case study research design, should eventually aggregate significant inquiry to how or why the world functions.

Consistent with Merriam's (2002) and Yin's (2009) assertions of investigating a social phenomenon that initiates with a concern related to work and intersects with a social or political issue, the case study research design supported the investigation of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. The social phenomenon under investigation, the external and internal influences that influence the child's development of English fluency, supported inquiry of the current problem that Brazilian students ranked low (46th) among 54 countries on the largest English proficiency examination worldwide, the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012), and that Brazilians' lack of English fluency is a disadvantage to compete in the local market and the global market (Bohn, 2003).

Selecting a sample for qualitative research requires a purposive sample selection, rather than a random sampling evident in quantitative research for discovering numerical

value, how much or how many. Merriam (2002) argued that a purposive sampling requires selecting a specific sample that will yield the most detail of the phenomenon under study. Specific criteria for participation in the study will determine who is interviewed and what site will be observed. Corbin and Strauss (2008) affirmed population samples should consist of specific data sources to ensure the data evolve into interrelated concepts.

In alignment with the purpose of the study, to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, three criteria for purposive sampling that would most effectively yield insights (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2002) were identified for investigation of the social phenomenon of external and internal influences that contribute to the Brazilian students' English fluency. The three criteria for participation in this holistic single-case study were: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system for the parents to participate, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate their child, and (3) the teacher must be willing to discuss perceptions and be the English language instructor for the child. The role of the parents in nurturing the child in seeking high English fluency, and the teachers' roles in influencing the students' English fluency, added to the richness of the descriptive data collected of the phenomenon under study.

Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) asserted the case study design is applicable when the focus is an analysis of a social phenomenon or group, or a particular program, and concentrating on the case because it is unique, experimental, or highly successful would be the unit of analysis. A unit of analysis is the case under study (Yin, 2009). The unit

of analysis, the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, aligned with Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009). The case study design yielded an in-depth focus on a contemporary phenomenon of the external and internal influences that contribute to the students' development of English fluency in the Brazilian classroom. With the nature of the study established as qualitative and the design as a case study, the procedures for establishing ethical guidelines for participation included appropriate forms to use the premises (Appendix A), an informed consent IRB 18 years or older letter to the participants (Appendix B), and an informed consent of confidentiality (Appendix C).

The population at Escola Interamérica currently yields 672 students and three English teachers. Of the 672 students, 211 students are in the seventh grade and 138 students are in the eighth grade. From the 349 students in the seventh and eighth grade, the intent was that 80-100 parents would volunteer to participate in the study. The intent was to purposefully select 20 participants from the targeted population, parents and EFL teachers. Consistent with Yin (2009), the appropriate number for a single-case depends on the unit of analysis or the case that most represents the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher should select the case that will yield the most significant data. The criteria for participation in this study to examine the unit of analysis, the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, were as follows: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system for the parents to participate, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate their child, and (3) the teacher must be willing to discuss perceptions and be the English language instructor for the child.

The participants who fit the criteria were chosen purposefully to allow the researcher to identify and to understand the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). The parents whose children were in the seventh grade and the parents whose children were in the eighth grade and their respective English teachers were invited to participate in this study (Appendix B). Coding enforced confidentiality, anonymity, and integrity of each participant's answers (Appendix B). For each student whose parent participated, the student was coded as S 1, S 2, and S 3 (Student 1, Student 2, and Student 3). The teacher for the student coded as S 1 was coded as TS 1 (Teacher of Student 1). The parent of S 1 was coded as PS 1 (Parent of Student 1). Children learning a second language often learn without recognizing why the learning is occurring, or exercising metacognition (Jacobs, 2004). Hence, the parents and the respective teachers were interviewed to amplify the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency in the seventh grade and the eighth grade.

Triangulation of multiple data sources ensured participants' perceptions were represented accurately during data collection and data analysis (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). Stake (2010) cited triangulation of that data as the method to ensure evidence and interpretations of the collected data are credible. The use of multiple methods for collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing evidence is interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was a vital process for seeking accuracy, new meaning, and unperceived insensitivity toward the evolving synthesis of participants' perceptions (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Skepticism of what was seen or heard, and checking for second interpretations from members was conducted to ensure protecting the participants from being upset by unreliable interpretations.

In this single-case study design, multiple forms of evidence were collected to confirm more than one vantage point were heard, such as open-ended interviews, tape-recordings of the interviews, transcriptions, and member checking (Carlson, 2010). The analyses of the school documents (teachers' lesson plans, tests, MEC curricular guidelines, parent conference participation), the reflective memos, the interviews, and the member checking served the purpose of data triangulation. Yin (2009) cited data triangulation as essential for maximizing the integrity of a case study. Member checking is an effective resource of descriptive data, to ensure sensitivity toward participants' words and to maintain ethical standards in seeking accuracy with the participants' responses to the interview questions (Carlson, 2010).

Research Questions

Children learning a second or third language have malleable minds, and they often learn without exercising metacognition or thinking about why the learning is occurring. According to Jacobs (2004), children's metacognitive awareness improves with learning strategies for thinking about learning. Educators must teach children strategies to increase their consciousness of how they think during learning, to build greater metacognition. Based on the ecological theory of development, children's behaviors are influenced by a didactic relationship beginning with the family, the organizational structures (school and community) and the environment within which the children function (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Consistent with Jacobs' (2004) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertions that metacognitive awareness must be learned and developed and that the primary influence begins with the family, the parents and the teachers were interviewed, to yield rich descriptive data of the ecological factors that contribute to the students' English fluency. The assumption was the parents and the

teachers of the students were at a better vantage point to verbalize the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to English fluency.

Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) stated the eligible number of candidates for conducting a single case study should align with relevant criteria for yielding the best data. The intent was to recruit 16 parents and four English teachers to volunteer to participate in this holistic single-case study and reduce the number to 20 candidates. The number of participants for this study was 15 parents and two teachers, a total of 17 participants. The parents' and the teachers' participation yielded rich data for an understanding of the general research question (GRQ) of this single-case study of the ecological factors that affect Brazilian students' fluency in English. The purpose of this single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in a private school in Goiânia.

Congruent with the purpose of identifying the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, the general research question was set within the problem statement of the study, and why it was important to the study, and moved into the specific questions (Merriam, 2002). The four research sub-questions were framed to align with the focus on the child, the family, and the school factors. The general research question (GRQ) and the four research sub-questions (RSQs) that guided this holistic single-case study were as follows:

General Research Question (GRQ): What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

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Research Sub-Question 1 (RSQ1): What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 2 (RSQ2): What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 3 (RSQ3): What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 4 (RSQ4): What are the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Overview of the Research Method

The two paradigms that situate social and scientific research are defined as qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Each paradigm represents "a comprehensive belief system, world view, or framework that guides research and practice in a field," (Willis, 2007, p. 8). Qualitative researchers and quantitative researchers differ in the approaches to research by establishing a non-linear or linear path, the mode of verification of results, and the structure of the research questions driving the design of the research (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010).

Qualitative researchers initiate research with broad questions that may change during the research. Qualitative researchers initiate studies in a natural setting and attempt to merge themes from descriptive data represented in pictures, words, or documents. Qualitative researchers conduct research in a nonlinear format and present

nonnumerical data of personal perspectives tied to a particular social phenomenon or cultural context (Bruce, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Tellis, 1996; Yin, 2009).

In contrast to the qualitative research method, quantitative researchers initiate research with a hypothesis to test in a linear path and attempt to present data in an objective manner. Quantitative researchers examine data represented in numbers and precise measurement to test and confirm hypotheses (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). According to Bell, DiStefano, and Morgan (2010), quantitative study results yield strategic, descriptive data, such as characteristics of samples and variables presented in tables and numerical statistics. A quantitative research method is strategic for testing a hypothesis, or hypotheses, and comparison of numerical data that may support or refute the hypothesis or hypotheses (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010). A quantitative researcher attempts to measure objective facts, to focus on variables, to conduct statistical analyses, and to replicate previous results (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2002; Tellis, 1996). A quantitative method may reveal students' test scores of English fluency, but fails to reveal the possible perceived factors in rich detail present in each child's environment that may contribute to the child's English fluency. The quantitative method was not appropriate for this study because the aim of this study was not to quantify, to test a predicted relationship, or to generalize to the general population of the child, the family, and the school interactions that may contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency.

The qualitative method was identified as the most appropriate method for this study of the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The intent was to identify and to understand a social phenomenon of influences, the external and internal influences that

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contribute to the development of Brazilian students' English fluency at a particular point and time (Merriam, 2002). The purpose was not to quantify the factors purported by participants. The purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency through descriptive data. Therefore, the qualitative research method allowed an in-depth focus on the phenomenon under study, the external and internal influences that contribute to the child's development English fluency, and allowed multiple perspectives to hold validity or truth of the phenomenon of a particular point and time (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010).

Overview of the Research Design

With the method established as qualitative, attention is turned to the design for this qualitative study. The qualitative research designs considered for this study included: Biography, case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory. Yin (2009) asserted researchers should examine (1) the type of research question, (2) the amount of control one has over the environment, and (3) the degree of focus on events as either historical or contemporary when selecting the appropriate research design. Further, research questions that address a phenomenon as what, how, or why are indicative of a case study design. The case study design allows the researcher to understand social phenomena and real-life events, such as students' performance in school at a specific period and time (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). Merriam (2002) asserted that a case study is appropriate when a phenomenon is the primary focus in an environment that is unique, experimental, or highly successful. The design most appropriate for exploration of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency skills of a specific period and time was the case study design, as described in

foundational resources, Merriam (2002) and Stake (2010). A case study design was advantageous for data collection, data analysis, and synthesis of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

The researcher in a phenomenological design emphasizes the participants' experiences and attempts to interpret perceptions of their world (Moustakas, 1994; Shank, 2006). According to Moustakas (1994), the participants' perceptions and feelings are the central source of evidence in a phenomenological design. Merriam (2002) noted a phenomenological design requires seeking primary experiences that deal with inner experiences of daily living. The participants' primary experiences and personal feelings with experiencing English fluency were not explored, rather the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to the students' English fluency. Merriam (2002) asserted phenomenology underpins all qualitative research, because perceptions and experiences are apparent in qualitative studies. A phenomenological design was not an appropriate design for this study because the purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The purpose of this study was not to understand the parents' and the teachers' primary experiences learning English or their feelings of the world, which is the central focus in a phenomenological study (Merriam, 2002). The phenomenological design was inappropriate for identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school in Goiania, Goiás.

The second design considered for investigating the ecological influences that contribute to the Brazilian students' English fluency was the grounded theory design.

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The grounded theory design yields a substantive theory from the participants' words (Chiovitti & Piran, 2003; Laws & McLeod, 2006) where discovery is key to distinguishing a new, formal theory (Merriam, 2002). A formal theory was not sought from the parent and the teacher participants' perceptions of the factors that contribute to English fluency in the classroom. The grounded theory was not an appropriate design because the purpose of this study was to identify and to understand a phenomenon, rather than build a substantive theory grounded in data (Merriam, 2002). The purpose of this study was not to generate a formal theory.

The third design considered for this study was an ethnographic design. An ethnographic researcher studies cultural environments with a focus on people within the social context. An ethnographic research design yields observational data about a specific population and the culture in a natural setting to give voice to the participants (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010). The culture of a specific population was not studied in the natural setting, the classroom in Goiânia. Merriam (2002) asserted that for a study to qualify as true ethnographic research, a sociocultural interpretation must be described. A sociocultural interpretation was not described regarding the natural setting in this case study. As with the phenomenological and the grounded theory design, an ethnographic design was not an effective design for this study because a sociocultural interpretation of the culture and the practices of a shared group in a natural setting (Merriam, 2002) were not explored. The purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, rather than explore and understand the culture of a shared group in a natural setting, resulting in a sociocultural interpretation. The most appropriate design for this study was a case study design that allowed investigation and analysis of data to

reflect the contemporary phenomenon of the external and internal influences that contribute to Brazilian students' development of English fluency in a private school in Goiânia.

According to Yin (2009), a case study design is effective when the focus of the study is on a contemporary phenomenon or about human behavior and social events. Brown (2010), Stake (2010), and Yin (2009) asserted a case study is particularistic and situational in focus of a person, a family, a company, or a classroom. However, the focus of a case study is the phenomenon. Yin (2009) noted the case study design is relevant for exploration of students' performance at school when the researcher desires an "in-depth description of some social phenomenon" (p. 4).

In alignment with Yin's (2009) assertion, the social phenomenon of factors, the external and internal influences that contribute to the child's development of English fluency, was explored in-depth through the parents' perceptions and the teachers' perceptions of the students' performance in English fluency. In consideration of Yin's (2009) protocol for data collection in case studies, multiple sources of evidence were collected to strengthen converging lines of inquiry, necessary for maximizing the quality of a case study. The multiple sources of evidence for this study were to conduct a panel of experts' study (Appendix E) to ensure quality and rigor of the interview questions (Stake, 2010), an interview protocol (Appendix D), field notes (memos) of observations during the interviews, audiotapes for a more accurate interpretation (Appendix B), interview transcriptions, and a second interview (Appendix B) for participants to clarify their perceptions of the factors and accurate interpretations, qualifying as member checking to ensure triangulation (Stake, 2010). The case study design was therefore, advantageous and appropriate to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the

school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. The parent and the teacher participants were asked to reflect on the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the students' academic achievement in English fluency.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this qualitative case study provided a perspective, or viewpoint, a base from which exploration of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency could occur, and guided the researcher during the data collection and the data analyses. Stake (2010) noted the conceptual framework provides the researcher with a lens to examine the topic under study. The proposition of this study was when the positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the student is more likely to achieve English fluency. The conceptual framework that guided this study of the child, the family, and the school influences that serve to motivate and to engage the individual to learn or to experience an event was Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserted both internal and environmental factors play a major role in a child's development. Bronfenbrenner's conception of the internal and the environmental factors influencing learning was the lens used to identify and to understand why some students in the private school in Goiânia, Brazil, gain English fluency in seventh and eighth grade while others do not. The internal and external influences may not act in harmony to engage student learning, wherein some students do not ascertain the challenges of learning a new language. An explanation follows of how

Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological influences may be attributed to English fluency of successful students in one particular private Brazilian school district in Goiânia, Goiás.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the child is at the center of the universe, influenced by attributes that affect the child's behavior, such as intelligence, personality, motivation, and temperament. These influences are defined as internal influences that affect the child's behavior, and how others interact with the child and the environment. The exterior influences that affect the child's behavior are called external influences. The familial and school influences on a child were examined in this study for the purpose of answering the general research question: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

Bronfenbrenner (1979) posited the ecological theory as a dynamic synergy that occurs when a child interacts with the external systems, creating a dyadic relationship. The interconnected systems provide experiences for learning: (1) Microsystem, (2) Mesosystem, (3) Exosystem, (4) Macrosystem, and (5) Chronosystem. Bronfenbrenner stated the child and the environmental influences engage in bi-directional influences throughout all five levels. The first system, microsystem, consists of a child's immediate environment (physical, social, emotional, cognitive, moral, and psychological). The family is the primary venue for the child to learn how to live, to behave morally and ethically, to develop self-regulation, and to establish a value and belief system. For example, the child and the parents experience a dyadic relationship; the child influences how the parents relate to the child. The parents' behavior influences how the child relates to the parents. Hence, a bi-directional set of influences occurs between the parents and the child. In regards to defining how the microsystems may influence a child's language acquisition and fluency, perhaps the parents communicate with the child using

sophisticated vocabulary and engaging questions (Bond & Wasik, 2009), demonstrate value of familial culture (Pena, 2000), or demonstrate interests of multiple languages and other cultures by engaging in diverse social and cultural events. Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion that the family is the primary influence within the microsystem affecting learning, a single-case study of high English fluency in a private school system in Goiânia will yield an understanding of the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) cited the second system, the mesosystem, is constructed of the child's immediate environment, such as the child's home and the school. The family-school interactions influence the child's learning. The mesosystem connects two or more of the systems to emanate security. The third system, the exosystem, encompasses the external environment and indirectly affects the child's development, such as a parent's workplace, the media, or the economy. Swick and Williams (2006) defined the exosystem as living in a system psychologically but not physically. The fourth system, the macrosystem, is the various subsystems of culture, societal values, and political and community events that merge as a powerful venue for learning in a child's life. The mesosystem connects expanding circles of triads and more expansive relations that regulate behavior, which give life meaning and value. An example of the mesosystem would be the school and the family and the external values that influence the child learning the English language in the state of Goiás compared to external values in other states. The fifth system, chronosystems, is the historical context within each system, such as the global demands for children in Brazil to learn English for economic progress and future job security in a global market (Borker, 2012; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013;

Hildebrand & Umeda, 2005; Lima & Brown, 2007; Naves & Vigna, 2008). The child, the family, and the school influences of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory set the parameters for identifying and understanding the social phenomenon under investigation in this holistic single-case study.

Theoretical Framework

Theory allows the researcher an increased awareness of making sense of the data, making interconnections, and applying significance to the data during data collection, data analysis, and synthesis (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2012; Yin, 2009). Shank and Villella (2004) asserted a theoretical view allows qualitative researchers to map areas of change, and to describe "new, subtle, and nuanced pictures of what were once familiar topics and areas" (p. 50). Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (1979) was the conceptual framework implemented to guide this holistic single-case study. Krashen's Theory of Language Acquisition (1982), Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1993), and Vygotsky's Theory of Social Constructivism (1978) served as the theorists whose work underpinned the theoretical framework of this holistic single-case study.

Krashen's Theory of Language Acquisition

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion of the environment as the support system for learning appears to be supported by Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, The Input Hypothesis. Krashen and Terrell (1995) differentiated between children *learning* a language and children *acquiring* a language. Children acquire a language without consciously thinking about the way a language system operates. In contrast to language acquisition, language learning encompasses children learning a language explicitly with awareness of the correct rules of language structure. Krashen (1982) asserted children's oral language skills increase when the comprehensible input (i+1) of a

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second language is comprehensible, interesting and relevant, sufficient to challenge the current level of comprehension, and not grammatically organized. Krashen's theoretical framework of language acquisition indicates children with a high self-esteem, high self-confidence, and increased motivation receive support for attaining i+1 learning. Zheng (2008) asserted "i" represents the current language level competency, and "+1" entails input that is comprehensible with the teacher's guidance in an environment that supports learning. The opportunity to provide children with literacy-rich environments to support extensive vocabulary growth through oral communication is vital for increasing early language skills (Dockrell, Stuart, & King, 2010; Soto-Hinman, 2011). The assertion that literacy-rich environments support children's vocabulary growth through increased oral communication aligned with the second language acquisition theory that language is acquired with the teacher operating as the link (i+1) to influence meaningful learning of the second language (Krashen, 1982).

Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, the Input Hypothesis, added support to the conceptual framework represented in the tenets of the ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Krashen's Input Hypothesis supported the purpose of the study, which was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. According to Krashen (1982), the teacher operates as the link in the environment (i+1) and affects the students' learning. Krashen's Input Hypothesis supported the investigation of the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' learning English and progression in language acquisition.

Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory

The investigation of the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to high English fluency were supported through Bandura's (1986) Social-Cognitive Theory of Self-Efficacy, in addition to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982). Bandura (1986) described self-efficacy as learners' judgment to recognize and exercise effective actions to attain a particular type of performance. Su and Duo (2012) asserted English learners who demonstrate effective language fluency tend to use effective strategies and have high self-images of their abilities, or high self-efficacy beliefs. Learners with high self-efficacy beliefs are learners who believe in their capabilities to achieve a task (Su & Duo, 2012).

According to Bandura (1993), self-efficacy beliefs extend beyond the student to include the teachers' self-images playing roles in students' academic challenges and accomplishments. Teachers' personal beliefs in abilities to challenge students to obtain learning goals and challenges are also influenced by the teacher. Epstein (as cited in Bandura, 1993) purported parents' self-efficacy also contributes to their children's intellectual growth and directly plays a role in positive learning achievements. Parents who exhibit a higher self-efficacy tend to place more emphasis on learning, establish regular schedules for homework, participate with school activities, and view learning as a mutual responsibility between the teachers, the family, and the community. When parents' self-efficacy is the model, it contributes to the atmosphere of the learning environment. The external factors, parents and teachers, contribute to positive learning experiences and acquisition of a foreign language.

Hsieh and Kang (2010) examined 192 Korean English learners' beliefs about successes and failures in learning EFL in the ninth grade. Hsieh and Kang found the

more successful learners credited success and failures to learning English to controllable factors, internal and personal. The less successful learners credited failures to uncontrollable, external factors, such as unfair tests or teacher biases. Results in the study indicated teachers' crucial roles in monitoring students' beliefs of success. Teachers can assist students in understanding the personal control over learning and the outcomes. Hsieh and Kang (2010) concluded self-efficacy encompasses effort, determination, and personal incentive to succeed in future endeavors, which foreign language teachers should attend to students' cognitive beliefs in tandem with performance. Consistent with Bandura's assertions, the self-efficacy beliefs of the parents, the teachers, and the students affect learning of a second language. As Krashen (1982) cited in the Input Hypothesis, the teacher is an external link to assist the students in understanding the role personal control, determination, and belief in abilities play in learning.

Social Constructivism

Lev Vygotsky's Theory of Social Constructivism is based on the belief that children learn through interactions with society and culture. Adults are key to promoting learning at the appropriate level or one level beyond (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) identified the support system that enables students to learn one level beyond the current level as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD corresponds to an interaction among the teacher or adult, the peer, and the students. The learning occurs when the teacher supports the child's current level of learning to initiate learning one level beyond (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Powell and Kalina (2009) noted social constructivists believe language precedes learning. Children learn through the social interactive process, using language to learn new concepts. Social interaction and

cooperation are key components of social constructivism, and to children's learning effective language skills and to the development of clear communication with peers and teachers. Consistent with social constructivists' view that children learn effective language skills through the development of clear communication and social interaction with peers and adults (Powell & Kalina, 2009), the parent and the teacher participants were asked to discuss in-depth the socialization aspect of home life and school life.

Another constructivist was Jean Piaget, the pioneer of individual constructivism. In contrast to Vygotsky's primary belief that children learn through social interactions, constructing learning from the environment (Powell & Kalina, 2009), Piaget believed learning is mostly self-constructed. Although the interactions with others and the environment are necessary for learning, a cognitive theorist asserted learning is mostly self-initiated (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Powell and Kalina (2009) asserted children learn new ideas through an individual process of understanding, as opposed to the social constructivists' ideas that children create ideas through social interactions with the teacher and peers. Piaget's developmental stages of learning are paramount in children's abilities to learn material at the appropriate moment. Awareness of the socially constructed and self-constructed learning beliefs embedded in constructivism provided interconnections to support an understanding of the factors that influence Brazilian students' learning English.

The social constructivist's theory of learning adds to the dynamics of effective classroom instruction and the knowledge teachers should exhibit about how the teacher, the student, and the environment contribute to students' learning achievements. Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory of Self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivism Theory supported

the investigation of the child, the family, and the school influences on students' language acquisition and fluency of English. Consistent with the social constructivism learning theory that children learn through interactions with the environment, the parents and the teachers contributed perceptions of the child, the family, and school interactions. In this holistic single-case study, parents were asked their perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that might contribute to their child's high English language fluency. EFL teachers contributed their perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that might contribute to students' high English fluency in the private school sector, in Goiânia. The theoretical framework of Krashen's theory of language acquisition, the Input Hypothesis, Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory of Self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory provided support and increased awareness of making sense of the data (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). The conceptual framework, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, added support and direction to the questions and analyses of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory supported the effects of the influences in the environment, such as relationships with the parents and the teachers, on students' learning; the interconnected role of students' social and emotional development may affect academic achievement. Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, Bandura's (1986) Social-Cognitive Theory of the students', the teachers', and the parents' self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivism supported the effects of external factors, such as the influences of the environment on learning, and internal factors of control that include persistence and incentives to achieve a goal. Thus, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, Krashen's Theory of Language Acquisition,

Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory of Self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's Social Constructivism provided an appropriate framework for this holistic single-case study to address the research purpose and the research questions that guided this study.

Definition of Terms

Several terms have universal meanings, which do not need defining. Other terms may be difficult to define. To ensure the terms that were used in this holistic single-case study were understood accurately and contextualized, the terms that may have been misinterpreted will be defined to increase understanding.

BRICS Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, developing economies identified as the BRICS. Originally identified as BRIC economies, prior to South Africa's entry (Borker, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; Schrooten, 2011).

EFL English taught in countries where English is not the dominant language (Kim, 2009).

ESL English as a Second Language, taught to students whose primary language is other than English and in countries where English is the dominant language (Calderon, Slavin & Sanchez, 2011).

Globalization is described as an integration of information and systems of communication around the world (Hildebrand & Umeda, 2005; Lima & Brown, 2007).

MEC Ministry of Education and Culture, also identified as Ministry of Education (Brasil, 1999).

Self-Efficacy Self-image of one's capabilities to achieve a goal (Bandura, 1986).

SLA Second Language Acquisition. The appropriate stages of development in a second or foreign language (Krashen, 1982).

Vestibular is a competitive entry exam for students who exit high school, to place in a prestigious, publicly funded university (Peluso, Savalli, Cúri, Gorensetin, & Andrade, 2010).

Assumptions

The first assumption for this holistic single-case study was the sample for the study would yield a rich picture of the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to students' high English fluency in the Brazilian classroom in the private school in Goiânia. The assumption was the parent and the teacher participants would provide accurate, candid responses, representative of the factors that influence Brazilian learners' English fluency. Merriam (2002) and Stake (2010) noted a case study design requires a program or system that is highly successful, unique, or experimental be chosen to represent the phenomenon. The parents and teachers were chosen with the assumption that the participants' responses would contribute to the purpose of identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency.

The second assumption was that a sufficient number of parents would volunteer to participate in the study. A third assumption was that a sufficient number of Brazilian teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) would participate in this study. Yin (2009) stated the number of participants for a case study depends on the components of the research design: (1) the questions of the study, (2) the unit(s) of analysis, (3) the propositions, if any, (4) the logic for linking a proposition to the data, and (5) the criteria for analyzing the study results. A study does not require a proposition; however, a study with specific questions and a proposition will stay within feasible research limits. The number of candidates depends on the unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). The assumption was a

sufficient number of eligible participants would volunteer to address the one unit of analysis. To ensure that the 17 participants would elicit honest, candid answers, the participants received a contract of informed consent (Appendix B) assuring the confidentiality of participants' responses and personal identities to expand research in education on factors that influence Brazilian students' high English fluency. Participants were assured of anonymity during an interview dialogue prior to the interview, specifically in question 5 and question 6 (Appendix D). Participants were also informed of anonymity of responses in the Informed Consent: Participants 18 Years of Age and Older (Appendix B). Consistent with Stake's (2010) assertion of looking and listening from more than one vantage point, member checking was initiated of interpretations of the data that were collected and analyzed. Member checking with the participants in a second interview (Appendix B) protected participants from any possible insensitivity to evolving meaning of interpretations to the questions elicited during the open-ended structured interviews.

The last assumption was the holistic case study design was appropriate for identifying and understanding the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that might influence Brazilian students' high English fluency. The assumption was the holistic single-case design would be advantageous for ensuring the responses from both participant types, the parents and the teachers, were accurately utilized to establish a sound means of defining the influences necessary for Brazilian students in the private school sector to develop English fluency. The assumption was the information collected and analyzed for the composition of themes would be adequate to represent the phenomenon under study of a particular point and time (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) asserted asking good questions should aggregate an inquiry about *how* or *why* the world operates. Researchers must select the case that will likely yield the most effective data. The case study design is appropriate when the focus is an analysis of a social phenomenon, group, or specific program because it is unique, experimental, or highly successful.

In alignment with Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009), the assumption was the participants' responses would be bound within the parameters set by the research questions, the proposition, and the purpose of the study to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The assumption was to generate descriptive rich meaning, not numerical, from the participants' perceptions to establish the possible child, the family, and the school interactions to evidence the high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. Understanding the high English fluency in the case particular to the private school, in Goiânia, may assist local educational leaders and teachers of English (EFL) to consider the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the students' English fluency, to improve other Brazilian students' achievement with English fluency.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study was limited to a single case of the private school system where high English fluency was investigated to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that possibly contribute to the Brazilian students' high English fluency. The study took place in Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil, and was limited to 15 parent-volunteers whose children were in the seventh grade and in the eighth grade and to two EFL teacher-volunteers from the seventh and the eighth grade faculty. The study took place in a private middle school where the unit of analysis, the influences on high English fluency,

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characterized the investigation of the unit of analysis as a case study (Merriam, 2002). The proposition that when positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to achieve English fluency also directed attention to the scope the study (Yin, 2009).

The parents whose children study in a public school, and teachers who teach in a public school, were not asked to participate in the study. The reason for this limitation was the focus of this case study was the high English fluency and the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to English fluency success, evident in this particular case in a private school in Goiânia. Akkari (2013) purported the public and private educational systems in Brazil still divide the underprivileged students from the privileged students. Although boundaries among the populations are beginning to diminish with social progress, the dividing lines still exist, evident in the quality of instruction, availability of appropriate materials and structures, and students' achievement. With the focus of the case study design on a highly successful system, students who study in private schools have more access to extracurricular activities to enrich their learning (Akkari, 2013). Students who study in a public school system lack opportunities and funds to engage in extracurricular activities as students who study in a private school. Akkari (2013) noted the contrasting differences in the public school and the private school systems are evident in the resources spent on the students and the wages teachers receive. Brazilian parents whose children study in the private school system during primary and secondary years, will most likely invest in extracurricular activities to foster their children's learning, compared to parents whose children study in public schools and rely on the educators to supply the appropriate learning materials with the public funds. Therefore, the parents and teachers of the students who exhibited English fluency were invited to participate in the holistic single-

case study of the influences, external and internal influences that contribute to high English fluency, selected for the specific purpose of yielding the most detail to the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2002).

Delimitations

The researcher decides the delimitations of a study by decisions of what to include and what to exclude from the study (Lunenburg & Irby, 2009). Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) noted when choosing a case study, the researcher should select the case to likely yield the most robust data. The first delimitation in this study was the scope of the study. The research was narrowed to a purposive sampling of the parents' whose child was in the seventh grade and to the parents whose child was in the eighth grade and to the respective English teachers. The parents who participated in this study met the criterion of having a child whose high English fluency was represented in a letter grade of a B or higher. The study was limited to one private school where high English fluency was the case under investigation.

The second delimitation was the small purposive sampling of 15 parents and two teachers of the seventh and eighth grade students' high English fluency. The findings of the 17 participants might not transfer to the larger Brazilian population in other Brazilian states. The study was conducted at a particular period and time (Merriam, 2002) and was a limitation since the social and economic development in this emerging BRICS country (Borker, 2012) changes rapidly and represents a particular period and time. The population represented a specific time and period and may not generalize to other populations. The rationale for having chosen this sample, limited to the 15 private school parent-volunteers and to the two teacher-volunteers, was congruent with Corbin and

Strauss (2008), Merriam (2002), and Yin (2009) that the population sample should be purposive to yield the most effective insights of the phenomenon under investigation.

The third delimitation in this holistic single-case study was the potential biases the parents and teachers may have regarding the ecological factors unique to the case of high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. The personal biases may have been present in the interview responses and may have threatened the validity of the results of the study (Yin, 2009). The researcher's perspectives of the topic under study may have created potential biases during data analysis. The NVivo 10.0 software (QSR International, 2014) facilitated in the process of ameliorating the validity of the results.

In this study, the phenomenon under investigation was the external and the internal influences that contribute to the development of Brazilian students' successful English fluency, evident in the particular private school system in Goiânia. Merriam (2002) stated that generalizability to a larger population is difficult, especially in case studies, because human behavior of a particular period and time is not replicable. Although replication is feasible with a multiple-case embedded design, replication is not possible in a holistic single-case design (Yin, 2009). The holistic single-case design did not allow replication.

Consistent with Merriam (2002), the intent was not to generalize the findings of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. In consideration of the family and school dynamics and the students' learning, Bronfenbrenner (1979) affirmed the family is the child's primary venue to learning. The second level of a child's learning includes the school system. The family and the school interactions influence a child's learning. In alignment with Bronfenbrenner (1979), the aim of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the

factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. Since this study was limited to

a particular place and time (Merriam, 2002), the findings of this study lack

generalizability to other populations in other Brazilian states.

Summary

The general problem in Chapter 1 emphasized the educational systems in BRICS

countries have challenges and priorities, which yield a broad range of English fluency

rates. The growing development for students to learn English as a Foreign Language

(EFL) in the BRICS countries, Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa with Brazilian

students performing the lowest of the emerging economies (Bohn, 2003; EF/English

Proficiency Index, 2012; Vargas, 2012), evidenced a need to align appropriate EFL

instructional methods with student achievement. Identifying and understanding the child,

the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian

students' English fluency outlined the specific problem under investigation in this holistic

single-case study.

The research method and the research design most advantageous for identifying

and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence

Brazilian students' high English fluency in the private school system in Goiânia, Brazil,

were substantiated with foundational qualitative resources, such as Merriam (2002),

Stake (2010), and Yin (2009). In particular, investigating a program because it is typical,

unique, or highly successful aligns as a unit of analysis in a case study design. The

qualitative research method supported research of a social phenomenon of a social or

political nature (Merriam, 2002), qualifying the qualitative method and the holistic

single-case design as appropriate for identifying and understanding the child, the family,

and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English

fluency in a private school in Goiânia, to yield descriptive details rather than numerical details.

The review of the literature in Chapter 2 established a framework for this holistic single-case study and the need to investigate the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence students' English fluency in the Brazilian classroom. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory underpinned the conceptual framework that ecological factors influence students' learning, starting with the family, the environment, and organizational structures, such as the school and the community. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory added support for considerations of bi-directional factors, the child, the family, and the school that may influence Brazilian students' English fluency. The theoretical framework that allowed increased awareness of applying significance to the emerging themes (Shank, 2010) and to map areas of change with new topics during research (Shank & Villella, 2004) was supported by Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, Bandura's (1993) Theory of Self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's (1978) Theory of Social Constructivism. The predominant educational system in Brazil and the contemporary need for students to learn English to compete in the local and in the global marketplace were explored.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

In Chapter 1, an overview of the general problem emphasized educational systems in the emerging BRICS countries, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa have challenges and priorities, which yield a broad range of English fluency rates (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). Brazilian students performed the lowest among their BRICS counterparts on English proficiency (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). The increased rise in English proficiency requirements in the Brazilian curriculum (MEC, 1998) for students to compete in a modern, global economy has increased educational leaders' attention to examine effective instructional practices in the EFL classroom, and to improve Brazilian students' achievement in English for competition in the global market (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008). Identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency was identified as the specific problem under investigation in this holistic single-case study.

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. Of the challenges facing Brazilian leaders in education in the elementary and secondary settings, English fluency is at the forefront (Bohn, 2003; Naves & Vigna, 2008). English fluency may be the catalyst to Brazilian students' participation in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, where English has been identified as the international language of communication (Koru & Akesson, 2011; Lima & Brown, 2007; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Sobrinho, 2006). The knowledge of why some students in a private school in Goiânia, in the state of Goiás, exhibit high English

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fluency may contribute to what little is known of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence students' development of English in an emerging BRICS country such as Brazil (Borker, 2012; Marcondes, 2013). This study will add to educational leadership, educational policy, and to the curriculum and instruction in Goiânia, Brazil, of the factors that influence Brazilian students' fluency of English in a global economy.

In Chapter 2, an overview of the Brazilian educational system, public and private, the contemporary culture, and the increased challenges Brazilian students encounter becoming English fluent compared to other BRICS counterparts (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) frames the study in a specific time and place (Merriam, 2002). A review of research-based theories of language development and theories of motivation for learning a foreign language, current studies and contrasting views that provide evidence of the importance of identifying and understanding the possible child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of English fluency will be evidenced. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks will add support for increased awareness and considerations of bi-directional factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) of the child, the family, and the school that may influence Brazilian students' development of English fluency. Overcoming the current disadvantages Brazilian students' encounter in the local and the global marketplace because of a lack of English fluency (Bohn, 2003), a skill necessary for students' success in this rapidly emerging global economy, indicated a social concern worthy of a holistic single-case study to examine high English fluency in one private school in Goiânia.

Title Searches, Articles, Research Documents, and Journals

Multiple searches for articles of historical and current research on the Brazilian educational system, public and private, the culture, language acquisition learning theories, motivational theories for learning, studies on Brazilians' English proficiency and current standing as global citizens with 21st century marketable skills (Lima & Brown, 2007) for this holistic single-case study included peer-refereed journal articles, e-textbooks, and dissertations obtained from University of Phoenix Library Internet search engines; EBSCOhost, ERIC, Google School, Thomas Gale PowerSearch, and ProQuest. Research from peer-refereed journals included, but were not limited to, *Early Childhood Education Journal, The Journal of Educational Research, The Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, The International Journal of Language Studies, The International Journal of Learning, The International Journal of Research, Phi Delta Kappan,* and *The Reading Research Quarterly*. Favorable and contrasting views that related to the research problem and the purpose of the study were examined. Research from non peer-refereed journals was excluded from the review to maintain scholarly quality of the data included in the review of literature.

The significant terms used to guide this research included: Brazilian culture, Brazilian teachers' instructional practices in EFL, BRICS countries and English proficiency ratings, private and public education in Brazil, external and internal factors affecting language acquisition, global economy, globalization and Brazil, parents' perspectives on influences in language acquisition, teachers' perspectives on influences in language acquisition, and developmental stages in language acquisition. The searches that led to peer-refereed journal articles appropriate for the research of Brazilian students' development of English fluency were included in the literature review.

