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A VOICE: THE ROLE OF CHILD INTERPRETERS IN THEIR PARENTS' IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCE IN CANADA

by

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A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

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ABSTRACT

Child interpreters are children of immigrant parents who have limited proficiency in the host country's official language(s) and serve as their parents' interpreters. Child interpreters, therefore, become their parent's voice throughout their settlement in the host country. This paper explores the experience of Portuguese-Canadian immigrant parents who use their children as interpreters. More specifically, it investigates the extent to which child interpreters shape and/or influence their parents' immigration and settlement experience in Canada. As I will demonstrate, my research found that child interpreters, as their parents' voice, play a significant role in their parents' experience in Canada. From interpreting at the doctor's office to interpreting during the purchase of a home, the parents in this study agree that their immigration experience would not have been the same without their children as interpreters.

Key words: immigrant parents; child interpreters; Portuguese-Canadian; immigration; settlement; language proficiency; language barrier.

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1. Introduction

Among the most trying tasks for individuals and families upon migration is the acquisition and development of proficiency in the host country's official language(s), which can be quite difficult and may result in setbacks during their settlement. For immigrant families, other settlement processes may take greater importance, such as securing employment, housing and their children's education, which may result in giving less priority to their lack of official language skills. A recent phenomenon has emerged in academic research and literature directly related to this language issue, that of child interpreters. Also identified as language brokers (Tse, 1996; Buriel *et al.*, 1998; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Valdés, 2003; Morales *et al.* , 2005; Jones and Trickett, 2005; Weisskirch, 2005, 2006, 2007; Love and Buriel, 2007); cultural brokers (Jones and Trickett, 2005; Trickett and Jones, 2007); and para-phrasers (Orellana *et al.*, 2003a, 2003b), child interpreters are children of immigrant parents who serve as interpreters in various settings in order to facilitate the communication between their parents and parties from the host society. They are chosen because they are often the first members of the family who attend educational institutions in the host country and are therefore more exposed to the dominant language and culture on a daily basis in comparison to their parents (Buriel *et al.*, 1998; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Morales and Hanson, 2005; Jones and Trickett, 2005; Weisskirch, 2005, 2007).

The recent interest in this topic implies the limited amount of research that has been conducted, especially within the Canadian context. There are many issues which this topic sheds light on, including: language acquisition by immigrant families; linguistic accommodation and access to services for immigrants with language barriers; provision of interpretation services in

various service sectors; the appropriateness of the use of one's child to serve as an interpreter; and the implications this practice may have on all the parties involved including the parents and family, the child interpreter and the third parties. The literature, however, has focused on the child's role and the effects that the role has on them in various aspects, including emotionally, psychologically and academically. It explores the practice and its positive and negative implications affecting mainly the child. The perspective of service providers is also provided in some of the literature, mainly that of health service providers (Jacobs *et al.*, 1995; Cohen *et al.*, 1999). In addition, the majority of the literature is American, and to a lesser extent British. The American research has a concentration on Latino (Tse, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999; Buriel *et al.*, 1998, 2005; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Orellana *et al.*, 2003a, 2003b; Weisskirch, 2005, 2006b, 2007; Worthy, 2006; Love and Buriel, 2007), Chinese (De Ment *et al.*, 2005; Tse, 1996), and Vietnamese (Trickett and Jones, 2007; Tse, 1996) immigrants, in addition to immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (Jones and Trickett, 2005). The concentration of British research is conducted on Punjabi-speaking immigrants in England (Kaur and Mills, 1993).

This research project will build not only on the literature pertaining to the use of child interpreters, but on that of the very limited literature on Portuguese-Canadian immigrant parents. The gap that I identified in the research is the parental perspective. Although the literature is very insightful and informative, it lacks an understanding of how the parents perceive their use of children as interpreters as well as how their children acculturate them into the host society and the extent to which they influence and shape their immigration and settlement experience.

The use of child interpreters has many implications, such as the effect the practice has on the interpreters themselves as well as the impact it may have on the family dynamic as a whole;

and the extent to which immigrants are accommodated linguistically within various institutions and service providers (from hospitals, schools and government offices, to phone companies, banks and pharmacies). Additionally, there are many policy implications which need to be raised, as part of the problem is rooted in the lack of interpretation services and policy surrounding the language barriers that immigrants are confronted with in Canada. This research project will, therefore, explore the parental perspective and provide some insight into the extent to which child interpreters shape and influence their parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada.

2. Literature Review

One of the major gaps that exist in the research on child interpreters is the parental perspective of the practice and its effect on their acculturation into the host society. Many researchers claim that the role of the child as an interpreter leads to the acculturation of the parents, but the extent to which this occurs has yet to be explored. Undoubtedly, these children do play a pivotal role in their parents' communication and access to the dominant society. Although the current literature provides insight into the effects that this practice has on the child interpreter, it is necessary to approach the topic more holistically, by including the parent's point of view. This perspective is of interest because it will give a voice to those who belong to a linguistic minority and have a language barrier with the dominant society, and as a result are often silenced in their immigration experience simply because of their inability to communicate. In addition, there is very minimal research and literature addressing this topic within a Canadian context. Canada's linguistic mosaic is of vital importance to the topic of language barriers that immigrants face, and to the use of child interpreters. The research and documentation of

immigrants with these experiences should be of great consideration in the development of policies and legislation in Canada that affect one's immigration and settlement experience.

This review will survey the following principal themes; first, the literature specifically pertaining to child interpreters will be presented, including: the role of child interpreters and practice of interpreting; the negative and positive effects that the practice has on the child; the effects that the use of child interpreters has on the family dynamic; and the parental perspective. Second, the experience of non-official language speaking immigrant parents will be discussed, including their struggles, access to resources and services, and their dependency on their children. Third, a brief outline of Portuguese migration to Canada will be provided, including their settlement and integration into Canadian society. This survey will be followed by a discussion of theoretical frameworks which set the foundation for the topic, and lastly, the review will be followed by a discussion of the literature and the contribution that my research project hopes to make to the field.

2.1. Child Interpreters

2.1.1. Definitions and roles of child interpreters

Child interpreters are referred to in various ways by authors and researchers, the most common being 'language brokers' (Tse, 1996; Buriel *et al.*, 1998; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Morales *et al.*, 2005; Jones *et al.*, 2005; Weisskirch, 2005, 2006, 2007; Love and Buriel, 2007). According to Tse (1996), language brokerage is the act of facilitating communication between two distinct linguistic or cultural groups. Language brokers are different from interpreters and translators in the sense that they become mediators between two parties rather than simply transmitting the information being shared. Since the language broker has influence over the

nature of content they transmit, they will "ultimately affect the perceptions and decisions of the agents for whom they act" (Tse, 1995, p.180). Essentially, these individuals must not only have full comprehension of the content that is being communicated, but a strong sense of what is being communicated and of how to deliver the messages or mediate the situation.

'Culture brokers' (Jones and Trickett, 2005; Trickett and Jones, 2007) is another term used to refer to child interpreters. Jones and Trickett (2005) define cultural brokers as mediators between their families and the host culture. Although there is a strong relation between a language broker and a culture broker, the latter term suggests that the role goes beyond interpretation or language brokerage, but acknowledges the inevitable connection that exists between language and culture and how these brokers navigate and negotiate between both the parent culture and the host society's culture in order to mediate their communication in a culturally appropriate manner.

Unique to Orellana *et al.* (2003a, 2003b) is the term "para-phrasing", which "deliberately invokes a play on the Spanish word *para* and its English translation "for", to name what children do when they "phrase" things *for* others, and *in order* to accomplish social goals" (2003b, p.15). Additionally, the term also draws on the parallel between translation and literacy practices at school where children are asked to paraphrase by using their own words (Orellana *et al.*, 2003b). This definition also underscores the fact that children might not be able to interpret a situation as accurately as a professional interpreter would. Instead, these children are reiterating the message in their own words, which they know will get the message across to their parents and others.

The roles and practices that child interpreters take on are of great importance and responsibility to their families. In many cases the role extends beyond the private sphere of the

home and into the public sphere, and encompasses everyday activities as well as more complicated ones. Jones and Trickett (2005) explain that the role involves many activities such as, "translating documents sent home by a local school, arranging for doctor's appointments, answering the telephone, or simply explaining to parents what their native-speaking friends are talking about when visiting the home" (p. 405). Evidently, the tasks vary in difficulty and regularity, as some, such as accompanying a parent to the doctor's office, may be much more difficult and less frequent than translating what native-speaking friends are saying. Researchers agree as well that the role of children and adolescents as interpreters also leads to their role as decision makers within the family, making decisions not only for themselves but for their parents and siblings (Kaur and Mills 1993; Tse 1995).

In his study of Mexican immigrants in the United States, Valenzuela (1999) identifies three roles which language brokers undertake: the first as *tutors*, the second as *advocates* and the third as *surrogate parents*. Their role as *tutors* encompasses interpreting and translating for their families, ranging from translating the news to interpreting at restaurants. Additionally, the children in the study found that they were teaching their parents about certain activities and skills, much like a tutor. Their role as *advocates* extends beyond interpretation and translation and includes intervention, mediation and advocacy on behalf of their parents and family in various situations including financial and legal difficulties. Lastly, as *surrogate parents*, child language brokers often actively participate in the functioning of the family by completing tasks such as cooking and baby-sitting and taking care of younger siblings. Valenzuela also notes that at times these children were consulted by their parents regarding discipline for their younger siblings.

Clearly, the role that child interpreters play in their immigrant parent's immigration and settlement experience is of great importance, and, as Orellana *et al.* (2003a) have suggested, they play a major role in the survival of their families in the host country. Due to the complexity and difficulty of the role of these children and adolescents, the literature extensively discusses both the negative and the positive effects that the role can have on the child interpreter.

2.1.2. The effects on the child

The literature discusses, in particular, the effects that language brokerage has on children and adolescents. The research examines a number of effects, ranging from personal and psychological to academic and developmental, that the role of interpreter has on the child. Both the negative and positive effects warrant examination.

In their study of Mexican, Chinese and Vietnamese American college students, De Ment *et al.* (2005) state that, in comparison to their non-interpreter immigrant peers, child interpreters are more exposed to potential stress because of the added responsibilities of interpreting a language and culture for their parents. In Kaur and Mills' study (1993) of young Punjabi-speakers in England, participants reported feeling exposed, obligated and uncomfortable with their duties as interpreters. Tse (1996) adds that, in addition to stress, child interpreters also feel that their responsibilities are a burden to them. Additionally, feelings of frustration when translation or interpretation became difficult, resentment because of having to miss out on certain activities in order to interpret for a family member, as well as embarrassment for their parent's low English proficiency were all reported in McQuillian and Tse's (1995) sample of Asian and Latino American language brokers. Evidently, these negative effects are indicative of the degree of

difficulty and responsibility that children and adolescent immigrants face as interpreters for their parents and family.

One of the most discussed sites of child interpretation is the health care system. As reported by Orellana *et al.* (2003a), children "are active participants in the presentation of health information and in families' health-related decisions" (p. 518). Although they make health and medical services accessible to their family members, there are many opposing views regarding the use of child interpreters in such settings. For example, Cohen *et al.* (1999), in their study of General Practitioners (GPs) in England and their views on the appropriateness of children being used as interpreters in their offices, found that there is more of a concern for the well-being of the child than on misinterpretation. They feel it is inappropriate for children to be not only aware of a parent's illness, but to possess the power in those situations, since this has a significant impact on the dynamics of the family (Cohen *et al.*, 1999). Furthermore, in such delicate and private situations, it is important to note that children not only become aware of the illnesses and treatments that their parents must face, they are the ones who must translate and mediate the communication between the physician and the parent and ultimately influence medical decisions that must be made. Lucilia Pulido, a former child interpreter who constantly accompanied her mother to the doctor's office, admits that there were times when she made decisions for her mother without her permission (as quoted in Orellana *et al.*, 2003).

Naturally, the use of child interpreters in medical and legal settings has received negative attention due to the degree of difficulty and sensitive nature of the material being communicated. Concern also lies in the repercussions that may result in the case of misinterpretation and, more importantly, the protection of the child from exposure to such situations. Law makers in

California introduced Bill 292 in 2002 which would prohibit the use of child interpreters in "medical, legal, and social service settings" (as quoted in Morales and Hanson, 2005, p. 470). The law makers argue that, "(a) children are not translating information accurately, (b) translating legal and medical information may negatively affect parent-child relationship, and (c) delivering information to a child about a serious medical condition may be traumatizing to the child" (Morales and Hanson, 2005, p. 471). These arguments are valid and reflect the views of the General Practitioners in Cohen *et al.*'s study (1999), which have as their main focus the protection of the children. Even though there seems to be a consensus on this issue, the GPs did recognize that they accept the use of child interpreters because there are no other formal alternatives at certain times (Cohen *et al.*, 1999). It is, therefore, important to highlight the issues of provision and availability of formal or trained medical interpreters. In the province of Ontario, for example, there is no policy or legislation regarding the access to interpretation services in certain settings such as health care; therefore those with limited English proficiency often have to find other resources, such as informal interpreters, to access services, including health care (Hoen *et al.*, 2006). Adopting a law such as California's Bill 292 in Ontario or in any linguistically diverse space without providing a solution (*i.e.* access to interpreters), would be an act of discrimination against those who need interpreters to receive medical care or legal assistance. Thus, it is vital to understand why child interpreters are used as well as the gaps that exist in the health care or legal system before providing a solution which would inevitably widen the gap.

Undoubtedly, there are many negative effects that language brokerage may have on children which need to be addressed alongside issues of immigration and settlement. However, the research also highlights the positive effects that this practice may have on children which

should also be taken into consideration in the discussion surrounding the use of child interpreters.

While some studies reported negative feelings towards language brokerage, others report the positive effects of interpreting on children. For example, Tse's (1995) study of Latino adolescent language brokers reported positive feelings about their role, such as being proud to broker for their families, as well as feeling more independent and mature. The same study suggests that language brokers feel that their first and second language development was aided by their experiences in translating and interpreting (as quoted in Tse, 1995). In his study of Mexican-born language brokers in the US, Weisskirch (2006b) found that Mexican-American adults who were interpreters had higher self-esteem. In a later study, Weisskirch (2007) found that Mexican-American child interpreters felt content, confident, pleased and trusted when interpreting for their families.

In an earlier study, Weisskirch (2005) makes the connection between language brokerage and the positive development of one's ethnic identity, as reported in his study of Latino adolescents in the United States. Additionally, the ability to speak both the native and the host language results in close ties between both languages and cultures, making the child both bilingual and bicultural (Weisskirch, 2005). As Buriel *et al.* (1998) concluded, biculturalism has a positive correlation with academic performance; "Greater experience, competence, and comfort in two cultures may provide bicultural students with more problem-solving strategies, interpersonal skills, and self-confidence for accessing academic resources at school and in their communities" (p. 290).

The relationship that develops between the child interpreter and their parents is also highlighted as a positive effect of language brokerage. Morales and Hanson (2005) report that communication and understanding between children and parents is facilitated by language brokerage and allows the child to be informed and adult-like. Love and Buriel (2007) also mention how parental bonds are strengthened by language brokerage and indicate that the close relationship that child interpreters have with their parents is related to "higher self-esteem, lower depression, less antisocial behaviour, and less risk-taking behaviours than do their peers" (as cited, p.475). In De Ment *et al.*'s study (2005) of college students who interpret, the bond with their parents continues and is manifested in ways such as explaining and showing them their college schoolwork, even though they might not fully comprehend. This positive aspect is healthy for both the child and parents as they are able to maintain a healthy relationship in the difficult situations that they may encounter during their migration and settlement experience. Undoubtedly, the family structure is of importance when discussing the role of child interpreters. The following section will address the effects and possible shifts that the family dynamic may be subjected to because of the use of children as interpreters.

2.1.3. The effects on the family dynamics

So far, the role that child interpreters or language brokers assume when their parents do not speak the host country's official language(s) has been discussed. It is evident that there is a degree of power that the child is given within the family in order to perform their language brokerage duties. The literature also addresses this shift in power dynamics within the family. Kaur and Mills (1993) address this issue extensively in their study, saying that the interpreter carries great power, causing the children and parents to reverse their traditional familial structure

of power. A teacher-participant in the aforementioned study also stated that the child is “given responsibility and access, and access is power” (p.121). This power is manifested through their interpretations and communication to both parties and especially through the decisions they make. Since they become accustomed to this decision-making role, some children may automatically make their own decisions, without seeking their parent's opinion or approval (Kaur and Mills, 1993). These decisions that child interpreters make include ones regarding their own educational experience and that of their younger siblings (Tse, 1996; Orellana *et al.*, 2003a). As mentioned previously, some may even make decisions regarding their parent’s health care and treatment (Orellana *et al.*, 2003a).