In contrast to the terms that advanced the search of documents, literature, and peer-refereed journal articles and pertained to the topic under study, terms deemed ineffective for accessing data related to the purpose of the study were not accessed. Some ineffective terms for advancing this holistic single-case study of Brazilian students' English fluency included: ESL methodology in USA, students' language acquisition in ESL classrooms, adult fluency in ESL, and pedagogical issues American teachers experience in American schools, for example. The terms that aligned with the study of English as a Second Language (ESL), appropriate for students who reside in countries where English is the primary language spoken, such as in the United States and Canada, were identified as inadequate terms for advancing the research on Brazilian students' English fluency. Terms specific to English fluency in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) for students who live in countries where English is not the primary language of communication, such as Brazil, added to the resource base.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory was the conceptual lens through which the influencing ecological factors that contribute to high English fluency were investigated.   The theoretical framework to support increased awareness of the emerging themes of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the students' disposition to learn English and to obtain fluency in the Brazilian classroom were Krashen's (1982) Theory of Language Acquisition, Bandura's (1993) Theory of Self-Efficacy, and Vygotsky's (1978) Theory of Social Constructivism.

Research Questions

Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009) suggested a research problem initiates with a concern related to a social phenomenon, which requires understanding of a constructed reality of a particular point and time. The social phenomenon worthy of investigating in

this holistic single-case study was the external and internal influences that contribute to Brazilian students' development of English fluency. Designing the research questions appropriately set the parameters of the focus of the research and the appropriate methods implemented for collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing data (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

Consistent with Merriam (2002), Stake (2010), and Yin (2009), the general research question and the four sub-questions were crafted to set the parameters for this holistic single-case study. The general question for this study was: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency? The focus of the general research question was an investigation of the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The four sub-questions were framed to further encapsulate the boundaries of the study of didactic influences of the child, the family, and the school on the students' acquisition of English fluency.

Research Sub-Question 1 (RSQ1): What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 2 (RSQ2): What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 3 (RSQ3): What are the teachers' perceptions of the influence of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 4 (RSQ4): What are the parents' perceptions of the influence of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Historical Background of Case Study Design

According to Healy (1947), Frederic Le Play, a Frenchman, pioneered the earliest form of the case study design in 1829 with an investigation of families and the financial expenses incurred. Le Play was interested in the human behavior within various social levels of society. He chose to observe working class families, representative of nearly ninety five percent of the population. Le Play sought to represent the typical working class family. Although Le Play analyzed the expenses of working class families, interviewed and observed members to reflect the social structure of the families, criticism surfaced that the representations were a combination of methods. According to Healy (1947), many rejected his method of combining the case study with the analysis of the family budget because the members within the scientific community believed that adherence to one approach was preferable, compared to a combination of subjective and objective approaches.

Tellis (1997) echoed the assertion that the case study research traced back to France, reminiscent of the current case study design. The earliest evidence of the case study design to the United States was traced to The University of Chicago Department of Sociology. The case study research was evidenced from the 1930s, a period of an influx of immigrants to Chicago in search of improved social conditions. The interests in the social situation of that particular time and period, experienced by the immigrants, were ideal for conducting case studies. Researchers' attention toward the immigrants' diverse

issues of working conditions, unemployment, and poverty yielded descriptive reports and a resurgence in case studies (Tellis, 1997).

Despite the interest in case studies, a controversy surfaced among professors at The Chicago School and Columbia University in 1935. The professors at Columbia University raised criticism of descriptive accounts of research with demands for an increase in quantitative measures. The public dispute between Columbia University and The Chicago School resulted in denigration of supporters for the case study design. The increase in public support for quantitative measures represented a decline in the case study design in the United States (Tellis, 1997).

Eventually, the scientific community voiced concerns that research was directed toward quantitative measures and lacked representation of qualitative perspectives (Tellis, 1997). The concerns within the scientific community bolstered interest in qualitative research, specifically in case studies. The renewed interest evoked the concept of theory grounded in data, developed by Strauss and Glaser in the mid 1960s (as cited in Tellis, 1997).

In consideration of the historical background of the case study design and assertions that Frederic Le Play pioneered the case study method with his study of working class families and the financial expenditures (Healy, 1947; Tellis, 1997), the case study method has evolved since the tracing to France. Despite the controversies and misunderstandings that exist about case-study research, the case study design has evolved and gained greater acceptance within the scientific community (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The case study design evolved into four different types of designs (Yin, 2009). The designs are identified as single-case holistic, single-case embedded, multiple-case holistic, and

multiple-case embedded. Of the four case study designs, the case may be identified as an exploratory, an explanatory, or a descriptive approach (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2009).

Consideration of the four types of designs, single-case holistic, single-case embedded, multiple-case holistic, and multiple-case embedded, the research questions and the unit of analysis lead the researcher toward selection of a particular design (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). A holistic design allows the examination of a phenomenon through a global lens. A social phenomenon may be analyzed through one person, a program, or an entity, such as a school (Yin, 2009). A single-case embedded study indicates more than one unit of analysis is under investigation. A unit of analysis represents the case. When subunits are included in a case study, an embedded design is the correct type of design applied for research (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

A multiple-case design may be holistic or embedded. A multiple-case holistic design may entail research about one school, but include multiple data resources such as diverse projects funded by one company. A multiple-case embedded design would be appropriate for examining several companies or entities in different geographical locations (Yin, 2009). The multiple evidence of subunits within an embedded case are not limited to qualitative analysis as in a holistic case. A multiple case yields multiple methods applicable within subunits (Scholz & Tietje, 2013). Analysis of the nature of the study, the study questions, and the case under investigation will yield the appropriate design type (Stake, 2010; Tellis, 1997).

Holistic Design

The holistic design is distinctive from the embedded design in the singularity of the focus. A holistic design is a singular focus on one entity (Scholz & Tietje, 2013). Hull (2013) examined the global nature of religious leaders' influence on multicultural

appreciation of one entity, the XYZ Church. Members from the XYZ Church shared a geographical location and a contemporary phenomenon of one unit of analysis. The holistic design was identified as advantageous for Hull's (2013) exploration of the phenomenon, the leaders' influence on the church members' appreciation of multiculturalism.

In consideration of Hull's (2013) holistic single-case study, one unit of analysis was identified in this study of high English fluency in one private school. The parents and the teachers for this study shared one geographical location and perceptions of one contemporary phenomenon. The optimal design for identifying and understanding the factors that influence Brazilian students' English language fluency in the private school, in Goiânia, was the holistic single-case design. The intent was to identify and to understand the factors that influenced the children's high English fluency. The holistic single-case design was identified as most effective for understanding the one unit of analysis, influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

BRICS Countries

With the focus of the research on Brazilian students' development of English and the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to English fluency, the economic and social position of Brazil in the global economy situated the current educational demands of the students and the teachers to leverage Brazilian students' competencies for participation in the global marketplace. Brazil is one of the emerging BRICS economies **(**Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) identified as a rapid-growth country in economic and social development (Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014; Hoskisson, Eden, Lau, & Wright, 2000; Schrooten, 2011). South Africa has been included in the original BRIC economies (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), thus the

current term BRICS economies (Dietrich, Moja, Pazich, 2014). However, according to O' Neill (as cited in Borker, 2012), the large developing economies (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) are associated in pairs because of similar land mass and population sizes, and cultural values evident during economic and social progression. Russia and Brazil are countries that yield a low population compared to the amount of land mass and rich natural resources available. In contrast, China and India are countries considered highly populated and most likely to make progress in the manufacturing and service industry. The cultural values exhibited by Brazilians' values are on interdependence among group members. Prior to conducting business in Brazil, a strong, trusting relationship must be built among members. The preferred communication style is context-rich and personal. India remained in the middle with individualist behavior and proceeding as a group during business transactions. China rated high on the scale for preference toward collective behavior. The Chinese people primarily act in the interest of the group rather than in the interest of the individual (Hofestede, Hofestede, & Minkov, 2010, as cited in Borker, 2012).

Of the emerging BRICS countries, Brazil ranked the lowest (46th) and India (14th) scored the highest on the International Education First/Proficiency Index. India's high score may be because English is considered an official language of India (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). Although the worldwide EF/EPI examination has deficiencies that include conducting the test online and requires students to have access to technology, the English proficiency results are still considered the most accurate results currently available (Koru & Akesson, 2011). Therefore, educational leaders, curriculum writers, and policy makers will benefit from consideration of how to address current concerns of leveraging Brazilian students' academic achievements and English fluency to participate

in a global economy where English fluency has been cited as the language of international communication (Koru & Akesson, 2011; Lima & Brown, 2007; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Sobrinho, 2006).

Consideration of Brazil's low ranking on the EF/English Proficiency Index (2012) and Brazil's emerging role among the BRICS countries, the educational system in Brazil has included recent requirements in the national curriculum parameters (PCNs) to require mandatory instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) beginning in the fifth grade (Naves & Vigna, 2008). Modernization of the Brazilian educational system entails addressing the quality of the national curriculum and the instructional practices of new guidelines for the Brazilian teachers to meet the needs for students to become active participants in a globalized economy (Marcondes, 2013). As teachers consider effective foreign language instruction of English, the culture and underlying belief systems that impact the quality of instruction frame educational leaders' concerns of improving instructional practices and student achievement (Vargas, 2012).

Culture in Brazil

An examination of the predominant culture in Brazil, or what Bronfenbrenner (1979) described as the macrosystem, a blueprint of society, refers to existing consistencies that may exist within the level of a subculture or a culture, and includes the belief systems and underlying ideologies. Examining the macrosystem may enable an understanding of the social context in which the children in Brazil learn a foreign language. According to Broom (2011), culture is fluid, organic, and ever-changing. The culture shapes the language of a country, and the language is a tool shaped by history. The culture of a country is embedded within patterns of knowledge, beliefs, and actions, which are articulated and understood through the particular language acquired by the

people within a given society. Broom (2011) suggested, "Children are thus shaped by their history and society through language…culture is the foundation of cognitive tools and learning" (p. 8).

In consideration of Broom's (2011) statement that children are shaped by their history, Canen (2003) argued for the educational leaders of Brazil's national curriculum to recognize Brazil as a pluralistic culture. Children's identity is marked through language and culture, which magnifies the Brazilian government's responsibility to recognize the mono-cultural cognitive-based approach to the curriculum should include a pluralistic approach for improved language and literacy development. The process of language development and literacy practices to improve student achievement heightens the complexity of teacher preparation in Brazil (Vargas, 2012).

Teachers who understand the process of language development in a foreign language (Borba, 2009; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013) and the effects of the first language on the acquisition of a second or foreign language (Canen, 2003; Keys, 2002; Mello, 2004) should understand how language and culture are interwoven during the language acquisition process. Students' language and culture are important elements to consider during instruction and learning a second or foreign language (Basista & Hill, 2010). Teaching English to Brazilian children encompasses comprehension of the linguistic and cultural landscapes that shape the foreign language curricula (Bohn, 2003; Keys, 2002; Mello, 2004).

Brazilian culture is a combination of the Portuguese, the Africans, and the Indigenous peoples. Although the Portuguese culture and language dominate the Brazilians' lifestyle, the influences of the Indigenous peoples and the Africans create cultural plurality in Brazilian society (Canen, 2003). The influence of the African people

is mostly prevalent on the coast of Brazil, evident in the food, the music, and religious beliefs (Brazil, 2013). The Portuguese and Spanish explorers fled to Brazil in the fifteenth century to exploit natural resources. In contrast to the Pilgrims who fled from Europe to North America to pursue religion, the explorers came to Brazil for gold and natural resources. Although the early pattern of international exploitation of Brazil's natural resources was established in the fifteenth century (Brazil, 2013), the impositions of the colonists' laws and diverse languages (Indigenous, Italian, German) in Brazil caused the local economy to suffer. Spanish is the official language in most of the bordering countries in South America. Brazil is the only country in South America to maintain the Portuguese language as the official language of communication (Bohn, 2003; Brazil, 2013).

The history of exploitation of the natural resources and the colonizers' holistic goals, created a pattern of foreign influence on the educational curriculum. According to Bohn (2003), the influence of the humanistic curriculum during the military regime of the 1960s until 1985 resulted in educational leaders' preference for the French language in the curriculum. After the military regime lost power officially in 1988, with the mandate of all children privileged to a free public education, the mandatory study of foreign languages lost hold in the national curriculum. Foreign language study became an option (Brasil, 1998).

Among the many foreign languages that were optional for study at the primary and secondary educational levels, the English language gained new status as the international language of communication (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013). In 1996, the national curricular parameters (PCNs) were revised to include mandatory study of English as a foreign language (Naves & Vigna, 2008). All children in the public and

private school would study English as a part of the revised curricular parameters. However, under the new law of mandatory instruction of English as a Foreign Language, educational leaders would need to evaluate appropriate instructional methods for teachers' understanding of effective instructional techniques and the stages of language development. The dilemma of increasing the quality of teacher education in Brazil would require more professional training and consistency with professional development to accompany contemporary changes (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Vargas, 2012). The results of this study may illuminate the strengths of the teachers, which can be capitalized by other school districts seeking to improve English instruction.

Overview of the Brazilian Educational System

Although the mandate for compulsory education for children was passed only in 1988 (MEC, 1998), the educational leaders who write the national curriculum fail to write a curriculum that addresses the pluralistic, multi-racial cultures of Brazil (Canen, 2003; Schwartzman, 2003). According to the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC, 2007) and Schwartzman (2003), the educational system in Brazil is a centralized system divided into three hierarchical levels. The first two levels of basic education are identified as Fundamental and Intermediate. The third level is called Higher Education. Basic education became a compulsory right for all children beginning in 1988. The federal government regulates the legislation of the Laws and Guidelines and Bases (LDB) of the national education.

In contrast to the Brazilian educational system divided into three levels, Soares (2004) cited the Brazilian educational system is a complex system that causes confusion when compared to other countries, because of the multi-tiered levels and labels. Soares (2004) argued that the educational system is divided into five levels: Infant,

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Fundamental, Secondary, Higher, and Postgraduate education. Children begin fundamental education at age seven and continue until age 14. The second level of fundamental education is labeled Intermediate. The intermediated level continues for three years, until the student completes 17 years of age. The third tier of education is identified as Higher Education, which is divided into two levels: Undergraduate and Graduate. Despite the complexity of the Brazilian educational system, the two main levels, Fundamental and Secondary, are mandatory rights in public education for all children (MEC, 2007).

The National System for Evaluation of Basic Education (SAEB) in Brazil is an evaluative process of the last year of each cycle at the Fundamental and Secondary levels. Children are evaluated on basic Portuguese and mathematics in the fourth and the eighth year of Basic, or Fundamental, Education and during the senior year (which is the third year) of Secondary Education. Akkari (2013) noted the complexity of Brazilian education lies in the definitive lines drawn among the social classes and the quality of education offered to children. Although the free public education is available and mandatory for all students beginning at age seven, students from more financially structured families enroll in private schools during the fundamental and intermediate levels. The duality of the school system, private and public education is evident in the quality of the materials, the facilities, and the teachers employed in each system.

Despite the progress in the laws of free, mandatory public education offered to all children, mostly students who received a private basic and secondary education will achieve entry into the prestigious public higher institutions (Akkari, 2013). For students to receive a free higher education, students must pass the evaluative entry-level test called *Vestibular*. Passing the entry examination to university will ensure a designated space is

available and free entry into a public higher education institution (Peluso, Savalli, Cúri, Gorensetin, & Andrade, 2010). However, the public higher education receives mostly students who attended private schools during the fundamental years (ages 7- 14) and the intermediate years (ages 15-17) (Akkari, 2013; McCowan, 2007). The duality in the education offered to students is evident in the contemporary society with the progress amid the development of Brazil as an emerging BRICS country (Borker, 2012). This study may uncover the didactic relationship that exists between the child, the family, and the school. Understanding that relationship could propel teachers to include factors that motivate a child's desire to learn a foreign language in the school curriculum.

Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture

The educational leaders of the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) are responsible for writing the national curriculum for the public and the private schools (Bohn, 2003). The curriculum consists of two parts: A common core and a diversified section. The common core curriculum is mandatory for all public and private schools. The compulsory subjects throughout Brazil are Portuguese, Social Studies, History, Geography, Physics, Biology, Science, and Mathematics. Educational leaders in each school are allowed to write the diversified section to align with the regional and community needs and characteristics, students' aptitudes, individual differences and each school's plan (Brazil, 2013). Canen (2003) contended the national curriculum is a predominantly mono-cultural, cognitive-based approach to children's education. In a pluralistic society as Brazil, Canen (2003) argued children would benefit from a multicultural approach on literacy and language development to attend the pluralistic realities within Brazil's economically diverse populations and visually stratified landscapes.

Although Brazil is considered one of the powerful emerging countries of the BRICS countries, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (Borker, 2012; Carnoy, Loyalka, Androushchak, & Proudnikova, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014), the educational leaders within the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) develop the national curriculum with a primary focus on basic literacy skills in students' mother tongue, Portuguese (Bohn, 2003). Corcoran (2011) asserted Portuguese is the first language of nearly 95% of approximately 200 million people in Brazil. Brazil is the only country in South America where Portuguese is the official language, compared to the 10 neighboring countries where the official language is Spanish. Canen (2003) asserted the educational leaders should consider the approximate 206 diverse linguist variations that currently exist in the Indian populations. Further, the Portuguese language yields a vast array of accents and dialects, reflected in different regions and states throughout Brazil. The linguistic variations of the Portuguese language create challenges for teachers with the uniform style that educational leaders use writing the national curriculum. Brazil is a multicultural society with extreme diverse social realities (Akkari, 2013; McCowan, 2007).

Bohn (2003) suggested the reintroduction of the National Curriculum Parameters: Foreign Language (Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais: Lingua Estrangeira) (PCNs), in 1996, by the leaders of the Brazilian MEC, to build a curriculum that includes an official policy for foreign language instruction, has been a controversial issue. The bill established each district and local community authority over the selection of languages offered to students and the pedagogical method of implementation. The lack of official policies on foreign language implementation has left local Brazilian educational leaders without a central plan. Since the national curriculum of foreign language was passed in

1996, the English language became the dominant foreign language in the national curriculum (Naves & Vigna, 2008), despite the attempt to enforce Spanish. Brazil's partnership in the Mercosul, an alliance among South American countries, has motivated educators to promote Spanish as the language of choice for students (El-Dash & Busnardo, 2001). However, the shortage of teachers who understand and identify the appropriate stages of language development in a foreign language creates a difficult landscape to reintroduce effective foreign language study (Bohn, 2003). Educators should understand the developmental stages of learning a second language (Krashen, 1982) and the effects of first language on the acquisition of a second language (Keys, 2002; Mello, 2004) to provide effective instruction of a foreign language to students (Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012). When teachers understand the language development process and the possible elements that affect students' learning, teachers can make realistic expectations and connect learning to lived experiences (Borba, 2009).

The reality that the schools in Brazil lack knowledgeable teachers versed in the process of acquisition of a foreign language and the appropriate stages of language development (Bohn, 2003; Borba, 2009; Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012) evidenced a need to align the current national curriculum with current research on effective instructional methods and ecological factors that influence students' fluency in a foreign language. Conroy (2012) analyzed third grade students' performance in math from Cuba, Chile, and Brazil. He found that students in Cuba outperformed the Brazilian and Chilean students. Conroy (2012) attributed the differences among student achievement to several factors. Cuban students attend school for a full day and are instructed by well-informed teachers in an environment dedicated to academic excellence. In contrast, most students in Latin America attend school for half of a day. Parents select the morning schedule (7:30-

11:30) or the afternoon schedule (1:30-5:30). Teachers in Chile and Brazil are unsupervised and teach in a hands-off system. Conroy (2012) further asserted the lack of accountability on teacher performance and student achievement reveals a need for this qualitative case study to investigate the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' acquisition and fluency in English. The information on factors that contribute to improved student performance in the foreign language classroom may increase the knowledge teachers attain and implement, to improve the current instructional methods and the students' performance in English fluency. The results of this study could shed light on the influence factors have on student learning and the qualities and practices of effective teachers in foreign language pedagogy.

Learning English in Brazil

The historical and political events that led to the inclusion of foreign language in the national curriculum created contrasting views of which foreign languages should be compulsory among educational leaders. According to El Kadri and Gimenez (2013), Marcondes (2013), Naves and Vigna (2008), English is the dominant language of communication among world leaders. The increasing importance of the economic exchange among the South American countries that form the Mercosul, and Brazil's proximity to countries with Spanish as the official language, bolster the importance of Spanish as one of the foreign languages to implement in the national curriculum. However, the formation of the Mercosul (Brasil, 1999; El-Dash & Busnardo, 2001), an attempt to form an alliance among South American countries, similar to the European Economic Community, created political interests to require Spanish as a mandatory subject in the national curriculum. According to Corcoran (2011), the Brazilians' inspiration to emulate the French culture and the humanistic curricula reflected the

influence of the past control of Brazil under the Portuguese monarchy, and the control of the military dictatorship from 1964 until 1985. In the late 1970s, the discourse for a new curriculum, under the guise for the right for all children to study, caused disequilibrium to the old military regime. The French, humanist curriculum from the years of the military regime that once prioritized learning foreign languages and humanities lost ground to a new, industrialized curriculum. Regardless of the foreign language selected as mandatory in the national curriculum, teachers' awareness of appropriate foreign language instruction and of the stages of development will advance the students' achievement and fluency in the foreign language.

Bohn (2003) asserted the industrialized curriculum implemented in 1988, that made education compulsory for all children in Brazil, resulted in a loss of foreign language offered as mandatory in the curriculum. The Brazilian Federal Laws and Bases for National Education (LBDs) required all children from the ages of seven through 14 a free public education (Brasil, 1999). As a result of the new curriculum where educators promoted physical education, nationalism, and more work in laboratories, foreign language study became optional. Students who desired to continue study in foreign languages sought assistance in language schools that proliferated around Brazil to meet the educational demands of the upper class to learn English (Bohn, 2003).

Students privileged to study English in a private language school view English as a prestigious language and a step toward progress (El-Dash & Busnardo, 2001). Friedrich (2002) suggested students' views on the English language facilitating societal mobility and prestige are reflected in political and social crises. Students look toward the international market and globalizing trends and consider English the language of international communication. Friedrich conducted a study that consisted of 300

professionals between the ages of 25-40. The researcher examined the attitudes of Brazilian and Argentine professionals and the primary reason for learning English. The results revealed 100% of the 300 respondents viewed English as the international language of communication. Hence, the students' desire to gain social mobility aligned with the primary reason for studying the international language of communication, English, over other languages, such as French or Spanish. The results of this case study could help parents understand the power of parental influence on a child's acquisition of English fluency.

In addition to students' viewing the English language as a vehicle for social mobility and prestige as cited in Friedrich's (2002) study on Brazilian and Argentine professionals, Corcoran (2011) examined English teachers' perspectives on the status of those who speak English well and with a native-sounding accent. Corcoran found a divergence in teachers' beliefs of the implications of learning English. The results of the study suggested that Brazilian teachers who had traveled abroad to study English received higher salaries after their return to Brazil to teach, compared to teachers who had remained in Brazil to learn English. Many non-native English-speaking teachers (NNEST) do not believe native English-speaking teachers (NEST) are superior in knowing and teaching English in Brazil. However, Corcoran (2011) found that the non-native English-speaking Brazilian teachers who had traveled abroad where the predominant language spoken was English believed they were better equipped to teach English than their Brazilian colleagues who had not studied English abroad. Competition among the NNESTs regarding superiority in language fluency and received income was evident.

The contrasting factors of motivation noted by Corcoran (2011) and Friedrich (2002) that influenced students' fluency in English among Brazilian teachers and professionals, who studied the English language for improved social mobility in a global society (Bohn, 2003; Friedrich, 2002), illustrated a need for this case study to examine the perceptions of the possible child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. Understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency may enable local Brazilian educators to improve the current instructional practices and increase students' performance in English fluency, observed as a key skill in a globalized economy (El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Lima & Brown, 2007; Naves & Vigna, 2008).

Conceptual Framework

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (1979) was the conceptual framework that added support to understanding the possible factors that influence the development of students' English fluency. The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of the Brazilian student's English fluency. The literature evidenced the problem that Brazilian students are not advancing in English proficiency compared to their peers in the PISA EF/English Proficiency Index (2012). Brazilian students encounter difficulty entering the global work market compared to BRICS counterparts because of a lack of English fluency (Bohn, 2003; Marcondes, 2013). The identification and the understanding of the possible ecological factors that contribute to the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school sector, and why some students become English fluent, were explored in this holistic single-case study.

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In consideration of the purpose of the study, the problem of the study, and the research questions that guided this holistic single-case study, Yin (2009) cited the components of the research design for a case study, the unit of analysis and a proposition, as essential for establishing reasonable limits for a case study. The unit of analysis, influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, added focus to this study. The proposition for this holistic single-case study was that when positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to become English fluent. The proposition added focus to answering the research question and the four research sub-questions.

Ecological Systems Theory

The high English fluency rather than the low English fluency was the proposition for identifying and understanding the positive didactic influences that influence the development of the Brazilian students' English fluency. The conceptual framework, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, added support for this holistic single-case study. Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified the center of the systems of the ecological theory as the developing person, the influences of the environment, and the reciprocal relationship between the environment and the developing person. Johnson (2008) postulated Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory reflects a useful framework for educational leaders to understand the processes and interactions involved in human development and student achievement. Educational systems are not simple, linear systems. Instead, "Educational systems are complex, dynamic systems with multidirectional linkages and processes that interconnect the different layers within the system" (p. 9). Johnson (2008) suggested the Ecological Systems Theory as an effective lens to examine the multilayered

systems that interact in complex ways, wherein the systems affect one another and can be affected by the students' development.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the theoretical perspective of the Ecological Systems Theory is about "conception of the developing person of the environment, and especially of the evolving interaction between the two" (p. 19). A person's development signifies a permanent change in the way in which a person perceives and deals with the environment. The bi-directional factors between the child and the environment play a major role in human development. The four systems, the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem are complex systems that comprise both bidirectional influences and unidirectional influences. At the center of the four systems is the child. Within the microsystem, students, parents, family members, teachers, and the external surroundings affect the child. The child's experiences are bi-directional influences that shape learning and interactions within the microsystemic environment. Johnson (2008) suggested the person is influenced by the dyadic relationships and also influences those relationships. According to Darling (2007), the ecological systems are interrelated structures bound by the environment, the culture, and history.

The next system that influences a person's behavior is the mesosystem. The mesosystem comprises the connections among two or more systems, or the microsystems, in which the child is dynamically involved (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); a link between home and school constitutes the mesosytem (Leu, 2008). Johnson (2008) suggested an example of the bi-directional influences within the various microsystemic structures, such as the home or the classroom would be parental expectations with academic achievement and the child's motivation to do well in the school. Parents with excessively high expectations on learning and intolerance for failure may cause tense

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dynamics to occur among the parents, the teachers, and the child. The negative dynamics may affect the educational leaders' desire to maintain contact with parents to avoid conflict. Johnson (2008) suggested the dynamics created in this relationship directly and indirectly influence the school climate and the students' learning.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) described the third system, the exosystem, as events that affect the person's development deeply. Such events constitute settings in which the person is not an active participant, but the occurring events are affected by, or affect, what happens in the person's immediate setting. Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggested the most powerful influence affecting young children's development in modern, industrialized societies is the conditions of parents' employment. Johnson (2008) noted the exosystem encompasses the social and political policies, events, and the decisions over which students have little control or influence. The child's intellectual development may be affected by the exosystem, which exerts a unidirectional influence, directly and indirectly, on the external social system.

An example of the unidirectional influence of a child's external system would be a lack of proper funds to offer quality curricular activities in music. Leu (2008) cited an example of the influence of an exosystemic structure that affects Taiwanese teachers' instructional abilities with music in early childhood education classes. In Taiwan, universities and colleges offer educational programs about music and pedagogy, but only one music course is required with few electives. Educators who desire to learn about musical instruction for young children are faced with learning elsewhere or remaining uninformed of effective pedagogical practices. The lack of educational courses offered to music teachers to train for teaching early childhood results in inadequately trained

teachers. The exosystem affects the quality of musical classes offered to the children, and directly affects the children's experiences with quality education in music.

The fourth layer within the ecological systems is the macrosystem. The macrosystem refers to stabilities emanating from the three lower systems, the microsystem, the mesosystem, and the exosystem that occur, or could occur, within a subculture or the predominant culture. Johnson (2008) described the macrosystem as the culture, the subculture, and the expansive social context surrounding the child; "values, belief systems, lifestyles, opportunities, customs, and resources are embedded therein" (Johnson, 2008, p. 3). The macrosystem is believed to cause unidirectional influence on the person and the three systems: The microsystem, the mesosystem, and the exosystem (Johnson, 2008).

Later Bronfenbrenner (1979) added a fifth layer to the four layers of the ecological system. Johnson (2008) cited the chronosystem as emitting an effect on the performance of all levels of the ecological system. The chronosystem represents long-term and short-term time dimensions. Curricular changes, choices in staff selection, and developmental changes in the student body from day-to-day would be examples of a time dimension and how time may affect the child's developing self (Johnson, 2008). An example of the effects of the chronosystem in Brazil would be the educational leaders' shifting views of the mandatory foreign language classes, specifically French, during the military regime. A shift toward a new curriculum after the mandatory education for all children was introduced in 1988 (Bohn, 2003; Naves & Vigna, 2008), and the implementation of English as a mandatory subject (MEC, 1998) appears to reflect the historical and political landscapes of Brazil, or the fifth layer of the ecological system, the chronosystem.

The recent emergence of Brazil as one of the powerful developing BRICS countries (Borker, 2012; Carnoy, Loyalka, Androushchak, & Proudnikova, 2012) revealed a shift in the dynamics of an educational system that included the renewed need for Brazilian students to study a foreign language for improved performance on the exit exams from middle school to high school; and for high performance on the vestibular, an examination to enter prestigious public-funded universities (Peluso, Savalli, Cúri, Gorenstein, & Andrade, 2010). El Kadri and Gimenez (2013) and Lima and Brown (2007) emphasized the current concern in Brazilian education to prepare students to acquire technological and linguistic competencies in a foreign language, such as English, which has been identified as the international language of communication (Friedrich, 2002). Adequate preparation in technology and English fluency prepares Brazilian students for opportunities and challenges in an interconnected global society. The stratified diversity of abilities among students in private and public institutions in Brazil (Akkari, 2013; Canen, 2003; Schwartzman, 2003) increases the challenge for educational leaders, curriculum planners, and policy makers to align students' abilities to learn English and achieve fluency in a competitive, globalized society.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Although many factors influence students' learning achievements (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the teacher is a major factor influencing students' motivation to achieve educational goals (Krashen, 1995; Hunter, 1993; Vygostky, 1978). Astleitner (2005) asserted effective instruction should stimulate students' motivation, support students' inquiries and learning, and increase positive emotions toward the content and learning environment. Instruction should include multiple methods to support diverse characteristics of students' learning. The pedagogic instructional models for teaching

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to English learners requires that teachers obtain in-depth knowledge of language instruction, stages of language development, and how to assess and address students' learning styles (Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012). Knowledge of effective instructional techniques for English fluency is a challenge for educational leaders in the Brazilian context (Naves & Vigna, 2008).

The instruction in English entails communicative and grammar focus for improving students' skills in the four areas of language proficiency: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Lavadenz, 2010/2011). Teachers of English learners must be aware of the evolution of language acquisition and the complexity of variables that contribute to English learners' success in language fluency. Teachers with proper training of instructional EFL strategies gain an increased awareness of a variety of factors that contribute to English fluency; such as parents, the school, the community, the child's current level of language development, the child's level of fluency in a primary language, the child's personality and level of motivation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Krashen, 1982; Mello, 2004). Further, teachers must comprehend how to teach English learners with appropriate methods and knowledge of the stages of language development (Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012). Bohn (2003) noted Brazilian students have been losing out on international and national competition in the job market because of a lack of English fluency. Success in a global economy requires students to exhibit skills of competency, wherein the high demand for English proficiency is key to success in participating in the global market.

Theories of Language Acquisition

With English fluency established as key for students' success in a globalized economy (Bohn, 2003; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013), attention is turned toward theories of

language acquisition. Fenner and Kuhlman (2012) asserted the implementation of the appropriate instructional model should include teachers' awareness of language acquisition. In consideration of aligning the appropriate instructional model with the goals, educational leaders should consider assessing students' motivation and performance (Gomez & Jimenez-Silva, 2010). The theories of learning a foreign language are replete with the effects of internal factors and external factors as possible influences in students' achievement of communicative competence and fluency. Rueda and Chen (2005) assessed Asian and non-Asian students' motivation to learn the Mandarin language, or Chinese as a Foreign Language in college. Rueda and Chen (2005) argued cultural factors influenced motivational constructs. Students from different ethnicities perceived target language and the purpose for acquiring a foreign language differently. The factors for learning may be similar, such as improved socioeconomic status, cultural adaptations, or improved grades. However, the purposes for the similar factors may vary according to the ethnic group.

Consideration of the study conducted by Rueda and Chen (2005) and the suggestion that motivational theories of learning may not be universally applicable is worth investigating and extending to the Brazilian educational context. Understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia may add to the discussion of the theories of motivation and students' English fluency in EFL. The analysis of theories of language acquisition and the distinction between language learning and acquisition were examined through the theoretical lens of Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the Affective Filter (1995) with an emphasis on role the of environment in learning a language.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis

Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell (1995) differentiated between the terms language *learning* and language *acquisition* when acquiring a second or foreign language. Language *acquisition* is implicit knowledge of a language and similar to acquiring skills subconsciously. The child learns a language without consciously thinking about the how the language operates. In contrast, language *learning* is explicit knowledge, or awareness, about the structure of a language. The student formally analyzes the rules and the grammar of the language.

According to Krashen (1995), the Input Hypothesis (i+1) formula reveals the students' comprehension increases when the input is interesting, relevant, and comprehensible. The i+1 equates to the learners' understanding one step beyond (+1) communicative competence. The students' speaking abilities emerges as competence builds through increased comprehension. Hence, the teachers and the environment appear to influence the students' evolving abilities to comprehend input and communicate.

The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1995) posited the environment as a crucial factor in students' development of effective language acquisition. The affective filter will either facilitate or impede students' abilities to perform in the second language. Students who sense the teacher and the environment enable errors in the second language will experience a lowered affective filter. The students will feel confident in an environment in which errors are allowed during learning.

In contrast, students who sense the teacher will not allow communicative errors will experience a raised affective filter. The students' increased anxiety will not allow

input of the new information. The activities that Krashen and Terrell (1995) suggested to create an environment that fosters a lowered affective filter are group activities, topics of interest and relevance to the students' lived experiences, and positive teacher-student rapport. The teachers are responsible for providing a friendly learning environment in which students may risk expression of ideas, opinions, and feelings as they progress through the stages of language development.

Stages of Language Development

Krashen's (1995) Natural Approach to language development constitutes an environment in which language emerges in a natural pattern or order. The three principles in the natural approach are (1) listening abilities precede oral communication, (2) language is produced in stages, and (3) learning consists of communicative goals. The goal in the natural approach is to help students learning a new language understand what is presented. This approach implies that teachers should (1) use the target language, (2) focus lessons on interesting topics to increase communication and to hold student interest, and (3) use a variety of techniques for the student to access comprehension in multiple ways. The teachers' use of a variety of activities to increase students' understanding will foster a non-threatening climate for learning and result in a lowered affective filter. The lowered affective filter enables students to receive input and to produce language without feeling threatened. Students are encouraged to achieve incremental success of learning English as they move through the stages of language development in an environment where the affective filter is lowered.

Students' language acquisition follows five stages, according to Krashen and Terrell (1995). The five levels, although not linear in development, follow a pattern for learners across language acquisition and development. Students' comprehension is

believed to precede language production skills. Krashen and Terrell (1995) identified the five stages of language development as (1) preproduction, (2) early production, (3) speech emergence, (4) intermediate fluency, and (5) advanced fluency.

The first stage, preproduction, reveals students' understanding of the spoken language reflected through single word responses. The students may also point and use sufficient body language to communicate. Lundquist and Hill (2009) noted teachers should align students' developing skills by targeting instruction with the current level and the emerging stages of language acquisition. This approach of connecting the current level of development with the next stage aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which encourages the students to perform one step beyond their current level of independent capability with the teacher's guidance. The teacher is a critical link in the environment for the students' progression toward each level and attaining fluency.

The second stage, early production, occurs with the students creating two word phrases and the use of present tense verbs. However, the students in the second stage of early production still exhibit a limited capacity to understand more complex conversations. Some children may reveal a delay in production from one until six months (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). Lundquist and Hill (2009) suggested the teacher supports increased understanding and language acquisition through the use of key words, supported by contextual prompts and pictures. The teacher should extend opportunities for students to move from the current level of abilities toward the next level.

The third stage, speech emergence, encompasses the use of students' simple sentence production with frequent grammatical and pronunciation errors (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). During the speech emergence stage, high school teachers may expect

students to respond during group work with short sentences that begin with key phrases and words, such as First there are, Next, there are, and Third, there is. The teacher's guidance with opening sentences assists students in the speech emergence stage to accompany written activities and to participate in learning (Lundquist & Hill, 2009).

The fourth stage is intermediate fluency. During the intermediate fluency stage, students reveal a solid understanding of the language and the instructional activities they engage in. Students make fewer grammatical errors and exhibit proficiency in replies to questions that require higher-level thinking. Teachers should direct students to focus on dialogue that predicts or defends a position, rather than yes-no responses (Lundquist & Hill, 2009).