De Ment *et al.* (2005) also found that children reported altering the message of the teacher during parent-teacher interviews at school which they brokered. Kaur and Mills (1993) also highlight the issue of child interpreters censoring or adding information in order to serve their own interests. In one case, a mother explains that her son was so persuaded by a video company salesperson that he persuaded his parents, who owned a business, to sign a contract that would force them to stock the company’s videos. The videos ended up being dated, therefore not selling, and the family had to take legal action in order to dispute the contract (Kaur and Mills, 1993). Clearly, these examples are indicative of the degree of power that the child assumes upon being used as an interpreter in a variety of settings.

The authority of the parent is suppressed when the child or adolescent assumes the role of family interpreter, which in turn may have repercussions for the family dynamic (Weisskirch, 2007). Jones and Trickett (2005) cite various researchers’ findings regarding cultural brokerage and its potential to cause negative consequences or conflict within the family. They believe that

cultural brokerage "overburdens the child and that the increased parental dependency on the child can undermine the normative power relationship between parents and children. Children may take advantage of this role reversal by filtering information to serve their self interest" (Jones and Trickett, 2005, p. 409). Undoubtedly, the role of a child interpreter can be one of great influence and power over the parents, and thus, cause a shift in the traditional dynamic of the family.

2.2. Immigrants and language barriers

2.2.1. Struggles and Limitations

Limited research exists on the experience of immigrants and parents who do not speak the official language(s) of the host country, the language barrier most likely being a cause of this lack of research and literature. Worthy (2006), who interviewed immigrant parents in the United States who do not speak English, describes their lack of English language skills as a 'handicap' in their lives that will greatly affect their children's future, a fact that they themselves are well aware of and frustrated by. One of Worthy's participants encapsulates his experience as a non-English speaking Latino immigrant in the US, saying that English is very important and that he feels inadequate when he is confronted with his language barrier, which he says is "just like missing an arm, like swimming with only one hand" (p.140). This handicap limits their access and freedom, in addition to causing both discomfort and frustration as they attempt to advance in the host country without a vital tool; the English language.

Parents in Worthy's (2006) sample identified many ways in which their limited English proficiency restricted their freedoms, and thus, further isolated them within their own Spanish-speaking community. The parents identified the following barriers: having to limit themselves to

travelling short distances from home because of the situations that could arise; communicating inadequately with their children's teachers, thus limiting their involvement in their child's education; experiencing limited employment opportunities due to their inability to speak English; and having difficulties communicating with their own children, especially the ones who identify themselves as English speakers (Worthy, 2006). These scenarios all result in the dependency of the non-English speaking parents on their children, whom they use as interpreters to limit the fear and the communication barriers they face with the outside world. In addition, the linguistic limitations of the parents may also limit the educational outcomes of children who wish to venture out to academic programs and institutions in mainstream society, because their parent's discomfort, lack of information and financial stability may halt such plans and aspirations, even though the child's education and future career opportunities were the most commonly cited reasons for migrating (Worthy, 2006).

2.3. Parental perspective on the use of child interpreters

Not only is research on immigrant parents with language barriers limited, the parental perspective on the use of child interpreters is also quite scarce. Kaur and Mills (1993) and Worthy (2006) are among those researchers who have addressed the parental perspective, which to a certain degree provides some insight into the feelings and perceptions of parents towards the use of their children as interpreters. One parent in Kaur and Mills' (1993) study implied that it would be very difficult for him to function without the help of his kids. Others expressed worry over the departure of the children from home, which would limit their accessibility to their interpretation services and the English speaking world (Kaur and Mills 1993).

Kaur and Mills (1993) report that, culturally, parents felt it was their children's obligation to help reduce the impact of the language barrier since the reason they migrated was to be able to provide them with a better life. In this case, the culture of these parents determines the responsibilities and obligations of the second generation such that serving as their parents' interpreters is seen as an early pay back for the opportunity that migrating has or will provide them with. On the other hand, Worthy's (2006) study reveals the gratefulness parents have for their children's help, and their pride in their child's ability to manage two languages and handle complex scenarios as language brokers.

Clearly, there are a few factors (*e.g*. culture, reason for migration) that shape the parental perspective on language barriers and the use of child interpreters, but further research is necessary in order to identify more factors and analyse their implications. This is essential to the field of immigration and settlement in Canada as it will provide a clearer picture of the experiences of the numerous families who are affected by language barriers and rely on their children as interpreters. These issues are not treated in Canadian literature, even though there are many ethnic groups that are affected by issues of language and face detrimental effects in their settlement and integration into Canadian society.

2.4. Portuguese immigrants in Canada

When the economic and social situation was looking grim during the mid- twentieth century in Portugal, under the dictatorship of Antonio Salazar and his right-wing 'New State' which the country was under from 1932 to 1974, and citizens were facing issues of unemployment, minimal wages and low levels of education and training, many made the decision to migrate to more prosperous countries, such as Canada, where one of the first large

waves of Portuguese arrived in 1953 (Marques and Medeiros, 1980). Upon their arrival, the Portuguese, the majority being males, filled labour shortages in the agricultural and railroad construction sectors and shortly thereafter began to sponsor their wives and families to join them in Canada (Teixeira and Da Rosa, 2000). Up until the 1970s Portuguese migration to Canada was quite steady until Canada's immigration policy became stricter and Portugal became a member of the European Union, which meant there was economic and social improvement for Portugal and less hope for entry into Canada (Teixeira and Da Rosa, 2000).

According to Teixeira and Da Rosa (2000), the vast majority of Portuguese-Canadians live in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, and are settled to a large degree in the census metropolitan areas (CMAs) of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. The communities that developed in these cities are considered 'self-contained' and 'self-sufficient' with the establishment by Portuguese immigrants of numerous institutions to serve their community. Additionally, their distinct spatial patterns in settlement resulted in their spatial and social isolation from Canadian society, which caused the segregation of the first generation and resulted in Portuguese Canadians being named one of the most segregated ethnic groups in the CMAs (Teixeira and Da Rosa, 2000). This enclave has inevitably led to the lack of integration of Portuguese immigrants into Canadian society.

Fernando Nunes, in collaboration with the Portuguese-Canadian National Congress (1998), produced a national needs-assessment identifying the various areas in which the Portuguese community in Canada is struggling, including: the academic underachievement of young Portuguese-Canadians; the lack of participation in Canadian politics and of political representation in addition to the lack of knowledge of the political process; the lack of English or

French language skills amongst the first generation; the constant difficulty in communication between the first and second generation; and the loss of the Portuguese language amongst the second generation. Stemming from these struggles are issues of integration into Canadian society, which inevitably has implications on one's settlement.

In focusing my research on the Portuguese-Canadian community, some of these settlement issues are likely to arise, especially regarding obstacles such as language barriers, which is of importance for my research project. In addition to investigating the use and prevalence of child interpreters by immigrant parents belonging to the Portuguese-Canadian community, there is also an opportunity to explore the immigration and settlement experience of these individuals and, more specifically, how their children as interpreters shaped and/or influenced this experience.

3. Theoretical frameworks

In order to set the foundation for the topic of child interpreters, it is necessary to outline two specific theoretical frameworks which assist in explaining the phenomenon of child interpreters. The most common theoretical framework utilized by scholars who study child interpreters, language brokers and/or cultural brokers is the acculturation theory (Tse, 1995; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Jones and Trickett, 2005; Weisskirch, 2005, 2006). Acculturation is described as the act of progressively adopting the norms, beliefs and values of the host society by immigrants (as quoted in Tyyskä, 2007). Therefore, child interpreters both acculturate themselves to the host society and are responsible for the acculturation of their parents and families. In Tse's study (1995), the majority of participants believed that their interpreting played a role in helping their parents learn about American culture. When the child or adolescent language brokers are responsible for most of the contact that their parents have with

the larger society, it is inevitable that they become the brokers for their parents' acculturation process, while simultaneously facilitating their own acculturation to the host society.

Familism is another theory to which scholars refer in order to explain the phenomenon of child interpreters (Valenzuela, 1999; De Ment *et al.*, 2005). Both De Ment *et al.* (2005) and Valenzuela (1999) use this theory to explain the use of child interpreters with Latino and Asian families. The focus of familism "is reflected in the strong sense of attachment and obligation that immigrant children and children of immigrants feel towards their parents" (De Ment *et al.*, 2005, p. 260). Valenzuela (1999) finds this theoretical framework of extreme relevance in his study because it is informative of the "interaction and social support patterns found in immigrant and Mexican-origin families" (p.722). Additionally, this theory provides insight into the settlement of families and how they deal with their language barriers. Consequently, both acculturation and familism theory provide a solid framework in explaining the phenomenon of child interpreters and their use within immigrant families.