The final stage in second language development is advanced fluency. At this level of language fluency students exhibit a speech pattern that resembles native fluency (Lundquist & Hill, 2009). Krashen and Terrell (1995) suggested several activities that promote active dialogue and acquisition among students occurs in a group setting. The use of affective-humanistic activities encourages students to focus on self and content (the use of language to learn something new) to stimulate conversation. Interviews, problem-solving activities, advertisements, and games also influence students' higher level thinking skills. Students at this final stage should be able to categorize topics and provide full descriptions with the use of higher-level vocabulary (Lundquist & Hill, 2009), as opposed to simple sentence production in stage three (Krashen & Terrell, 1995).

Teachers' familiarity with the five stages of language acquisition will improve instruction and enable students to increase their learning and academic achievement in learning a foreign language and obtaining fluency. Teachers' awareness and intentional

focus on the stages of language development, identified as preproduction, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency, and advanced fluency, may motivate teachers to meet students' diverse, developing linguistic abilities and stimulate higher level thinking at the appropriate stage (Lundquist & Hill, 2009). The teachers' goal in the implementation of Krashen's Natural Approach is for the students' oral fluency to emerge through communication in a natural, low-stress setting, monitored by the teacher to ensure a secure learning environment (Krashen & Terrell, 1995).

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

The role of the teacher as a fundamental link in establishing a secure environment for optimal learning opportunities (Hunter, 1993; Krashen & Terrell, 1995) is also recognized in Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1993). Bandura posited the atmosphere in the classroom is partially determined by the teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Teachers' beliefs in their capacities to effectively instruct and assist students in successful learning experiences influence the classroom environment. Teachers who believe in their instructional efficacy most likely create exceptional learning experiences for students. In contrast, teachers with a lowered instructional efficacy criticize students who do not learn quickly, and give up on students' learning. Teachers who are affected by self-doubt and a lowered self-efficacy construct classroom environments that are likely to demean students' sense of self-worth and intellectual development. The teachers' self-efficacy affects the environment and level of challenges, which also influences the students' beliefs of achievement in learning.

According to Bandura (1993), students with an elevated self-efficacy conceptualize successful mental images that guide and support high performance. In contrast, students who doubt their abilities to perform well visualize failure and exhibit self-doubt. Students

who lack a high efficacy may dwell on what may go wrong. In addition, children who exhibit a high self-efficacy may initiate a difficult task and spend more time on the task, enjoy more difficult challenges, and demonstrate higher levels of concentration to complete a task. High self-efficacy appears to play an important role in students' abilities to achieve academic success. In consideration of Bandura's (1993) assertions of self-efficacy and learning, Arslan (2012) noted students in elementary school should be taught about self-efficacy, the sources of establishing personal beliefs in strengths and capacities, and how self-efficacy facilitates future learning and achievements.

The connections between the teachers' role in creating a favorable learning environment (Hunter, 1993; Krashen & Terrell, 1995) and the students' beliefs in abilities to achieve challenging learning tasks successfully align with the teachers' diagnoses of teaching abilities (Bandura, 1993). The effects of teachers' and students' perceptions of self-efficacy attribute to students' abilities to learn successfully or experience setbacks. The teachers' perceptions of personal abilities to challenge the students appropriately and the students' perceptions of personal abilities to perform and control their own successes supported the assertion of the teachers' roles in stimulating a low-stress environment for learning (Krashen & Terrell, 1995).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Pedagogy in Brazil

Conroy (2012) and Stewart (2010) noted disconnects among teacher preparation programs, effective instructional methods, and students' academic achievement in South America, especially in Brazil. Educational leaders' concern for improving the quality of education and instruction resulted in an attempt to align student performance with incentive pay in 2007. According to Vegas (2007), educational leaders in Brazil initiated a reform in 2007 called Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education

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and Teacher Appreciation (FUNDEF). The FUNDEF program was an attempt to increase incentives for teacher and student performance in Brazil, especially in less advanced states in the Northeast. The reform was introduced when Brazilian legislation increased requirements for teachers to have a minimum of a secondary degree in education.

The reality of the qualifications of the teachers currently active in Brazilian schools was examined in an exploratory study of teachers in the Northeastern states of Brazil. MEC (2007) found 68% of teachers in the public system have a basic college degree. Teachers who completed only primary education represented 0.8%, mostly concentrated in rural schools. The minimum training allowed by law to teach kindergarten to fourth grade is completion of elementary to high school, or fundamental to intermediate school. The teachers who did not obtain a college degree, or lay teachers, play a role in Brazil's developing education system in kindergarten to fourth grade, in efforts to increase requirements for teaching in the public school system. Brazilian educational leaders and teachers in public and private institutions would benefit from consideration of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence student performance.

Consistent with the findings of MEC (2007) and Vegas (2007) and the need to improve the education system in developing countries, such as Brazil, consideration of current pedagogical models applied in the foreign language classroom would benefit educational leaders, teachers, students, and policy makers in Brazil, where English is necessary for students' to pass middle school and high school exit examinations (Peluso, Savalli, Cúri, Gorenstein, & Andrade, 2010). The increase of qualified teachers in the FUNDEF program appears to align with improved student performance (Vegas, 2007),

consistent with the need to improve teacher preparation programs, effective instructional methods, and students' academic achievement (Conroy, 2012). Brazilian teachers' limited training in foreign language pedagogical methods (Bohn, 2003; Borba, 2009; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008) reinforced the importance of conducting this case study to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency to construct a foundational understanding of language development in a foreign language.

Gaps in the Literature

The current review of literature of the factors that may contribute to students' fluency in English and other foreign languages revealed effective practices in instruction require teachers to understand the appropriate stages of language development in a second language for effective instruction (Borba, 2009; Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012). The literature revealed a shortage of qualified teachers to teach a foreign language in Brazil, and the struggle for teachers to become prepared for the globalization that requires teaching students new skills for participation in a global economy (Christian, Pufahl, & Rhodes, 2005; Met, 2004, Sobrinho, 2006). The emergence of Brazil as one of the powerful developing BRICS countries (Borker, 2012; Carnoy, Loyalka, Androushchak, & Proudnikova, 2012; Dietrich, Moja, & Pazich, 2014) exposed how educational leaders in Brazil must remain abreast current pedagogical methods to realign the curriculum to address the students' need to learn to speak another language, such as English and to become active participants in a globalized society (Bohn, 2003; Lima & Brown, 2007). Brazilian students' low ranking of 46th from 54 countries worldwide on the PISA Education First/English Proficiency Index (2012) indicated a misalignment may exist among the recent curricular parameters set in 1996 (Naves & Vigna, 2008) and the

current student achievement in English fluency skills (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). Further, literature revealed how bilingual, multilingual abilities serve as strategic tools to leverage students' learning and academic achievements (Lam & Rosario-Ramos, 2009), and the contemporary challenges English language learners face in attaining English fluency for participation in the global marketplace (Christian, Pufahl, & Rhodes, 2005; Lima & Brown, 2007; Met, 2004).

Koru and Akesson (2011), Lima and Brown (2007), and Met (2004) argued English serves as the international language of communication among speakers who do not share a similar language. Corcoran's (2011) study and Friedrich's (2002) study of Argentine and Brazilian professionals' perspectives on improved professional status was contributed to English fluency evidenced awareness of social mobility obtained through English fluency. The results of Brazilian students' low English proficiency ranking 46th among 54 nations worldwide (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012) added to the specific problem facing Brazilian students, a lack of English fluency. The current research literature was inadequate concerning Brazilian students' fluency in a foreign language and the ecological factors that influence Brazilian students' English acquisition (Bohn, 2003).

The gap in the literature exists of the parents' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' learning English. The lack of current research available on the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence students' disposition to learn English in the Brazilian classroom creates additional issues for educational leaders in Goiânia, Brazil, to consider for students to achieve high fluency skills in a foreign language for participation in the global marketplace. Although Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2002) examined

parental involvement in middle-to-lower income Brazilian children's educational experiences in the basic public school system, the research did not add scholarship to the area of students' development of a foreign language.

Through this holistic single-case study, a new facet was explored of the influencing child, the family, and the school interactions that Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2000) did not investigate at the basic public school level of the Brazilian educational system. The proposition of this holistic single-case study was that when the positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the child is more likely to achieve English fluency or competency. Identifying and understanding the influences on Brazilian students' English fluency adds scholarship to the current research of Brazilian students' fluency in EFL and the possible ecological factors that contribute to the development of English fluency in the private school sector.

Tensions in the Literature

The review of literature for this holistic single-case study evidenced the concerns that Brazilian students struggle to obtain English fluency, a skill identified as advantageous to entering the local and the global marketplace (Bohn, 2003; Lam & Rosario-Ramos, 2009; Lima & Brown, 2007). Despite the revised curricular reform to include English as a priority for students' foreign language studies (MEC, 2007), the Brazilian students' performance was low compared to their peers of other BRICS countries (EF/EPI Index, 2012). Conroy (2012) and Stewart (2010) affirmed the misalignment of the curricular goals for Brazilian students' learning English and the realities evidenced in the PISA Education First/English Proficiency Index (2012) that Brazilian students ranked lowest among the students from the BRICS countries, and 46th

from 54 countries worldwide (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). The disparity between educational leaders' intentions for improved educational conditions and the social realities Brazilian students in the public and the private schools experience reflect a discrepancy between goals and the students' performance in education.

The studies by Christian, Pufahl, and Rhodes, (2005), El-Dash and Busnardo (2001), and Lima and Brown (2005) demonstrated that students' English fluency elevates opportunities for career mobility in the marketplace. The apparent disconnect between curricular intentions for Brazilian students' competency in a foreign language and the disparate realities that performance is lacking, evidenced a tension in the literature. Brazilian educators' examination of the issues associated with English fluency, and why some students gain fluency and others do not would add to the scholarship of pedagogy in English as a Foreign Language.

To address the opposition of low English fluency, educators must understand how effective educators and the families advance students' development in English fluency. The conceptual framework that underpinned this study evidenced parents and teachers as the primary resources for a child to comprehend how the world functions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bandura (1993) ascertained the teacher's self-efficacy of abilities to motivate and to effectively instruct the child to learn is pivotal to a child's successful learning. Krashen and Terrell (1985) echoed Bandura's belief that the teacher is crucial to successful student learning by identifying the teacher as an external link in a child's learning.

Consideration of the literature on effective learning environments, Conroy (2012), and El Kadri and Gimenez (2013) ascertained that Brazilian teachers lack competency and knowledge of the stages of language acquisition and effective instructional technique.

Teachers must be versed in the appropriate stages of language development to initiate assistance for students' success in a foreign language (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). The evidence in the research connects the teacher as a crucial link in the learning process. Further, the contrary evidence that Brazilian teachers operate in an educational system defined as a hands-off system (Conroy, 2012) and lack competency in knowledge of the stages of language acquisition creates concern for educational leaders, curriculum developers, and Brazilian students and their families.

The concern that Brazilian students lack marketable skills to compete in the global marketplace (Marcondes, 2013) added to the assertion that a revelatory case to identify and to understand the Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school system in Goiânia would advance scholarship in pedagogical practice of a foreign language. The studies by Benetti and Roopnarine (2006) and Bhering (2000) evidenced the level of parent interaction in the child's education in the public school environment. The holistic single-case study was an effective design to examine the unit of analysis and the factors that influence the Brazilian students' high English fluency, and how the Brazilian educators served as a link in the environment to advance the Brazilian students' high fluency for success. Although the Ministry of Education (MEC) in Brazil updated the guidelines for Foreign Language instruction in 1996 (Brasil, 1998), MEC allows teachers liberties to organize the curriculum according to the needs of the current school population (Conroy, 2012; MEC, 2007). The hands-off accountability systems allow Brazilian teachers autonomy to build a yearly curricular plan to address students' needs (Conroy, 2012). However, Naves and Vigna (2008) asserted knowledge of effective instructional techniques for English fluency is a challenge for teachers and educational leaders in the Brazilian context.

Conclusion

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 highlighted the influence of the political

dominance of the military regime (Bohn, 2003), the diverse Brazilian population, and

how the lack of infrastructure in education to meet students' diverse needs in the

classroom has affected the implementation of foreign language in the national curriculum

in Brazil. Of the limited research studies discovered on the educational system in Brazil,

the researchers highlighted Brazil's emergence as a powerful country of the burgeoning

BRICS countries (Borker, 2012; Carnoy, Loyalka, Androushchak, & Proudnikova, 2012;

Schrooten, 2011), and Brazilian students ranking lowest among the other BRICS

countries (EF/English Proficiency Index, 2012). The economic progress in Brazilian

society revealed the need for educational leaders to address the skills students must

possess to participate as competent, global citizens. Lima and Brown (2007) noted

speaking another language, specifically English as a Foreign Language, is an important

skill for global citizens to possess. Consistent with Lima and Brown (2007) and the

importance of students' fluency in a foreign language to participate as competent global

citizens, knowledge gained from this holistic single-case study of the child, the family,

and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency is beneficial

to educational leaders in Goiânia, Brazil. Educational leaders will bolster knowledge of

effective pedagogical methods in foreign language instruction and improve teacher

preparation to increase students' academic achievement in English fluency cited as an

important skill for global citizens (Borker, 2012; Lima & Brown, 2007).

Significance of Research Findings

The significance of the research findings in Chapter 2 resonated the need for

educational leaders in Brazil to address effective instructional practices to improve

Brazilian students' English fluency. The worldwide EF/English Proficiency Index (2012) revealed Brazilian students' ranked 46th compared to other students in 54 countries. Among the emerging BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries, Brazil ranked lowest. Consistent with the research findings that educators in developing countries, such as Brazil, lack adequate preparation and knowledge of the stages of development in foreign language pedagogy (Conroy, 2012; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; MEC, 2007), the research findings reinforced the need to examine a case evidenced with Brazilian students' high English fluency, the current instructional practices, and the influencing ecological factors. The limited teacher training and the paucity of current studies regarding English learners' fluency skills in Brazilian classrooms indicated a need for further examination of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence middle school students' fluency of English.

The general methodology of the research studies of English learners' fluency skills revealed quantitative studies of university students' attitudes toward learning a foreign language (El-Dash & Busnardo, 2001) and the influence of Brazilian students' first language on second language acquisition in secondary private education (Keys, 2002; Mello, 2004) dominated the little research accessed. The lack of qualitative research regarding the investigation of the social phenomenon, external and internal influences that contribute to the child's development of English fluency, evidenced the need for educational leaders and policy makers in the EFL fields to add to existing scholarship in Brazilian education. Therefore, a holistic single-case study on the perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English language acquisition skills was consistent with Yin's (2009) and Merriam's (2002) assertions of an in-depth examination of a social

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phenomenon through a case study design. The holistic single-case study yielded an increased awareness of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, expanding teachers' fundamental knowledge of the diverse domains of a language system (Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012), crucial for effective instruction and students' successful learning achievement in English fluency.

Summary

In Chapter 2, an overview of the Brazilian educational system, public and private, the contemporary culture, and the challenges Brazilians encounter in becoming English fluent compared to students in other BRICS countries, Russia, India, China, and South Africa indicated a need to examine the possible child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to students' acquisition in a foreign language. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory as related to learning and human development revealed the importance of examining the ecological systems that interact with learners and influence learning achievement. The literature revealed parents' and teachers' relationships to the child affect the child's developing abilities in English acquisition fluency (Bandura, 1993; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Other topics examined were the stages of language development, the culture of Brazil, the role of culture in learning a foreign language, teacher preparation, and the role of efficacy in students' learning and academic achievement.

Chapter 3 of this qualitative case study will examine the appropriate methods for gathering narrative data on parents' and teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence student's acquisition of English fluency for Brazilian students. A qualitative research method was appropriate for examining the

factors that influence students' English fluency. A qualitative method allowed an emic view of Brazilian parents' and teachers' perceptions of the internal and external factors that influence students' learning English and becoming active, future participants in the global marketplace.

Chapter Three

Method

The general research problem for this study was based on the evidence of

Brazilian students' low ranking on the EF/English Proficiency Index (2012), and losing

out on opportunities in the national and international marketplace because of Brazilians'

lack of English proficiency (Bohn, 2003; Borker, 2012; Friedrich, 2002; Naves & Vigna,

2008). The lack of English proficiency created challenges for educators to align effective

instructional methods for students' success with communication in English (Cook, Boals,

& Lundberg, 2011; Lee, 2012). The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to

identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence

the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The importance of this study lay

in identifying the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence middle

school students' English fluency and why some students outperform others in English

fluency. The research data may increase local educational leaders', policy makers', and

educators' understanding of the influencing factors for Brazilian students to develop

English fluency. Hence, local stakeholders may use this information to identify effective

instructional strategies that best support students' learning English.

In Chapter 3, a detailed discussion of the research method, the research design,

and the rationale for the selected research method and design are included. The study

population, data collection procedures, and instrumentation are described. The

procedures employed for the data analyses and the alignment of the focus with the

purpose of the study and the research questions in this holistic single-case study, to

ensure reliability, validity, credibility, and dependability, are explained. Qualitative

reliability concerns of trustworthiness, transferability, and research biases are addressed in Chapter 3.

Research Method

Merriam (2002) and Stake (2010) asserted qualitative studies are conducted in natural settings, wherein the researcher focuses on the phenomenon studied in-depth. In qualitative studies, the researcher is the central instrument of making sense of the natural setting, or world, that is studied. Stake (2010) cited qualitative researchers collect nonnumerical data that consist of statements made during interviews, written records, or from observed behavior. In contrast, quantitative researchers collect numerical data to answer a research question, or to identify a cause and effect relationship (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010). According to Stake (2010), qualitative researchers attempt to construct a social reality of cultural meaning, rather than measure objective facts as quantitative researchers attempt to ascertain with numerical results. Qualitative researchers focus on a small, purposive population and attempt to fuse data and theory. In other words, qualitative researchers attempt to discover variables rather than control variables as quantitative researchers.

In contrast to qualitative researchers who initiate the study with a specific topic, or inductively, Stake (2010) affirmed quantitative researchers work in a deductive manner; the researchers begin with a general topic and narrow down to a specific research question. Generally, a hypothesis is developed that requires the researchers to measure factors and remain distanced from the field of study. Quantitative researchers generally take a linear path and tend to emphasize objectivity, represented in variables that measure concepts or take on multiple values. Central to quantitative design is writing a hypothesis to test for validity. The goal of quantitative research is to create

predictions, to confirm the predictions, and to test the hypothesis, or hypotheses, for confirmation (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010).

The quantitative research method was not advantageous for this research. The intended goal for this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the possible child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' high English fluency. The intent was not to quantify the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' high English fluency, but to create a descriptive investigation of the factors reliant on rich detail. The most appropriate method for eliciting descriptive details of the factors that influence English fluency for this study was the qualitative method. The qualitative method enabled the researcher to investigate the participants' descriptive, multifarious perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to English fluency. A quantitative method allows for tables and statistics to lead the researcher in validating the hypotheses, rather than allow the researcher to explore ideas and themes to create meaning and interpretations from the rich data (Merriam, 2002; Tellis, 1997).

The qualitative research method was the most appropriate method for identifying and understanding the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' fluency of English. The distinction between the general research question and the four sub-questions used to initiate the study were open-ended, as opposed to narrow-ended questions that are measured in numbers in quantitative research (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010). The research questions were written to align with the purpose of the study, which was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The four research sub-questions

were distinguished by exploring the teachers' perceptions of external influences in RSQ1, and the parents' perceptions in RSQ2. The teachers' perceptions of the internal influences were explored in RSQ3, and the parents' perceptions of internal influences in RSQ4. The participants' perceptions were the focus of the interview questions for data collection to investigate the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. As a result of the intent to gain rich, revelatory data (Merriam, 2002) that evidence the child, the family, and the school factors that influence the development of Brazilian students' fluency in English, the qualitative research method was more appropriate than the quantitative research method for this study.

Research Design Appropriateness

Of the various types of qualitative designs, biography, case study, ethnography, phenomenology, and grounded theory that were considered (Shank & Villella, 2004), the case study design was considered the most appropriate design for this qualitative study. Concentrating on a single program is relevant for examining a contemporary phenomenon identified as unique, experimental, or highly successful (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). Case studies are detailed descriptions of one situation or multiple cases that are selected for uniqueness or high success (Merriam, 2002; Stake 2006). Multiple cases may be compared and contrasted to reach results of describing a phenomenon in depth (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2006; Tellis, 2010; Yin, 2009).

The case study design was identified as the most appropriate type of design for identifying and understanding the unit of analysis, the influences of high English fluency in a private school in Goiânia. The case study design facilitated exploration of the general research question that guided the study and the four research sub-questions of

identifying the *"what"* of phenomena regarding the familial and school factors that contribute to English fluency. Through the case study design, the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to the students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia were explored.

Distinguishing among other types of qualitative research designs, to ensure design appropriateness for identifying and understanding the factors that contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency entailed examining grounded theory, phenomenology, and ethnography. In grounded theory, the goal is to inductively build a theory resulting from research in an environment and requires, for example, a sample of various types of organizations and other types of work (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2002). The grounded theory design is appropriate for collecting and analyzing data in a cyclical manner. A theory is grounded in, or aligned with, the participants' words or the data. The theory presents concepts derived from comparative data (Charmaz, 2006). The grounded theory design was not considered advantageous because the purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, rather than ground a substantive theory of language acquisition in the participants' words.

In addition to consideration of the grounded theory design, the phenomenological design was considered for identifying the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. Phenomenological research is an attempt to understand and to describe participants' primary experiences of a phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). The phenomenological design requires seeking primary experiences that deal with participants' inner feelings that have not previously been sought in everyday living (Merriam, 2002). The participants' inner experiences with English fluency were not

explored, but the perceived child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to students' English fluency were sought. Although Merriam (2002) asserted phenomenology underpins all qualitative research because conceptions of experiences and understanding are evident, the use of diverse techniques differentiates each design from the other. Phenomenology was not an appropriate design for identifying and understanding parents' and teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that possibly influence students' high English fluency in the private school system in Goiânia. In this study, the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence seventh and eighth grade students' English fluency were identified, not the parent participants' and the teacher participants' personal inner experiences of learning English. Participants' primary experiences with learning English were not sought, thus eliminating the phenomenological design as optimal for this study.

The third design considered for researching the factors that contribute to Brazilian students' English fluency was ethnography. Ethnographic researchers explore the culture of a group of people, or a shared system of a group of people, in the natural environment to give the participants' voice (Merriam, 2002). Merriam (2002) noted misunderstandings about ethnography arise because the term is used interchangeably with other qualitative terminology, such as fieldwork and participant observation. However, ethnography is not determined by data collection, but by the lens through which data are examined and interpreted. The ethnographic design was not appropriate for identifying the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' high English fluency in one private school setting in Goiânia. A sociocultural interpretation of the culture and practices of a shared group in a natural setting (Merriam, 2002) was not

the aim of this study. Further, the students were not observed in the school setting or a natural environment. The ethnographic design was also eliminated.

Congruent with the research questions of seeking parents' and teachers' perceptions of the factors that affect Brazilian students' English fluency, the grounded theory design, the phenomenological design, and the ethnographic design were considered unsuitable designs. The focus was not to ground a theory in the participants' words, evident in a grounded theory design. The intent was not to seek parent and teacher participants' primary experiences with English fluency, central to phenomenological designs. Finally, the intent was not to observe students with high English fluency in the school environment or a natural setting, crucial in ethnographic research designs. The case study design was distinguished as the most appropriate design to identify and to understand the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to Brazilian students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

According to Bell, DiStefano, and Morgan (2010), quantitative researchers should provide transparent detail of specific variables and precision on how they measured the variables. Transparency of the variables, measurement, and hypotheses enables future researchers to replicate the study and generalize to a larger population, which is crucial in quantitative research. Flyvbjerg (2006) affirmed misunderstandings exist with case-study research about replication and generalizability, wherein replication and generalizability are possible if the one case was selected strategically to represent the phenomenon. Similar to quantitative researchers' quest to replicate or generalize to the larger population (Bell et al., 2010), Flyvbjerg (2006) asserted replication and generalizability

as feasible with case-studies when the case or cases are selected carefully to represent the phenomenon under study.

In contrast to Bell, DiStefano, and Morgan (2010) and Flyvbjerg (2006), Merriam (2002) argued that generalizability to a larger population in case studies is difficult, because human behavior is not replicable. Merriam (1995) noted sampling within a school system might include various parts (teachers, students, administrators), wherein the sample could extend to the larger group within the unit of analysis. The results of a case study are unique to a particular group, point, and time.

The case for this study was selected strategically to represent the phenomenon and the purpose of the study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). However, in consideration of the foundational resource, Merriam (2002), the intent was to identify revelatory data of the Brazilian students' high English fluency. Consistent with Merriam (2002), replication of the participants' perceptions of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency was not the goal of this case study. Although Flyvbjerg (2006) considered generalizability feasible with a single-case, generalizability to a larger population was not the goal of this holistic single-case study. The child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia were sought. The child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to English fluency were not measured, but contextualized to descriptive data of perceived ecological influences, unique to the case of high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

The aim of this holistic single-case study was not to quantify variables or to replicate human behavior. The aim of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian

students' English fluency; a focus on a contemporary phenomenon, the external and internal influences that contribute to the Brazilian students' development of high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Tellis, 1997) was explored. The results of this holistic single-case study were unique to a particular group, point, and time period (Merriam, 2002), eliminating replication of human behavior (Bell, DiStefano, & Morgan, 2010). The most appropriate design for this study was a case study design that allowed identification and analysis of data to reflect the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in a private school in Goiânia.

Inappropriateness of Multiple Case and Embedded Research Designs

Yin (2009) classified the single-case and the multiple-case as the primary designs. A single-case study may be classified as holistic or embedded. A multiple-case study design may be a holistic or an embedded design. A single-case holistic study includes a single case with one unit of analysis. A holistic case study is an examination of the global nature of a person, a program, or an entity (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2009). Hull (2013) examined religious leaders' influence on multicultural appreciation of one entity, XYZ church. The holistic single-case design was effective for Hull (2013) to examine church members' development of multicultural appreciation. Members from XYZ church shared a geographical location and the contemporary phenomenon of one case. A single-case embedded study is the appropriate design for examining more than one unit of analysis, as the primary focus of the study. When subunits of an investigation are included in the study, an embedded case study is the correct design (Tellis, 1996; Yin, 2009).

In this study of high English fluency in a private school entity, one unit of analysis was identified, the external and internal factors that influence the child's

development of English fluency. An embedded single-case study was not appropriate for

identifying and understanding one unit of analysis, the influences on high English

fluency. The participants of this study were parents whose children exhibited high

English fluency and shared a geographical location. The embedded design was not

optimal for answering the research questions. The optimal design for identifying and

understanding the factors that influence Brazilian students' English language fluency was

the single-case design with one unit of analysis.

A multiple-case embedded design involves more than one unit of analysis with

attention given to subunits. A multiple-case embedded design encompasses examining

multiple cases and various subunits. A holistic embedded design may be about one

program or entity but include data about multiple units such as various projects funded

through sponsors. A holistic embedded case study design would be appropriate for

collecting data about the multiple projects of one program (Yin, 2009). A multiple-case

embedded design would be appropriate for examining multiple cases or entities in a

different geographical location. Multiple case studies allow replication (Trellis, 1997).

A multiple-case embedded design and a holistic embedded design did not add to

answering the research questions for this study of one private school and the parents' and

the teachers' perceptions of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency.

The holistic single-case design was identified as the most effective design for addressing

the research questions.

Research Questions

The type of question written for research is key to conducting a qualitative study.

The structure of a problem moves from general to specific. The specific question for

research is written as the purpose statement, addressing a gap in knowledge of a topic

(Merriam, 2002). The research question is the compass location that enables the researcher to focus through to completion of the study (Stake, 2006). Of the case study designs, Yin (2009) cited exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive as a type of case study. Yin (2009) cited the use of *how* and *why* questions to capture participants' insights in a case study. However, the use of *what* questions may also be used in case studies. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggested qualitative research questions are broad to allow the researcher to explore issues or problems, yet the question should set particular parameters to enable focus. Designing the research question appropriately sets the parameters of the research and the methods implemented for data gathering and data analysis.

Consistent with the assertions of Corbin and Strauss (2008), Merriam (2002), and Yin (2009) on crafting qualitative research questions, the primary research question for this study was framed around a central, open-ended question to allow the researcher to identify and to understand the influences that act within and on the students in the private school in the state of Goiás, in Brazil, to acquire English fluency. The use of questions beginning with "*what*" framed the research questions for this holistic single-case study. As suggested by Merriam (2002), the four research sub-questions were written to set the parameters for data gathering and data analysis. The four research sub-questions were framed to align with the purpose of identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency as the child interacts with the environment. The general research question (GRQ) and the four research sub-questions (RSQs) that guided this holistic single-case study were the following:

General Research Question (GRQ): What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 1 (RSQ1): What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 2 (RSQ2): What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 3 (RSQ3): What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 4 (RSQ4): What are the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Population

The population for this holistic single-case study consisted of one private, middle school in the city of Goiânia, in the state of Goías, in Brazil, located in an affluent neighborhood. The participants consisted of parents whose children study at the middle school, Escola Interamérica (Appendix A), and whose children experience high English fluency in the seventh and eighth grade EFL classroom. The principal granted permission to use the premise, to recruit subjects, and to use the name of the institution, Escola Interamérica (Appendix A). The participants also consisted of English teachers whose students met the criteria of receiving a letter B or above. The targeted study population for this study included 15 parents of the students in the seventh grade and eighth grade English class whose children exhibited an English fluency level of B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system. The seventh grade English teacher

and the eighth grade English teacher were invited to participate. Thus two English teachers participated in the study. Although the intent was to include 20 participants for this single-case study, seventeen participants were finalized as eligible participants in alignment with the criteria. The criteria for participation in this study to explore the influences on high English fluency were: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a letter B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate their child, and (3) the teacher must be willing to discuss the perceptions and be the English language instructor for the child.

Merriam (2002) stated a purposive sampling should be selected for a case study that will yield the most detail of the phenomenon under study. Specific criteria determine who will participate and the site that will be observed in a case study. Congruent with the specific criteria for participation and the site selected, the 15 parents and the two English teachers were identified as suitable for participation. Although students' literacy was the target to understand, it was decided that the most reliable information would come from the parents and the teachers of the middle school children for identifying the factors. The rationale for interviewing only parents and teachers and maintaining the students as the target aligned with Jacobs' (2004) assertion that children often learn without recognizing the process of learning or exercising metacognition. Interviews with the 15 parents and the two teachers of the middle school children provided rich revelatory details of the phenomenon and of the multiple levels of ecological influences that contribute to Brazilian students' successful English fluency.

Sampling Frame

In qualitative research, researchers use nonrandom samples, or purposive samples, to gain knowledge of a social phenomenon in a specific context (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010). Merriam (2002) argued that purposive sampling should be chosen purposefully to ensure the sample yields the most detail of the phenomenon under study. The specific criteria determine who participates in the study and what site will be observed. Congruent with Merriam's (2002) assertion of selecting a purposeful sample for a case study, the sample that yielded the most effective data on the child, the family, and the school interactions that contribute to the development of high English fluency consisted of seventh and eighth grade parents whose children experience high English fluency and their respective seventh and the eighth grade English teachers in the private school in Goiânia. In consideration of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory, the conceptual framework that guided this study, the family is the primary venue for the child to learn how to live, to behave morally and ethically, to develop self-regulation, and to establish a value and belief system. The school is the secondary influence on the child's development. The family-school interactions influence the child's learning development.

Alignment of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) and Merriam's (2002) assertions with the purpose of the study yielded a purposeful sample of parents and EFL teachers as appropriate for increasing the rich data that contribute to students' high English fluency and academic achievement in the private school in Goiânia. This purposeful sample yielded five parents whose children attend the seventh grade and 10 parents whose children attend the eighth grade and two of their respective EFL teachers, elevating the number to 17 participants for this holistic single-case study.

Yin (2009) noted interviews are a crucial source of evidence in case studies. As asserted by Yin regarding interviews as an essential source of evidence, and Merriam's (2002) assertion of purposeful samples and relevant criteria for participation in a case study, the criteria for participation were identified. The participants were required to meet the following criteria for participation in the interviews for this holistic single-case study: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system for the parent to participate, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate their child, and (3) the teacher must be the English language instructor for the child.

Initially, 30 students received an informative letter about this study in their school agendas to take home for the parents to view on February 27, 2014. Of the 30 students, six parents signed and returned the consent forms for participation. The principal and the owners of the school decided to send an electronic letter to all parents whose children study in the seventh and the eighth grade class with a March 17, 2014 deadline for participation. After receiving nine more letters, the pedagogue and the principal conferred with the English teachers to verify the students who met the criterion of holding a letter B or higher for their parents' participation in the study. Of the nine students, eight met the criterion of holding a letter B or higher. One student was excluded based on purposeful sampling necessary for conducting a case study of a particular social phenomenon of a particular place and time (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009). A second mother was excluded from the sample after the initial interviews were concluded and the date for her interview was changed two times. She requested to have the interview at her home. Yin (2009) asserted interviews are an essential source of case study evidence, and home visits are effective when aligned with the case study purpose.

To maintain regularity in data collection procedures, all 17 primary interviews and 17 member checking interviews were initiated at Escola Interamérica, in a neutral environment, as outlined in the participant consent form (Appendix B). Therefore, the parent participant who requested an interview in her home was excluded to maintain regularity in the interviewing process. One parent stopped in the office during an interview and asked the secretary to be included in the study. Her name was presented to the English teachers to verify that her child met the criterion of holding a letter B or higher. The parent was included in the sample, which brought the total of parent participants to fifteen. Of the 15 parents, five of the parent participants' children attended the seventh grade and 10 of the parent participants' children attended the eighth grade. Thirteen of the parents were female participants and two of the parents were male participants. Both English teachers were female participants.

After the principal, pedagogues, and the English teachers verified the parents' eligibility to participate in the study, parents were called and asked to select a convenient day and time to participate in the interview. Each parent chose the day and time most suitable for the initial interview. Participants were asked if they would like to receive an electronic message reminding them of their interview day and time. Each of the 15 parent participants and the two teacher participants agreed to receive an electronic reminder of the scheduled day, time, and location of the interview.

Informed Consent

The study participants were selected by means of purposive sampling (Cutcliffe, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009) for conducting the case study. The researcher was granted access to conduct the holistic single-case study at the middle school, Escola Interamérica, in the city of Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil (Appendix A), in June 2013. The

principal and two pedagogues of the private middle school, Escola Interamérica, agreed to participate with the study by providing the appropriate environment for conducting interviews, and a list of volunteer-participants to facilitate the progression of this holistic single-case study. The 34 interviews took place in a private room, located down the hall from the front office. The secretary received a list of participants and the scheduled time of the interviews, to facilitate the order of the participants' arrival and the time allotted for each interview.

After the confirmation from the members of the Quality Review Method (QRM) on November 11, 2013, and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at University of Phoenix was received on January 27, 2014, to proceed with data collection, the principal at Escola Interamérica was informed of the IRB approval. The principal received a copy of the IRB approval for beginning data collection for this study. The principal requested that the process of sending out informative letters and selecting participants begin toward the end of February, one month into the new school year. Waiting to select participants allowed the school leaders and teachers to assist the students in adapting to their new schedules. The compulsory school year in Brazil begins on the third week of January and finishes in December.

In consideration of the principal's request, informative letters were sent home on February 27, 2014, to 30 prospective students' parents to inform them of the purpose of the study and their role in the study if they decided to participate (Appendix B). Of the 30 who received letters, only six parents returned the form and agreed to participate. The principal and pedagogues decided to send out electronic letters to each of the seventh and eighth grade students' parents, to increase parents' awareness of the study. The electronic invitation yielded a total of 15 eligible parent participants. Stake (2010) noted

the right of the participant to receive a consent form with descriptions of what participation will involve, the terms of the activities, and the duration of the involvement in the study. The parents and teachers who agreed to participate returned the consent forms to the secretary at the school. In alignment with Stake (2010), the proposed letter to participants (Appendix B) outlined the following procedures for the study: (1) the significance of the study to educational leadership and learning; (2) the purpose of the study; (3) the voluntary nature of the participation; (4) the minimal daily living risks associated with the study; (5) the confidentiality and the participant anonymity; (6) how the initial interview would be recorded and transcribed; and (7) details of the second interview, involving member checking of interpretations, to ensure accuracy and sensitivity to participants' perceptions have been maintained (Cutcliffe, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010).

Before each interview began, the participant was set at ease with introductory informalities. Each participant received an informative packet that contained the following documents in the Portuguese language: (1) the consent form, (2) the interview protocol dialogue, (3) a list of the interview questions, and (4) an optional demographic questionnaire to complete. After the participant received the packet, the content of the consent form was discussed in length, in conjunction with the procedure of the interview and the member check interview, the confidentiality procedures, the alphanumeric coding procedure, and the right to withdraw electronically or via telephone without penalty. Each participant received a signed copy of the informed consent form to take home and store for future reference.

The intended sample size prior to receiving approval of the study was 20 participants, identified as a feasible number for maintaining the focus in a single-case

study (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009). Of the sample size identified as appropriate for a

single-case study by Merriam (2002) and Yin (2009), the intent was that approximately

80-100 participants of the parents, whose children study in the seventh and the eighth

grade, would volunteer to participate. From the parent and the teachers who volunteered

to participate, fifteen participants were selected in alignment with the criteria and the

purpose of the study. A total of 15 participants were parents of the seventh and eighth

grade students and two participants were the respective EFL teachers. The 17

participants were informed of the importance of participation in the study to further

research in the area of educational leadership and instruction in students' learning English

as a Foreign Language. Participants understood the potential to further knowledge in the

area of language acquisition and the benefits to their child's study of English and fluency

in English (Appendix B). According to Yin (2009), a sample size within the case study

design depends on the unit of analysis or the definition of the case. The one unit of

analysis in this case study was defined as the external and internal influences that

contribute to the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The sample size of

this study, seventeen participants, was effective for a holistic single-case study with one

unit of analysis. The purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child,

the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian

students' English fluency.

Confidentiality

The 15 parent participants and the two English teacher participants were informed

of their rights to volunteer their perceptions of the child, the family, and the school

interactions that contribute to students' development of English fluency (Appendix B).

Each participant understood the rights to inform the researcher of the desire to participate

or to discontinue with the study at any time, electronically or via telephone, without penalty. Each participant was informed of the benefits to EFL education; added knowledge to education, learning and instruction, in English language fluency. Each participant was informed of the confidentiality of responses to the study in the informed consent document (Appendix B).

The participants' names were coded with an alphanumeric identifier code to ensure anonymity throughout the study. For each student whose parent agreed to participate, the parent was coded as PS 1, PS 2, and PS 3. To align the student with the appropriate teacher during the study, the student was coded as S1 and the teacher was coded as TS 1 (Teacher of Student 1). Due to the limited number of seventh and eighth grade teachers at Escola Interamérica, two teachers participated in this study. The seventh grade teacher was assigned the alphanumeric code T 1 (Teacher 1). The eighth grade teacher was assigned the alphanumeric code T 2 (Teacher 2). The parent of S1 received the alphanumeric code of PS 1 (Parent of Student 1). This method of coding ensured anonymity of answers and reinforced participants' confidentiality.

Yin (2009) defined the method for analyzing qualitative data as a continuous process until the data begin to yield commonalities and evolving categories. During the coding of themes derived from the data, anonymity of participants and the discussion and analyses of the data remained general and free of biases. Dominant themes, or nodes, were derived through the NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta (QSR International, 2014). Member checking was the primary strategy implemented to ensure interpretations of the interviewee's responses were recorded and interpreted accurately (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007). In consideration of Carlson (2010) and Curtin and Fossey (2007), member checking was conducted after all data were collected from all participants in the

initial interview and transcribed. The member checking initiated on April 14, 2014, to

ensure accuracy and sensitivity to the participants' interpretations had been maintained

and the interpretations were free of researcher biases (Cutcliffe, 2000; Merriam, 2002;

Stake, 2010). Member checking was completed on April 30, 2014.

The confidentiality of the list of study participants, the corresponding

alphanumeric codes, and the recordings of the initial interview and the member checking

interview were stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office. The researcher is

the only individual who has access to the locked file cabinet. Written data recorded in

research memos were stored securely in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office.

The electronic files that pertain to this research project are accessible with a code, known

only by the researcher. All data will remain confidential and stored with an appropriate

access code, accessible only by the researcher. After 3 to 5 years, the data will be

destroyed, shredded, and disposed of for no further evidence of the participants' words.

Geographical Location

This holistic single-case study was conducted in Brazil. Brazil is the largest of

the South American countries and 10 other countries border Brazil. The official language

in the countries that border Brazil is Spanish. Despite the Spanish-speaking neighbors

(Venezuela, Uruguay, Suriname, Peru, Paraguay, French Guiana, Colombia, Bolivia, and

Argentina), Brazil has maintained Portuguese as the dominant language. Brazil gained

independence from Portugal in 1822. The official language in Brazil is Portuguese

(Central Intelligence Agency, 2011).

Brazil is divided into five geographic regions. The geographical regions are

identified as the North, the Northeast, the Central West, the Southwest, and the South.

The specific site selected for this study was in the Central West region of Brazil. This

holistic single-case study was conducted in the state of Goiás, in the city of Goiânia. The

state of Goiás is the official site of Brazil's national capital, Brasília. Goiânia is the

capital of the state of Goiás (Brazil, 2013).

Data Collection

Merriam (2002), Stake (2010), Tellis (1994), and Yin (2009) noted that data

collection for qualitative studies is field-based and flexible, and may change during the

course of the research. Although observations, videotapes, and historical records amplify

data collection, interviews play a key role in case studies (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) stated

the data collection process should include multiple sources of evidence to allow the

development of converging lines of inquiry to triangulate. The multiple sources may

include open-ended interviews, focus interviews, structured and semi-structured

interviews, surveys, home observations, review of documents, and field notes (memos).

The data collection process for this holistic single-case study occurred during a

two month's time period. Data collection initiated with the panelists' review study of the

instrumentation on March 10, 2014, and the data collection was finalized on May 5,

2014. Additional data collection involved collecting narrative data from a purposeful

sample of 17 participants, appropriate for conducting a holistic single-case study

(Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). The data collection process included reliance

on principle data collection sources as cited in Yin (2009). The process included the use

of multiple sources of evidence, a case study database to organize and collect data, and a

chain of evidence to allow the researcher to follow the derivation of evidence from

beginning to the conclusions (Yin, 2009).

Multiple Sources of Evidence

Congruent with Yin (2009), multiple sources of evidence for the data collection process included a permission to use the premise (Appendix A), a panel of experts' study, an interview protocol to increase reliability (Appendix D), seventeen open-ended interviews conducted face-to-face, a recording of each interview (Appendix B), and 17 member checking interviews (Appendix B) of the raw data and themes derived from interpretations during the interview (Appendix E). A document review of the teachers' lesson plans, written tests, and the national curricular guidelines from MEC (Ministry of Brazilian Education) were included in the unit of analysis, to triangulate congruency between the interview statements made by the EFL participating teachers and the instructional intent outlined in the documents. Document review included analysis of the parent participants' attendance to an introductory school year meeting in February 2014 and the parent participants' attendance to parent-teacher conferences in April 2014. Stake (2010) asserted the three main forms to include in the data collection process to serve the purpose of triangulation are interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking is key to seeking accuracy of interpretations of the participants' statements yielded during the open-ended interviews and for eliminating any possible insensitivity toward interpretations (Curtin & Fossey, 2007; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

In alignment with Curtin and Fossey (2007), Stake (2010), and Yin (2009), interviews, observations, and review of documents were incorporated to increase the rigor and quality of the data collected in this holistic single-case study. The connection between the review of the teachers' documents (lesson plans and tests) to the purpose of the study was to triangulate the teachers' perceptions of the child, the home, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency

reflected in lesson plans with their replies to the interview questions and the nuances observed during the interviews. Parents' perceptions of the child, the home, and the school interactions that influence English fluency were triangulated with the teachers' observations and perceptions of the factors that influence each student's English competency. Thus, triangulating perceptions reinforced the quality and rigor of the data collected in relation to the purpose of the study, the general question, and the four research sub-questions (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010).

After University of Phoenix Quality Review Methods (QRM) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) granted consent on January 27, 2014, to proceed with the research, the educational leaders at Escola Interamérica, in Goiânia, received a copy of the IRB approval to initiate the data collection process. The educational leaders at Escola Interamérica provided a list of the seventh and the eighth grade students who exhibit high English fluency equivalent to a letter B or above according to the English teachers' grading scale. The criteria for the purposive sample for participating in this study ensured alignment with the purpose of the study, the research questions, and that the data received from the participants yielded rich descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 2002).

Each student's parent or guardian eligible for participation in the study received an electronic, informative letter with an explanation of this single-case study, and a form to complete for those interested in participating and contributing to research about English language acquisition (Appendix B). The parents, who expressed interest, returned the completed consent form to the secretary of the school where the study took place. The participants were purposefully selected in alignment with the criteria for participation and the purpose of the research (Yin, 2009). Each interested participant

received a call and chose a convenient day and time for the first interview. The interview

was scheduled according to each participant's availability to attend. Parents and EFL

teachers interested in participating with this single-case study received an informative

packet regarding the study upon arrival for the first interview. The contents of the

information packet included an informed consent (Appendix B), a confidentiality form

(Appendix C), the interview protocol dialogue (Appendix D), a list of the interview

questions (Appendix E), and an optional demographic questionnaire (Appendix F). After

the participant received the packet, the content of the consent form was discussed,

addressing each section. In addition, the member checking interview (Appendix B), the

confidentiality procedures (Appendix C), the alphanumeric coding procedure (Appendix

C), and the right to withdraw electronically or via telephone without penalty were

clarified verbally prior to beginning the interview.

Yin (2009) differentiated between selecting candidates for a single-case study and

a multiple case study. A multiple case study requires screening the number of candidates

in two stages, thus reducing the number of eligible participants to 20-30. In contrast, Yin

(2009) asserted, "if doing a single-case study, choose the case that is likely, all other

things being equal, to yield the best data" (p. 91). Consistent with Yin (2009), the site for

this single-case study was selected for the high rate of English fluency. Concentrating on

one unit of analysis in a holistic single-case study (Merriam, 2002; Yin 2009), influences

on high English fluency in the private school, allowed identification and understanding of

the positive didactic interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students'

English fluency. After the initial screening of participants who returned consent forms,

parents were selected to participate in alignment with the criteria for eligibility. The

number of parent and teacher participants was reduced to seventeen, an appropriate

number for holistic single-case studies with a focus on one unit of analysis (Yin, 2009).

The data collection was intended to initiate with a pilot study, to ensure clarity of

the research questions and alignment to the purpose of the study (Appendix E). Stake

(2006; 2010) noted a pilot study group does not need to be large, but those participating

in the pilot study should be similar in background, such as teachers who comprehend the

process of language acquisition or parents whose child exhibits high English fluency.

The pilot group should understand clearly the content so the data will fit into the analyses

of the quality of the questions. The pilot study group for this study was intended to

consist of five participants (four parents and one teacher) from the private school system.

However, the educational leaders at the private school system where the study took place

expressed concern about the number of available teachers to participate in the field study.

The eighth grade teacher who had agreed to participate had been dismissed, and the new

eighth grade teacher was not familiar with the students. Therefore, one seventh grade

teacher and one eighth grade teacher was eligible to participate in the study, which

eliminated additional teacher candidates from the seventh and eighth grade list, available

for participation in a pilot study.

After a conference with the committee chairperson at University of Phoenix, an

alternative decision was taken to seek expert advice from a panel of experts. Stake

(2006) asserted that panels serve the purpose of triangulation. Panels may be small,

formal or informal. An expert panel should include persons with special experience or

viewpoints of the topic under study. Further, the panelists may hold diverse perceptions

of a study instrument, but the various perceptions must be presented.

In consideration of the foundational reference Stake (2006) on case studies and the benefits of conducting a panel of experts' study, a panel of experts replaced the pilot study group. Three experts in the area of English Language Acquisition and Instruction were asked to participate on the panel of experts, to validate the study instrument in alignment with the purpose of the study and the research questions (Stake, 2006). Each panelist was invited via electronic mail to participate with the review of the instrument. All three panelists agreed to serve on the panel and review the study instrument for this single-case study on the factors that influence Brazilian students' English language acquisition. Each panelist reviewed (1) the interview protocol dialogue, (2) the 15 interview questions for the parents, (3) the 10 interview questions for the teachers, (4) the purpose of the study, and (5) the research questions. The study information form was sent to each panelist electronically on March 10, 2014.

All three panelists returned feedback by March 18, 2014. Feedback from each panelist was considered and the appropriate changes were made to the interview questions, to align appropriately with the purpose of the study and the research questions. The results of expertise from the panelists confirmed that nine of the 10 interview questions for the teachers were appropriately aligned with the study purpose and research questions. One question was eliminated, in consideration of R3's suggestion that the question may be inappropriate. Reviewers suggested that the 15 questions for the parent participants might need modifying to align with the study purpose and the research questions.

In consideration of the reviewers' analyses of the research questions, the purpose of the research, and the interview questions, redundant questions and inappropriate questions were eliminated. The research instrument was revised, reducing the interview

questions from 15 questions to 10 questions. Rabina (2013) asserted that a panel of experts is an effective measure for assuring the research instrument will yield the quantity of answers expected to study the phenomenon, and to ascertain the quantity of answers yielded through the interview questions will address the research questions and the purpose. The panelists' feedback was beneficial during the exploratory phase to ascertain how valid and reliable the instrument would be for the purpose of the study (Ginsburg, 2012).

The panel of experts comprised three individuals, chosen for expertise and professional experience (Stake, 2006) in language acquisition and instruction with English learners. One professor and one high school teacher of ESL from the United States, and one Brazilian professor from a university in Goiânia, Brazil, served as the reviewers for the panel of experts. Each reviewer was identified with alphanumeric identifiers. The alphanumeric identifiers (R 1) referred to Reviewer 1, (R 2) referred to Reviewer 2, and (R 3) referred to Reviewer 3.

The revised interview questions were open-ended interview questions, distributed to the 15 parents and the two teachers, evoking an emic view of parents' and teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' high English fluency. Stake (2010) differentiated between open-ended interviews and semi-structured interviews. Stake (2010) stated each interview type serves a function in qualitative research. The semi-structured interviews are pertinent when collecting numerical aggregated information from many people. Semi-structured interview questions should be asked in an identical format in an effort to seek repetition and to calculate categorical responses in numerical form. However, semi-structured interview questions also increase the validity and reduce biases (Stake, 2010).

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In contrast to semi-structured questions, open-ended interviews yield questions of a topical nature with more probing. The researcher may use open-ended questions during an interview when seeking unique information from the participant and finding out about "the thing" that the researcher was unable to observe (Stake, 2010). Yin (2009) affirmed interviews as the central source of case study evidence. For this study, the questions were written in an identical format to increase the validity and to reduce researcher biases. The questions were semi-structured and open-ended in nature to obtain unique information about the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school in Goiânia.

Instrumentation

Yin (2009) suggested unstructured interviews are the most data dense interviews. Stake (2010) identified semi-structured interviews as relevant for collecting numerical aggregate information of responses from many participants, whereas open-ended interviews yield questions that serve as a topical platform for probing conversation. Open-ended interview questions enable researchers to seek unique information from participants and to discover "the thing" under observation in the study. Charmaz (2006) suggested interview probes are valuable instruments and allow direction for the participants to focus on the phenomenon under study. Thus question probes that initiate the interview questions with *could you elaborate further, how, tell me about* will provoke rich data and direct the participants to elaborate.

Blum and Muirhead (2005) and Stake (2010) noted interview questions should be tested prior to the study, to review understandability and clarity of the proposed interview questions. As Blum and Muirhead (2005) and Stake (2006) asserted the panel of experts analyzed the research instrument; the teachers' interview questions and the parents'

interview questions. The reviewers evaluated alignment of the interview questions for the parents and for the teachers, to allow for future modifications prior to the initial study. After an evaluation of the clarity of the questions and alignment to the purpose of the study, the reviewers agreed that the instrument for evaluating the teachers was aligned with the purpose of the study and the research questions. The reviewers' expertise on language acquisition revealed that the researcher should reconsider modifying the interview questions for parents. The reviewers made recommendations, which resulted in modifications to the interview instrument. Prior to initiating the study with the parent and the teacher participants, modifications were made to ensure clarity and understandability of the revised instrument.

The modified interview probes (Appendix F) were implemented to initiate the single-case study with the parent and the teacher volunteers at the private school system in Goiânia. The aim was to confirm the interview instrument probes were designed to evoke descriptive responses from participants to investigate the phenomenon of the study and to remain within the parameters of the study questions. The interview probes were implemented to elicit data rich responses and to increase identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency.   The interview probes aligned with the suggestions by Blum and Muirhead (2005), Charmaz (2006), Stake (2006, 2010), and Yin (2009).

The protocol that was followed for writing the interview questions was to align with the focus of the purpose of the study and the general research question (GRQ) and the four research sub-questions (RSQs), as recommended in foundational sources on qualitative research, Merriam (2002), and specifically on case studies, Stake (2006, 2010) and Yin (2009). Merriam (2002) further asserted the research questions are key to

conducting a case study. Stake (2006) noted the researcher maintains focus of the study with the research question, which serves as a compass point. The purpose of this holistic single-case study design was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency.

Congruent with the purpose of identifying the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, the general question was set within the problem statement of the study, and why it is important to the study, moving into the specific questions (Merriam, 2002). The general research question and the four research sub-questions that guided this holistic single-case study were as follows:

General Research Question (GRQ): What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 1 (RSQ1): What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 2 (RSQ2): What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

Research Sub-Question 3 (RSQ3): What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Research Sub-Question 4 (RSQ4): What are the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Distinction among the general research question, the research sub-questions, and the interview questions were written to align with foundational resources Merriam (2002) and Stake (2006, 2010). The 9 interview questions for the parents, the eight interview questions for the teachers and a final closing question for each group were open-ended probes that allowed participants to explore the factors that may influence the development of the students' English fluency (Stake, 2006, 2010). The questions were not written in a semi-structured format to yield a numerical calculation of responses, leading to high English fluency. The questions were worded and elicited to participants in the identical format to increase the reliability of the instrument and to minimize the errors and researcher biases during interviews (Yin, 2009). The purpose was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The most effective questions for understanding the influences on students' high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, the unit of analysis, were the open-ended, topical questions to yield detailed conversation (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010).

The Panel of Experts' Study

The initial plan prior to conducting the study was to select a pilot test group of five participants (one teacher and four parents) to review the clarity and understandability of the interview probes (Appendix E), and to ensure in-depth descriptive data would result from participants' answering the questions. The feedback from the pilot test group would be used to modify and to approve the research interview probes (Appendix F) and the interview process. However, due to the low number of teacher participants for the single-case study, an alternative decision was taken to review the clarity and understandability of the interview probes with a panel of experts' study.

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Stake (2006) cited a panel of experts should be selected for expertise and experience with the topic under investigation. Congruent with Stake (2006), the reviewers were sought for expertise in the area of English Language Acquisition and Instruction and invited to serve on the panel. The reviewers served to validate the study instrument in alignment with the purpose of the study and the research questions. Each panelist was invited via electronic mail to participate with the review of the instrument. All three reviewers agreed to serve on the panel and to review the study instrument for this single-case study on the factors that influence Brazilian students' English language acquisition. The reviewers' results were not included in the study results. However, the results were included in the triangulation of the research data. The objective for conducting a panel of experts' study prior to initiating the study was to evaluate the quality of the interview questions (Blum & Muirhead, 2005; Ginsburg, 2012; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). Rabina (2013) asserted a feasible approach to determining the validity and reliability of the instrument for the purpose of the research is to seek expertise from a panel of experts. The role of the reviewers was to validate procedures, measurement instruments, or methods of analysis. The data collected from the reviewers' facilitated analysis of the validity of the interview probes, but were not incorporated in the final analysis and results of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence high English fluency in the private school. The reviewers' study results were included in the triangulation of the study data. Merriam (1995, 2002) defined validity as ensuring a true representation of the phenomenon under study is accurately interpreted and represented. The panel of experts allowed the researcher to check for validity of the instrument used to elicit conversation and data collection of the phenomenon. The panel

of experts' study results enabled modification of the open-ended topical interview questions prior to use in the case study at the private school system in Goiânia.

Validity and Reliability

The validity in qualitative research refers to an accurate or truthful account of the inferences made by the researcher, represented in the results of the study (Merriam, 1995; Yin, 2010). Tellis (1997) noted validity refers to the researcher accurately constructing the participants' interpretations of the phenomenon in the final form of the study. To increase construct validity of a case study, Yin (2009) cited the use of multiple sources of evidence and to have the key informants read the draft of interpretations from the first interview or survey questions in a second interview called member checking. Stake (2006, 2010) also affirmed member checking as a means for seeking accuracy or truthfulness. In sum, validity was achieved in this study through participants' feedback through a panel of experts, researcher reflexivity, member checking, and triangulation of multiple sources (Merriam, 1995). Triangulation implies that multiple sources of information converge to confirm themes or categories, or to cross-check and to substantiate research data with other resources (Stake, 2010; Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2009).

In this holistic single-case study, validity was achieved first by conducting a panel of experts to ensure the research instrument was aligned with the purpose of the study, the general research question, and the four sub-research questions. Second, researcher reflexivity in a journal enhanced comprehension of the phenomenon during the study to achieve internal validity. Strategies of researcher reflexivity included copious written recordings of personal biases and assumptions during the research process (Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Third, member checking was a crucial strategy implemented, which

allowed participants to review wording and interpretations of the questions elicited during the first interview and thus increased validity (Carlson, 2010).

Reliability in a case study implies the inferences are consistent and dependable (Stake, 2010). According to Yin (2009), the goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and researcher biases in a study. Shank (2006) added reliability is about consistency of perceptions of the phenomenon under study. In contrast, Merriam (1995) stated the notion of reliability in social sciences is problematic, compared to the "hard" sciences because human behavior is changeable. For example, classroom interactions and people's understanding of the surrounding environment vary day to day. Merriam (1995) noted that qualitative investigations do not yield replicable results because multiple perspectives and world views of a specific point and time are difficult to replicate in a second study. The three strategies for ensuring what Merriam (1995) called consistency, rather than reliability were the following: (1) Triangulating multiple methods of data collection, (2) Peer reviews of the emerging results and consistency with the data collected, and (3) Creating an audit trail of how the researcher reached the final report of the study (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Merriam, 2002). The key to reliability is to examine whether the consistency exists between the data that were collected and the results of the study (Merriam, 2002).

The first step implemented in this study to verify data reliability was the recordings of the interviews were transcribed to a text document. The text document was compared to align with the audio version for accuracy of the participants' words (Appendix D). If any errors existed between the recording of the interview and the text document, the written document was corrected before further use in data analysis. The second step included in data reliability was a second interview with participants, member

checking. Participants listened to the first taping of the interview and verified the wording and the accuracy of interpretations on a scripted copy during the member checking interview, which took place at the Escola Interamérica (Appendix B). Consistent with Shank (2006) and Stake (2010), an interview script protocol was initiated prior to each interview with participants (Appendix E) to ensure clarity of the questions and alignment to the purpose of the study. An interview script was implemented to add to the standardization of the interview protocol and to ensure the questions remained within the parameters of the study, thus minimizing any researcher biases (Stake, 2006).

Therefore, in consideration of the multiple strategies discussed to increase qualitative reliability concerns of trustworthiness, transferability, researcher biases, and validity of the participants' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency in the private school, multiple strategies were implemented. As Yin (2009) asserted, multiple sources of evidence allowed for convergence of inquiry, a process of triangulation. Multiple sources of evidence provided multiple measures of the phenomenon under study. The multiple sources for this holistic single-case study included an expert panel study, face-to-face interviews, tape-recordings of the interviews, transcriptions of participants' responses, member checking of the data as themes were derived, participants' feedback, researcher reflexivity in memos, review of teachers' lesson plans and tests, and a demographic questionnaire. All recordings of the 17 interviews and of the 17 member checking interviews, the transcriptions of the interviews, and researcher's memos were transported from a Sony recording device to the NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta. Carlson (2010) affirmed member checking increases the trustworthiness or credibility of a study's results. The participants were given the opportunity to verify wording, clarify,

edit, or delete from the narratives, to guarantee congruency between responses and emerging themes (Carlson, 2010). NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta software was used to analyze data obtained from the interviews and to search for themes, or nodes, and possible subnodes (QRS International, 2014). Consistent with Merriam (2002), Shank (2006), Stake (2010), and Yin (2009), the use of multiple resources in this case study ensured triangulation to confirm the reliability and validity of the concepts as they evolved during the research, and to determine the credibility and accuracy of the research findings.

Data Analysis

Yin (2009) asserted data analysis in case studies requires coding and categorization of large amounts of data. To ensure the data analysis is of highest quality, Yin (2009) stated analysis should address the most significant aspect of the case study. Of the five techniques mentioned for analysis, matching themes, building an explanation, time-series analysis, a model of logic and accuracy, and a cross-case synthesis, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software was beneficial in the codification and categorization of data collected during interviews. The NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta, a computer-assisted software, was used to allow patterns and themes to emerge from the data (QSR International, 2014).

The source of the expert review participants for this holistic single-case study was selected through specific qualifying criteria, validating purposive sampling identified as crucial for a case study (Merriam, 2002). The criteria for parents' and teachers' participation in this case study were congruent with Merriam's (2002) and Yin's (2009) assertions that relevant criteria for participation reduce the number of eligible participants to 20-30, most appropriate for a multiple case study. For a holistic single-case study

design, the appropriate number for the sample depends on the unit of analysis that most represents the phenomenon under study. Further, the case, or unit of analysis, should be chosen to ensure that sampling yields the most descriptive data of the phenomenon under study. Merriam (2002) stated that a purposive sampling requires selecting a specific sample that will yield the most detail of the phenomenon under study. Specific criteria for participation in this study determined who was interviewed and what site was observed. A foundational resource in qualitative studies, Corbin and Strauss (2008) affirmed population samples should consist of specific data sources to ensure the data evolve into interrelated concepts aligned with the purpose of the study.

In alignment with the purpose of the study, to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, the criteria for purposive sampling that most effectively yielded insights were identified (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009). The criteria for participation to examine the unit of analysis, the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, were as follows: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a B or above as measured by the teacher's grading system for the parents to participate, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate their child, and (3) the teacher must be willing to discuss perceptions and be the English language instructor for the child. The role of the parents in nurturing their children in seeking English fluency and the teachers' roles in influencing the students' English fluency added to the richness of the descriptive data collected of the phenomenon under study.

The parents' and the teachers' participation yielded rich data for an understanding of the general research question (GRQ) of this single-case study. The purpose of this

holistic single-case study design was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. Congruent with the purpose of identifying and understanding the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency, the general question was set within the parameters of the problem statement of the study, and why it was important to the study, moving into the specific questions (Merriam, 2002). The four research sub-questions were framed to align with the focus on the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. The general research question and the four research sub-questions that guided this qualitative case study yielded data from multiple resources and triangulated (converged) to allow examination of the unit of analysis in this case study. The unit of analysis in this case study was identified as the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia. The social phenomenon identified was the external and internal influences that contribute to the Brazilian students' development of English fluency.

Data from the 15 parent participants and two teacher participants were collected in open-ended interviews. The primary interviews and the member checking interviews were recorded with a recording device, a Sony IC PX333, to capture participants' responses and the nuances of the interview. The recordings were transported to the computer and downloaded to NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta and transcribed in the Portuguese language (Appendix B), to ensure accuracy of each participant's wording during the interview. Observations of initial interpretations during the interviews were also recorded in field notes (memos) for analysis (Yin, 2009) with the NVivo 10.0 software for Mac Beta (QSR International, 2014).

The process of transcribing participants' words from the recordings is pivotal in the success of the member checking interview, a strategy for triangulating research data (Stake, 2006). Carlson (2010) asserted that interview transcriptions strongly influence the member checking process. The researcher must decide on an effective format to allow participants to verify word accuracy of the interview transcriptions. Transcriptions might include (1) participants' responses verbatim, including filler words with repetitive phrases, or (2) a condensed version of responses. Further, participants should understand their role in the process of verifying accuracy in responses and interpretations during member checking. Consistent with Carlson (2010) and Stake (2010), the reflexivity of the field notes and the transcriptions of recordings increased the validity, or accuracy, of the evolving themes in this holistic single-case study.

The second step in the data analysis process involved member checking (Carlson, 2010; Stake, 2006, 2010). Each parent participant scheduled a convenient day and time to return to the school, to review the transcripts of individual replies to the 9 questions and one closing question initiated during the first interview. The two teacher participants scheduled the second interview for a day and time identified as convenient to review the accuracy of the transcripts of the eight questions and one closing question. Member checking was crucial to the data analysis process, allowing the participants to read the transcriptions of actual words, to comment on the responses, to clarify narratives, and to contribute to the accuracy of the findings (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey; 2007). Member checking was conducted from April 14, 2014 until April 30, 2014, to validate the accuracy of the interpretations of the perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency.

The procedure for the second interview followed a specific protocol to ensure standardization. Prior to initiating the member checking interview, each participant was informed of the member checking procedure (Appendix B) (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007). Participants understood that the responses were transcribed verbatim, including filler words and repetitive phrases. However, filler words and repetitive phrases were enclosed in parentheses to demonstrate that those words would be omitted in the final version. Participants understood that all of the data pertinent to the study would be translated to English. Participants were given the option to listen to the first interview to ensure accuracy while reading the transcriptions from an extra copy. All of the 15 parent participants opted to read the questions aloud and reread their responses for accuracy. Participants were instructed that words could be deleted or added to the responses at their discretion to describe perceptions of the factors that influence the students' English fluency.

As Carlson (2010), Curtin and Fossey (2007), and Stake (2010) asserted the value of member checking to reduce researcher biases and to increase truthfulness of interpretations, the participants in this holistic single-case study confirmed accuracy of the responses and interpretations of perceptions of the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. Of the two teacher participants, only T 1 asked to listen to the interview to verify responses. The 15 parent participants chose to read the questions and the scripts aloud, omitting unnecessary words or including additional words. The member checking process was crucial to ensure accuracy of interpretations with participants' responses and the researcher's interpretations were free of biases. All of the interviews were conducted and transcribed in the Portuguese language, the primary language of the 17 participants. The transcriptions were analyzed and compared to the

audio recording, to enhance accuracy of the participants' words and of the evolving themes.

The third step in the data analysis process was to create an audit trail, or a chain of evidence, to increase credibility and reliability (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) further asserted that evidence from the initial research to the conclusions of the case study includes maintaining copious notes of each step in the data collection process. An audit trail for this study included the following data collected for future reference: (1) a calendar of scheduled meetings with the principal and the pedagogues of Escola Interamérica to write an informative invitation of the study; (2) the scheduled meetings with the English teachers and pedagogues to examine the criteria for the participants to qualify for participation in the purposeful sample; (3) confirmation that all of the 17 interviews were conducted at the study site in an appropriate room, specific for this study; (4) recordings on two devices to ensure participants' responses were captured accurately; (5) 17 member checking interviews and recordings; (6) implementation of the NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta for data analysis of predominant themes to reduce researcher biases; (7) memos of nuances during the primary interviews and the member checking interviews, and (8) a document analysis of the teachers' lesson plans, tests, the curricular planning from MEC, and parents' conference attendance sheet were accessed and analyzed. The documents were included in the data analysis to triangulate data.

The data analysis process for this study involved recordings and transcriptions of the interviews, and member checking. Member checking increased the validity of the responses and the credibility of the findings in this holistic single-case study (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2010). Following the member checking with the 17 participants, the interviews, the memos, the recordings, and the

documents were downloaded to NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta. Texts were selected and coded, which yielded nodes. The nodes, or containers of themes (Hilal & Alabri, 2013), yielded emergent themes. The analytic strategies of pattern matching with NVivo allowed concepts relevant to the study to emerge of the possible child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian student's English fluency. Understanding the external and internal influences that contribute to the development of Brazilian students' English fluency could add to the evolving literature of effective instruction in EFL, to increase Brazilian students' low fluency, which places Brazilian students at a disadvantage in the future global marketplace (Bohn, 2003; Lima & Brown, 2007; Naves & Vigna, 2008).

Summary

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The unit of analysis in this case study, identified as the influences on high English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, was explored through implementation of an interview script protocol, initiated prior to each of the 17 interviews (Charmaz, 2006), observations recorded in memos of distinctions during the open-ended, face-to-face interviews (Openakker, 2006; Yin, 2009), member checking (Carlson, 2010; Curtin & Fossey, 2007), and a document analysis of teachers' lesson plans, tests, MEC curricular guidelines, and an attendance sheet of parent conferences. An understanding of the social phenomenon, external and internal influences that contribute to child's English fluency, was investigated. The NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta software (QSR International, 2014) facilitated the analysis of the emergent themes. The coding procedure of an alphanumeric identifier code for the participants' responses

allowed the interviewer to gather data, analyze the data, and to identify the emerging

concepts to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence

Brazilian students' fluency in English.

In Chapter 3, a highlight of the research method, the research design, and the

rationale for the selected research method and design were included. The criteria for

the study population and data collection procedures were described. The procedures

that were employed for the data analyses in this holistic single-case study to address

qualitative concerns of trustworthiness, transferability, research biases, reliability,

validity, and credibility were explained. Chapter 4 includes a presentation of the data

collected, the data analysis, the field study findings, and a summary of the presentation

of the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors that influence Brazilian

students' English fluency.

Chapter 4

Presentation and Analysis of the Data

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence the development of Brazilian students' fluency of English. A single-case study design was appropriate to identify and understand the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors, external and internal, that influence the development of the seventh and eighth grade students' fluency of English in a private school in Goiânia, Goías. The purpose of Chapter 4 is to present the results of the data collected from the parents and the English teachers. The data were collected through interviews, tape recordings and transcriptions of the 17 interviews, the 17 member checking interviews, a document review of the national curricular guidelines from the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), teachers' lesson plans and tests, parents' conference attendance sheets, and researcher's memos of observations during interviews. Specific themes of the factors that influence seventh and eighth grade students' English fluency were identified through the use of NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta software. The 15 parent participants and the two teacher participants engaged in two rounds of interviews; the initial interview and a second interview of member checking.

The six sections presented in Chapter 4 are the introduction, the panel of experts' study findings, the data collection, the data analysis procedures, the study findings, and the chapter summary. The data analysis software, NVivo 10 for Mac Beta, facilitated the process of data analysis of emergent themes in alignment with the purpose of the study and the research questions for this holistic single-case study. Finally, the goal of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand the positive didactic

influences, the child, the family, and the school that influence the development of the Brazilian students' English fluency.

Panel of Experts' Input

Prior to conducting the primary study, experts in the area of English Language Acquisition and Instruction were asked to participate on a panel of experts, to validate the study instrument in alignment with the purpose of the study and the research questions. A panel of experts should comprise reviewers, chosen for expertise in the topic under investigation (Stake, 2006). Consistent with Stake (2006), two university professors and one high school ESL teacher were selected and invited to participate on the panel. To serve on the panel of experts, the reviewers fit the three criteria: (1) understanding and experience with the stages of English language acquisition, (2) experience with instruction with English learners, and (3) a willingness to share expertise through analysis of the research instrument.

Each of the three reviewers received an electronic invitation with pertinent details of the study. The three reviewers agreed to review the study instrument for this single-case study on the factors that influence Brazilian students' English language acquisition. The reviewers' analyses were not included in the study results. The study instrument was improved upon the reviewers' analyses. The results of the modified study instrument were included in the triangulation of the research data. The objective for conducting a panel of experts' study prior to initiating this holistic single-case study was to evaluate the quality of the interview questions in alignment with the purpose of the study and the research questions (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

Each reviewer was asked to evaluate the 15 interview questions for parent participants and the 10 interview questions for teachers, and to mark the appropriate box

with an X. After each interview question, reviewers selected from the following choices: Appropriate, Inappropriate, Not clear, and Redundant. A space for additional suggestions was included. The reviewers analyzed 15 interview questions for parents and 10 interview questions for teachers, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. To ensure each reviewer's identity remained anonymous, each reviewer on the panel of experts was identified with alphanumeric identifiers. The alphanumeric identifiers (R 1) referred to Reviewer 1, (R 2) Reviewer 2, and (R 3) Reviewer 3.

The objective for conducting a panel of experts' study prior to initiating this holistic single-case study was to evaluate the quality of the interview questions (Blum & Muirhead, 2005; Ginsburg, 2012; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). The reviewers' analyses of the interview questions for the teachers and for the parents validated the research instrument as an effective tool for representing the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1995, 2002). The panel of experts assured the validity of the research instrument. The reviewers' insights were a valuable resource to certify that the research instrument used to elicit conversation and data collection of the phenomenon yielded accurate representation from the study participants. The panel of experts' study results enabled modification of the open-ended interview questions prior to implementation in this holistic single-case study at the private school system in Goiânia.

Table 1: *Panel of Experts' Interview Questions Before Review*

Interview Questions for Parents

1.   What activities do you take your child to participate in after school?

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2.   How often does your child participate in each activity?

3.   Which activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency?

4.   What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

5.   Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency in your home?

6.   What activities/if any/ are practiced during the break in July to maintain intellectual/social rigor (Internet/English Chat rooms, e-mail exchanges)?

7.   What external factors would you attribute to your child's interest in studying English?

8.   Do you have English books in your home? If so, how many?

9.   If so, what genre are the English books?

10.   If you travel during July and December and January vacations, do you travel abroad to English-speaking countries or remain in Brazil or Latin America?

11.   What other ways do you promote learning English in your home?

12.   Do you subscribe to English children's magazines or English channels on Television?

13.   What additional cultural activities, if any, do you take your child to, to enrich learning?

14.   What internal factors (such as motivation) would you attribute to your child's interest in studying English?

15.   Would you define your child as more internally motivated to study and learn English or more externally motivated? Explain further why.

CLOSURE: Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your child's English fluency?

Panel of Experts' Findings

The reviewers' findings of the validity of the 15 interview questions and one open-ended closing question was that the researcher should consider modifying the questions. R 2 suggested that the interview questions for the parents, the purpose of the study, and the research questions needed realignment. Reviewers 1 and 3 agreed that questions 1, 2, 7, and 8, were clear and aligned with the research study questions, the purpose, and the problem under study. However, R 1 and R 3 suggested that the researcher should consider restating question three, although they agreed the question was connected to the problem of the study. Stake (2006) asserted that review panels may be small, formal or informal. A panel should include individuals with special experience or viewpoints that pertain to the topic under study. A review panel serves to triangulate data. Stake (2006) further affirmed that it is necessary to present the reviewers' perceptions, however it is not critical to resolve the differences.

In consideration of Stake (2006), the reviewers' analyses were addressed and the interview questions for the parents were modified to align with the GRQ (General Research Question) and the four research sub-questions (RSQs). Revisions for the parents' interview questions were made.

Question 3 was revised to: Which activities do you consider more beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency?

R 3 suggested that the researcher consider questions 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13 as redundant questions. The reviewer suggested that the questions 8 and 9 could be modified into one clarifying question. Questions 10, 12, and 13 could be rewritten into two clarifying questions. In consideration of the experts' recommendations, the questions 10, 12, and 13 were rewritten into two clarifying questions.