4. Methodology

This project uses both quantitative and qualitative data to analyse the phenomenon of child interpreters through the perspective of the parents. More specifically, it seeks to uncover the extent to which these parents' immigration and settlement experience in Canada has been influenced and/or shaped by these young interpreters. The quantitative method utilized was in the form of a questionnaire with demographic questions as well as questions relating to the need for and the frequency of use of interpreters as well as a question regarding their immigration and settlement experience in Canada. The qualitative data collected was in the form of personal interviews with seven participants (four women and three men). The questions ranged from ones

pertaining to their English language proficiency and instruction, the use of their children as interpreters as well as other interpreters, and reflections about their immigration and settlement experience in Canada. The questionnaire allowed me to place their experiences into context as well as allowing the participants to begin to reflect upon their experiences, which they were asked to recall during the interviews.

Through my personal network of the Portuguese-Canadian community in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, with the help of other community members, I was able to recruit seven participants for my study. I asked family, friends, and acquaintances to ask certain participants instead of asking them myself directly to ensure that they did not feel obliged to participate. The logic was that they could say 'no' much more comfortably to the intermediary rather than to myself. This procedure would also ensure that no participants felt coerced into participating, and thus, doing so uncomfortably or unwillingly. When the invited participant agreed to be interviewed by me, I then contacted them to set up an appointment. All interviews were conducted at the participants' homes at times of their convenience. Both the questionnaire and the interview were conducted in Portuguese because of the nature of the research project, which seeks to uncover the experiences of Portuguese-Canadian parents with limited to no English language proficiency.

The limitations of this study include the limited number of participants as well as an unequal gender representation. Taking these two factors into account, this research project does not provide concrete answers nor is it representative of the views of all parents with limited English proficiency or of Portuguese-Canadian immigrant parents. This study provides, however, a glimpse into a perspective which has yet to be fully explored and documented

academically, and thus, hopefully will be added to the literature regarding the use of child interpreters as well as give a voice to those living with limited official language proficiency in Canada. Other limitations include ones difficult for the investigator to control, including the participant's willingness and comfort in answering all questions openly and honestly. Additionally, since the questionnaire and interviews were conducted in Portuguese, some of the original answers and/or explanations may lose some meaning when translated into English for the purpose of this study.

This study seeks to explore the experience of Portuguese-Canadian parents who may have had or continue to have limited English language proficiency, and thus, used or continue to use their children as interpreters for them in various situations. More specifically, this project seeks to uncover the extent to which parents feel their immigration and settlement experience in Canada has been influenced and/or shaped by their child interpreters.

This study does not seek to critique the positive or negative effects that the use of children as interpreters has on the children or on the family dynamic. Its aim is to explore the perspective of the parent and their experience immigrating and settling in Canada with a language barrier and the role their children played to ease this barrier of communication.

5. Sample

Four women and three men were interviewed for this study. A married couple were among those interviewed, and the interviews were conducted separately. Since the participants were asked to participate by other community members and the community is fairly small, the participant's real names will not be used. Also, their children's gender and exact age will not be shared since it might reveal the participant's identity. Certain details that participants revealed

may also make them identifiable, therefore there are parts throughout this paper where even the participant's pseudonym will not be used.

Two of the female participants are between the age of 45 and 55 and the other two are between the age of 55 and 65. One male is between the age of 45 and 55, the other between the age of 55 and 65, and the last male is over the age of 75. One participant arrived in Canada during the sixties, four participants arrived during the seventies, and the other two arrived during the eighties. Their age upon arrival ranges from 24 to 35 years of age. Three participants have two children; two participants have three children; and one participant has one child. The pseudonyms that will be used for the females are: Glória, Felicidade, Adelaide and Olinda. For the male participants, the following names will be used: Lúcio, Angelo and Roberto.

6. Findings and Analysis

6.1. The Barrier: Living with Low English Language Proficiency

In order to place this study and its results into context, it is essential to understand the barrier that these immigrants faced or continue to face as a result of their limited knowledge of the English language which, in turn, has led to their need for interpreters. The questionnaire used in this study asked participants to classify both their proficiency in the English language at the time of migration and their present proficiency in the language. During the interviews they were asked to reflect upon their experience as immigrants living with a language barrier as well as to identify their experience in learning the language through schooling, if they were ever enrolled. More than anything, the results illustrate that this language barrier, which all participants faced or continue to face, has caused much distress and frustration among them in their immigration and settlement experience in Canada.

All seven participants rated their knowledge of the English language upon migrating to Kitchener-Waterloo at zero. Although the responses varied when they were asked about their present knowledge of the English language, it is clear that there is a language barrier that they are plagued by: five participants rated their knowledge of English as poor or limited, and two of the seven rated it as satisfactory or sufficient. During the interview the participants were asked whether or not they had attended or were attending English as a Second Language classes or any type of English language instruction. Three participants stated that they never attended any school to learn English and the other four said that they had attended some sort of English language classes, varying from voluntary to mandatory attendance.

The participants who had never attended any English language instruction school or classes provided a very simple answer as to why they had not: the need to work and make money. Roberto gave the explanation that Portuguese immigrants came to Canada and dedicated themselves to working, as did he and many others. Although Adelaide gave birth recently after immigrating and her husband was working, she decided it was necessary to find employment to assist in alleviating her family's financial struggles. It is apparent that this dedication to work was not a choice for either Roberto or Adelaide, but an absolute necessity, since they both cited financial struggles upon migration as a reason to start working immediately instead of attending classes to learn English.

The participants who did receive English language instruction attended classes from periods ranging from approximately two months to one year. Two of the participants who voluntarily attended English language classes said that the stresses of life at home were too distracting, making it difficult to be in the classroom and concentrating on the lessons and

activities, and for Glória, this was reason enough to quit attending. The other two attended classes when they were on worker's compensation; therefore they were not working at the time. One participant, who attended an English language program as a mandatory requirement of worker's compensation, said that the experience was quite difficult because of his inability to correctly pronounce words in English. Additionally, he mentioned that he was being placed in classes that were beyond his level of proficiency, but once it was sorted out and he was placed in the appropriate level, he said that he learned a little bit. For example, he mentioned how he could read and write better than he could speak. He recalled communicating with his boss at work through notes he would write rather than speaking to him. He also says this is still the case today, where his writing and reading are more advanced than his oral communication abilities. Angelo echoes a similar experience learning English, which he did through a work-related English language program. He says that he learned a few things, such as how to write a cheque, but English pronunciation was one skill he never acquired. On the other hand, Olinda states that while learning English in school, writing exercises were the most difficult for her; she says she eventually quit attending possibly due to frustration.

Overall, with or without English language instruction at one point or another, all seven participants continue to struggle and feel the effects of living with a language barrier. Inevitably, they spoke of their personal and public experiences of not being fluent in English and the effect that it had or continues to have on their lives. When asked about how they feel about not being able to communicate, the responses were similar. Adelaide, who classifies her English language proficiency today as satisfactory or sufficient, recalls moments of tears in the years following her arrival in Canada due to her language barrier, which she confirms was the most difficult of obstacles during her settlement in Canada. Felicidade replied that it is sad because one cannot

talk or comprehend, and as a result one always has to ask for others' help to interpret for them. She continued saying that 'we', as in immigrants like herself with the same linguistic barrier, feel good here in Canada, but it is simply saddening that when one picks up a newspaper or a book or is watching television, few words are understood. When asked about how they felt about being an immigrant with a language barrier, one participant, who immigrated to Canada from Brazil, where the official language is Portuguese, simply said that there were times when they very much desired a return to either Brazil or Portugal.

Undoubtedly, these individuals had to deal with many personal feelings regarding their inability to communicate within Canadian society. Furthermore, some participants identified situations where they had been discriminated against and criticized by others in the public sphere. During her stay in the hospital after giving birth, one female participant recalls telling a nurse that she did not speak English, to which the nurse rudely replied, 'If you don't speak English, then I don't speak Portuguese!' Olinda also recalls being asked on numerous occasions by doctors and specialists why after so many years of living in Canada she still did not speak English. On a specific occasion, one participant recalls basically being told by a specialist during an appointment that her English would get her nowhere. One can make the connection between the attitudes, such as the one of this physician, and that of the resentment some immigrants feel to communicate with the English language skills that they do have. For example, Glória spoke of this apprehension and fear of pronouncing words incorrectly even though she does have some knowledge of the English language. Angelo also recalls when he first arrived to Canada, driving around helplessly to potential employers and approaching them with 'I look for job', an approach which rarely led to being called back. Inevitably, the public

sphere also caused much distress on top of the private distress these immigrants were already suffering due to their limited proficiency in the English language.