R 3 identified question 6 as inadequate. R 3 suggested the adequacy of the remaining two questions, 14 and 15, would depend on the parents' understanding of question fourteen. Parents may not identify factors as internal or external. Therefore, the interview question 14 was rewritten as "What factors would you attribute to your child's interest in studying English?" Question 15 was eliminated, because if the parents did not identify intrinsic/extrinsic factors, then the question 15 would be invalid.

In consideration of Stake's (2006) guidelines for writing effective interview questions and seeking panelists' insights, the reviewers' evaluations and suggestions for tightening the research instrument, the 15 interview questions and one open-ended closing question were revised. The final instrument for parent participants was reduced to include 10 final interview questions. The revised research instrument was aligned with the study questions, the purpose of the study, and the problem under study.

Table 2: *Panel of Experts' Revised Interview Questions for Parents*

Revised Interview Questions for Parents

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1. What activities do you take your child to participate in after school?

2. How often does your child participate in each activity?

3. Which activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency? Explain why.

4. Do you use some type of educational technology to develop English fluency/competency in your home? If yes, how?

5. During vacation time, does your child get involved in activities that require the use of English? If yes, which activities?

6. Do you motivate reading at home, for example, with books, magazines, newspapers, toys, games or other types of recourses that contribute to

English language fluency? Explain further, why.

7. Do you provide your child with opportunities to travel to countries where English is the primary language of communication, so your child may interact and practice English?

8. What other ways do you use to promote learning English in your home?

9. What factors motivate your child's interest to learn English? Explain further.

10. **Closure:** Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your child's English fluency?

Interview Questions for Teachers

R 1 and R 2 identified the interview questions as appropriate for the teacher participants. R 3 checked question 4 as inappropriate for teachers. Consideration of R 3's analysis to question 4, the question was finally omitted. R 3 noted that teachers and parents educate their children in different environments and the demands are diverse for each. The interview questions for teacher participants should address learning activities and teachers' insights on appropriate activities. The interview questions should differentiate the two settings, the home and the school environment. The ten interview questions for parent participants were now aligned with the study research questions, the purpose of the study and the phenomenon under investigation.

Table 3: *Panel of Experts' Revised Interview Questions for Teachers*

Revised Interview Questions for Teachers

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1. What activities do you believe are more beneficial to the student obtaining success in English fluency?

2. What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

3. Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency?

4. What external factors would you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

5. What other ways do you attribute to learning English in your classroom?

6. What cultural activities, if any, do you believe contribute to enrichment of your student learning English?

7. What internal factors do you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

8. Would you define your student as more internally motivated or externally motivated to study and learn English? Explain further why?

9. **Closure:** Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your student's English fluency?

Data Collection

After the IRB approved this study, the data collection process initiated on March 10, 2014. The data collection process commenced with the panel of experts' review of the study instrument. The panel of experts' review validated the study instrument in alignment with the purpose of the study and the GRQ (General Research Question) and the four RSQs (research sub-questions). The reviewers received the informative form about the study, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the research instrument on March 10, 2014. Each reviewer returned the analysis of the study instrument by March 18, 2014. The reviewers' comments were valuable in modification of the research instrument to align with the purpose of the study, the problem of the study, and the research questions.

The multiple sources of evidence for the data collection process included a permission to use the premise (Appendix A), a panel of experts' review study, 17 open-ended interviews conducted face-to-face, a recording of each interview (Appendix B), and 17 member checking interviews (Appendix B) of the raw data and themes derived from interpretations during the interview, analysis of the dominant themes with the NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta software (Appendix E). Finally a document review of the teachers' lesson plans, written tests, and the national curricular guidelines from the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) assisted in triangulation of data for congruency between the interview statements made by the participating EFL teachers and the instructional intent outlined in the documents. Documents that added to the case study of the factors that influence Brazilian students' fluency of English were collected and analyzed to add to confirmatory evidence (Yin, 2009). The document review included analysis of parent participants' attendance to an introductory school year meeting in February 2014 and parent participants' attendance to parent-teacher conferences in April 2014. The 17 participants for the study included 15 parents and two English teachers. Of the 15 parents, thirteen were females and two were males. The two teachers were females. The data were collected during a two-month period from March 10, 2014 until May 5, 2014.

Interview Transcripts

The primary interviews and the member checking interviews were completed on April 30, 2014. The interviews were conducted in the Portuguese language. The 17 primary interviews were transcribed into Portuguese with Microsoft Word 2011 for Mac Version 14.0. All data collection and data analyses were conducted in Portuguese. The NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta software (QSR International, 2014) allowed for the data

analyses to be conducted in the participants' original wording. Maintaining participants'

original wording allowed an accurate analysis of dominant themes to emerge through the

use of the NVivo 10.0 software and to increase the validity of the data analysis (Curtin &

Fossey, 2007). The final step in the data analysis process was translating participants'

responses from the Portuguese language to the English language. Translations of the

participants' responses were completed only after member checking interviews and the

dominant themes were evidenced with NVivo 10.0 software.

The act of transcribing influences the member checking of participants'

perceptions and the researcher's interpretations. The researcher decides when portions of

information are useful or when verbatim transcriptions of filler words and repetitive

phrases are effective for the researcher (Carlson, 2010). Member checking increases the

trustworthiness of the study results when participants verify the wording and

interpretations (Stake, 2006). Congruent with Carlson (2010) and Stake (2006), the

participants for this study were versed about the member checking procedure, prior to

commencement of the second interview. Each participant received a copy of the

transcriptions from the first interview. The participants chose (1) to listen to the tape-

recorded responses to verify accuracy, or (2) to read through the questions and replies

silently or aloud. All of the 17 participants verified the accuracy of their perceptions by

reading the questions and responses aloud, and including additional details of their

perceptions or deleting information that was deemed unnecessary. At the closure of each

member check interview, participants were asked if they would like to receive an

electronic copy of the study findings. The 17 participants affirmed interest in the study

findings and included electronic addresses for notification. The participants asked to

receive information about the future presentation of the study findings at the Escola Interamérica.

Study Participants

The participants for this study included 15 parents and two teachers of English. A total number of 17 participants shared perceptions of the factors that influence the Brazilian students' development of English fluency. The participants for this study were representative of the population at Escola Interamérica. The middle school is located in an affluent neighborhood in the city of Goiânia, in the state of Goiás, Brazil. The teachers who participated in this study met the criteria of a shared willingness to discuss the perceptions of the phenomenon, and were the respective English language instructor for the child. The parents who participated in this study met the criteria of having a child whose English fluency represented a letter B or higher, and a willingness to share perceptions of the factors that influenced the child's high English fluency. The principal, the pedagogues, and the English teachers verified each parent's eligibility for participation.

Participants' maintained anonymity throughout the study with an alphanumeric alias code. For each student whose parent participated, the parent received an alphanumeric alias code PS 1 (Parent of Student 1). The parent and child received identical alphanumeric coding to ensure the student and parent pair was coded and identified correctly during the data collection and data analyses. The method of coding assured parents' anonymity and reinforced participants' confidentiality with responses to the interview questions. Of the 15 participants, five parents had children who were in the seventh grade. The seventh grade teacher answered questions regarding perceptions on the factors that influence English fluency for five seventh grade students. The remaining

10 parent participants' children were in the eighth grade. The English teacher for the eighth grade answered questions about perceptions of the factors that influence the 10 eighth grade students' English fluency.

Parent Participants

Parent participants' demographic details are represented in the chart below. Each parent participant was given a demographic questionnaire (Appendix F) to complete voluntarily. All 15/15 (100%) parents completed the demographic questionnaire of gender, age, education level, profession, and ability to speak English fluently. The average age of the parent participants was 46. The parents who agreed to participate met the selection criterion of having a child in the seventh or eighth grade whose English competency was a letter B or higher, in accordance to the English teachers' grading scale at Escola Interamérica.

Table 4: *Population Demographics-Parent Participants*

Parent Participant	Gender	Age	Level of Education	Profession	Fluency in English
PS 1	F	55	University Degree	Pharmacist	No
PS 2	F	46	Post Graduation	Real Estate Agent	No
PS 3	F	52	University Degree	Administrative Manager	Yes
PS 4	F	45	University Degree	Phonologist	No
PS 5	F	51	University Degree	Lawyer	No
PS 6	F	46	Post Graduation	Pharmacist	No

PS 7	F	41	University Degree	Cardiologist	Yes
PS 8	F	52	University Degree	Cardiologist	Yes
PS 9	F	39	University Degree	Business person	Yes
PS 10	F	49	University Degree	Business Administrator	No
PS 11	F	31	Course Specialization	English Teacher	Yes
PS 12	M	51	University Degree	Lawyer	No
PS 13	F	45	Currently working on Doctorate	Dental Surgeon	No
PS 14	F	43	Doctorate	Civil Engineer	No
PS 15	M	46	University Degree	Cardiologist	No

Teacher Participants

One English teacher for the seventh grade and one English teacher for the eighth

grade participated in this study. The two English teachers met the selection criteria of

having students whose parents were interested in participating and the child had received

a letter B or higher in English. Each teacher expressed willingness to share perceptions

of the factors that influenced students' development of the English language. The two

(100%) English teachers were females. The average age of the teachers was 32.

The teachers received alphanumeric codes to maintain anonymity during the data

collection and the data analysis of the study. The alphanumeric codes reinforced teacher

participants' confidentiality with responses to the interview questions. The seventh grade

teacher was coded as T 1 (Teacher 1). The eighth grade teacher was coded as T 2

(Teacher 2). Students were referenced with the appropriate teacher with S1 (Student 1), and the seventh grade teacher was coded as T1 S1 (Teacher 1 of Student 1). The eighth grade teacher was coded as T2 S2 (teacher 2 of student 2).

Table 5: *Population Demographics-Teacher Participants*

Teacher Participant	Gender	Age	Level of Education	Profession	Fluency in English
T 1	F	31	Post Graduation	English Teacher	Yes
T 2	F	33	University Degree-Post Graduation	English Teacher	Yes

Research Questions

A foundational resource for case studies, Stake (2006) asserted the research question serves as the compass point to secure the focus of the study. To complement Stake (2006), Merriam (2002) noted the general research question sets the parameters of the problem statement of the study, the purpose and importance of the study, therein tightening the focus of the study reflected in the specific research questions (Merriam, 2002). The GRQ (General Research Question) was: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency? The GRQ established the compass point for this holistic single-case study.

The four RSQs (research sub-questions) served for further exploration of the parents' and of the teachers' perceptions of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. Specifically, RSQ1 and RSQ2 served to further explore the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the external factors that influence development of English fluency. RSQ1 was: What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students'

fluency of English as a Foreign Language? RSQ2 was: What are the parents'

perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of

English as a Foreign Language?

       RSQ3 and RSQ4 allowed exploration of the teachers' and the parents' perceptions

of the internal factors that influence the development of Brazilian students' English

fluency. The teachers' perceptions were explored in RSQ3: What are the teachers'

perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality

traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency? The parents'

perceptions were explored through RSQ4: What are the parents' perceptions of the

child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may

influence the child's development of English fluency? The intent of this holistic single-

case study was to identify and understand the influences on high English fluency in the

private school in Goiânia, Brazil.

Table 6: *Research Questions and Aligned Interview Questions*

General Research Question (GRQ): What perceived influences act within and on the student's language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

Research Sub-Questions for Parents	Aligned Interview Questions for Parents
RSQ2: What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a foreign language?	IQ 1: What activities do you take your child to participate in after school? IQ 2: How often does your child participate in each activity? IQ 3: Which activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency? Explain why.

	IQ 4: Do you use some type of educational technology to develop English fluency/competency in your home? If yes, how?
	IQ 5: During vacation time, does your child get involved in activities that require the use of English? If yes, which activities?
	IQ 6: Do you motivate reading at home, for example, with books, magazines, newspapers, toys, games or other types of recourses that contribute to English language fluency? Explain further, why.
	IQ 7: Do you provide your child with opportunities to travel to countries where English is the primary language of communication, so your child may interact and practice English?
	IQ 8: What other ways do you use to promote learning English in your home?
RSQ4: What are the parents' perception of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?	IQ 9: What factors motivate your child's interest to learn English? Explain further.
	IQ 10 (Closure): Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your child's English fluency?

Research Sub-Questions for Teachers	Aligned Interview Questions for Teachers
RSQ1: What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?	IQ 1: What activities do you believe are more beneficial to the student obtaining success in English fluency?
	IQ 2: What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

	IQ 3: Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency?
	IQ 4: What external factors would you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?
	IQ 5: What other ways do you attribute to learning English in your classroom?
	IQ 6: What cultural activities, if any, do you believe contribute to enrichment of your student learning English?
RSQ3: What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?	IQ 7: What internal factors do you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?
	IQ 8: Would you define your student as more internally motivated or externally motivated to study and learn English? Explain further why?
	IQ 9 (Closure): Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your student's English fluency?

Study Findings

The NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta (QSR International, 2014) facilitated the data

evaluation of the emergent themes. The number of sources and the evidence of

references provided a chain of evidence of the emergent themes, which increases the

validity in this holistic single-case study (Yin, 2009). Themes were evidenced from the

data through agreement of participants' responses or near-agreement of participants'

responses, and applicability to the general research question or to the research sub-

questions. An outlier is a response that is unique or diverse from the other participants'

responses and generates the emergent themes and the minor themes. Recognition of an

outlier increases internal validity of a case study (Hull, 2013). There was no significant

outlier identified in this case study. The research sub-questions (RSQ1/RSQ3) were

aligned to the appropriate interview questions for teachers (Table 6). The research sub-

questions (RSQ2/RSQ4) were aligned to the appropriate interview questions for parents

(Table 6).

The aim was not to aggregate data into quantitative form, but to reach

understanding of the how or why the world functions as it does (Yin, 2009). Pattern

matching of participants' perceptions of the external factors and of the internal factors

that motivated students' English fluency were coded and categorized to align with the

appropriate research question. The process of data analysis and categorization of the

factors was facilitated through the use of NVivo 10.0 for Mac Beta (QSR International,

2014). Yin (2009) asserted the data analysis for case studies should (1) begin with the

small questions, (2) identify evidence of the resource to answer the question, and (3)

continue analyses until the main research question has been addressed. Consistent with

Yin (2009), a foundational resource for case studies, the analysis initiated with the

research sub-questions and finalized with the general research question.

Table 7: *Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions of the External Factors*

RSQ1/RSQ2	External Familial Factors	External School Factors
Teachers	- Parents' discourse at home - English lessons at a language school - Contact with culture and native speakers through travel	- Teachers' competency - School curriculum - Technology

Parents	• English lessons are priority • Technology use is fundamental • Parents participate in the learning experience • Parents motivate through example • Contact with culture and native speakers through travel • Parents set high standards	• Teachers motivate the learning • The method of instruction

Research Sub-Question 1 (RSQ1): What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

The Family Influence

Teachers' perceptions of the familial factors that influenced students' fluency in English as a Foreign Language were motivation from (1) parents' discourse at home, (2) additional English lessons at a language school, and (3) travel. T 1 and T 2 affirmed parents played a role in motivating students with discourse in the home or seeking out a school specialized in foreign languages. T 2, in particular, spoke of the power of parents' discourse at home as a motivational factor,

A good part of students today have discourse at home. It's like this, studying English is important. Many parents say, 'Study English. When I was your age, I did not study English. I did not have the opportunity. You have to study English because if you want to study medicine to become a doctor, you need to know

English. For any course, for a biology course, you will need English. If you are

going to travel, you will need English.'

T 1 did not speak directly about how the families played a role in discourse at

home, as T 2 spoke. T 1 spoke more of the stable financial aspect that these students

have who studied at Escola Interamérica, which allowed the students to study at a school

specialized in foreign language and to travel abroad. T 1 stated,

> As a whole, I think parents aren't so committed to the students' fluency of
>
> English. They just want them studying at an ESL school to have a better
>
> education than what is offered at regular schools, maybe because the children
>
> nowadays know more than parents (about English).

T 1's statement of parents' willingness to enroll the child in a school specialized

in foreign languages aligned with T 2's perception that parents do play a role in the

child's development of English fluency. At home, parents discuss benefits of obtaining

English fluency because parents did not have the same opportunities to study English and

to travel abroad. Parents sought out additional classes at specific language schools to

complement the English offered at the regular school.

Although T 1 stated that parents were not fully committed to the students' English

fluency, T 1 did affirm that the seventh grade parents who participated in this study were

more demanding. T 1 spoke of the parent-teacher meetings and the parents' attendance at

the recent meeting on April 12, 2014. T 1 stated,

> At the parents' meeting, S 5's, S 10's, S 11's, and S 13's mother came to talk to
>
> me about the children's performance at school. They wanted to know about their
>
> comprehension of language, the pronunciation and the participation in class, if

they speak Portuguese more than English and so on. So, as far as I can see, they are more concerned about the children's production.

T 2 spoke of parents who demonstrated interest in the child's fluency in English compared to those who do not. T 2 stated, "Parents who are aware, consider English study not just one more language in the curriculum, but also the experience itself is connected to a new way of thinking. Some parents offer education as a real gift."

Speaking of parents' offering education as a gift, the opportunity to travel abroad, as a family, was discussed by teachers. In particular, T 1 said, "These students are in a good financial situation, so they want to travel and get to know the world. And English will help a lot with this." For students to experience the English language and the culture that connects to the language, students need a financially secure environment.

T 1 also spoke of the difference in the language spoken in class by a non-native speaker compared to the English language spoken in a country where English is the primary language of communication. T 1 believed contact with the language in context benefitted students' English fluency. T 1 stated, "Students do not become fluent without having contact with the language and how it is really spoken. It (the language) will not be the same as it is spoken in the classroom." Considering the importance of interaction with culture and language to improve fluency, students will encounter new words and improve pronunciation.

> Students who remain in the classroom just studying, I think this gets in the way somewhat (of fluency). Given that we are not native speakers, we do not have such a vast vocabulary…so we are limited. We use the same vocabulary and do not try to use synonyms or to include new words (T 1).

T 1 perceived that the students who experienced language and culture through travel abroad improved English fluency. Contact with culture and the language is possible because students, whose parents participated in this study, traveled with their families to countries where English is the primary language of communication. Parents made an effort to connect their child with travel opportunities, discussed benefits of English fluency at home, and sought out language schools for extra study with a foreign language. The statements reaffirmed that the family was a factor in the child's development of English fluency.

The School Influence

The seventh grade teacher (T 1) and the eighth grade teacher (T 2) (100%) believed the school factors that influenced the students' English fluency were (1) the teachers' competency and (2) the school curriculum. T 2 shared that although MEC (the Ministry of Education and Culture) issues a national curriculum, each school has the autonomy to choose the languages that are important to the surrounding community. Annually, teachers and educational leaders at Escola Interamérica build curriculum around the community needs. The states bordered by Spanish speaking neighbors tend to emphasize the Spanish language in the curriculum over English. The students at Escola Interamérica benefit from a school curriculum with the foreign language emphasis on the English language.

A part of the curriculum that surfaced as important was the reading material. T 1 believed students advanced with English fluency because of the didactic reading books selected by teachers. T 2 spoke of reading as fundamental in advancement in English; however, T 2 spoke of the literature books adopted by the school, and curiosities discovered outside class that the students bring to discussion. T 2 responded "Reading

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(motivates), not just the books we adopt, or the other books we have, or the didactic

books, but also I ask students to bring curiosities in. The things they find outside of the

school environment sometimes do not have a connection to the content, but is part of the

English language." The teachers' flexibility with building the local curriculum around

the national curriculum added to the creativity of language instruction, ensuring the

teachers a fundamental role in the language fluency process.

With the English language emphasized by educators at Escola Interamérica,

teachers spoke of social benefits of students' speaking English fluently. T 1 and T 2

believed that students who attain English fluency have increased chances to achieve

success in any place in the world by gaining access to the competitive job market. The

local educators decided on the foreign language and sent the plan for approval to the

Secretary of Education. The decision over curriculum and the priority given to the

English language was important for the students' commitment to learning English.

T 1 stated, "I believe that English is a part of the curriculum for the student and

his future. If he does not know at least how to communicate using the basics, he will lose

work opportunities." T 2 affirmed how students advance with English fluency, stating

"Today English is politically the most important language to learn. It (English) is the

language of the world marketplace for working in any place in the world."

The statements made by T 1 and T 2 confirmed evidence of the fundamental role

the school played in the students' learning English. Teachers' belief that English is a

fundamental part of the curriculum because of the demands for entry into the future job

market surfaced in the teachers' perceptions. The primary role of the school is to build

the curriculum according to the local community needs. Parents' primary concern that

students must take extra English lessons to complement the English classes at school

validated the teachers' affirmation that students' attainment of English fluency equates to job marketability and job choice.

Teachers' competency to motivate students and perceive what works best was shared by T 2. T 2 stated,

Students who are externally motivated, the teacher will have to bring many things and start to study what type of activity will attract the student the most? Will it be listening, speaking, or a film, or a debate? This the teacher must discover through the school year. The teacher has to begin to discover. The face-to-face contact between the student and the teacher will make the difference.

T 1 also spoke of how she motivated her students to interact and perform well in English class,

What pleases the students the most is music and games. So, I frequently use games and I always call on students to participate in the front so it does not become a monologue with just the teacher talking, talking, talking. They participate more or less 50% of the time and I participate 50% of the time. The games are dynamic with pieces of paper or they have to compete between row one and two with row three, four, and five. Something like this.

Teachers' affirmed that they believed the role of the teacher to seek out students' interests was an important part of the teaching profession. The teachers' role in assisting educational leaders in building the curriculum to attend community concerns and students' needs reinforced the fundamental role teachers' played in students' development of English fluency.

Research Sub-Question 2 (RSQ2): What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language?

The Family Influence

The parents' perceptions of the familial and the school factors that contributed to Brazilian students' English fluency were evidenced in IQs 1-3. The dominant themes that emerged for the familial influences were (1) parents' setting high standards, (2) the child's enrollment in schools specialized in foreign language, (3) travel, (4) the parents' participation in activities to motivate, and (5) parents motivate through example. The parents' dedication to ensuring their child is enrolled in English classes in a school specialized in foreign language development was an essential factor.

English classes at a language school were cited as the principle activity and then other extracurricular activities were included. Parents believed that the English classes at the regular school were directed toward students' passing the proficiency entrance examination, the vestibular. Parents sought enrollment at the best English schools in Goiânia to complement the mandatory English classes at the school. Fourteen (93.33%) of the fifteen parent participants enrolled their child in extracurricular English classes. This factor evidenced the role the parents played in the development of English fluency. The perception made by PS 7 captured parents' role in the process of English language development. PS 7 stated, "If a child has a desire to learn English, but the parents do not stimulate or do not search out for a good school, or offer books, or offer trips, I believe the child will be limited in learning."

Parents' dedication to their child studying English at a language school required organizing the work schedule to realize this endeavor or hiring a driver. The school

schedule for students in Brazil is a morning or afternoon schedule (Conroy, 2012). The

majority of extracurricular activities are practiced outside of the regular school. Thus,

parents' participation was a factor in the child's accessing extracurricular English classes.

The IQ 5 and IQ 7 (Appendix D) challenged parents to consider activities

practiced during vacation to motivate English fluency. Nine (60%) of the fifteen parents

prioritized international travel to ensure contact with the language and culture. Six (40%)

of the parents sought a camp at a school specialized in English during vacation. Whether

the child's contact with the English language during vacation time was through

international travel or an English immersion camp, one hundred percent (100%) of the

parents sought out contact to motivate English fluency and to demonstrate to their child

how English fluency is crucial to future success.

Parents believed that their demands for their child to learn English were crucial

for their child to continue studying. Whether through discourse in the home, enrollment

in English classes at a language school specialized in foreign language development to

improve English fluency for career advancement, parents felt their role modeling the

importance of studying English, and prioritizing English as a part of the extracurricular

activities, influenced their child's high English fluency.

The School Influence

The parents' perceptions of the school influence yielded a dominant theme of the

language school (teachers) as a factor in the child's English fluency. Parents' shared the

perceptions that the (1) teachers motivated the learning, and (2) the method was

important to advancement in English fluency. One hundred (100%) percent of the

parents recognized the value of their child studying English at a language school to

complement the English classes at the regular school.

Although parents prioritized time in their work schedule to take the child to extracurricular English lessons, and parents were recognized as crucial for ensuring the child was enrolled and attended classes, parents shared perceptions of the teacher as instrumental for motivating the child's reading success in English literature. Parents' perceptions of the more effective method for a child's development of English fluency revealed diverse opinions.

Nine (60%) of the fifteen parents spoke about the teachers' influence on the child's English fluency. Three (20%) parents believed that the method of repetition and English-only policy were effective for the development of English fluency. PS 5 shared her perception of why her son is successful. PS 5 observed,

At the school there are two levels. On the second level, you can only speak English. Parents who want to talk to the teacher have to talk in English. If you want to discuss a problem in Portuguese, you have to schedule a special time because up there (on the second floor), you cannot speak Portuguese. This is very interesting.

The English-only policy weighed positively on the parents' choice for the child's enrollment. PS 13 spoke of the English-only policy and the method that she believed helps her daughter obtain English fluency. PS 13 shared,

The method helps a lot. The method is really good. It is a method that requires a lot of repetition. I do not know if it is correct, but it works. The students repeat a lot. They also play games, but memorization happens the whole time. The students have to speak. There are schools where the child knows how to read and write, but does not speak. Not at this school, they have a lot of activities. They have to speak.

In contrast to the three participants who spoke highly of repetition as an effective method, three (20%) parents believed that English should be taught in a natural, fun manner. PS 9 spoke of her view of how English instruction was directed toward the competitive entry examination, Vestibular, to a state funded university. PS 9 stated,

Today the culture in Brazil, until a certain age, is directed exclusively toward passing the vestibular. I view this in a negative manner because I think that English should be fun. I always say English for me is not an obligation, it has to be fun. Learning English should be something natural. I do not see this in Brazil…this is the reason why I did not put my daughter in a school in Goiânia that is very difficult…for me learning English should be something natural and it has to be pleasurable.

Two (13%) of the parents spoke of the school as a reason for their child's high English fluency, but did not mention the teacher or the method as a factor.

The parents' beliefs that the educators at the language school in Goiânia offered quality classes, despite the contrasting preference for a method that is repetitive or a method that is taught in a more natural manner, affirmed the important role the teachers' played in capturing the parents' interest. Dedicated parents prioritized time in busy, half-day schedules to take the child to the language school with the method parents' viewed as the most appropriate for enabling students' English fluency. The parents' positive perceptions of the language school and the regular school played a role in the child's advancement and success at school.

Parents' perception of the importance of the child's English fluency evoked concerns of future job mobility. Thus, the correlation was made from the parents' emphasis on extra English classes to access the competitive job market. The statement

by PS 3 encompassed the concern of the child becoming English fluent for job mobility and marketability. PS 3 stated, "Speaking English today is a basic necessity for a professional." PS 14 affirmed the necessity for her daughter to learn English for professional security. PS 14 stated, "We tell her (our daughter) that English today is a necessity. You do not choose. It is necessary. You are only able to become a good professional if you have a good level of English."

Thus, the parents perceived the role of the teacher as vital for a child's advancement in English fluency. Although the perceptions of the most effective method varied, what dominated the shared perceptions was the parents' beliefs in the success of the method and the competency of the teacher where the child sought English fluency two or three times a week. The parents' satisfaction that the child was enrolled in a quality school appeared crucial in the child's success at the language school.

Table 8: *Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions of the Internal Factors*

RSQ3/RSQ4	Internal Factors
Teachers	• Students have a natural interest in English • Students want to share knowledge with others
Parents	• Child is naturally interested • Child likes studying English

Research Sub-Question 3 (RSQ3): What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English?

Internal Motivational Factors

Teachers addressed the internal factors that motivated students in IQ 7 and IQ 8. Teachers' shared perceptions of the internal motivational factors were difficult to isolate, but those who were motivated by internal factors were students who (1) have a natural interest in English and (2) want to share knowledge with others.

T 1 and T 2 believed students today are mostly motivated by external factors. However, T 1 and T 2 shared the perceptions that the students in this study were mostly internally motivated. The external factors cultivated the students' internal drive to learn English. Teachers believed that the external interests in technology influenced those who may exhibit a natural interest in foreign languages. Students who were identified as internally motivated were those who "like English because it is a part of him. The student has something that you cannot reach, but it is there. So the motivation is internal because it comes from within" (T 2). T 2 identified two students (S 7 and S 12) as questioners. These two students were identified as internally motivated, although the mother of S 7 believed a combination of factors motivated her son's interest in English.

T 1 described students who were internally motivated as students who will complete an activity because they have a natural interest in the language. "The students in this case are interested already and they go after knowledge externally. Even if they become demotivated to do an activity because they dislike the activity, they will complete the activity and seek out other interesting activities."

Speaking of the students in this study, T 2 perceived that students who were internally motivated were those students who "participate all the time, you do not need to ask them to get involved during classes, they do it naturally; they ask questions that may have or may not have connections with your content. They see things outside of school and bring them to us."

Despite the teachers' beliefs that the majority of the students today are motivated by external factors, such as parents, Internet, social networks, and the demands of English fluency for participation in the job market, T 1 perceived the students in this study as more internally motivated to learn. T 1 stated, "All of them like English, so it is easier for them to study it and they learn easily and quickly because of this internal interest. The external interests just push them to learn more and more."

Research Sub-Question 4: What are the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Internal Motivational Factors

The parents' perceptions of whether a child was internally or externally motivated appeared difficult to isolate. Parents who believed the child was motivated internally believed the child's interest in the language was a factor. Six (40%) parents shared perceptions that internal factors motivate their child. Parents described the child who was internally motivated to learn English with the following key phrases: Since she was little, it has been her dream, he just likes English, she seeks English on her own through the social networks, she is motivated, she completes English homework alone. Parents who described the child as more internally motivated agreed that (1) the child is naturally interested and (2) likes studying English.

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PS 6 noted that she does not motivate her child to study English. PS 6 stated, "What I see is that she is interested in English. She really likes English. It comes from inside. What we do (to motivate) is watch movies in English with her. We do not have any incentive besides this." PS 13 echoed the perception of her child's natural interest in English. PS 13 shared,

> I reinforce the importance of English, that it is the most important thing. It will open many doors. She understands this. I do not need to tell her to study. She always completes her obligations in relation to English. She has good grades. At the English school she is champion or vice champion (with the reading competitions). She worries about completing her homework. She understands the importance of knowing English for her future.

Three (20%) parents described the child's interest in English as a combination of factors. The statements made by PS 7 reflected the other two participants' perceptions,

> I think that the internal factor is important because with all of this external, you may not be able to turn on the button in the child, you know? So I believe it is a mixture of the external stimulating the internal and you need both.

The parents' perceptions supported the assertion that internal factors influenced the child's interest in English, wherein the child sought out external motivators through technology, driven by the internal interest, curiosity.

The General Research Question (GRQ): What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency?

Consistent with the assertion that data analysis for a case study requires the researcher to build from the sub-questions to the general research question (Yin, 2009), the answer to GRQ brought the analysis to summation. Analysis of the four research sub-

questions evidenced the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors, internal and external, that influenced the Brazilian students' to acquire high English fluency. Teachers' perceptions of RSQ1 revealed (1) family discourse, (2) students' enrollment in a language school, and (3) contact with culture and native speakers of English are external familial factors. Teachers' believed the school factors that influenced English fluency were (1) teachers' competency, and (2) the curriculum that prepares students for the future job market. Teachers' perceptions of internal factors (RSQ3) were (1) students are naturally interested in English, and (2) the students like sharing knowledge of English with others.

Parents' perceptions of RSQ2 revealed the family factors that influenced English fluency were (1) enrollment in the language school, (2) technology, (3) parents' participation in the learning experience, (3) parents' motivate through example, (4) technology, (4) contact with culture and native speakers through travel, and (5) parents set high standards. The school factors that parents' attributed to the child's English fluency were (1) enrollment in the language school, (2) the teachers' competency, and (3) the method of instruction. Parents' perceptions of RSQ4 of the internal factors that influenced the child's interest in English were (1) the child likes English, and (2) a natural interest.

A summation of the parents' and teachers' answers to the four research sub-questions revealed the external factors that influenced a students' English fluency were (1) English lessons are priority in extracurricular activities, (2) technology use is fundamental in English fluency, (3) parents participate in the learning experience, (4) contact with culture and native speakers advances English, (5) parents set high standards,

(6) the curriculum and (7) the teachers' competency influence the child's English fluency.

The two factors identified by the parents and the teachers in this study as internal were (1) students exhibit a natural interest in English, and (2) the students like learning. The internal factors perceived by parent and teacher participants that motivated students to obtain high English fluency were cited as the child having an interest since little, just liking English, and wanting to learn. Six (40%) of the fifteen parents identified the child as motivated by internal factors. Another six (40%) of the fifteen parents described the child as motivated by external factors. The external factors identified by participants were international travel, Internet, video games, social networks, parents' setting high demands and obligating the child to study. Three (20%) of parent participants perceived neither external nor internal factors as predominant in motivating the child to obtain English fluency.

Emergent Themes

In this holistic single-case study 17 participants were interviewed to identify and understand the factors that influenced Brazilian students' fluency of the English language. Of the 17 participants, fifteen participants were parents of students in the seventh and eighth grade at a private school in Goiania, Brazil, and two participants were their respective English teachers. The use of NVivo 10.0 Mac for Beta facilitated the identification of themes. The themes were identified through analysis of interview responses, document analysis, and field memos. Key words and phrases germane to parent participants' and teacher participants' perceptions of the phenomenon under study and related to the research questions yielded seven emergent themes and one sub-theme for external influences. The seven themes for external influences were: (1) English

Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities, (2) Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency, (3) Parents Participate in the Learning Experience, (4) Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English, (5) Parents Set High Standards, (6) the Curriculum and (7) the Teachers' Competency Influence English Fluency. One sub-theme resulted: Parents Motivate Fluency through Example. The two themes for internal influences were: (1) Students are Naturally Interested in English, and (2) the Students Enjoy Learning.

Theme 1: English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities

The first interview question (IQ 1) allowed parents to consider the activities they take their child to participate in on a daily basis, and the role those activities may play in their child's development of English. Consideration of the various activities each child participated in revealed parents (1) enroll their child in English courses at a language school specialized in language development, and (2) prioritize English classes along with sports and music lessons. The rationale for initiating the interview with an open-ended question was to allow parents to consider the activities that possibly influenced their child's English competency.

Findings evidenced that 15/15 (100%) parents believed enrollment in a language course, specific for learning English, was beneficial for obtaining English fluency. Although English is a required course in the school curriculum at Escola Interamérica, 14/15 (93.33%) parents responded that they enrolled their child in English classes at a language school, specialized in English. Parents prioritized time in a busy schedule to take their child to study English, in addition to the regular English classes at school. Parents enrolled their child in music lessons and sports activities, but extracurricular English classes were evidenced as priority.

The one parent participant whose child did not study English at a language school agreed that enrollment in a language school, specific for studying English, was essential for increased language development. Currently, extracurricular English classes were not financially feasible for PS 11's child. PS 11 stated, "I would like for my son to study at a school, specific for languages, but now it is not possible. I like the English that is offered here at Interamérica. It is not as specific as a class at a specific language school, but the English (class) is quality." PS 11 believed extracurricular English classes benefitted students' excelling in English fluency.

PS 2 affirmed that her daughter studied at a school specialized in languages for the purpose of developing a complete understanding of English. "They study English outside the school. They study in a school specialized in languages….the idea is the girls will have a complete understanding of the English language" (PS 2). Although PS 2 did not speak of extracurricular English classes until IQ 4, PS 2 was included in the perception that English classes at a language school were essential for obtaining English fluency, wherein 14 of the 15 students were currently enrolled in an extracurricular English course.

The second interview question (IQ 2) of how often the child participates in each activity evoked parents' thoughts on whether the child's frequency of attending extracurricular English classes, sports' classes, or musical lessons factored into the child's high English fluency. Yin (2009) affirmed that asking good questions is about listening, and comprehending research is about questions that eventually aggregate some inquiry about the phenomenon under investigation representative of the case. Thus, the purpose of question two was to allow parents to begin analysis of the activities their child

participated in weekly, and to share perceptions of the external and internal factors that possibly influenced the child's English development.

Participants' responses to IQ 2 revealed that parents took their children to study at an English school two and three times a week. Children participated in sports and musical lessons. Only PS 2 responded that her daughter watched American TV sitcoms because she loves music. The American sitcoms were perceived as influencing PS 2's daughter's interest in the English language. PS 2 said, "They (her daughters) like to watch the American sitcoms. In my perception, cable TV contributes because they have music and the series….this makes them more interested in the language."

Consideration of the activities each child participated in after the regular school day in Brazil (IQ 1), a half day in the morning or in the afternoon (Conroy, 2012), and the frequency of participation in each activity (IQ 2), revealed that parents believed more contact with English in the language school was necessary and not optional. The rationale for this question was to allow the parent participants to delve further into consideration of which activities were most beneficial for their child's success in obtaining English fluency. IQ 1 and IQ 2 provided the foundation for IQ 3. Parents' perceptions of the activities that were most beneficial for success in their child's obtaining English fluency were evidenced in IQ 3.

Findings to IQ 3, *what activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency*, indicated that parents believed that extracurricular English classes were necessary for obtaining fluency, because the English curriculum at a language school was focused toward fluency, compared to the English offered through the regular school curriculum. Eight of the 15 (53.33%) parents affirmed that the English classes in a language school were beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency.