Overall, every single participant, whether they attended English language instruction classes or not, expressed their regret for either not continuing, for not enrolling upon arrival, or for not enrolling at all in a language course that would have provided them with the language skills that would have allowed them to speak English fluently and to do the following things: defend oneself in every situation; not have to ask others for help with interpretation; get a better job or position within a company; go to the doctor/specialist; have a social life; converse with one's neighbour; read a book or newspaper in English; watch television; talk to others; and go anywhere and everywhere. These are the everyday tasks that participants mentioned randomly throughout the interviews as being limited at one point or another because of their linguistic barrier. In addition, five participants stated that they strongly recommend to any new immigrant that they learn the language before they think about work, because they say that that was one of their most costly errors, which they greatly regret and which continues to have repercussions today.

6.2. Discussion: Understanding the Barrier

The evidence presented in this section seems to be cut and dry—immigrants chose not to, or could not learn English. In reality this theme is more complex and multifaceted. We can see that it was nearly impossible for these participants to attend school to learn English as the pressures of immigrating and settling in Canada were excessive and extremely stressful. Additionally, there was a financial factor that also hindered their ability to dedicate themselves to school rather than gather the necessary funds for survival. As all the participants mentioned, in

their opinion there were trends amongst Portuguese immigrants who came to Canada, including the need to work and make money and the notion of one day returning to Portugal. These trends, among others, will be discussed in order to place this discourse into context in hopes of better understanding the linguistic barrier. The state of English language instruction for adults in Canada also needs to be explored in order to understand the reasoning behind the existence of this barrier because, as is made evident in this section, even those who attended classes continue to have limited proficiency in the English language.

As previously mentioned, a few participants identified similarities between their own immigration and settlement experience in Canada with that of other Portuguese immigrants. Studies on the Portuguese community, as discussed in the literature review, tell us that many Portuguese immigrants came to Canada to escape the educational, economic and social disparities created during the dictatorship of Antonio Salazar and to seek a better standard of living (Marques and Medeiros, 1980). Participants agree that their lives have improved in Canada, but not without the hardships and struggles of being immigrants in a country where they do not speak either of the official languages. Factors that assist in explaining the reasons behind their limited acquisition of English: the need to work and be financially stable, the possibility of returning to Portugal and, finally, the network that eased their settlement experience in Canada.

Nearly all the participants stated that their initial goal in Canada was to find employment and make money as soon as they arrived, and some were able to do just that. Since all the participants arrived in Canada between the ages of 24 and 35 with young and/or growing families, and were escaping a country with an economic disparity, it is clear as to why their employment and financial goals were so important. It was this desperation, as many participants

explained, that led them not to learn English when they arrived. Roberto explained that Portuguese immigrants leave their country and dedicate themselves to work in order to start covering their expenses. Felicidade states that the reason she and other Portuguese immigrants did not go to school to learn English was because of the desire to work and make money and forget about the language, which today she cites as very important. As already mentioned, the importance of learning English was brought up by all the participants in addition to the regret they feel presently about their lack of English language skills.

Interestingly, another factor that hindered their willingness to learn English came up during the interviews and is also echoed in the literature on the Portuguese in Canada: the notion of one day returning to the homeland. "Nearly all Portuguese immigrants leave with the idea of going back 'home' one day" (Hamilton, 1970, p.2). This statement supports another interesting commonality amongst the participants: their dream of one day returning to their homeland. Five participants said that when they arrived in Canada, their plan was to return one day to Portugal with the money that they had been able to save by working in Canada. This is another reason that they did not learn the language upon arrival; they planned on returning as soon as they had earned enough money to live comfortably in Portugal. When asked if Portuguese immigrants did not learn English in order to work and make money, Adelaide responded "...the problem is that we [Portuguese immigrants] think that we arrive here and that within half a dozen years we'll become wealthy and return [to Portugal]. It's the illusion—and then why would it be necessary to learn the language? And that's why I think the immigrant doesn't go to school when they

migrate."[1] This opinion was echoed by other participants who added that in the end they stay in Canada permanently, and consequently, as is the case with this study's participants, settle with a language barrier.

Navigating oneself through various aspects of life, including employment, medical needs, and social life was somewhat eased for the participants due to the strong network that exists within the Portuguese community. For example, when Lúcio arrived in Kitchener and sought employment, he was only able to do so with the assistance and support of another Portuguese-Canadian acquaintance who spoke enough English to convince the boss of the factory to hire him, which he did. Higgs (1982) reports that this kind of networking with friends and family was frequent among Portuguese immigrants when looking for a job in Canada. According to Anderson and Higgs (1976), during the mid seventies, during which four of the participants had arrived, Portuguese-Canadian men in Kitchener-Waterloo were largely employed in the construction industry or in factories, whereas women cleaned homes privately or also worked in factories. Anderson and Higgs (1976) also find that Portuguese-Canadians struggle with the complexities of the English language, therefore find it easier to work in jobs where "Portuguese is the language of work" (p. 178). Adelaide and Glória both agree that one of the reasons why they were not forced to learn English was because they always worked with other Portuguese-speaking employees. For Adelaide, this was the case when she first started working at a factory, but eventually she moved on to a different department and began working with English-speaking

[1] "O problema é que chegamos aqui, e pensamos que estamos aqui meia dúzia de anos que arranjamos riqueza e vamos embora...isso é que faz muitas vezes..a illusão, e depois para que é perciso aprender a língua, e aí é o que eu penso que faz o imigrante não ir logo para a escola quando chega ao país que imigra." -Adelaide

employees, and it was then that she began to learn some English. Glória, on the other hand has always worked with Portuguese speakers and knows that it has resulted in her lack of English language development. She further explains that she believes this to be the case with many other Portuguese-Canadians and adds that "...we [Portuguese] always look for other Portuguese for the reason that we do not have to strain ourselves [with the English language]."[2] Here, Glória makes evident that there is a linguistic comfort zone within which Portuguese-Canadians operate to deal with their lack of English language skills. This is another factor in the choice of some Portuguese-Canadians not to learn English.

In order to complete this discussion, it is vital to understand also why it is that those who attended, and even graduated from, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or other similar programs still do not feel their English language proficiency is anything beyond minimal. Even though four participants put the effort into attending classes and learning English, they still came out of it with a language barrier. Duff *et al.* (2000) identify the problems with the methods of ESL programs including "the restricted opportunities of many immigrant ESL learners to interact with English speakers before, during, and after language and skills programs, thus preventing them from becoming integrated more fully into English-speaking society" (p. 11). Essentially, the authors believe that the English learners are not given the opportunity to communicate orally with English speakers and therefore they do not practice their oral communication. Three participants who attended classes, alluded to this notion in one way or another; Lúcio and Angelo both identified their oral or pronunciation skills to be their greatest weakness, whereas Olinda

[2] "...a gente sempre procura os portugueses por causa da razão de nao puxar por a gente." –Glória

mentioned that during her short time in class her writing skills were not very good, which could possibly imply that there was more of a focus on reading and/or writing skills rather than oral communication skills and pronunciation.

In Derwing and Rossiter's (2001) study of ESL learners' perceptions of their pronunciation, needs and strategies, they concluded that although there has been a call for more attention to and incorporation of pronunciation instruction in the classroom by researchers and instructors, the ESL students of the study made it evident that they are either not being taught pronunciation at all or that they are not learning from it if they are. They also state that there is a limited number of teachers who have been trained in teaching pronunciation and having classrooms with students of various linguistic backgrounds makes it even more difficult for the inexperienced instructor to teach pronunciation to the ESL learners. The authors conclude that there is a need for instructors to assess and evaluate the current pronunciation strategies they utilize and to develop appropriate strategies that will enable their ESL learners to communicate within society. One may apply this critique of ESL instruction to the experiences of Lúcio and Angelo, who both attended ESL classes, but were and are unable to effectively communicate orally. They both cited their pronunciation as being weak, which makes sense according to Derwing and Rossiter's (2001) critique of ESL classes and the lack of instruction in pronunciation and oral communication. All of these factors contribute to our understanding of why language barriers exist and are fundamental in helping us alleviate the language barrier many immigrants face.

As has been made evident throughout this section, it is important to understand the multifaceted nature of the topic of child interpreters and how they influence and shape their

parents' immigration and settlement experience in Canada. This discussion has provided an overview of the fundamental issue of living with a language barrier as well as possible causes of this barrier. The following section will address the repercussion of this initial issue; the need for interpreters.

6.3. The Need: The Use of Interpreters

In order to put the use of children as interpreters into context, it is necessary to be aware of the participant's need and use of interpreters, in particular their children; but also interpreters other than their children. This section clarifies the need that these non-English speaking Portuguese-Canadians have for interpreters as well as their use of them in various situations. Additionally, this section will provide insight into the extent to which child interpreters shape and influence the immigration and settlement experience of their parents, which will be discussed in the final section of the findings.

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to identify the following: in which situations they have used or continue to use their children as interpreters; in which situations they have used someone other than their children as interpreters; and finally the frequency of which they use their children as interpreters. The contexts that they were asked about were: medical; legal; work-related; educational; shopping; bills; finances; television; news, newspapers or current events; and others not mentioned on the list.

The only situation in which all participants said that they have used or continue to use their children as interpreters is in medical situations. Legal matters and news, newspapers or current events were the next most frequent situations where six out of seven participants indicated having used or continuing to use their children as interpreters. Next, five participants said they

used or use their children in situations relating to their child's education and television programs. Using their children as interpreters in shopping and financial situations was identified by four participants, and employment and bills were identified by three of the seven participants. Lastly, only one participant named another situation which they use their child as interpreters, which is dealing with their neighbour regarding issues they may have.

When asked about the use of other interpreters, meaning interpreters other than their children, six out of seven stated that they had used other individuals for medical and employment or work-related situations. Three specified having used another interpreter for situations regarding their child's education and legal matters. Two out of seven stated that they had used another interpreter for shopping, bills, television and news, newspapers or current events. Finally, one participant indicated having used another interpreter regarding finances.

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to identify the situations in which they use their children as interpreters and to indicate how often they use them in each of these situations. All participants said that they used their children a few times a year as interpreters in all the situations they identified. Only one participant said that they use their child every month for help with the bills.

The interviews build on these responses and provide greater insight into the need for, use of and feelings toward the use of their children and others as interpreters by the participants. More specifically, the participants were asked to reflect on their need for interpreters, the evolution of their need, as well as on the use of and comparison between other interpreters and their children as interpreters.

When asked about why they feel they have needed or continue to need an interpreter, participants' responses varied. Some simply responded, "Because I don't know how to defend myself"[3], "Because of not knowing how to speak English well or understand"[4], and "Because I don't know. If I knew, I wouldn't need [an interpreter]."[5] Others explained that they feel that the other person will not understand them, as is the case with Adelaide, who says she feels that she is able to better comprehend the other person than the other person is able to comprehend her and therefore, she needs an interpreter because misunderstandings can take place during grave situations, such as in relation to medical matters. Roberto says that in certain situations of great importance, one might not feel confident in communicating effectively with one's limited English, such as in medical and government related situations as well as in signing contracts where people need to know what exactly they are signing for. Angelo feels that he needs an interpreter because in difficult times when he has to deal with a problem, he has been unable to communicate exactly what he wants to say. He provided a recent example of a conflict he had at a financial institution, in which he was able to communicate some of his thoughts to the representative, but unable to resolve the problem in the manner he would have liked to because of his limited English language proficiency. As a result, he had to seek a representative who spoke Portuguese and was able to help him. Evidently, the participants feel that their proficiency in the English language is not at a level where they are able to communicate or comprehend comfortably and confidently in various situations with English-speaking parties.

Participants were also asked whether or not their need of an interpreter has evolved since their migration to Canada. Not surprisingly, all seven participants said that they had a greater

[3] "Porque eu não me sei defender" -Glória
[4] "Por não saber falar bem o inglês, nem comprender" -Felicidade
[5] "Por não saber. Se soubesse, não percisava" -Olinda

need for an interpreter when they first arrived in Canada, in comparison to now. Olinda says that when she first arrived in Canada she needed an interpreter for everything, but as Portuguese businesses started to open, her need was somewhat eased. For example, once a Portuguese travel agency opened she could buy tickets on her own, without an interpreter. Interestingly, Angelo offered an explanation on how his and other's needs for interpreters evolve over time; he said that even though one may not speak fluently, with time and experience one becomes more comfortable in Canada, implying that although one may not speak the official language(s), one is still able to somewhat adapt to the adopted country and go about tasks comfortably. This notion may also be applicable to the other participants, as they all have had a good experience in Canada without being completely fluent in English.

All of the participants, at one time or another, used interpreters other than their children in various situations. These other interpreters ranged from family and friends to professional interpreters. The reasons that the participants provided as to why they used other interpreters included: their children were not born yet; their children were too young to interpret; their children did not have authorization to enter certain places such as the workplace; and problems with work and/or school schedules led them to find interpreters other than their children. Generally, the participants were satisfied with the use of these other interpreters, but only after being asked about the use of their children as interpreters and how they compare to the use of others were they more explicit in who they actually prefer to use.

As per the results of the questionnaire, it is evident that the participants of this study utilize their children as interpreters for them in various situations. One participant reported using their child as early as eight years old, but the majority began to use their children between the ages of

ten and fifteen. For the participants who had multiple children, they were asked which one they used most frequently to interpret and why. There were no trends in the responses, as each participant had unique answers. Some chose their eldest child simply because of their age, while others chose their youngest because they still live at home. One participant prefers one child over the other because of their ability to be more personable than the other child. Another said that they chose their one child because they are friendlier, involved in their parent's issues, and always willing to help with interpreting for them. Others identified linguistic competence in Portuguese and the ability to interpret and translate well as reasons for choosing one child over another. Overall, participants felt that all of their children were good interpreters and felt comfortable with any of them.

Finally, participants were asked to compare the use of their children with the use of other interpreters (including other family members, friends, acquaintances, and/or professionals). Adelaide says that although the other interpreters did a good job and she is satisfied with the assistance they provided her, she believes that having your child interpret for you is different because they have a different or greater interest in resolving whatever needs to be resolved with her interests in mind, partly because of their close relationship. Glória says there is a big difference between the use of other interpreters and that of her one child, whom she uses most often. She explains that she feels much more comfortable with this specific child and that only with him/her does she feel that she is able to say everything she needs to say, whereas with others she is more reserved. Felicidade echoed some of the same feelings. She said that "there is nothing like a daughter or son"[6] and that to a child "...one says everything, and to an outsider

[6] "...não há nada como uma filha ou um filho" -Felicidade

one doesn't want to say certain things."[7] On the other hand, when asked how he compares the use of his children to other interpreters, Angelo said that he feels his children are better interpreters for him because he trusts them to say exactly what he is asking them to say to the other person, whereas sometimes he feels other interpreters feel afraid to interpret certain things he is wanting to communicate.

Even though participants generally had good experiences with other interpreters, it is evident that the use of their children as interpreters was and continues to be their preference. The use of their children as interpreters is a result of the lack of English language proficiency of these participants, as discussed in the first section; this second section has described their needs and the solution that they came up with in order to navigate and survive many aspects of life upon their immigration and settlement in Canada. The following discussion will attempt to provide reasons why this solution was utilized.

6.4. Discussion: Understanding the Need

At this point it is important to properly address the reasons why parents use their children as interpreters and why it was and continues to be the solution to their lack of English language skills. This section will attempt to discuss this very question in order to better understand their solution to the problem. Certainly, there will be no concrete or correct answers, but connections between the participant's experiences and the existing legislation and literature relating to their need and use of interpreters.

Only one participant reported being provided with a professional interpreter when they had a worker's compensation hearing. Besides this participant, no others reported the use of a

[7] "E a gente a um filho diz tudo, e alias a uma pessoa de fora certas coisas não se quere dizer" -Felicidade

professional interpreter in any situation. A possible reason to explain this lack of professional interpreter use is the lack of legislation regarding the provision of such interpreters in situations other than in the court system, where those with limited language skills must be provided with an interpreter. Ontario, with its linguistic diversity, does not have any policy or legislation regarding access to interpretation services in certain settings, such as in health care (Hoen *et al.*, 2006), where medical misinterpretations may have detrimental effects on both the patient, the hospital and the health care system. This lack of provision and accessibility to professional interpreters is one of the reasons why low proficiency English-speakers must find alternate, informal and untrained interpreters, such as their children.

Additionally, the use of professional interpreters might allow the non-English speaker to speak more freely, whereas with a friend or acquaintance, they might feel uncomfortable revealing certain private information, which may be of significance to the cause and outcome of the situation. As previously mentioned, a few participants in this study also felt this reservation about revealing certain details to other interpreters. This issue inevitably leads to another explanation of why this solution of using children as interpreters has been used by Portuguese-Canadian parents: the theory of familism.