However, in addition to extracurricular English classes, other activities surfaced; technology surfaced in 4 of the 15 (26.66%) replies and two (13.33%) parent participants, PS 4 and PS 7, believed that all of the extracurricular activities were beneficial for developing English fluency. PS 12 (0.066%) felt that his prioritizing English as obligatory was the most beneficial for his son's high English fluency. The perceptions of which activities were perceived as most beneficial for the child attaining English fluency added to the richness of each family's beliefs.

The statement made by PS 3 reflected the benefit of studying English in a language school where English fluency extended beyond a beginner's English competency. PS 3 stated,

> The most beneficial activity is the English class that complements the English that she already has at school two times a week. Two more private English classes are beneficial because English is used for everything today, Internet and music. For everything, a person needs to know English. For any profession, knowing English is basic today.

PS 1 stated, "I put my daughter to study at a language school because it makes a person stand apart from the others. Today a person needs to be fluent in English. The language most spoken in the world really is English."

Congruent with the participants' statements of the activities that benefitted a child's English competency, PS 8 spoke of the English-only policy during class at the language school. In response to IQ 3, PS 8 stated, "The English class really (is beneficial), the English course is focused so you stay there an hour and a half just talking in English." PS 6 affirmed that the school where her daughter studied English was demanding. "There are a lot of activities to do at home, a lot of things." PS 5 added that

at her son's language school, students were allowed to speak English only. The school was very demanding. PS 5 shared about the English-only policy at the language school:

At the school there are two levels. On the second level, you can only speak English. Parents who want to talk to the teacher have to talk in English. If you want to discuss a problem in Portuguese, you have to schedule a special time because up there (on the second floor), you cannot speak Portuguese. This is very interesting.

Parents believed the students who had the opportunity to study English on a regular basis in a school specialized in languages, excelled in English fluency abilities compared to students who studied at the regular school without extra English classes. The interview questions, IQ 1, IQ 2, IQ 3, yielded near unanimity that extracurricular English classes in a language school specialized in language development was a principle factor in each child's obtaining high English fluency.

Participants' concerns that learning English at the regular school was directed toward students' learning the minimum English, a more functional English than conversational English was evidenced in parents' perceptions. PS 7 stated, "It is necessary to study English outside the school because the English (at the regular school) is limited." PS 5 noted that at the regular school, the English curriculum was very basic. "I think that it does not prepare the student for fluency, it does not prepare the student well. So the most beneficial activity would be English outside the school" (PS 5).

PS 1 voiced the same concern that speaking Portuguese during English class did not increase a students' English fluency. PS 1 added, "Last year my daughter complained that the teacher spoke more Portuguese than English. She did not speak much English because the majority of the children did not understand. So this teacher was removed."

The parents' perceptions affirmed that an extracurricular English course attended a specific level and specific learning needs, as opposed to the level of English at the regular school, directed toward the middle group. Parent participants sought English classes that elevated the child's learning challenge to obtain fluency in English.

The parents' concern that the English course at school was directed toward the middle group, an elementary level of English and toward passing the Vestibular, was evidenced in other participants' responses. PS 9 believed that the incentive to learn English should extend beyond learning for passing the entry-level college test, the Vestibular. PS 9 stated,

> I think that there should be more incentive from the school. Today the English at school is directed toward students passing the Vestibular. You need to know the minimum to pass the Vestibular. I do not think this is good.

Vestibular is the entry-level test that allows students' eligibility into a state-funded university (Peluso, Savalli, Cúri, Gorensetin, & Andrade, 2010). PS 15 noted, "I believe the normal English curriculum does not fulfill the need for fluency and the capacity to understand, it is more about curricular fulfillments and you being able to pass the vestibular. To become fluent, you need more." Therefore, parents who envisioned more than their child passing the proficiency test for the college entry-level test prioritized English lessons as a part of the extracurricular activities their child engaged in.

Two (13.33%) participants, PS 4 and PS 7, believed that all activities their child participated in were beneficial to the child's development of English fluency. PS 4 stated,

> I believe all activities are beneficial. Because if he isn't healthy, he will not be able to study English well to learn this language like the other kids. Musical

instruction with piano lessons helps develop his listening skills. And the family's willingness to participate in these activities makes a difference.

PS 7 affirmed the belief that all of the extracurricular activities had a connection to her son's developing fluency in English. PS 7 stated,

For example, he loves to play basketball, and now he likes to watch the American basketball league games. So he searches out for the basketball games on the sports' channel. And the extra English classes that is obvious, isn't it?

The parents' perceptions of the activities that were most beneficial to the development of English fluency yielded that English classes at a language school were prioritized as essential in students' developing fluency in the English language beyond a basic competency for passing the Vestibular. Eight of the 15 (53.33%) parents perceived extra English classes at a specific language school as beneficial and four (26.66%) of the participants identified technology as beneficial for development of English fluency. Two (13.33%) participants identified all of the extracurricular activities as beneficial. Only one (6.66%) parent felt that the family's pressure for the child to learn English was the most beneficial to the development of English fluency.

Theme 2: Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency

In consideration that IQ 1, IQ 2, and IQ 3 evidenced that the parents prioritized time in their busy work schedule to take their child to a specific course of English, 14/15 (93.33%) participants indicated that the parents and the schools played a fundamental role in their child's development of English fluency. All 15/15 (100%) parent participants believed learning English was essential to their child's success in the future. PS 11 affirmed the importance of her child studying English at a school specialized in languages, although currently it was not feasible to enroll him in extracurricular English

classes. However, PS 11 sought out other venues, such as the Internet, to cultivate her son's interest in the English language.

The fourth interview question evoked perceptions of the parents' role in the use of educational technology at home to develop English fluency. The purpose of the fourth interview question was to explore the family's views on the use of technology in the child's development of English fluency. Through NVivo (QSR International, 2014) 10.0, a chain of evidence regarding technology was identified in 14 sources and 37 references. In response to IQ 4, *Do you use educational technology to develop English fluency in your home. If yes, explain how,* 10/15 (66.66%) parents believed that they did not use educational technology to develop their child's English fluency, and 5/15 (33.33%) parents believed that they used educational technology. The rationale for the open-ended question of educational technology was to explore parents' perceptions of the use of technology to develop English fluency. Parents' perceptions of what encompassed educational technology were diverse, which added to the richness of participants' perceptions of the factors that influenced the development of English fluency for Brazilian students.

In consideration of the varied perceptions of technology as a medium to develop English fluency, all 15/15 (100%) parents affirmed that their children accessed technology to fulfill educational activities and to interact with other English-speaking students worldwide. The statement made by PS 7 evidenced that technology was a factor in developing English fluency and the richness of parents' perceptions of technology as an educational tool. PS 7 stated,

> I do not think that it is educational technology, but I think that it is related to the generation of today. This generation plays games and video games. If you

include this, I think video games help very much (in fluency) because they have

to listen, they have to read, they have to participate in that game. When we

download a game on the Ipad or on the Iphone, the language you have to use is

English.

PS 13 affirmed the use of technology to motivate learning and stated,

I believe video games, the computer has a lot of activities in English, like music

in English. The music channel is always playing music in English and talking in

English. They (her children) know how to sing the songs in English.

PS 8 believed that she did not use educational technology to motivate English

fluency. PS 8 said, "No. They are interested in accessing music on the Internet. They

like music a lot. I do not have anything special related to English." Although 10

(66.66%) participants believed they did not use educational technology to develop

English fluency, the responses from the five participants who stated affirmatively to the

use of educational technology spoke of video games and music on the computer as

educational technology. The parents' perceptions of what constituted educational

technology varied. However, the five participants who affirmed the use of educational

technology, the video games and music, the answers evoked by the participants resonated

the ten participants' viewpoint of the use of technology. Technology was, indeed, a

valuable learning tool.

Of the five (33.33%) parents who affirmed the use of educational technology at

home, the parents affirmed that they collaborated with their child when searching out

music or watching a film in English. PS 12 described how his passion for music

influenced his children's interests in music:

I like music. Practically, I have one room just to watch my music clips. And they

also learned, by influence or something, a lot about music. And they, whether

they want to or not, make that association. They listen to the music and translate

naturally.

Another participant shared how he searches for music with his daughter on the

Internet. PS 15 responded that he and his daughter enjoyed listening to music and

looking for films in the original language (English). PS 4 affirmed that the use of

technology to develop English fluency was a daily event in her home. She affirmed,

We use technology through the cell phone, the computer, and books that they like.

We use it everyday. In the car, I play recordings of CDs and they sing along.

They like music in English a lot.

PS 11 concurred that technology is a part of family life for motivating her child's interest

in learning, and added, "Yes, I use the Internet, video game, music, and didactic material

from school."

In contrast to the five participants who believed they used educational technology

to motivate English fluency, ten parents believed the technology used in the home did not

classify as educational technology. The parents' perceptions of what constituted

technology were diverse. The final perceptions evidenced that technology was prevalent

in the parents' and the children's daily lives, whether completing schoolwork or

accessing the Internet for seeking out music and films.

Parents spoke of children's natural interest in popular contemporary music.

Parents affirmed the use of music to motivate their child's interest in English and to

stimulate audio and oral skills on the way to extracurricular activities, such as sports,

music classes, and English classes. PS 3, PS 6, and PS 9 spoke of technology use, but

believed that the technology used in the home was not specific to education. PS 9

believed that the type of technology used in her home was not planned specifically to

motivate her daughter's English fluency. PS 9 stated, "Not voluntarily. But today the

majority of technology is in English. They access technology because all of the games,

the challenging games, and the questions have been written in English." PS 3's response

echoed that the technology used in her home was not specifically educational technology.

"We watch movies in English with subtitles in English, and we listen to a lot of American

and foreign music." PS 6 affirmed that technology was used in the home, but not

educational technology specifically. PS 6 continued,

> She (my daughter) has access to technology. Especially she likes to have contact
>
> with people outside. She communicates with people outside (Brazil). She
>
> comments that 'Mom, I am talking with someone in the United States. Mom, so
>
> and so is correcting my English in the conversation.' She really likes this. The
>
> Internet allows you to have contact with people around the world.

PS 9 believed that her daughter was influenced through technology to seek out

games and music in the English language. PS 9 stated,

> All of the video games are in English. So she has to know English to be able to
>
> play, to complete the challenges, and win and get beyond the barriers. I allow her
>
> access to these technologies so that she can develop her English.

PS 15 affirmed that his daughter loved to access music and books in English on

the Internet, in particular the Fun Fiction role playing game. PS 11 echoed technology as

a medium wherein "…he plays a lot on the Internet, and through this he ends up

developing English fluency because the majority of the games are in the English

language…so these new technologies interest him."

The theme of technology was triangulated with the teacher participants'

statements to IQ 1, *What activities do you believe are more beneficial for the student*

obtaining success in English fluency, and IQ 4, *What external factors would you attribute*

to your students' interest in studying English, which yielded affirmative influences of the

student, the home, and the school connection. Teachers believed that technology played

a pivotal role in the classroom instruction and the students' lives to develop English

fluency. T 2 stated,

> English is the language that children at this age of adolescence have contact with
>
> various places outside of the school, in music, in video games. So to know
>
> English means that you can become a part of a social group and participate in
>
> many groups.

As T 2 spoke of the importance of students' belonging to social groups through

networking, T 1 concurred that students were influenced by the social networking system,

which is conducted mostly in the English language. T 1 said, "It is important for students

to have contact with different types of language through games, movies, and music. It is

important to have contact with all types of language which they will learn through games

or Facebook." Students' contact with different styles of oral and written language

enriched students' knowledge of communication with diverse people. T 2 shared

perceptions of the benefits of a student knowing English, and added, "…a student who

dominates the English language, can communicate and travel anywhere in the world.

The student has access to places where English is spoken. He has access to the language

in that environment."

Teachers' observations that technology was a powerful motivational tool

evidenced that technology was implemented in the classroom to motivate students'

learning English. T 2 stated, "We work with educational technology, such as Edmodo, Popplet, or Padlet. The technology is not used everyday in every class, but we try to use a mix of these technologies so the student will advance." T 1's response echoed T 2's affirmation that technology played a role in the classroom at the private school, but not everyday. "I try to use technology, but it is not always possible. But I at least use music or complete an activity through an educational platform such as Edmodo. That is what we use. I try (to use technology)."

Theme 3: Parents Participate in the Learning Experience

The interview question 6 (IQ 6) allowed parent participants to consider the extent of their role in their child's English language development. IQ 6, *Do you motivate reading at home, for example, with books, magazines, newspapers, toys, games or other types of recourses that contribute to English language fluency? Explain further, why?,* revealed that parents did participate in promoting reading in their home. Whether parents prioritized time to take their children to a specific language school for studying English or to subscribe to magazines written in the English language, parents' influence in the language development process was evident through their responses.

Findings from IQ 6 revealed that 11 (73.33%) parents motivated reading in their home and four (26.66%) parents did not. Of the 11 parents who affirmed that they cultivated the habit of reading, PS 8 affirmed that she bought books in Portuguese and English. "I cultivate reading by being an example. I read magazines in English and the New York Times on my IPad." Another parent participant, PS 12 also spoke of electronic reading on a tablet and the pleasure of turning the pages when reading a book. PS 12 stated, "We read a lot. Although we have the tablets, I still like the pleasure of reading and turning the pages in a book….I expect them to do this (read). "

PS 7 believed that everyone in the family had internalized the habit of reading. PS 7 stated: Well, the habit of reading at home, he is…everyone has already internalized this. For a while now, I have realized that they are acquiring a larger interest in the English language, so I have bought books in English. Since I have noticed, I have begun to buy small books and now I have increased a little and I have noticed they are interested in this (reading).

The four parents who affirmed that they did not motivate reading English at home, however, noted that the regular school and the language school promoted reading literature in English. The school positively influenced the students' reading habits with English through the use of reading competitions. PS 5, PS 6, and PS 13 spoke of the reading competitions at the language school, which motivated their children to advance. PS 6 stated,

What books she reads, come from the school. I believe it is the only contact she has with reading English literature. The student has to check out a book from the library, read it at home. After, the student goes to the library to explain what she understood about the book. She discusses the book with this person, which helps her to develop English fluency and want to read.

The teachers' cultivating student participation with this reading competition, and the interaction between the student and the librarian assisted the students to develop an interest in reading and to improve English fluency. PS 5 noted that participation in the reading competition at the language school was voluntary. PS 5 stated, "The school recognizes students who read a lot of books with an award. He usually is in second or third place. Every semester he participates with this competition. He reads often in English and at home in Portuguese."

PS 13 concurred that the English school was where her children had more contact with reading English than at home. PS 13 spoke of her perceptions of the habit of reading in her home:

> They do not have the habit of reading, unless it is the books required by the
> English school that they have to read. I am not sure if it is two books per
> semester, but they do not have the habit of reading other literature in English

PS 9 also believed that her child read books in English because of the requirements made by the school. PS 9 stated,

> No. I do not have the habit of reading in English. We do not have access to this.
> What does come home in English is from the school. The books are mandatory
> for reading. I believe this is the only contact they have with English literature.

The parents' responses were triangulated with the teacher participants' replies to IQ 1, IQ 3, and IQ 5 (Appendix D) to verify that reading English literature was a part of the curriculum and the requirements at the school. Triangulating parents' responses with teachers' responses evidenced that teachers required students to read literature in English at school. T 2 affirmed the importance of reading in a student's development of English fluency. T 2 said,

> Daily practice, contact with the language daily makes it so that you have access to
> a large vocabulary. And with this word bank of vocabulary you learn new
> words….Without reading it is difficult to do this. For me, I believe that reading is
> fundamental for raising this linguistic ability

T 1 concurred that reading was fundamental for language development. However, T 1 isolated the didactic textbook used at school as the most beneficial tool for her students' success in obtaining English fluency. "First, I believe that the didactic

textbook we use is very important, which is complemented by interactive activities that interest students. For example, music, dynamic games, and presentations" (T 1). Teachers played a role in motivating students to read texts in English and communicated those expectations so parents ensured their child read at home. Although four of the fifteen (26.66%) parents shared perceptions that the child read books in English at home because of the school, parents did reinforce through discourse that the reading activity was completed. Parents participated in the learning experience through purchase of reading materials and subscriptions to magazines written in English, reinforcing the importance of English study for the child and the family. The role of the parents at home did empower the students to complete activities to advance in English.

Theme 3a: Parents Motivate Fluency through Example

Examination of the factors that influenced students' development of English yielded a sub-theme of parents' role modeling the importance of the English language through enrollment in English classes for career purposes or personal interest. The rationale for question eight was to develop further the participants' perceptions of how learning English was promoted inside the home compared to how English was promoted in the schools. IQ 8, *What other ways do you promote learning English in your home*, added to the theme of parents' participation in English fluency. Whether parents modeled the value by studying for career improvement or motivating conversation with their child in English, parents were active participants in the pursuit of English fluency. Parents affirmed that they modeled the important role English plays in establishing a career in the global market by studying English. Several participants conveyed the difficulty experienced when a job opportunity arose. A lack of English fluency was a barrier to advancement in the job market. PS 14 is a scientific researcher who studies

English. She pointed toward the opportunities lost for advancement or participation in a conference abroad because of low English competency. PS 14 stated,

> We tell her (our daughter) that English today is a necessity. You do not choose. It is necessary. You are only able to become a good professional if you have a good level of English…We work in the area of research with the federal government. A lot of times we are limited to go abroad (for work purposes) or go to a meeting because we are not that fluent in English.

PS 2 affirmed that she and her husband studied English for career improvement. PS 2 believed their struggle with English made a difference:

> The girls see their father and I making a great effort to learn. We are dedicated to our careers. The corporate world is very competitive and they see this. I want to begin my masters. But I experience difficulty with the English language. I have begun studying English again.

PS 3 concurred, "For everything a person needs to know English. It is a basic necessity for professionals." PS 13 also studies English to improve her English speaking abilities.

In addition to the parents' role modeling how English fluency created career mobility for professionals, parents perceived the importance of engaging in conversation in English with their child after English class or while in the car. PS 3, PS 4, PS 7, PS 8, PS 9, PS 10, PS 11, PS 12, and PS 13 spoke of conversing in English with the child to motivate interest in English. Of those nine (60%) participants who attempted conversation in English during the week, four (26.66%) participants, PS 3, PS 7, PS 9, and PS 11 identified themselves as English fluent. Although the remaining four participants who attempted conversation in English with the child, PS 4, PS 10, PS 12,

and PS 13 did not identify themselves as English fluent. However, the four participants did attempt conversation with their child on a regular basis or spoke of a member in the family, such as an uncle or aunt who attempted conversation in English with the child while visiting the home.

PS 4 admitted that her abilities to speak English were limited, however, her husband spoke English fluently. "In fact, on a certain weekend day, we sit as a family to talk about what happened during the week. They explain in their own way, using English, especially with their father because he is fluent in English" (PS 4). Despite the participant's lack of abilities to speak English, PS 4 prioritized family time to talk about the week's events with the father leading the conversation with their two children, 10 and 12 years of age.

A second participant spoke of the importance of attempting conversation with her child, although her English fluency was limited. PS 13 studied English for career advancement, which motivated her to converse with her daughter about English class. PS 13 stated,

> I also study English. I experience difficulty with speaking English, but I read in English and I read a lot. I ask my daughter, 'Let's talk English, talk to me in English.' She accepts it, but we do not go beyond small talk…but this is something I have tried to do. 'Speak English to me. Let's train, let's talk,' because I am also in the process of learning English. So interacting with her, she can teach me.

A third participant, who described himself as not English fluent, was PS 12. PS 12 spoke of allowing his child the opportunity to correct his English errors as a valuable learning tool. PS 12 shared his perception:

Sometimes we talk in English. I believe the opportunity to correct me is an interesting learning tool, because he practices not just speaking, but grammar as well…Sometimes when they have swimming lessons, I play with them and make an error and they say, 'no daddy, it is swimming not that.' I allow them the chance to correct me.

Of those participants who identified themselves as English fluent, PS 7 affirmed that she conversed with her two children while driving in the car to extracurricular activities. One son is 12 years old and the other son is 10 years old. PS 7 shared her experiences:

One thing that I have tried to do with them often is to converse in English. Sometimes we chat about daily things. Maybe the talk will last only ten minutes, but that topic was discussed and we exchanged a half a dozen phrases and later I return to the topic in English….Sometimes, I play CDs of music in English in the car. I say to them, 'let's practice, right, our listening and understanding.'

PS 9 identified her skills in English as fluent. She prioritized time in her home to speak English with her two daughters who are 12 and 8 years old. PS 9 stated,

We have a special day, 'The English Day' in truth. We start (speaking), and my youngest gets frustrated because she does not understand a lot, but we attempt to maintain conversation in English. Maybe this English day lasts one hour, two hours, but we maintain English, playing with the language. It is great because she (the oldest) responds, sometimes with difficulty, but we enjoy playing and talking in English at home.

Parent participants' responses were triangulated to the teachers' responses to IQ 7 and IQ 8 (Appendix D), which added to the sub-theme of parents' role modeling the

value of obtaining English fluency. T 1 noted that two of the students, whose parents participated in the study, were motivated to perform in English because of the mothers' influences. The mothers' persistence that the students perform well dominated the influencing factors. T 2 affirmed that parents played a fundamental role in students' desires to obtain English fluency, to complete homework, and to arrive at school prepared to learn. Students hear about the value of English fluency at home. T 2 shared her belief about the role of parents in the process of English fluency:

> A good part of the students today hear this discourse at home. Studying English is important. Many parents say, 'When I was your age, I did not study English. When I was your age I did not have this opportunity. You have to study English, if you want to study medicine. You need English for a course in biology.' So parents justify and want this sometimes more than the children.

Parents' support for their children to obtain English fluency extended beyond adults studying English for career advancement or interacting with the child to speak English with the parent who had an increased ability to speak English. Brazilian parents shared that they did prioritize time in their workday to take the child to a specific English course two and three times a week. Findings from IQ 1 and IQ 2 revealed that 14/15 (93.33%) participants took their child after school to study English in a school specialized in foreign languages. Therefore, parents participated in their child's education and performance in the development of English fluency.

Theme 4: Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English

The purpose of the fifth interview question (IQ 5) and of the seventh interview question (IQ 7) was to understand the opportunities parents provided their children to experience contact with culture and the English language beyond the classroom,

specifically during vacation time. The parents' perceptions that English fluency was essential for career advancement were evidenced through responses to IQ 8. Parents were asked about influencing factors provided inside and outside of the home. Interview question 5, *During vacation, does your child get involved in activities that require the use of English? If yes, what activities,* challenged parents to consider how activities were orchestrated during vacation time and the value placed on studying English. Interview question 7, *Do you provide your child with opportunities to travel to countries where English is the primary language of communication, so your child may interact and practice English*, allowed participants to consider the child within the community and the influencing factors that cultivate English fluency. T 1 and T 2 considered the influencing factors beyond the school and home through IQ 4 and IQ 6 (Appendix D).

Findings about the influence of the community on the students' development of English fluency evidenced that parents did travel abroad to countries where English was the dominant language. Nine (60%) parents affirmed that international travel was a part of family vacation time. Six (40%) parents stated that they did not travel to countries where English was the primary language during vacation time.

Parent participants who did prioritize international travel to countries where English was the primary language, believed contact with native speakers assisted in placing theory into practice. PS 7 spoke about the positive experiences her sons have had when traveling abroad. Each trip she had noticed tremendous progress in their English fluency skills. PS 7 stated,

It is important for them to realize the hard work, why they are studying English…Each trip I have allowed them more freedom to order food, to go shopping, to negotiate what they would like, and to help us during check-in with

the airline company. So, they notice a reason exists for us to motivate learning

English.

PS 3 also emphasized the importance of traveling abroad for her daughter to

practice speaking English, specifically to Disney World in Orlando, Florida, United

States. "It was very important for my daughter to realize the necessity to know English,

how to order food, and to understand the rides" (PS 3).

PS 4 spoke of international travel as essential for improving English fluency. The

last trip she and her family traveled to the United States was on a cruise ship where the

language of communication on the ship was English.   PS 4 shared her perception:

> English was the language inside the ship. Everything was written in English. So
>
> they (her son and daughter) communicated the entire trip in English. There were
>
> other Brazilians, and other children who did not know how to speak English so
>
> they became the interpreters during the trip for their friends.

PS 2 affirmed that international travel was essential for her daughters to perceive

the necessity of learning English. PS 2 shared her experience with traveling international

and how her daughters increased English fluency:

> So, for example, in January we traveled to the United States and it was an
>
> important trip for them (her daughters). She had the opportunity to speak a lot in
>
> English. When she returned, she jumped one level in English at her school
>
> because of the contact with the English language. In fact, this last trip was the trip
>
> where she had the greatest opportunity to develop her English…when she arrived
>
> she asked to take a proficiency test and she jumped one level, or she gained 6
>
> months in 15 days of travel.

Of the six parents who stated they did not travel internationally to countries where English was the primary language spoken, the parents affirmed that they did seek out opportunities for their child to connect to speakers of the English language within Brazil. PS 6 observed that when they traveled to the beach up North, her daughter makes an effort to interact and engage in conversation with children whose first language was English.

> When we travel just here, you meet a lot of outsiders. She likes to talk. Sometimes she will meet someone her age and she interacts and tries to find a common topic. So I see that she has this contact one time a year. She is very confident (PS 6).

PS 5 spoke of a second alternative to international travel, offered by educators at one school specialized in foreign languages, in Goiânia. Students may participate in an English immersion weekend trip to a hotel situated on a large ranch.

> I think this is essential, the contact. If the students cannot have contact with a citizen, a society where English is spoken by everyone…At my son's school there is an activity that is interesting. During the semester, they stay for three days and they are allowed to speak only English. They cannot speak in Portuguese, so this helps (with fluency) a lot (PS 5).

The option for children to interact in all-day immersion language camps offered families who opt to remain in Brazil during vacation, a viable alternative for advancing the child's English fluency.

Parents' responses were triangulated with the teachers' responses regarding travel. Teacher participants also spoke of travel as an essential factor in students' learning to

communicate in English. T 2 believed that travel to English speaking countries allowed

students to engage in cultural activities that students could not do in the classroom.

> Clearly trips are essential because a student who speaks English can travel
>
> anywhere in the world…The student has access, not just to the language, but to
>
> the cultural movement that the language has within that environment. The
>
> American English is different than the Canadian English. Each place has a unique
>
> culture (T 2).

The perceptions of T 1 also contributed to the positive learning connections

students made with the intricacies of the English language and the culture of a country

where English was the dominant language. T 1 stated,

> I believe that English is a part of the curriculum for the student and his
>
> future…students who have a stable financial situation, they want to travel, get to
>
> know the world, and knowing how to speak English will help a lot.

T 1 spoke of a cultural activity offered in the classroom to students to extend

knowledge of the connection between culture and language. T 1 noted,

> English is not spoken in just the United States as the first language, so students
>
> can include England, Canada, Australia. At the end of the semester, students will
>
> present a different country and the culture. In our culture, we believe the United
>
> States is top. This project will demand that students get to know other cultures
>
> and countries where English is spoken.

Parents and teachers affirmed travel as essential for students to interact with

speakers of the English language and the culture that emanates a particular country. The

theme of interaction with native speakers and culture surfaced as a pertinent factor in

students' developing English fluency. Nine (60%) parents asserted that travel was part of

the agenda during vacation time. Six (40%) parents affirmed that international travel was not part of the family plans during vacations. Parents who did travel perceived their children improved English fluency, and attributed contact with native speakers and culture as essential. In contrast, the parents who did not travel abroad to countries where English was the primary language, the parents sought out interactive activities, such as the English immersion trip in Goiânia, through a language school, to enhance the child's contact with English. Parents believed the English immersion camp at the language school was beneficial for their children to improve English fluency. Parents played active roles ensuring their child encountered opportunities, whether in Brazil or abroad, to attain English fluency.

Theme 5: Parents Set High Standards

The rationale for the ninth research question was to allow parent participants to further explore the factors that motivated their child's English fluency. Parents considered the home, the school, and the community elements that motivated the child's development of English fluency. IQ 9, *What factors motivate your child to study English*, was open-ended to encourage emergent data of the external influences and the internal influences.

Findings to IQ 9 evidenced that 6/15 (46.66%) parents attributed external factors to their child's high English fluency, and 6/15 (46.66%) attributed internal factors to their child's high English fluency, leaving 3/15 (20%) that perceived a mix of internal and external factors. However, 12/15 (80%) parent participants identified either external or internal factors as most prevalent in influencing their child's English fluency. Participants' perceptions were triangulated with teachers' perceptions of the factors that motivated their students whose parents participated in this study. Interview questions 7

and 8 (Appendix D) allowed teachers to reflect on factors that influenced their students in the classroom.

Among the factors that parents attributed to high English fluency, a total of six (40%) participants attributed external factors to their child's English fluency. Participants who spoke of the motivating factors such as trips, parents' obligating them to study, or the use of the computer, Internet and playing videos games described the child as more inclined toward external motivation. Of the external factors identified, three (20%) of fifteen parents believed that setting high standards, obligating the child to work hard to obtain fluency, was an essential factor (PS 5, PS 8, PS 12). Three (20%) other participants perceived traveling abroad as a motivational factor that most influenced their child (PS 4, PS 9, PS 14). A total of three (20%) parent participants (PS 1, PS 3, PS 7) believed that neither external nor internal factors weighted more on developing English fluency.

Parents' responses to IQ 9 evoked a sense of parents' playing a central role in their child's success at school. PS 8 shared her perception that her child's success could be attributed to the following:

It is her mother obligating her. We know how important it is (to speak English). English was important in my life. Many doors were opened. As a doctor, it would be impossible to read English literature. Some of the biggest advances in the medical field are in the English language.

PS 5 spoke of how she and her husband obligated her son to study English. The primary reason would be their setting the standards and the second reason would be that her son likes English. PS 14 affirmed that currently her daughter did not understand the reason to study English. PS 14 emphasized the validity English fluency had for future

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success, stating, "Her father and I always reinforce to her the importance of studying English. Later she will thank us for studying English" (PS 14).

In addition to the parents' setting high standards for their child to study the English language, three (20%) of the participants included travel as a motivational factor. PS 11 stated, "I believe that trips abroad motivate a lot. He likes to learn (English) and arrive there and feel secure. His motivation is external." PS 9 also spoke of travel. "I think that (the motivational factor) is for travel. You know you have the possibility to get to know the world through a universal language" (PS 9). PS 4 also contributed traveling as the motivating factor for her son's high English fluency. "I think the principle factor, ever since they were little, has been the contact (with the English language) through travel. They perceived the ease and the difficulties they would have being able to speak the language or not."

Theme 6: The Curriculum

The purpose of IQ 3 and IQ 4 was to identify the influences in the classroom on the students' English fluency. Teachers' responses evidenced the curriculum as a factor in the child's development of English. The teachers believed the curriculum at Escola Interamérica placed emphasis on the English language. Teachers in the Brazilian educational system assist in curriculum development.

T 2 shared insights on the process of curriculum development. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) issues a national curriculum, but educators at each school have the autonomy to prioritize the foreign languages that may be more important to the surrounding community. Teachers and educational leaders at Escola Interamérica build curriculum around the community needs. The Brazilian states bordered by Spanish speaking neighbors tend to emphasize the Spanish language in the curriculum over the

English language. States that are not surrounded by countries where Spanish is the dominant language tend to emphasize English in the curriculum.

Teachers shared perceptions of the reading material used in the classroom. T 1 believed students advance with English fluency because of the didactic reading books selected by the English teachers. T 2 spoke of reading as fundamental in advancement in English; however, T 2 spoke of the literature books adopted by the school, and curiosities discovered outside class that the students bring to discussion. T 2 responded "Reading (motivates), not just the books we adopt, or the other books we have, or the didactic books, but also I ask students to bring curiosities in. The things they find outside of the school environment sometimes do not have a connection to the content, but is part of the English language." The teachers' flexibility with building the local curriculum around the national curriculum added to the creativity of language instruction, ensuring the teachers a fundamental role in language fluency.

Teachers shared perceptions that students' learning English was part of the basic curricular learning today. T 1 and T 2 believed that students who attained English fluency have increased chances to achieve success in any place in the world by gaining access to the competitive job market. The local educators decided on the foreign language and send the plan for approval to the Secretary of Education. The decision over curriculum and the priority given to the English language was important for the students' commitment to learning English.

T 1 stated, "I believe that English is a part of the curriculum for the student and his future. If he does not know at least how to communicate using the basics, he will lose work opportunities." T 2 affirmed how students advance with English fluency, stating

"Today English is politically the most important language to learn. It (English) is the language of the world marketplace for working in any place in the world."

T 1 and T 2 perceived that the school curriculum played a fundamental role in the students' learning English. Teachers' belief that English is a fundamental part of the curriculum because of the demands for entry into the future job market surfaced in the teachers' perceptions. The primary role of the school is to build the curriculum according to the local community needs.

Theme 7: Teachers' Competency Influences English Fluency

The seventh theme that surfaced during the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency was the teachers' competency. A teacher's competency to motivate students and to perceive what activities work more effectively was shared by T 2. T 2 stated,

Students who are externally motivated, the teacher will have to bring many things and start to study what type of activity will attract the student the most? Will it be listening, speaking, or a film, or a debate? This the teacher must discover through the school year. The teacher has to begin to discover. The face-to-face contact between the student and the teacher will make the difference.

T 1 also spoke of how she motivated her students to interact and to perform well in English class. T 1 explained,

What pleases the students the most is music and games. So, I frequently use games and I always call on students to participate in the front so it does not become a monologue with just the teacher talking, talking, talking. They participate more or less 50% of the time and I participate 50% of the time. The

games are dynamic with pieces of paper or they have to compete between row one

and two with row three, four, and five. Something like this.

Teachers affirmed that they believed the role of the teacher to seek out students' interests

was an important part of the teaching profession. The teachers' roles in assisting

educational leaders in building the curriculum to attend community concerns and

students' needs reinforced the fundamental role teachers played in students' development

of English fluency.

Parents also spoke of the teachers' competency to motivate the students. PS 4's

perception encapsulated the role of the teacher and the teacher's competency in her

response to IQ 10. PS 4 shared,

Another factor, besides the other factors that I already talked about, that I

consider important is the (child's) identification with the method for English

instruction. It is important for the child to identify with the method that the

teacher uses to teach them. My worry, in relation to my children, was not being

able to speak English, not becoming fluent. Because of this, the method, the

classroom, and the teacher are important factors to my belief of effective learning.

I think the most important is the method and the teacher. It has to be (learning

English) something natural without repetition.

Theme 1: Students are Naturally Interested in English

The internal factor that surfaced during IQ 9 was students who demonstrated

English fluency were naturally interested in English.   In contrast to the external factors

cited as playing a role in the child's English fluency, six (40%) of fifteen participants

believed that internal factors motivated their child to obtain English fluency. The

participants who described the factors for the child's high English fluency used phrases

such as, "since she was little, it has been her dream, she just likes English, she seeks out English on her own, I do not have to tell her to study, she is motivated," which differentiated the participants' perceptions of the internally motivated students from the externally motivated students.

PS 6 and PS 15 spoke of their daughters liking English. PS 6 stated, "I believe this is a factor that influences her really. The fact that she likes it (English) a lot." PS 15 added, "She likes it, she is really interested. She follows the Spanish at school well too. Now she is going after French on the Internet."

A third parent spoke of the motivation to learn more about English as a factor for her daughter's success. PS 13 conveyed how she does not need to tell her daughter to study or to do her homework. PS 13 stated,

> She is very motivated. I believe that she understands that English is important for her future…I do not need to tell her to study. She completes her obligations in relation to English. She has good grades. At the English school, she is champion or vice champion (in the reading competition) and is worried about completing her homework.

Three of the fifteen (20%) participants (PS 1, PS 3, PS 7) believed isolating external factors or internal factors that contributed to their child's success of high English fluency was difficult, because the external motivated the internal drive. PS 7 spoke of her son's motivation to perform well in English as a combination of factors:

> I think that there are various small factors that we try to point out. I think this is fundamental. 'Do you see the reason why? The difficulty one experiences because he does not speak English?'….I think that external factors are the motivators that we try to turn on the little button in him…but I think that the

internal factor is important because all of this external, you may not be able to turn on the button in the child, you know? So I believe it is a mixture of external stimulating the internal and you need both.

Another participant's perceptions of factors that motivated her daughter's high English fluency were attributed to internal and external factors. PS 3 spoke of her daughter's interest in music and singing. "She enjoys taking singing lessons. It is easy for her to pronounce the words in English correctly in the music. The factors that motivate her to learn English are a mixture of internal with external."

A third participant perceived that her daughter really likes English. Initially, PS 1 stated that the greatest factor in her daughter's developing English fluency had been that she motivated her daughter to study English. She invested in her daughter studying at a language school because she would like her daughter to become an exchange student. During the member-checking interview, PS 1 affirmed that her daughter liked music. "Studying English today is an obligation. I think she is conscientious of this. My daughter is motivated by a combination of factors, external and internal" (PS 1).

The rationale behind the teachers' interview question 7 was to allow teachers to reflect on perceptions of the possible internal factors that motivated the students whose parents participated in this study. Interview question 8 tightened the focus on the motivational factors.   The teachers were asked to describe each student as internally motivated or externally motivated to study English, and explain why. The parent participants' responses were triangulated with the teachers' responses, adding to the validity of the responses (Yin, 2009).

During the first interview, T 1 defined four of the five students in the seventh grade as internally motivated. T 1 described only one student as motivated by an external

factor, the mother. Speaking of internal motivation for four of the five students, T 1 stated,

> In this case, I believe these four students are more internally motivated because they are interested and have a natural interest in the language. They search out knowledge. Even if something demotivated them to not like an activity, they will still be interested in some other activity (T 1).