The theory of familism is based on the notion of attachment and obligation felt towards immigrant parents by their children (De Ment *et al.*, 2005). Valenzuela (1999), who uses familism to explain the prevalence of child interpreter use among Mexican-origin families, adds that the theory explains the interaction and support system that exists within such families. This theoretical framework may also be used to explain the use of child interpreters among Portuguese-Canadian families.

Anderson and Higgs (1976), in their book on the Portuguese-Canadians, address Portuguese family trends and issues upon migration and settlement, including the respect for and obedience to parents by children. In Bela Feldman-Bianco's (2000) article about Portuguese-American women who served as cultural brokers from the 1960s to the 1980s, personal accounts are told by these women and their experiences as interpreters and brokers for their parents. In their accounts it is clear that although it was a difficult task at times, it was a duty that they had to comply with since their parents were helpless in communicating with American society. Also, it is reported that even today these women maintain a strong attachment with their families and continue to broker and solve various problems they may have (Feldman-Bianco 2000).

With this evidence, one can apply the theory of familism to explain why children are chosen as interpreters for Portuguese-Canadian parents who do not speak English. The majority of participants preferred to use their children as interpreters and did not report any disobedience and/or rebellion from their children regarding the duty they were called upon to complete. One participant in particular, Lúcio, claimed that if his children were helping him, they would also be helping themselves, meaning that there was a great sense of responsibility as an interpreter, not only for their father, but for themselves and the family, which reinforces this theory of familism and its notion of obligation towards the family. Orellana *et al*. (2003b) also maintain that the practice of 'para-phrasing' in immigrant households is prevalent due to the notion that there is an expectation "that all members of a household or family should pool their skills and resources for the good of the whole" (p. 23). The close-knit nature of the Portuguese family and its collective mode of operation, thus, furthers our understanding of why children have been chosen to be used as interpreters for and by their parents.

The connections that have been made between legislation and theory to the use of child interpreters do not provide the concrete answer as to why child interpreters are the solution, rather it allows us to begin thinking of alternate reasons why it has become the solution. Keeping this discussion in mind, one can move forward in terms of policy recommendations and research studies that will further our understanding of the topic. Up to this point the foundation has been laid in order to understand the result that has come of this phenomenon; the role of child interpreters in the influencing and shaping of their parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada.

6.5. The Result: Child Interpreters and Their Parents' Immigration and Settlement Experience

This third and final section continues to draw on the perspective which has been absent in the literature concerning child interpreters and which this project aimed to shed light on; the parental perspective. The extent to which child interpreters shape and influence their parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada will be revealed and, as a result, answer the main research question of this project.

First, the questionnaire asked the participants to rate their immigration and settlement experience in Canada, with the options being: very poor; poor; satisfactory; good; and very good. Four out of the seven participants rated their experience as being 'good' and the remaining three rated it as being 'very good'. These statistics illustrate the very positive feelings that the participants have towards having chosen to migrate and settle in Canada. The next and final question on the questionnaire was to what extent their immigration and settlement experience in Canada has been shaped and/or influenced by their child, to which the options were: not at all; very little; little; somewhat; and very much. Six out of seven replied 'very much' and the

seventh replied ‘little’. The intention behind this question and its placement as the final one in the questionnaire was to get the participants thinking about how their children have done this before and during the interview that followed. Although the answer to this question is the main research question of this project, the responses during the interview provided the most evidence to answering the question. This is also the case for the participant who responded ‘little’ to the question.

During the interview participants were asked how they felt about having their child or children interpret for them; the qualities they possessed which made them a good interpreter; whether they felt their child played the role of an ‘advocate’ or ‘interpreter’; if they provided neutral interpretations; who they felt they interpreted for; how they have influenced any decisions they have made; how and if their experience would have been different without an interpreter and without their child as an interpreter. The responses to these questions in addition to the personal accounts and memories provided by some participants made it clear that these children played and/or continue to play a very significant role in the immigration and settlement experience of their parents in Canada.

The parents of this study all claimed to feel content, good, comfortable or proud to have their child interpret for them. Glória explained that she felt good having her children interpret for her because she feels as if it were her talking. Adelaide explained that she likes how she and her children are able to discuss the subject matter before, during and after the interpretations take place, therefore she feels comfortable knowing that they are able to discuss any matter that may come up.

Although the majority of the participants did not choose one single child as an interpreter, they did indicate the qualities that their child possesses that they like in an interpreter. Adelaide identified two different qualities her two children possess. First, she likes how her one child is more aggressive and battles issues until the end, and second, she likes how her other child asks a lot of questions especially regarding any medical concerns. Glória said she specifically likes her one child's qualities which include his/her ability to effectively explain things to her, despite being the youngest; the ability to speak Portuguese well; involvement and knowledge of her issues; and the constant willingness to assist the mother. Felicidade similarly identifies her one child's ability to explain and properly interpret in various situations as well as the child's proficiency in Portuguese as qualities she prefers in her children as interpreters. Olinda said that her child has great qualities as an interpreter, including being very resolved and resourceful, and at times she does not even need to tell them what to say, nor do they ask. Clearly, the participants have certain preferences when it comes to the qualities their children possess as their interpreters. Overall, the participants were very satisfied with the interpretation work of their children and felt they had positive qualities as interpreters.

The participants were asked what kind of role they felt their children were taking on: advocate (someone who speaks on your behalf) or interpreter (someone who transmits your messages). Six participants answered similarly saying that they believed they inevitably played both the role of interpreter and advocate. Only one participant, Angelo, identified his children as being interpreters and not advocates simply because he feels they interpret everything he says, therefore not needing them to defend him, but only to transmit his message to the other parties.

One of the participants who identified her children as being both interpreters and advocates is Glória who added that she feels that her children also live her needs and are aware of her needs and feel it is their right to help her. These sentiments of obligation and loyalty were echoed in different ways by other participants who believed that as their children, the child interpreters inevitably also advocated or defended them in addition to interpreting for them.

Another participant agreed that her child plays both roles, and that they always became an advocate in situations where they saw that their mother's case or stance weakening. She continues describing her child's six year fight with the officials from the worker's compensation board over their assessment of her work related injury. The participant credits her child with having gained a better assessment of her injury and having fought for her rights. Another participant, who also believes his children play both interpreter and advocate, recalled a specific experience when asked this question. He told me about a time when he had to go to court and took with him his eldest child, who was eighteen years old at the time. He remembers his child speaking on his behalf for twenty minutes straight in English, and him not understanding a word of what his child had said.

When asked if they felt their children's interpretations were always neutral, six out of the seven participants believed their children's interpretations to be neutral, some explained that they never felt that their children were inclined to a specific side. Roberto's response went beyond the question as he explained that his children's interpretations are not always neutral because they have their own thoughts and opinions which inevitably come out through their interpretations to him, which he believes are always positive for his decision making.

The participants were also asked whether they felt their children were interpreters for them, for the other person or institution, or for both. All the participants agreed that their children served as interpreters for both parties. Adelaide explained that although she felt her children were interpreters of both parties, she feels that at times, for example at the doctor's office, her children are more interpreters for the doctor than for her because she is able to better understand the doctor than the doctor would be able to understand her, therefore her children were interpreting more for the doctor's benefit.

When the participants were asked how they felt their child had influenced any decision they made or continue to make, they all answered affirmatively. One participant revealed that their recent move to another city was greatly influenced by their children, a decision they would have never made without them. Olinda admitted that many times her child ends up making decisions, which she supports and trusts. Roberto said that especially in medical concerns, his decisions are influenced by his children. Overall, it was made quite clear that these parents were satisfied with the manner in which their children's interpretations have influenced or influence any decisions they need to make.

Participants agreed that their immigration and settlement experience would have been very different had they not had anyone as an interpreter; and this difference would have been for the worse. One participant described a situation that occurred when he first arrived in Canada, where his social insurance number was unintentionally given to someone else, and at income tax return season, he suffered the penalty. He says if he had not had anyone to help interpret and defend him, as he did in this situation, many times he would have just had to give up and stop fighting. Roberto claimed that at least seventy-five percent of his life would be different today,

had he not had anyone as an interpreter. Other participants could not fathom the thought of not having an interpreter to help them; "It would be impossible, I think"[8] said Lúcio. Clearly, all the participants were affirmative in their responses and had a difficult time imagining what it would have been like without an interpreter.

The next question was very similar, but distinct. I asked if their immigration and settlement experience in Canada would have been the same without their children as interpreters. The vast majority of respondents said it would not have been the same. Four participants said it would have been different because they would have had to ask others from 'outside the home'. Olinda and Lúcio, who both attended school to learn English, said that they would have had to spend more time in school.