However, during the member-checking interview, T 1 added to her responses to realign her perceptions of motivational factors for each student. T 1 described two of the seventh grade students as internally and externally motivated. The students (S 1, S 13) who she described as motivated by a combination of factors was more inclined toward internal motivation, but external factors motivated the internal interests of excelling in English. T 1 stated, "The child of PS 13 is a combination really, but more internal because she loves to read and listen to music. She created a web page about music, so the external influences the internal." PS 13 defined her daughter as internally motivated. The perceptions made by T 1 and PS 13 misaligned with the perceived factors that motivated PS 13's daughter. T 1 believed external factors continued to motivate the internal drive to learn English.

T 1 identified the daughter of PS 1 as motivated by internal and external factors, which aligned with the participant's analysis of her daughter. During the first interview, PS 1 shared how her daughter really liked learning English. PS 1 also believed that her persistence with her daughter to enroll and study English in a language school was the key. However, during the member-checking interview, PS 1 identified her daughter as motivated by a combination of factors. "The factors that motivate her to learn English

are a mixture of internal and external." The perceptions made by T 1 and PS 1 that S1 was motivated by a combination of factors aligned.

PS 5 identified her son as externally motivated, which corroborated with the primary perception made by T 1. PS 5 stated, "I believe that the principle factor is my husband and I demand that he studies English, and second he likes English." PS 10 identified her son as internally motivated, which aligned with the teacher's perceptions of the factors that motivated S 10 to achieve high English fluency. T 1 stated, "S 10 likes languages in general. He is internally motivated."

T 1 described only one student as externally motivated, the son of PS 11. PS 11 described her son as naturally interested in English in the first interview. However, PS 11 identified her son as externally motivated because of travel, which surfaced during the member-checking interview. Upon further reflection, PS 11 stated, "I believe that traveling motivates him a lot…He perceives the importance of speaking English for professional and for personal reasons. The motivation here is external."

The triangulation of the teacher's perceptions of the five students from the seventh grade with the parents' perceptions was invaluable. The difference among perceptions lay with only one student, PS 13. Although the teacher had initially described S 13 as internally motivated to excel in English, she modified her response during the member-checking interview. T 1 perceived that external factors, such as an interest in music and creating a web page, as influencing S 13. The mother concluded that her child was internally motivated and did not alter her responses during the member-checking interview. T 1 and four of the parent participants' (PS 5, PS 1, PS 10, PS 11) perceptions of the factors that motivated students to obtain high English fluency aligned. Only PS 13 and T 1 varied in views of the factors that motivated S 13.

Although T 1 had initially identified S 13 as internally motivated, she affirmed that external factors did play a role, whereas PS 13 believed the motivation was solely internal. The perceptions made by T 1 and the five parent participants aligned four (80%) of five perceptions.

To continue evaluation of the factors that motivated the 10 students in the eighth grade, the perceptions of students made by T 2 were triangulated with the parent participants' perceptions of the factors that motivated the eighth grade students' high English fluency. Of the ten participants, four parent participants (PS 2, PS 6, PS 12, PS 15) believed their child was internally motivated. Four parent participants (PS 4, PS 8, PS 9, PS 14) perceived their child as externally motivated. Two parent participants (PS 3, PS 7) perceived their child as motivated by a combination of external and internal factors.

Participants who affirmed that their child was motivated by internal factors used the following words to describe their child and the factors that motivate high English performance: "she likes English, she is interested, he is motivated, and she dreams about this." The teacher for the 10 eighth grade students identified seven students (S 2, S 6, S 7, S 8, S 9, S 12, and S 15) as internally motivated to seek English fluency. Triangulating the parents' perceptions resulted in a slight difference. PS 8, PS 9, and PS 14 believed their children were motivated by external factors and not internal factors, placing the mother and international travel at the forefront as the principle motivators.

Next, T 2 identified only one student (S 3) as externally motivated. The parent (PS 3) identified her daughter as motivated by a combination of factors. "The factors that motivate my daughter to learn English are a combination of internal with external." During the member-checking interview for IQ 10 (Appendix D) PS 3 stated, "It is like a

mirror. She imitates what she sees." PS 3 referred to how she liked English and had been an exchange student for one year during adolescence. So the discrepancy between T 2's assertion of external factors versus PS 3's statement that a combination of influences may have reflected that indeed external factors, such as the mother's interest, motivated the student's internal interest in music and singing. In this instance, the teacher's perception of S 3's motivation as external was misaligned with the parent's perception that her child was motivated by external and internal factors.

One other participant, PS 7, described her son as motivated by a combination of factors. "I believe it is a combination of factors…I believe that the external factors motivate the internal. It is the external motivators that we use to turn on the little button in him. " (PS 7). This perception that her son was internally motivated to perform misaligned with the teacher's perception that S 7 was motivated solely by internal factors. The teacher believed S 7 was motivated solely by internal factors, whereas the mother perceived external and internal as essential for motivation to obtain high English fluency.

Triangulating parents' perceptions with T 2 evidenced 6/10 (60%) perceptions made by T 2 aligned with the parent participants. The teacher believed S 4 and S 14 were motivated by a combination of external and internal factors. However, PS 4 and PS 14 believed their children were externally motivated. T 2 perceived that S 9 was internally motivated. PS 9 believed that her daughter was motivated by external factors mostly, such as international travel.

Theme 2: Students Enjoy Learning

Students who were motivated by internal factors were described as liking to learn. Although parents experienced difficulty isolating internal factors, parents did ascertain that the child was motivated to learn. PS 15 spoke of his daughter's interest in learning

English and Spanish. PS 15 affirmed that he did nothing to motivate his daughter's learning. PS 15 stated,

> She likes it (English). She is interested. She is able to follow the Spanish curriculum really well. Right now she is going after French on the Internet. Today she came to school studying French on the Ipad. She is interested and I like this a lot.

PS 6 spoke of the child's interest in learning. PS 6 ascertained,

> What I think is the greatest influence is the interest. What I believe is the student who has a certain ease to learn, he will capture more. Not just with the English language, but I am talking about learning in general. The student has a greater ability to learn than the others. I think that when the student has this natural ability to learn, he is able to obtain a better fluency, he is able to learn more deeply in certain subjects. So I believe this is a part of the individual, a particularity of the individual.

The parents who identified the child as mostly motivated by internal factors, described the child as interested in learning Spanish and German. PS 10 affirmed that her son was interested in studying German now. PS 1 also spoke of her daughter's interest in Spanish at school. Although parents experienced difficulty isolating the motivating factors that were from within, the theme that the child liked learning surfaced in the parents' conversation about the factors that influenced the child.

Observational Findings

Yin (2009) stated that no single source of evidence has advantage over other sources. Further, case studies should rely on more resources than primarily interviews for data sources. Although interviews were cited as one of the most essential sources of

evidence, documents were included among six sources of data pertinent to case studies.

Documents that added to the case study of the factors that influenced Brazilian students'

fluency of English were collected and reviewed to add to confirmatory evidence (Yin,

2009). The documents were included and coded appropriately through the NVivo 10.0

software, and added to the unit of analysis. The documents that added to the unit of

analysis were the teachers' lesson plans and tests, the MEC foreign language curricular

guidelines, and the attendance sheets for the initial parent conference in February and the

parent/teacher conferences in April. Triangulation of data sources, interviews, recordings

and transcriptions of interviews, and member-checking interviews added to the validity of

the data analysis (Yin, 2009).

Lesson Plans and Tests

T 1 and T 2 sent a general semester plan, which was written collectively at the

beginning of the year to align with the MEC curricular plan, and a bimonthly plan with

teaching suggestions. T 1 and T 2 stated that a weekly lesson plan was completed only

when a particular class did not happen. Then teachers must write a plan for the week.

Daily lesson plans were not written. T 2 affirmed that teachers experienced autonomy

with planning. Every Monday a collective teachers' meeting with the pedagogues and

principal took place to discuss what happened in class with students. Any difficult

classroom issues that surfaced, teachers shared ideas of how to address a problem, as well

as shared triumphs that occurred the prior week.

The key areas addressed in the annual plan for the English teachers at Escola

Interamérica were entitled as (1) the political pedagogical project, (2) general objectives,

(3) minimum content to cover for 4 quarters and the competencies that align, (4)

suggestion of the didactic materials, (5) the procedures and means of accomplishing the

objectives, (6) the evaluative procedure, (7) instruments used during evaluation, (8) literary books, (9) literary festival, and (10) the bibliographic references.

The fact that both teachers did not produce weekly lesson plans aligned with research literature that teachers in Brazil are autonomous and teach in a hands-off environment (Conroy, 2012). The pedagogue at Escola Interamérica confirmed that the lead teacher, T 2, was responsible for ensuring the other English teachers were prepared and that any weekly lesson plans were sent to T 2. Considering many educational leaders at Escola Interamérica did not speak English, the appropriate person to evaluate the lesson plans, bimonthly or semester, was the lead teacher. The annual plan for teaching English was aligned with the MEC curricular guidelines for consistency.

Three tests were provided by the seventh and the eighth grade teachers, which reflected clear instructions. The three tests included a regular test, a probation test, and an adapted test. The regular test was for students without special learning needs. The test entitled, "probation" was an opportunity to improve if the student failed the previous test. The test entitled, "adapted," was for students who experienced difficulties that other students did not. If the student were born with a learning disorder, the probation test would be issued without other students' noticing.

Despite the three identifying titles to the English tests for the seventh and the eighth grade students, the tests appeared similar. The regular test required the student to decide on the answer without visual cues. The probation test still represented filling in the blank, true and false answers, unscrambling sentences, and writing complete sentences with the correct word provided in the parentheses. The test adapted for special learners evidenced the same material but in a simplified manner. Students matched words with the correct column, filled in the blank, and were provided with additional

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vocabulary for creating meaning. The three tests (regular, probation, and adapted) appeared basic and did not challenge the students to demonstrate beyond rote learning.

MEC Curricular Guidelines

The Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) writes the updated national curriculum for public and private schools (Bohn, 2003). The National Curriculum Parameters: Foreign Language or (PCNs) from 1998 (Brasília, 1998) are guidelines that allow each school district and local community authority over the selection of languages offered within the school curriculum. Teachers and local pedagogues write a plan and send the curriculum to the MEC that will be offered at each school with clear justifications of the predominant foreign languages emphasized in the curriculum. The PCNs were formed to allow social, political, and cultural diversity within school systems, while respecting national common educational references for Brazilian students in each region (Brasília, 1998).

The PCNs for a foreign language curriculum emphasize students' comprehension of the following: (1) a multilingual, multicultural society, (2) seeking a global comprehension of the language through oral and written proficiency, and (3) for students to commit to negotiating an understanding of the meaning in context (Brasília, 1998). The curricular objectives for each school, private or public, are written by educational leaders to align with the social conditions evident at each school. Local leaders consider the social conditions of the population for learning the foreign languages chosen by each school, with attention given to the countries that border a Brazilian state, for example, and create the objectives (Brasília, 1998).

Parent Conference Participation

The last two documents analyzed were the attendance sheets for the opening meeting of the school year, which was held in the auditorium at Escola Interamérica, on February 21, 2014, and the parent-teacher conferences on April 12, 2014. The intent was to evaluate participation from the parents who met the criteria for eligibility in this case study. The question was whether parent participation factored into the demands parents enforced for the child to obtain English fluency.

The seventh grade English teacher, T 1, confirmed that each parent participant (PS 1, PS 5, PS 10, PS 11, PS 13) in the study attended the meeting in April. Each parent voiced concerns regarding grades and English fluency. Parents inquired about the child's choice of language during English class. Parents reinforced concerns that the teacher and students should speak only English during class. Parents asked questions and assured the teacher that she could call home if she needed to speak with them about behavior or grade concerns.

The parents of the eighth grade students participated less in the parent-teacher conference in April. Of the 10 parents who participated in the study, only four signed in on the attendance sheet (PS 3, PS 7, PS 9, PS 8). During the member-checking interview, PS 12 shared that he did not attend the meetings because his son was doing well in all subjects. He only attended a parent conference if he had to address a problem with a grade or content in a particular class. PS 4 affirmed that she attended all meetings. However, PS 4 did not attend the meeting in April because of the Easter holiday, wherein the family had traveled to Peru. T 2 confirmed that only 4 parents attended.

The data analysis of the meetings attended by the parents revealed that holidays and other family obligations might have been a factor in the parents' absence from the

conferences. The April meeting for the parents was held on a Saturday, prior to the seven-day Easter holiday, also called Saints' Week. Therefore, many families may have been traveling during the conference. The parents who attended, however, spoke with teachers and demonstrated interest in the child's performance in class. In particular, T 1 noted that parents wanted to ensure that an English-only policy was followed and that the child was speaking English and not Portuguese during instruction.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the factors that influenced the Brazilian students' development of English fluency. Analysis of the interview questions aligned to the four research sub-questions and the general research question evidenced the internal and external influences perceived by the 15 parent participants and the two teacher participants that motivated the child to acquire English fluency. Through the NVivo 10.0 Mac for Beta seven leading themes and one sub-theme were evidenced. The seven themes for this study were: (1) English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities, (2) Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency, (3) Parents Participate in the Learning Experience, (4) Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English, (5) Parents Set High Standards, (6) the Curriculum, and (7) Teachers' Competency Influences English. One sub-theme resulted: Parents Motivate Fluency through Example. The two themes of internal factors that surfaced were: (1) Students are Naturally Interested in English, and (2) Students Enjoy Learning.

The answers to the four research sub-questions and the general research question revealed that parents were active participants in the child's development of English fluency, the teachers and the schools, technology, international travel, and students' natural interest in the English language and in learning influenced the Brazilian students'

high English fluency in the private school, in Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil. Chapter five will detail the findings and the recommendations based upon the results for this holistic single-case study of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' fluency of English. The chapter includes recommendations to a wider audience, educational leaders, and suggestions for future researchers concerned with students' acquisition of a foreign language.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four initiated with the purpose of this holistic single-case study, which was to identify and understand the factors that influence Brazilian students' English fluency. The parents' perceptions and the teachers' perceptions of the external factors and the internal factors that influenced the Brazilian students' English fluency were presented in each of the four research sub-questions and the general research question. In alignment with Yin (2009), the presentation initiated with the sub-questions and finalized with the main research question. The data that were collected, the data analysis procedure, the study findings, and the presentation of the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency were presented. The themes were: (1) English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities, (2) Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency, (3) Parents Participate in the Learning Experience, (4) Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English, (5) Parents Set High Standards, (6) the Curriculum, and (7) Teachers' Competency Influences English Fluency. One sub-theme resulted: Parents Motivate through Example. The two themes of internal influences were: (1) Students' are Naturally Interested in English, and (2) Students Enjoy Learning.

Chapter five consists of a restatement of the purpose of this study, a restatement of the population, the data analysis procedures, and the study findings. A summary of the findings, recommendations for leaders, suggestions for further research, a chapter summary, and a dissertation summary bring chapter five to finality.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the

child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the development of the

Brazilian students' English fluency. The study was conducted to gather narrative data

from parents and teachers of the seventh and eighth grade students in the private school

in Goiânia, Brazil, where students experienced a high level of English fluency. A

purposeful sample included fifteen parents, who answered 10 open-ended questions, and

two respective English teachers, who answered nine questions about the factors that

influenced Brazilian students' English fluency. Data were analyzed through NVivo 10.0

for Mac Beta software, to facilitate the process of coding and the development of the

emergent themes through a chain of evidence (Yin, 2009).

The holistic single-case design was appropriate for identifying and understanding

the one unit of analysis, identified as the influences on high English fluency in the private

school in Goiânia, Brazil. A holistic single-case design allowed revelatory data (Yin,

2009) to emerge from one case defined by high English fluency. This study occurred

during a specific period of two months' time (Merriam, 2002).   The phenomenon was

identified as external and internal influences that contribute to the Brazilian students'

development of English fluency. This study was not about quantifying factors, but

exploring the factors that contributed to the Brazilian students' high English fluency at

the private school in Goiânia, Brazil.

Population

The population for this holistic single-case study included one private, middle

school in the capital, Goiânia, in the state of Goiás, Brazil, situated in an affluent

neighborhood. The three criteria that yielded a purposeful sample, critical in a case study (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009) were: (1) the parents' child must have achieved an English fluency level of a letter B or above as measured by the teachers' grading system, (2) the parents of the qualifying study must agree to discuss perceptions of the influences that motivate the child, and (3) the teacher must be willing to discuss perceptions and be the English language instruction for the child.

The target study population consisted of 15 parents of seventh and eighth grade students whose child experienced high English fluency. The seventh grade teacher and the eighth grade teacher of English participated in this study. Seventeen participants were finalized as eligible participants in alignment with the criteria. The population demographics yielded 13 (86.66%) of the 15 parents were female participants and two (13.33%) of the parents were male participants. Of the fifteen parents, five parents had children who studied in the seventh grade. The remainder, 10 parents had children who studied in the eighth grade. Two (100%) of the teachers were female participants. The seventh grade teacher answered nine questions about the perceived factors that influenced the five seventh grade students' English fluency. The eighth grade teacher answered nine questions about the perceived factors that influenced the 10 eighth grade students' English fluency.

Research Questions

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the development of Brazilian students' English fluency. The problem of the challenges the Brazilian educational leaders face in producing English fluency students was addressed by studying students who were English fluent, to discover the internal and external influences on the

successful acquisition of English. The general research question was written to set the parameters of the problem statement of the study, the purpose, and the importance of the study, thus tightening the focus of the study reflected in the specific research sub-questions (Merriam, 2002). The GRQ (General Research Questions) was: What perceived influences act within and on the students' language acquisition to acquire English fluency? The focus of the GRQ was to identify and understand the internal and external factors that influenced Brazilian students' development of English fluency.

Four research sub-questions (RSQs) served for participants to explore further the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the Brazilian students' English fluency. RSQ1 and RSQ2 allowed exploration of the external factors that influenced the development of English fluency. RSQ1 was: What are the teachers' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to the students' fluency of English as a Foreign Language? RSQ2 was: What are the parents' perceptions of the familial and school factors that contribute to their child's fluency of English as a Foreign Language? RSQ3 and RSQ4 allowed participants to explore further the internal factors that influenced the development of English fluency. RSQ3 was: What are the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency? RSQ4 was: What are the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits that may influence the child's development of English fluency?

Data Analysis

In consideration of the GRQ and the four RSQs, multiple sources of data were collected. Triangulation of multiple data sources increased the validity and the reliability (Yin, 2009; Stake, 2010) of the data analyses of emergent themes. Yin (2009) affirmed

that data collection for case studies, single-case, multiple case, holistic and embedded, should include multiple sources. The multiple sources of evidence may include interviews, surveys, document review, and observations (Yin, 2009).

The multiple data sources collected for this holistic single-case study included a permission to use the premise (Appendix A), a panel of experts' study, 17 interviews conducted face-to-face, a recording of each interview (Appendix B), interview transcriptions, 17 member checking interviews (Appendix B), a voluntary demographic participant questionnaire (Appendix F), researcher memos, analysis of coding and emergent themes with NVivo for Mac Beta 10.0 software (Appendix E), and document review of teachers' lesson plans and tests, MEC national curricular plans, and parent/teacher conference attendance records. All data were collected from 15 parent participants, whose children studied at Escola Interamérica, in Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil, and two of the respective English teachers; one seventh grade and one eighth grade teacher. A total of 17 participants shared perceptions of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency.

Study Findings

The problem of the challenges the Brazilian educational leaders face in producing English fluent students was addressed by studying students who were fluent to discover the influences on the Brazilian students' successful acquisition of English fluency. The specific problem under investigation was the ecological influences such as the family, the school, and the child interactions that might contribute to Brazilian students' low ranking among counterparts in competing BRICS countries in the global economy (Benetti & Roopnarine, 2006; Bhering, 2002; Bohn 2003; Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008; Schrooten, 2011; Vargas, 2012). Seven themes of external influences emerged during the

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data analysis and one sub-theme emerged. The seven themes were: (1) English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities, (2) Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency, (3) Parents Participate in the Learning Experience, (4) Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English, (5) Parents Set High Standards, (6) the Curriculum, and (7) Teachers' Competency Influences English Fluency. The one sub-theme that surfaced during data analysis was: Parents Motivate Fluency through Example. The two themes of internal influences that surfaced were: (1) Students are Naturally Interested in English, and (2) Students Enjoy Learning. A summation of the themes aligned to the four RSQs and to the GRQ follow.

For RSQ1, teachers' perceptions of the role of the family affirmed that parents played a role in motivating students; however, the motivation was mostly through (1) discourse at home and (2) seeking the child's enrollment in a language school. Parents interested in the child obtaining English fluency considered English study as an obligation, not as an option today. The teachers' perceptions of the role of the school in students' English fluency was that (1) the curriculum reflected the importance of the English language, and (2) the teachers' competency to understand how the students learn and are motivated were important to students' learning. English competency is a requirement for students to graduate from middle school (Brasília, 1998).

The answer to RSQ2 revealed that parents' perceptions of the role of the family were that parents should (1) enroll the child to study English in a school specialized in foreign languages, (2) set high standards by inquiring about school and about English class, (3) ensure travel for increased contact with language and culture, (4) allow technology use, (5) participate in activities to motivate, and (6) motivate through example. Parents prioritized time in their work schedule to take the child to English

lessons at a school specialized in foreign languages, allowed study through technology in the home, traveled abroad to countries where English was the primary language, offered reading in Portuguese and English, and engaged in small talk in English with the child. Parents also studied English for career advancement, thus involving the entire family in the foreign language acquisition process.

The parents' perceptions of the role of the school in the child's English fluency were the (1) teachers' competency, and (2) the method was important to advancement in English fluency. One hundred (100%) percent of the parents recognized the value of their child studying English at a language school to complement the English classes at the regular school.

The results for RSQ3 evidenced that the teachers' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits were the students who demonstrated an interest in activities, participated without being asked, brought questions to class, unrelated to the topic, assisted other students in learning, and demonstrated a natural interest in English. Teachers agreed that students who are internally motivated (1) have a natural interest in English, and (2) like learning.

The answers to RSQ4 of the parents' perceptions of the child's internal characteristics, motivational factors and personality traits were that children with internal motivation could be described as, liking English since a child, dreaming about living in an English speaking country, just liking English, or seeking out English through technology without parents' orientation. Parents ascertained that the child who is internally motivated (1) has a natural interest in English and, in general, (2) enjoys learning.

In consideration of the themes aligned to the research questions, the teachers' and the parents' perceptions evidenced support from the literature of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' development of English fluency. Each theme was situated in the literature to compare findings. The significance of the results aligned with the appropriate literature and evidenced the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency to improve pedagogy in foreign language and students' English fluency.

English Lessons are Priority in Extracurricular Activities

The findings for theme one evidenced that 15/15 (100%) parents believed the child should enroll in English classes at a school specialized in foreign languages. T 1 spoke of the parents' interests in seeking extra language classes to complement the child's English classes at the regular school. The role of the parent as the primary decision maker for these seventh and eighth grade students seeking extra English classes at a language school was evident in literature. In particular, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, the conceptual framework that framed this study, evidenced the primary role of the family in a child's educational endeavors.

Through the Ecological Systems Theory, the mesosytem is the primary layer of the five systems, wherein the child experiences learning. The primary influences on the child are first the parents and the family members. Building upon those primary influences in the mesosystem are the teachers who also shape the child's learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The child's first contact is with the parents, family members, and then, as school initiates, with teachers and educational staff. The parents in this study demonstrated that the decision to enroll the child in a language school was sought out primarily by the parent, or influenced by the child's natural interest in the language. The parents' belief that English fluency was necessary for advancement in future

opportunities demonstrated the primary influence the parent had by selecting a school, driving the child to the school, and inquiring about the child's progress in the English classes.

Parents discussed the method of instruction at the language schools as important for the child's English fluency. Three parents affirmed that repetition and English-only policy were leading decisions for the child's enrollment. Three other parents spoke of a method that allowed the child to interact with the teacher and have fun during learning as important. The findings indicated that a link between home and school is essential in the child's learning and the teachers' performance (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Leu, 2008). The parents' expectations with academic achievement influenced the child's motivation (Johnson, 2008). Thus, teachers' increased awareness of how parents' expectations played a role in the child's performance would strengthen the home-school connection. Improving communications between the families and the school would benefit teachers, and advance the quality of foreign language instruction offered to students at the regular school.

Technology Use is Fundamental in English Fluency

The development of English fluency through technology emerged as parents sought to reinforce the child's English fluency during the week. Fifteen of the fifteen (100%) parents affirmed the use of technology to develop the child's English fluency. Parents perceived the role of technology as essential to improved fluency. The teachers' (100%) belief that technology was instrumental in the child's desire to learn English aligned with the parents' perceptions. Parents spoke of the ease children had accessing social networks, researching topics, and searching for music in English. The children

were comfortable with technology as a learning tool, which reassured parents that this tool, inside the home, or outside, benefitted students' advancement in learning English.

The discrepancy of what constituted educational technology added richness to the belief that technology is essential for learning English. Ten (66.66%) of fifteen parents believed the technology used in the home did not qualify as educational. Five (33.33%) of the fifteen parents believed the technology used in the home qualified as educational, citing music, the Internet, and video games as the technological platform. One hundred percent (100%) of the parents affirmed collaboration within the home, discussing the words to music or watching videos together was a part of the home routine. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) second layer resonated the importance of the bi-directional influences of the priorities families in this study made related to learning. Families' beliefs enabled a child to internalize what activity was priority, which happened within the mesosystem. All 17 (100%) of the participants viewed technology as essential to the acquisition of English.

The parents' perceptions that technology was a valuable learning tool for the child's English fluency triangulated to the teachers' perceptions of the benefits of learning English through technology. T 2 asserted, "…a student who dominates the English language, can communicate and travel anywhere in the world. The student has access to places where English is spoken." To motivate the students' dominance of the English language, teachers implemented educational platforms, such as Edmodo. Educational programs allowed the teacher and the students to communicate outside of the classroom during the elective school year, to discuss assignments and to ask questions of the teacher and the other students.

The literature on the stages of language acquisition, Krashen's Natural Approach to language development, supported the use of technology to improve English fluency. Krashen (1995) affirmed teachers should use the target language, focus lessons on topics of interest, and use a variety of techniques to increase students' understanding of the content. Implementation of a variety of techniques to pique students' interest will lower the students' affective filters, and enable students to receive new information and connect new learning to prior information (Krashen, 1995). Parents and teachers' beliefs that technology, such as music, video games, social networks, and educational platforms such as Edmodo, proved a valuable resource for parents and teachers to motivate students' access of the English language.

Parents Participate in the Learning Experience

The third theme evidenced that the parents' roles in the child's learning extended beyond selecting the language school where the child would study English. Eleven of fifteen (73.33%) parents participated in the learning process through purchase of comic books, contemporary literature written in English, and purchase and engagement in board games and electronic games. Parents also bought books in Portuguese. PS 12 and PS 7 affirmed that the family members have internalized the habit of reading.

The four (26.66%) parents who admitted that they did not buy literature nor prioritize reading at home, spoke of the educators at the regular school and at the language schools as responsible for promoting reading. Three (20%) of the participants spoke of the reading competitions that motivated the child's reading in English. The literature on Krashen's Theory of Language Acquisition (1982) supported the assertion that the teacher operates as the positive link in the environment and affects the child's learning. This holistic single-case study supported the assertion that the teachers in the

language school and the regular school motivated language fluency in non-threatening environments, to allow the child to communicate without fear of mistakes.

Theme 3a: Parents Motivate English Fluency through Example

A sub-theme surfaced of parents' modeling the importance of English fluency through enrollment in English classes for career advancement or personal interest. A lack of English fluency served as a barrier in career opportunities for several parents in this study. Parents' lack of job mobility motivated parents to ensure the child studied English extra time and engaged in conversation in English. The literature supported the influence that community affected the parents' choices in education for the child. The third system, exosystem, connects the child to the demands of the external environment and affects the child's learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The media and the workplace, for example, influenced the development of the curriculum. The child's learning was, therefore, influenced by the exosystem of which the child had no control over (Bronfenbrenner). In this study, the parents' view of the need to speak English for work promotions and social mobility aligned to the high demands parents held for the child to perform well in English.

In addition to parents' quest to learn English, the parents attempted to speak with the child in short conversations about English classes, about the English music playing in the car, or prioritized family time to talk in English about the day. Nine of the fifteen participants (PS 3, PS 4, PS 7, PS 8, PS 9, PS 10, PS 11, PS 12, and PS 13) spoke of parent-child discourse at home, in English, to motivate interest and to increase conversation. The parents who lacked English fluency still attempted to motivate conversation with the child. Parent participants demonstrated a genuine interest in the child's learning activities.

Parents' affirmation of persistence with prioritizing a time on the weekend to speak English was triangulated with the English teachers' perceptions of family participation. Both teachers believed students who demonstrated high English fluency at Escola Interamérica were the students who engaged in discourse with parents about the role English plays in work and school achievements. The bi-directional influences occurred between the child and the parents, positively influencing the child's learning and the child's belief system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that English fluency was critical for success in school and the future work force.

Contact with Culture and Native Speakers Advances English

The fourth theme that emerged was the importance parents' placed on the child to experience culture and contact with native speakers of English through travel. Nine (60%) parents provided the child with opportunities to travel abroad to countries where the primary language spoken was English. Six (40%) of the parents stated that they did not travel internationally to countries where English was the primary language, but parents sought additional opportunities for the child to interact with speakers of English.

Parents' assertions that international travel to countries where English was the primary language of communication benefitted a child's English fluency was triangulated with teachers' perceptions. Teachers affirmed that the families in this study placed emphasis on travel and experienced social mobility that allowed frequent travel. Teachers believed that emphasis should be placed on the connection between the language and culture through activities inside and beyond the classroom for children to understand the English spoken in Canada is different than the English spoken in the United States. Contact with culture advances understanding of the differences, allowing the child's comprehension to improve. The social constructivist's theory of learning

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supported the child's learning through social interaction (Powell & Kalina, 2009; (Vygotsky, 1978).

Of the six parents who did not travel abroad, parents spoke of the child's experiences at a language immersion camp at one language school in Goiânia. Parents also spoke of travel in Brazil, wherein the child sought out other children who spoke English. Parents dedicated ample time to ensure travel abroad or engagement in an English immersion camp to reinforce the child's ability to advance in English fluency.

Parents Set High Standards

The fifth theme that emerged was that the parents in this study believed that high standards must be set for the child's achievement in obtaining English fluency. The literature that supported the role of the parent to challenge the child to excel was evident in Bandura's (1986) Social-Cognitive Theory of Self-Efficacy. Students with a high self-efficacy, the belief that success is attainable, tend to have parents who also exhibit a high self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Epstein (as cited in Bandura, 1986) asserted parents who set routines, participate with school activities, and view learning as a bi-directional responsibility between the teachers, the family, and the community tend to place emphasis on learning rather than grades.

The Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) added support to the assertion that the child's behavior was influenced by the parents' expectations. The mesosystem is the second system of five systems. A link between the home and the school constitutes the mesosystem (Leu, 2008). Parents in this study affirmed that their high expectations for the child to perform well assisted the child in maintaining high academic performance. T1 and T 2 identified parents' participation as mostly through discourse with the child. However, parents were responsible for taking the child to

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extracurricular activities. Additional English lessons at a language school, specialized in foreign languages, were priority for 14/15 (93.33%) children in this study. Parents' expectations equated to the students' high English fluency level. Johnson (2008) asserted parents with unrealistic expectations could cause tension to occur among the teachers, the parents, and the child. Negative dynamics could decrease educational leaders' desire to maintain contact with the family to avoid conflict.

In this study of the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the child's development of English fluency, the parents' expectations were a positive attributing factor to the child's development of high English fluency. The positive relationship evident in this study among the child, the school, and the family reflected Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion that the link between the teachers and the family affected the school environment and the child's motivation to excel at school. Teachers in this study affirmed the parents' participation in the child's education as discourse at home. Parents attended meetings, but did not engage in assisting the teacher in the classroom. Parents' assistance in the classroom was not a part of the school-home relationship within the school culture at Escola Interamérica.

The Curriculum

The sixth theme that emerged was the curriculum at Escola Interamérica. The teachers (100%) believed the school was responsible for creating a curriculum with emphasis on English as a Foreign Language. The literature review of the Brazilian educational system evidenced the educational leaders of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) write the national curriculum for the private and the public school systems. The curriculum consists of two parts: The common core and the diversified section. Educational leaders in each school district are allowed to modify the diversified

section to align with the local needs of the population. School leaders evaluate the students' aptitudes, diverse differences, and learning needs during the writing of the document (Brasília, 1998).

Teachers at Escola Interamérica confirmed that the curriculum was written to attend the local community members' needs. The National Curriculum Parameters: Foreign Language or (PCNs) from 1998 (Brasília, 1998) are guidelines that allow each school district and local community authority over the selection of languages offered within the school curriculum. The PCNs were formed to allow educators more diversity with cultural, political, and social systems within the schools, while adhering to the national common educational core for Brazilian students (Brasília, 1998).

The PCNs for a foreign language curriculum emphasize students' comprehension of the following: (1) a multilingual, multicultural society, (2) seeking a global comprehension of the language through oral and written proficiency, and (3) for students to commit to negotiating an understanding of the meaning in context (Brasília, 1998). Local leaders consider the social conditions of the population for learning the foreign languages chosen by each school, with attention given to the countries that border a Brazilian state, for example, and create the objectives (Brasília, 1998).

The document findings were aligned with the teachers' statements regarding the curriculum and the teachers' role in curriculum development. T 2 shared perceptions on the process of curriculum development. Educators have the autonomy to prioritize the foreign languages that are more important to the surrounding community. Teachers and educational leaders at Escola Interamérica build curriculum around the community needs. Teachers shared perceptions that the English language is part of the basic curricular learning today. T 1 and T 2 believed that students who attained English fluency had

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increased chances to achieve success in any place in the world by gaining access to the competitive job market. T 2 explained that the local educators decided on the foreign languages selected for the curriculum, which must meet approval prior to implementation.

T 1 stated, "I believe that English is a part of the curriculum for the student and his future. If he does not know at least how to communicate using the basics, he will lose work opportunities." T 2 affirmed how students advance with English fluency, stating "Today English is politically the most important language to learn. It (English) is the language of the world marketplace for working in any place in the world."

T 1 and T 2 perceived that the school curriculum was a fundamental tool in the students' learning English. Teachers' belief that English was an essential part of the curriculum because of the demands for entry into the future job market surfaced in the teachers' perceptions of the external factors that influenced students' performance. The primary role of the school is to build the curriculum according to the local community needs.

The educational leaders in the Brazilian schools make curricular decisions that affect the implementation of the foreign languages chosen for each school district. This decision of which language should receive curricular priority is a political decision that students have little control over the influence (Johnson, 2008). Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserted the influence of the third system, the exosystem. Events that surface in the exosystem affect the student who has no direct involvement in the events. The events that occur within the third system affect the child's learning. Examples of a unidirectional influence on the child's learning would be a lack of funding to provide the students with appropriate didactic materials to enrich learning (Leu, 2008).

In this study, parents' contribution to the child's learning and the teachers' contribution to the importance of including English in the curriculum advanced the students' learning. The literature, the document findings, and the teachers' assertions that Brazilian educators participated in the curriculum development evidenced the curriculum as an influencing factor in the students' English fluency.

Teachers' Competency Influences English Fluency

The seventh theme that surfaced during data analysis was the teachers' competency to influence the child's learning. The teacher's competency to perceive what activities motivated students to learn English was shared by T 2. T 2 stated,

Students who are externally motivated, the teacher will have to bring many things and start to study what type of activity will attract the student the most? Will it be listening, speaking, or a film, or a debate? This the teacher must discover through the school year. The teacher has to begin to discover. The face-to-face contact between the student and the teacher will make the difference.

T 1 shared perceptions of how she motivated students to interact during activities to stimulate English conversation among students,

What pleases the students the most is music and games. So, I frequently use games and I always call on students to participate in the front so it does not become a monologue with just the teacher talking, talking, talking. They participate more or less 50% of the time and I participate 50% of the time. The games are dynamic with pieces of paper or they have to compete between row one and two with row three, four, and five. Something like this.

Teachers believed face-to-face contact was most effective to gain understanding of the student and of activities that motivated students' interest. According to Krashen

and Terrell (1995), the teacher serves as a link between the child and the learning. For the child to learn English, the input must be interesting, relevant, and comprehensible. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (i+1) equates the child's current understanding of the material and extended comprehension of more difficult material with the teacher's assistance.

Congruent with Krashen and Terrell (1995) and the Input Hypothesis of learning, the teachers' competence was essential in advancing students' language acquisition of English. The teachers' comprehension of engaging students in learning that interests, connects, and is comprehensible is fundamental.   The evidence in the literature regarding Brazilian teachers' limited preparation of effective instruction in foreign language (Bohn, 2003; Borba, 2009; El Kadri & Gimenez, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008) revealed a need for exploration of a case with high English fluency to understand the influences of the child, the family, and the school.

Students are Naturally Interested in English

The first emergent theme that surfaced of the internal factors that influenced a child's learning in English was the students' natural interest in English. Although parents and teachers shared perceptions of the internal factors, participants demonstrated difficulty isolating the factors. Six (40%) of fifteen participants believed that internal factors motivate their child to obtain English fluency. The participants used phrases such as, "since she was little, it has been her dream, she just likes English, she seeks out English on her own, I do not have to tell her to study, she is motivated," which differentiated the participants' perceptions of the internally motivated students from the externally motivated students.

PS 6 and PS 15 spoke of their daughters liking English. PS 6 stated, "I believe this is a factor that influences her really. The fact that she likes it (English) a lot." PS 15 added, "She likes it, she is really interested. She follows the Spanish at school well too. Now she is going after French on the Internet."

A third parent spoke of the motivation to learn more about English as a factor for her daughter's success. PS 13 conveyed how she did not need to tell her daughter to study or to do her homework.   PS 13 stated,

> I do not need to tell her to study. She always completes her obligations in relation to English. She has good grades. At the language school, she is champion or vice champion. She is always worried about completing her homework. She understands the importance that English (fluency) has for her future.

Speaking of internal motivation for four of the five students, T 1 stated,

> In this case, I believe these four students are more internally motivated because they are interested and have a natural interest in the language. They search out knowledge. Even if something demotivated them to not like an activity, they will still be interested in some other activity (T 1).

T 1 stated, "S 10 likes languages in general. He is internally motivated."

Speaking of the child's natural interest, PS 10 confirmed her son's natural interest in English during the member check interview, stating, "The factor that influences my son more is something internal because he told me he wants to study German. His grades in Spanish and English are good. He likes languages. What motivates him is he likes languages."

The factor that teachers and parents shared about the students' motivation to excel in English fluency was the students' interest in English. Although the interest in English

may have been motivated by external tools such as the Internet, the interest in music and films, the students' natural interest in English was evident to parents and teachers. Parents who identified the child as mostly motivated by internal influences, affirmed that they did not have to ensure homework was completed.

T 2 believed most students today are motivated to perform by external factors. However the students in this study were mostly motivated by internal factors. T 2 shared her perception of students' doing well in English:

> For me, the question is about a solid foundation in the child's first language so the child will have a good foundation in the foreign language. I believe a child who does not write well in Portuguese, does not know what a verb or an article is, does not understand his own language, this will make it difficult to learn a second language….When a student is good in the Portuguese language, he will be good in languages.

The teachers' understanding of what motivates a student to learn will benefit the student, the school, and the family. Teachers who understand the stages of language development serve as a critical link in the students' progression toward the student' attaining fluency (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). Bandura (1979) asserted the teachers' self-efficacy, or the belief that the teacher is capable of teaching the student, affects the student. Although a student may be motivated by internal factors, teachers must understand the process of language acquisition to ensure learning is relevant (Krashen, 1995) to advance students' English fluency.

Students Enjoy Learning

Students who are motivated by internal factors were described as liking to learn. Although parents experienced difficulty isolating internal factors, parents did ascertain

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that the child was motivated to learn. PS 15 spoke of his daughter's interest in learning

English and Spanish. PS 15 affirmed that he did nothing to motivate his daughter's

learning. PS 15 stated,

> She likes it (English). She is interested. She is able to follow the Spanish
>
> curriculum really well. Right now she is going after French on the Internet.
>
> Today she came to school studying French on the Ipad. She is interested and I
>
> like this a lot.
>
> PS 6 spoke of the child's interest in learning. PS 6 ascertained,
>
> What I think is the greatest influence is the interest. What I believe is the student
>
> who has a certain ease to learn, he will capture more. Not just with the English
>
> language, but I am talking about learning in general. The student has a greater
>
> ability to learn than the others. I think that when the student has this natural
>
> ability to learn, he is able to obtain a better fluency, he is able to learn more
>
> deeply in certain subjects. So I believe this is a part of the individual, a
>
> particularity of the individual.

Although the parents experienced difficulty isolating the internal factors, the theme that

students like to learn was evident. The statement made by PS 7 encapsulated the parents'

and the teachers' responsibility in accessing a child's motivation to learn in any subject,

despite the child's internal motivation to learn. PS 7 stated,

> I believe that it is difficult to separate this influence with one factor. I do not think
>
> (a child is motivated) with just external nor just internal, because if a child has a
>
> desire to learn, but the parents do not stimulate or find a good school, or do not
>
> offer books, or a trip, I think the child will be limited…unless the child is a
>
> genius, a little genius, you know? But I believe a mixture of factors is more

important that you stimulate and are able to perceive in your child where you can

turn on that little light for him to have the desire to go forward and learn.

The internal factor of the child enjoying learning was evident. But PS 7's

statement that a child with parents, who do not stimulate the child's interest in learning

English, or other subjects, will be limited, illuminated the powerful position of the family

and the teachers in identifying motivation and cultivating the child's interests.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion of the bi-directional influences the child and the

family, and the child and the school play in successful learning was evidenced in PS 7's

perceptions that a child's success is connected to a family who prioritizes seeking out

diverse opportunities for the child to experience learning. Parents who pursue schools

where teachers are attentive to the activities that motivate students' learning, and the

teachers serve as a positive link (Krashen & Terrell, 1995), the child is more likely to

advance learning and achieve English fluency for participation in the global marketplace

(Marcondes 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008).

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and to understand

the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the development of

Brazilian students' English fluency. The summary of the findings related to the research

questions for this holistic single-case study was the family participated with the child's

English fluency development through (1) participating in the learning experience; (2)

seeking a language school for the child's additional English lessons; (3) setting high

standards, (5) ensuring contact with culture and native speakers through travel, and (6)

technology use. The teachers' participation with the child's development in English was

evident through the (1) teachers' competency to understand the child and learning, and

(2) the curriculum. The internal factors that influenced a child's development of English fluency were evidenced as the child (1) exhibiting a natural interest in English, and the child (2) enjoying learning. The findings emphasized the primary concern of the child, the family, and the school relationship and how the Brazilian students' learning English fluently advanced through positive influences within the systems.

<center>**Recommendations for Leaders**</center>

The findings of this holistic single-case study evidenced the fundamental role the school and the family play in a child's advancement in the development of English as a Foreign Language. The child was influenced by, and influenced, the bi-directional relationship with the family and the school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The proposition of this study was that when positive didactic influences between the child and the family, and the child and the school are present, the student is more likely to achieve English fluency. The purpose of this study was to identify and to understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) cited a child learns through his immediate environment. The family is the primary venue for learning how to live, to behave, to develop self-regulation, and to establish a belief system. Consideration of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory of the ecological systems that influence a child's education, the parents, the teachers, the educational and community leaders would benefit from the findings of this holistic single-case study of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' development of English.

The results of this study added insight to the educational leadership in the Brazilian context and aligned to the current problem that Brazilian students are not advancing in English proficiency (EF/EPI, 2012). English is the language of

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international communication, which reduces Brazilian students' participation into the global market (Marcondes, 2013; Naves & Vigna, 2008). In light of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) affirmation that the child is affected by, and affects, the bi-directional relationship with family and school leaders, comprehension of the five systemic layers is valuable for leaders to leverage stakeholders' comprehension of the value in collaborative connections among the child, the family, and the school. Knowledge gained from this holistic single-case study of high English fluency tightens the focus of the external and the internal factors that influence Brazilian students' development of English. The evidence that Brazilian students struggle to obtain fluency in English, a skill identified as advantageous for entering the local and the global marketplace (Bohn, 2003; Lam & Rosario-Ramos, 2009; Lima & Brown, 2007), evidenced a need to improve instruction and students' performance.

The following recommendations include the use of the study results to advance stakeholders' understanding of the child, the family, and the school dynamics to improve students' English fluency in the Brazilian context:

(1) An invitation extended to families to share the study findings of the primary external and internal factors that influence a child's language acquisition. Aligned with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) assertion that family is the primary influence in a child's development and learning, families should have opportunities to learn about the family-child-school relationship.

(2) Teachers are a valuable resource to strengthening the family-school link (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Educating teachers of the ecological factors that influence a child's language acquisition would advance the school climate for improved instruction.

(3) Teachers should understand the stages of language development to ensure children's learning needs are addressed appropriately (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). Opportunities could be provided to advance teachers' learning of appropriate foreign language pedagogy.

(4) Teachers would benefit from opportunities to read literature on the role the teachers' self-efficacy plays in a child's success in the classroom (Bandura, 1993).

(5) Teachers and families should receive scientific research on effective instructional practices for development of a foreign language and the role of the family-school connection.

(6) The literature revealed that teachers do not know how to involve parents in the educational process (Benetti & Roopnarine, 2006; Bhering, 2002). The findings from this single-case study evidenced parents' participation in the child's education is mostly at home and through discourse with the child.

Suggestions for Further Research

This single-case study was conducted in a private school system of high English fluency to evidence revelatory data (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2009). The intent was to advance knowledge of the influences on Brazilian students' development of English fluency in the Brazilian context. An understanding of Brazilian educators' roles in the classroom yielded insights of the national and the local curriculum at Escola Interamérica. The relationship between the child and the family, and the child and the school, allowed valuable insights into the current reality of Brazilian educators' role in curriculum development and classroom instruction during a particular period and time (Merriam, 2002).

An additional area of research related to the problem that Brazilian students are not advancing in English proficiency, compared to students in other developing BRICS countries (EF/EPI, 2012) was identified in the study findings. Participants in this study perceived additional English courses as advantageous to students' improved English fluency. Therefore, an area not evident in the scope of the study was Brazilian parents' priority for the child to attend an additional English course at a language school, specialized in foreign language development. Although the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) included English as a Foreign Language as mandatory in the national curricular guidelines (Brasília, 1998), English lessons at a language school were priority among extracurricular activities.

Educational leaders, practitioners, and curriculum developers might be interested in future research to identify why parents choose to enroll the child in English courses at a language school. Suggestions for advancing knowledge of students' development of English fluency in the Brazilian context are the following:

(1) Research of foreign language pedagogy in an EFL classroom in a private school setting compared to an EFL classroom in a language school may illuminate a unique perspective of teachers' instructional practices in each setting;

(2) Brazilian students' development of English fluency in a different state than the state of Goiás would yield rich data of a different social reality

(3) A comparative study among Brazilian students' development of English fluency and parents' roles in the process in a public school setting compared to a private school setting would yield diverse data;

(4) To conduct a multiple case study to extend the findings of this single-case study in multiple contexts;

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(5) To conduct a quantitative research study to examine the phenomenon in different schools and to attempt replication (Flyvberg, 2006); and

(6) To conduct a grounded theory study to evidence a theory grounded in Brazilian participants' words of the factors that influence the child's development of a foreign language.

The social and economic development of this emerging country, Brazil, one of the powerful emerging BRICS economies (Borker, 2012; Vargas, 2012), allows for researchers to examine a diverse landscape in Brazilian education. Future researchers may advance knowledge of the development of foreign language acquisition and the evolving role of child, the teachers, the parents, and of the educational leaders in the Brazilian context.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the development of the Brazilian students' English fluency. The study was conducted in a private school setting in Goiânia, Goiás, where high English fluency was evidenced. The holistic single-case study was appropriate for allowing revelatory data (Yin, 2009) to surface in one case defined by high English fluency. This study occurred during a specific period and time (Merriam, 2002). This holistic single-case study consisted of exploring the factors that contributed to the Brazilian students' English fluency in the Brazilian context. The sections in chapter five consisted of a restatement of the purpose of the study, a restatement of the population, the procedures for the data analysis, and the findings for this holistic single-case study. A summary of the findings, recommendations for educational leaders, and suggestions for further research of Brazilian students' English

fluency and the factors that influenced development of a foreign language were presented. Chapter five concludes with a dissertation summary.

Dissertation Summary

The purpose of this holistic single-case study was to identify and understand the child, the family, and the school interactions that influenced the development of the Brazilian students' English fluency. A holistic single-case design was optimal for examining the parents' and the teachers' perceptions of the factors that influenced Brazilian students' English fluency. This case was identified by the high English fluency evident in a private educational system in Goiânia, Brazil. The intent was not to replicate the narrative data evidenced in this study, but to gather revelatory data (Merriam, 2002) of the influencing factors that advanced Brazilian students' development of English fluency in the private school in Goiânia, Goiás. The findings from this holistic single-case study illuminated the child, the family, and the school factors within the Brazilian context, substantiated by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as fundamental influences in a child's success in education.

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Appendix A

Permission to Use Premise

University of Phoenix

PERMISSÃO DE USO DAS INSTALAÇÕES, DE RECRUTAMENTO E NOME (PRN)

Escola Interamérica

Nome das Instalações, Organização, Universidade, Instituição, ou Associação

Por favor preencha o formulário, marcando os campos cujas permissões listadas foram aprovadas, e por favor, forneça sua assinatura, título, data e informações organizacionais. Se você tiver dúvidas ou questionamentos sobre esta pesquisa, entre em contato com a Universidade de Phoenix, Institutional Review Board via e-mail IRB@phoenix.edu

[X] Eu autorizo Margaret Huntingford Vianna, estudante da Universidade de Phoenix, a usar as instalações (instalações identificadas abaixo) para realizar um estudo intitulado *Exploração dos fatores que influenciam a fluência de estudantes Brasileiros na língua Inglesa: Um estudo de caso.*

[X] Eu autorizo Margaret Huntingford Vianna, estudante da Universidade de Phoenix, a recrutar indivíduos para participação em um estudo intitulado *Exploração de fatores que influenciam a fluência de estudantes Brasileiros na língua Inglesa: Um Estudo de Caso.*

[X] Eu autorizo Margaret Huntingford Vianna, estudante da Universidade de Phoenix, a usar o nome da empresa, organização, universidade, instituição ou associação acima identificada ao publicar os resultados do estudo intitulado *Exploração de fatores que influenciam a fluência de estudantes Brasileiros na língua Inglesa: Um estudo de caso.*

Data: 12 de Junho de 2013

Suelânia Conceição Costa Santos
Diretora

Endereço da Instituição:
Escola Interamérica
Rua C-242, QD. 557, LT. 16 - Jardim América
Goiânia, Goiás 74290-170 - BRAZIL
Telephone: 55-062-3526-8550
E-mail: suelania@gmail.com

University of Phoenix®

PREMISES, RECRUITMENT AND NAME (PRN) USE PERMISSION
Escola Interamérica

Name of Facility, Organization, University, Institution, or Association

Please complete the following by check marking any permissions listed here that you approve, and please provide your signature, title, date, and organizational information below. If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, please contact the University of Phoenix Institutional Review Board via email at IRB@phoenix.edu.

☒ I hereby authorize Margaret Huntingford Vianna, a student of University of Phoenix, to use the premises (facility identified below) to conduct a study entitled *An Exploration of the Factors that Influence Brazilian Students' Fluency of English: A Case Study.*

☒ I hereby authorize Margaret Huntingford Vianna, a student of University of Phoenix, to recruit subjects for participation in a study entitled *An Exploration of the Factors that Influence Brazilian Students' Fluency of English: A Case Study.*

☒ I hereby authorize Margaret Huntingford Vianna, a student of University of Phoenix, to use the name of the facility, organization, university, institution, or association identified above when publishing results from the study entitled *An Exploration of the Factors that Influence Brazilian Students' Fluency of English: A Case Study.*

Date: 12 June 2013

Suelânia Conceição Costa Santos

Principal

Institution Adress:

Escola Interamérica

Rua C-242. QD. 557. LT. 16 - Jardim América

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E-mail: suelania@gmail.com

Appendix B

Informed Consent: Participants 18 Years of Age and Older

CONSENTIMENTO INFORMADO: PARTICIPANTES 18 ANOS DE IDADE E MAIS VELHOS

Caro _____,

Meu nome é Margaret Huntingford Vianna e eu sou uma estudante da Universidade de Phoenix trabalhando em um doutorado em Educação, Currículo e Ensino. Estou fazendo um trabalho de pesquisa intitulado Uma Exploração dos Fatores que Influenciam a Fluência de Estudantes Brasileiros na Língua Inglesa: Um Estudo de Caso. O objetivo da pesquisa é entender os fatores externos e internos que influenciam a percepção de aquisição de fluência em Inglês dos alunos.

Sua participação envolve duas atividades. A primeira atividade envolverá responder 10 questões e uma pergunta extra em uma entrevista cara-a-cara. A duração da primeira entrevista será de aproximadamente uma hora. A entrevista será gravada para posterior transcrição a fim de garantir percepções precisas de cada participante. A segunda atividade envolverá uma revisão de suas respostas para as questões da entrevista para garantir que a pesquisadora tenha feito interpretações precisas de suas respostas, e irá durar aproximadamente 30 minutos. Sua participação é voluntária. O tamanho da amostra prevista é de 20 participantes. Se você deseja participar deste estudo, seu nome e identidade permanecerão anônimas. Você pode optar por fazer parte deste estudo ou não. Uma vez que você começar, você poderá se retirar do estudo a qualquer momento sem qualquer penalidade ou perda de benefícios. Os resultados do estudo poderão ser publicados, mas sua identidade permanecerá confidencial e seu nome não será divulgado a terceiros.

Nesta pesquisa, não há riscos previsíveis, além dos riscos da vida diária.

Embora nao hajam benefícios direto para você, um possível benefício de participar deste estudo é agregar conhecimento dos fatores que influenciam a fluência dos alunos e métodos que possam aprimorar o ensino da Língua Inglêsa. A informação será utilizada em minha dissertação e poderá ser usada em futuros estudos de educação, liderança e desenvolvimento curricular.

Se você tem alguma dúvida a respeito de sua participação neste estudo, pode contactar-me em 62-XXXX-XXXX. Ou você pode me alcançar em via e-mail em XXXX@hotmail.com ou XXXX@email.phoenxi.edu
Para perguntas sobre seus direitos como participante do estudo, ou quaisquer preocupações ou reclamações, entre em contato com a Universidade de Phoenix Institutional Review Board via e-mail IRB@phoenix.edu.

Como um participante neste estudo, você deve entender o seguinte:

1. Você tem a opção de fazer ou não parte deste estudo, assim como você pode se retirar do estudo a qualquer momento. Se você quiser se retirar, poderá fazê-lo sem problemas. Você poderá entrar em contato comigo por telefone ou enviando um e-mail pelo endereço acima mencionado.
2. Sua identidade durante o estudo será mantida em sigilo.
3. Margaret Huntingford Vianna, a pesquisadora, explicou a natureza do estudo em sua totalidade, e respondeu a todas as suas dúvidas e preocupações.
4. As entrevistas serão gravadas. Assim sendo, a Escola Interamérica dá permissão para a pesquisadora, Margaret Huntingford Vianna, gravar as entrevistas. A Escola Interamérica está ciente de que as informações das entrevistas gravadas serão transcritas.
5. Os dados serão mantidos em uma área segura e trancada. Os dados serão conservados durante um período de três a cinco anos, e depois destruídos.
6. Os resultados deste estudo poderão ser publicados.

"Ao assinar este formulário, você concorda que entende a natureza do estudo, os possíveis riscos para você como um participante, e como sua identidade será mantida em sigilo. Ao assinar este formulário, isso significa que você tem 18 anos ou mais e que concede permissão para oferecer-se como um participante do estudo que está descrito aqui. "

(☐) Eu aceito os termos acima. (☐) Eu não aceito os termos acima. (MARQUE UM)

Assinatura do entrevistado _____ Data _____

Assinatura do pesquisador _____ Data _____

INFORMED CONSENT: PARTICIPANTS 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

Dear _____,

My name is Margaret Huntingford Vianna and I am a student at the University of Phoenix working on a doctorate of Education, Curriculum and Instruction degree. I am doing a research study entitled An Exploration of the Factors that Influence Brazilian Students' Fluency of English: A Case Study. The purpose of the research study is to understand the perceived external and internal factors that influence students' acquisition of English fluency.

Your participation will involve two activities. The first activity will involve answering 1o interview probes and a closing question in a face-to-face interview. The duration of the first interview will be approximately one hour. The interview will be recorded to ensure that the researcher will have an accurate perception of each interviewee's responses. The second activity will involve a review of your answers to the interview probes to ensure accurate interpretations of your perceptions. The second interview will last approximately 30 minutes. Your participation is voluntary. The intended sample size will be 20 participants. If you wish to participate in this study, your name and identity will remain anonymous. You can decide to be a part of this study or not. Once you start, you can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. The results of the research study may be published but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be made known to any outside party.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks, other than the risks of daily living.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, a possible benefit from your being part of this study is to add knowledge of themes of factors that influence students' English fluency and improve instruction. The information will be used in my dissertation and may be used in future studies of education, leadership, and curriculum development.

If you have any doubts regarding your participation in this study, you may contact me at 62-XXXX-XXXX. Or you may reach me at via e-mail at XXXX@hotmail.com or XXXX@email.phoenxi.edu

For questions about your rights as a study participant, or any concerns or complaints, please contact the University of Phoenix Institutional Review Board via email at IRB@phoenix.edu.

As a participant in this study, you should understand the following:

    1.   You may decide not to be part of this study or you may want to withdraw from the study at any time. If you want to withdraw, you can do so without any problems. You may contact me by telephone or by sending an e-mail to the abovementioned address.

    2.   Your identity during the study will be kept confidential.

3.   Margaret Huntingford Vianna, the researcher, has fully explained the nature of the research study and has answered all of your questions and concerns.

4.   The interviews will be recorded. You agree to give permission for the researcher, Margaret Huntingford Vianna, to record the interviews. You understand that the information from the recorded interviews will be transcribed. The researcher will develop a way to code the data to assure that your name is protected.

5.   Data will be kept in a secure and locked area. The data will be kept for three to five years, and then destroyed.

6.   The results of this study may be published.

"By signing this form, you agree that you understand the nature of the study, the possible risks to you as a participant, and how your identity will be kept confidential. When you sign this form, this means that you are 18 years old or older and that you give your permission to volunteer as a participant in the study that is described here."

(☐) **I accept the above terms.**   (☐) **I do not accept the above terms.   (CHECK ONE)**

Signature of the interviewee _____ Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____ Date _____

Appendix C

Confidentiality Form

![University of Phoenix logo]

AN EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAZILIAN STUDENTS'

FLUENCY OF ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY

Margaret Huntingford Vianna

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

  As a researcher working on the above research study at the University of Phoenix, I understand that I must maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning all research participants as required by law. Only the University of Phoenix Institutional Review Board may have access to this information. "Confidential Information" of participants includes but is not limited to: names, characteristics, or other identifying information, questionnaire scores, ratings, incidental comments, other information accrued either directly or indirectly through contact with any participant, and/or any other information that by its nature would be considered confidential. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the information, I hereby agree to refrain from discussing or disclosing any Confidential Information regarding research participants, to any individual who is not part of the above research study or in need of the information for the expressed purposes on the research program. This includes having a conversation regarding the research project or its participants in a place where such a discussion might be overheard; or discussing any Confidential Information in a way that would allow an unauthorized person to associate (either correctly or incorrectly) an identity with such information. I further agree to store research records whether paper, electronic or otherwise in a secure locked location under my direct control or with appropriate safe guards. I hereby further agree that if I have to use the services of a third party to assist in the research study, who will potentially have access to any Confidential Information of participants, that I will enter into an agreement with said third party prior to using any of the services, which shall provide at a minimum the confidential obligations set forth herein. I agree that I will immediately report any known or suspected breach of this confidentiality statement regarding the above research project to the University of Phoenix, Institutional Review Board.

Margaret H. Vianna   Margaret H Vianna   _June 19, 2013_
Signature of Researcher   Printed Name   Date

Zuian   GUSTAVO FERREIRA VIANNA   JUNE 19, 2013
Signature of Witness   Printed Name   Date

Appendix D

Interview Protocol and Interview Questions

ENTREVISTA DO ESTUDO NO CAMPO

O seguinte diálogo será usado antes da entrevista com cada participante para garantir confiabilidade nas 10 questões e uma pergunta extra de pesquisa:

Pergunta 1: "Olá, meu nome é Margaret. Eu lhe agradeço por ter concordado em participar no meu estudo, e sobretudo, pelo tempo valioso que você esta dedicando a este estudo. Se você decidir não mais participar neste estudo após esta primeira entrevista de trinta minutos, você pode me contactar pelo telefone XXXX-XXXX, ou me enviar um e-mail para louisehv@hotmail.com. Neste caso, eu eliminarei seus dados do estudo. Ok?"

Pergunta 2: "Durante esta primeira entrevista, eu gostaria de pedir sua autorização para gravar nossa conversa, pois não gostaria de perder partes de suas respostas. Você concorda com a gravação desta entrevista?"

Pergunta 3: "Ok. Obrigado. A gravação irá garantir que suas respostas sejam interpretadas com precisão. Eu agradeço por permitir que suas respostas sejam gravadas. Agora, uma vez que eu avaliar os dados de todos os participantes, pretendo revisitar os participantes para garantir que o que eu interpretei durante a entrevista inicial esteja correto. Você se importaria se eu contatá-lo para uma segunda reunião de 30 minutos para ter certeza de que minhas interpretações são o que você pretendia dizer?"

Pergunta 4: "Ok. Obrigado. Nós nos encontraremos quando for conveniente para você. Agora, durante a segunda reunião, você pode querer adicionar ou excluir informações das minhas anotações. Isso está ok com você?

Pergunta 5: "O próximo ponto é que eu gostaria de assegurar que todas as suas respostas serão confidenciais e seu nome ou o código identificador que você receberá não irão aparecer em qualquer revisão pública do meu estudo. Cada participante receberá um

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código de identificação ou um número para assegurar o anonimato no decorrer do estudo. Isso faz sentido?"

Pergunta 6: "Ok. Está ótimo. Assim, o procedimento de codificação seguirá o formato no qual cada aluno, cujos pais concordarem em participar, será codificado como S1, S2 e S3. O pai de S1 será codificado como PS1 (pai de aluno 1). Para alinhar o aluno com o respectivo professor, que concorda em participar no estudo, o professor será codificado como TS1 (professor do aluno 1). Esta mensagem de codificação irá assegurar o anonimato das respostas e reforçar a confidencialidade."

Pergunta 7: "Você tem alguma dúvida sobre a entrevista?"

FIELD STUDY INTERVIEW PROBES

The following dialogue will be used prior to the interview with each participant to ensure reliability with the research probes and one final question:

Question 1: "Hello, my name is Margaret. I thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. I would like you to know how I appreciate the time that you are dedicating to participate with this study. If you decide to not participate with this study after this first one-hour interview, you can either call me at XXXX-XXXX, or you can send me an e-mail to XXXX@hotmail.com. I will eliminate your data from the study. Ok?"

Question 2: "During the first interview, I would like to capture all that you have to say by tape recording your responses. Do you mind if I tape record your responses? Yes or no?"

Question 3: "Ok. Thank you. The recording will ensure that I have interpreted your responses accurately. I appreciate your allowing me to record your responses. Now, once I evaluate the data from all of my participants, I plan on revisiting the participants to ensure that what I interpreted during the initial interview is correct. Would that be ok if I contact you for a second meeting of 30 minutes to make sure my interpretations are what you intended?"

Question 4: "Ok. Thank you. We will meet when it is convenient for you. Now, during the second meeting, you may wish to add or delete from my notes. Would that be ok with you?"

Question 5: "Next, I would like to assure you that all of your responses will be confidential and your name or the identifier that you will receive will not appear in any public review of my study. Each participant will be give an identifier code or a number to ensure anonymity throughout the study. Does that make sense?"

Question 6: "Ok. That's great. So, the coding procedure will follow the format that for each student whose parents agree to participate, the student will be coded as S1, S2, and S3. The parent of S1 will be coded as PS1 (parent of student 1). To align the

student with the appropriate teacher who agrees to participate during the study, the teacher will be coded as TS1 (teacher of student 1). This message of coding will ensure anonymity of answers and reinforce confidentiality."

Question 7: "Do you have any doubts about the interview?"

PAIS

1. Para quais atividades você leva seu filho para participar depois da escola?

2. Com que frequência seu filho participa de cada atividade?

3. Quais atividades que você acredita serem as mais benéficas para o sucesso na obtenção de fluência em inglês?

4. Qual a principal razão para se acreditar que as atividades são essenciais para o sucesso na fluência em inglês?

5. Você utiliza a tecnologia como uma ferramenta para estimular a fluência em inglês em sua casa?

6. Que atividades, se alguma, são praticadas durante as férias de julho para manter o rigor intelectual / social (Internet / salas de Chat em inglês, trocas de e-mail)?

7. A quais fatores externos você atribui o interesse de seu filho/a em estudar inglês?

8. Você tem livros em inglês ou outras línguas em sua casa? Se sim, quantos?

9. Se assim for, qual o gênero dos livros em inglês?

10. Se você viaja no mês de julho e dezembro e nas férias de janeiro, você viaja para países onde a primeira língua é o inglês ou permanecer no Brasil ou na América Latina?

11. Quais outras maneiras você utiliza para incentivar o aprendizado do inglês em sua casa?

12. Você assina revistas infantis em inglês ou canais de televisão em inglês?

13. Que atividades culturais adicionais, se houver, você leva seu filho/a para enriquecer o aprendizado?

14. A que fatores internos (como motivação) você atribui o interesse de seu filho em estudar inglês?

15. Você definiria o seu filho como mais internamente motivado para estudar e aprender inglês ou mais externamente motivado? Explicar melhor o porquê.

ENCERRAMENTO:

Gostaria de acrescentar algo sobre a sua percepção dos fatores que podem influenciar a fluência em inglês do seu filho?

Obrigado por sua participação. Seu tempo e colaboração são importantes para a melhoria da qualidade da educação, instrução e currículo oferecidos. As informações que você forneceu durante esta entrevista permanecerão confidenciais.

PROFESSORES DE INGLÊS

1. Quais atividades que você acredita serem as mais benéficas para o sucesso na obtenção de fluência em inglês?

2. Qual a principal razão para se acreditar que as atividades são essenciais para o sucesso na fluência em inglês?

3. Você utiliza a tecnologia como uma ferramenta para estimular a fluência em inglês?

4. Que atividades, se alguma, são praticadas durante as férias de julho para manter o rigor intelectual / social dos seus alunos(Internet / salas de Chat em inglês, trocas de e-mail)?

5. A quais fatores externos você atribui o interesse de seu aluno/a em estudar inglês?

6. Quais outras maneiras você utiliza para incentivar o aprendizado do inglês em sua sala de aula?

7. Que atividades culturais adicionais, se houver, você acredita que podem contribuir para enriquecer o aprendizado do seu aluno?

8. A que fatores internos (como motivação) você atribui o interesse de seu aluno em estudar inglês?

9. Você definiria o seu aluno como mais internamente motivado para estudar e aprender inglês ou mais externamente motivado? Explicar melhor o porquê.

ENCERRAMENTO:

Gostaria de acrescentar algo sobre a sua percepção dos fatores que podem influenciar a fluência em inglês do seu aluno?

Obrigado por sua participação. Seu tempo e colaboração são importantes para a melhoria da qualidade da educação, instrução e currículo oferecidos. As informações que você forneceu durante esta entrevista permanecerão confidenciais.

Atenciosamente,

Margaret Huntingford Vianna

Doutorando

Universidade de Phoenix

PARENTS

1. What activities do you take your child to participate in after school?

2. How often does your child participate in each activity?

3. Which activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining English fluency?

4. What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

5. Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency in your home?

6. What activities/if any/ are practiced during the break in July to maintain intellectual/social rigor (Internet/English Chat rooms, e-mail exchanges)?

7. What external factors would you attribute to your child's interest in studying English?

8. Do you have English books in your home? If so, how many?

9. If so, what genre are the English books?

10. If you travel during July and December and January vacations, do you travel abroad to English-speaking countries or remain in Brazil or Latin America?

11. What other ways do you promote learning English in your home?

12. Do you subscribe to English children's magazines or English channels on Television?

13. What additional cultural activities, if any, do you take your child to, to enrich learning?

14. What internal factors (such as motivation) would you attribute to your child's interest in studying English?

15. Would you define your child as more internally motivated to study and learn English or more externally motivated? Explain further why.

CLOSURE:

Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your child's English fluency?

Thank you for your participation. Your time and input are valuable for improving the quality of education, instruction and curriculum offered. The information that you have provided during this interview will remain confidential.

EFL TEACHERS

1. What activities do you believe are more beneficial to the student obtaining success in English fluency?

2. What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

3. Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency?

4. What activities/if any/ are practiced during the break in July to maintain intellectual/social rigor (Internet/English Chat rooms, e-mail exchanges)?

5. What external factors would you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

6. What other ways do you attribute to learning English in your classroom?

7. What cultural activities, if any, do you believe contribute to enrichment of your student learning English?

8. What internal factors do you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

9. Would you define your student as more internally motivated or externally motivated to study and learn English? Explain further why?

CLOSURE:

Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your student's English fluency?

Thank you for your participation. Your time and input are valuable for improving the quality of education, instruction and curriculum offered. The information that you have provided during this interview will remain confidential.

Sincerely,

Margaret Huntingford Vianna

Doctoral Candidate

University of Phoenix

Appendix E

Modified Interview Probes After Panel of Experts' Input

PAIS

1. Para quais atividades você leva seu filho para participar depois da escola?

2. Com que frequência seu filho participa de cada atividade?

3. Quais atividades que você considera mais benéficas para o sucesso no desenvolvimento da competência/fluência em inglês do seu filho? Por que?

4. Você utiliza algum tipo de tecnologia educacional para desenvolver a competência/fluência em inglês em sua casa?

5. Durante as férias, seu filho (a) se envolve em atividades que requerem o uso do inglês? Se sim, quais?

6. Você cultiva o hábito de leitura em casa, por exemplo, com livros, revistas, jornais, brinquedos, jogos ou outros tipos de recursos que possam de alguma forma contribuir para práticas de letramento nesta língua em sua casa?

7. Você proporciona ao seu filho(a) oportunidades de contato com a língua inglesa durante as férias, por exemplo, viajando para países onde o inglês é a língua falada como L1 pela maioria das pessoas?

8. Quais outras maneiras você utiliza para incentivar o aprendizado do inglês em sua casa?

9. Quais fatores motivam o seu filho (a) a estudar inglês? Explique.

10. **Encerramento:** Você gostaria de acrescentar algo sobre a sua percepção dos fatores que podem influenciar a fluência em inglês do seu filho?

Obrigado por sua participação. Seu tempo e colaboração são importantes para a melhoria da qualidade da educação, instrução e currículo oferecidos. As informações que você forneceu durante esta entrevista permanecerão confidenciais.

PARENTS

1. What activities do you take your child to participate in after school?

2. How often does your child participate in each activity?

3. Which activities do you believe will be most beneficial for success in obtaining

English fluency? Explain why.

4. Do you use some type of educational technology to develop English

fluency/competency in your home? If yes, how?

5. During vacation time, does your child get involved in activities that require the use of

English? If yes, which activities?

6. Do you motivate reading at home, for example, with books, magazines, newspapers,

toys, games or other types of recourses that contribute to English language fluency?

Explain further, why.

7. Do you provide your child with opportunities to travel to countries where English is

the primary language of communication, so your child may interact and practice English?

8. What other ways do you use to promote learning English in your home?

9. What factors motivate your child's interest to learn English? Explain further.

10. **Closure:** Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that

might influence your child's English fluency?

Thank you for your participation. Your time and input are valuable for improving the

quality of education, instruction and curriculum offered. The information that you have

provided during this interview will remain confidential.

PROFESSORES DE INGLÊS

1. Quais atividades que você acredita serem as mais benéficas para o sucesso na obtenção de fluência em inglês?

2. Qual a principal razão para se acreditar que as atividades são essenciais para o sucesso na fluência em inglês?

3. Você utiliza a tecnologia como uma ferramenta para estimular a fluência em inglês?

4. A quais fatores externos você atribui o interesse de seu aluno/a em estudar inglês?

5. Quais outras maneiras você utiliza para incentivar o aprendizado do inglês em sua sala de aula?

6. Que atividades culturais adicionais, se houver, você acredita que podem contribuir para enriquecer o aprendizado do seu aluno?

7. A que fatores internos (como motivação) você atribui o interesse de seu aluno em estudar inglês?

8. Você definiria o seu aluno como mais internamente motivado para estudar e aprender inglês ou mais externamente motivado? Explicar melhor o porquê.

9. **Encerramento:** Gostaria de acrescentar algo sobre a sua percepção dos fatores que podem influenciar a fluência em inglês do seu aluno?

Obrigado por sua participação. Seu tempo e colaboração são importantes para a melhoria da qualidade da educação, instrução e currículo oferecidos. As informações que você forneceu durante esta entrevista permanecerão confidenciais.

EFL TEACHERS

1. What activities do you believe are more beneficial to the student obtaining success in English fluency?

2. What primary reason do you believe the activities are crucial for success in English fluency?

3. Do you use technology as a medium to stimulate English fluency?

4. What external factors would you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

5. What other ways do you attribute to learning English in your classroom?

6. What cultural activities, if any, do you believe contribute to enrichment of your student learning English?

7. What internal factors do you attribute to your student's interest in studying English?

8. Would you define your student as more internally motivated or externally motivated to study and learn English? Explain further why?

9. **Closure:** Would you like to add anything about your perception of the factors that might influence your student's English fluency?

Thank you for your participation. Your time and input are valuable for improving the quality of education, instruction and curriculum offered. The information that you have provided during this interview will remain confidential.

Appendix F

Demographic Questionnaire for Participants

Questionário- Informações Pessoais (Demográficas)

Instruções: Complete o questionário, respondendo às perguntas sobre suas informações pessoais. Todas as informações permanecerão anônimas.

Nome:

_____

Data de nascimento: _____

Profissão:

_____

Nível Educacional:

_____

Endereço:

_____

Telefone (s) de Contato:

_____

Número de filhos:

_____

Você viaja internacionalmente?

_____

Você fala uma outra língua fluentemente?

_____

Se sim, qual língua? _____

Obrigado pela sua colaboração. Todas as informações serão mantidas em sigilo.

Participante Número _____ (PS _____)

Questionnaire- Personal Information

Instructions: Complete the questionnaire by answering the questions about your personal information. All information will remain anonymous.

Name:

_____

Date of Birth (Age):

_____

Profession:

_____

Level of Education:

_____

Address:

_____

Contact phone number(s):

_____

Number of Children:

_____

Do you travel abroad?

_____

Do you speak a second language fluently?

_____

If yes, which language?

_____

Thank you for your collaboration. All information will remain confidential.

Participant Number _____ (PS _____)