In terms of employment and finances, however, Angelo stated that his experience would not have been totally different because his children did not play any role in securing him with a job or money. This is the same participant who rated his immigration and settlement experience in Canada being shaped and/or influenced 'little' by his children. However, throughout the specific questions regarding his children he did admit that his children have undoubtedly given him much access to society as interpreters for him and overall his experience would have been different as he would have had to solicit others for help.

Glória maintained that it would have been a totally different experience for her, for the worse, and she would feel apprehensive and less willing to ask others to interpret for her. Adelaide said that by having to ask others to interpret for her, she would have felt uncertain that they would have had the same interest in resolving her problems as her children have because

[8] "Era impossível, acho eu" -Lúcio

their sentiments are not the same, and children always try to resolve matters because it is for their parent's good.

One participant stated that her experience would have been different because her child has been a fighter for her and she feels that if it were not for her child, many aspects of her life would have been different because she simply did not have the same will and determination as her child did in fighting to solve her problems. She provided an example regarding her ordeal with her worker's compensation claim. She said that her child was always by her side and was even her interpreter on the day her case was resolved. She indicated that her child continued and continues battling both for herself and her husband. The participant admits that she would not be where she is today without her child and says that because she knows that many times she would have just given up, rather than fighting alongside her child.

Another participant also revealed an interesting example regarding the resilience of his oldest child. Merely eight years old at the time, his child was his interpreter when he bought his first home in Canada. When explaining this situation, he was noticeably very proud of having his child help him and he knows that his experience would have been a totally different one had he not had his children interpret for him.

Undoubtedly, the participants revealed the vital role that their child interpreters played in their immigration and settlement experience in Canada. The participants agree that their experience would not have been the same in many aspects had they not had their children as interpreters. The following section will discuss these responses and experiences more in depth.

6.6. Discussion: Understanding the Results

The preceding evidence answers the main question of this research project; child interpreters greatly shape and influence their parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada. The extent of this statement's truth is clear in the responses and the examples provided by the participants in this study. Since the perspective and evidence provided in this section is fairly unique, this discussion will attempt to understand the extent to which child interpreters played such an important role in their parent's experience as limited English-speakers based on the data collected in this study. First, acculturation theory will be discussed as a framework that will assist in understanding the role that child interpreters play.

As previously discussed, acculturation theory is used by academics who have conducted studies on child interpreters, language brokers and/or cultural brokers and their use by parents (Tse, 1995; Weisskirch and Alva, 2002; Jones and Trickett, 2005; Weisskirch, 2005, 2006). Acculturation is what occurs when immigrants progressively adopt the norms, beliefs and values of the host society (as quoted in Tyyskä, 2007). With this definition in mind, it is evident that children who serve as interpreters for their parents, and therefore become their access point to Canadian society in general, play a significant role in their parent's acculturation process. Participants agreed that their children did in fact provide them with access to society and many services and opportunities. By providing their parents with this access, they inevitably became the mediator between them and the host society as well as the representative and broker of the host culture in the home. Going through this process with their children, parents therefore develop their general opinion and notion of the host society through their children which may

explain why participants in this study indicated a great amount of trust towards their children's interpretations and opinions of various issues.

One important factor worth noting is the trust that exists between the participants in this study and their children. Most respondents are certain that their children provide accurate and neutral interpretations and have never attempted to sway any of the decisions that their parents needed to make. The reliance and trust that parents have for their child interpreters may additionally indicate the extent to which they allow their children to acculturate them into society and inevitably shape and influence their immigration and settlement experience in Canada.

The evidence also tells us that parents were and are dependent on their children for everyday tasks, such as interpreting something on television or in the newspaper, as well as greater, more complicated tasks such as interpreting at specialist appointments, or in court, and even in buying a house. Although these situations may be serious and very private with lasting effects on one's life, parents still reported feeling comfortable and confident in their child's abilities to relay the necessary information. This trust and confidence may also be derived from the notion that, as interpreters for their immigrant parents, children develop a stronger bond with their parents (Love and Buriel, 2007) and the communication between them is facilitated and the child feels more mature (Morales and Hanson, 2005). The bond that is created and the maturity of the child can be used to explain why this trust exists between the parents and their child.

Undoubtedly, the role of child interpreters in their parent's immigration and settlement experience is one of great magnitude. Participants reported positive feelings towards having used their children as interpreters and feel like their children have done so with great competence, even though they would have been much better if they could speak English and

defend themselves. Overall, the parents in this study are content with their experience here in Canada and know that it is in part due to their child's help in communicating with and accessing the larger community including socially, economically and culturally, in addition to providing them with an asset they do not have, a voice in the English-speaking world.

Even though their attempts to become proficient in English were unsuccessful resulting in their needing interpreters, the participants in this study are content with their choice to immigrate and settle in Canada with their families. They recognize the efforts of their child interpreters and the influence that they have had on their positive experience here in Canada. This recognition is especially evident when participants were asked if their immigration and settlement experience would have been different without their children as interpreters, to which all replied that it would.

It is clear that there is a bond or relationship that has been formed in which the children have assumed the responsibility of helping their parents, and parents have, in turn, placed their reliability and trust in their children. As a result, parents have allowed themselves to be influenced by their child interpreters, as they believe their intentions are always positive and in their favour and well-being. This may also explain why the vast majority of participants say they would rather have their child interpret for them rather than anyone else. The trust that has been established between the parent and child is unmatched by other interpreters.

Clearly, this phenomenon which has been occurring and continues to occur in immigrant families is fascinating and requires more consideration and research to help us fully understand it and uncover all the effects it has on the individuals involved, including the immigrants with language barriers, the child interpreters, any third parties and even Canadian society at large.

7. Recommendations for Further Research and Policy

In order to complete this project, it is necessary to discuss ways in which some of the problems discussed throughout this paper could be alleviated through further research and through policy and legislative changes.

In terms of further research, the topic of child interpreters and of parents and adults with low English proficiency should receive further study, especially in Canada. In studying the use of child interpreters, one will better understand this phenomenon and become more aware of issues surrounding it. More specifically, there is a need to explore the parental perspective on the use of child interpreters in order to develop a more complete picture of the topic. Weisskirch (2007) also agrees with this need for research on the parental perspective because it may "yield insight into the acculturation experiences and stresses of immigrant, non-English speaking, minority families" (p. 559). Undoubtedly, in an immigrant-receiving country like Canada, these types of issues are important to explore so that we can better understand immigrants' experiences in order to properly assist them during their settlement.

Additionally, more research should be conducted on English as a second language instruction in Canada. The curriculum and its instruction should be monitored and the success rates should be tracked in order to improve the programs. Consequently, these programs should receive more financial support from both the federal and provincial governments. In Kitchener-Waterloo, the Waterloo Region District School Board has ended their language training programs, among other immigrant serving programs, in order to save money (Aulakh, 2008). Unfortunately, these cuts do not solve the problem; instead, more immigrants are being disadvantaged by not being provided with the necessary services which would allow them to

successfully integrate into Canadian society. It is also necessary for there to be outreach to immigrants who are not newcomers and who continue to live with a language barrier. As seen through the responses of the participants in this study, there is still a need to support immigrants who are no longer newcomers to Canada, but who have been here many years.

Another issue that deserves attention is the providing of professional interpreters, especially in the health care system. According to the participants, they needed interpreters the most during doctor and specialist's appointments and had never used a professional interpreter in this setting. The participants agree that they use their children as interpreters in these situations because of their sensitivity, seriousness and fear of misinterpreting the health care provider's diagnosis. In order to eliminate miscommunication, which may lead to more serious problems and repercussions, interpreters should be provided for immigrants with a language barrier.

These research and policy recommendations are a step towards better understanding the immigrant population in Canada. Finally, becoming aware of the experiences of immigrants will create a more inclusive society into which immigrants may successfully integrate.

8. Conclusion

The topic of child interpreters is multifaceted. As seen through this research project, there are numerous factors which may contribute to understanding how and why child interpreters are used by immigrant parents who do not speak English. These factors are all vital in order to understand the extent to which child interpreters shape and/or influence the immigration and settlement experience of their parents in Canada.

This research project has explored the extent to which child interpreters shape and/or influence their parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada. Additionally, it has highlighted many of the causes and factors that have contributed to immigrants' lack of English language proficiency resulting in their need of interpreters in many aspects of their day-to-day lives.

This paper approaches the topic of child interpreters from a perspective that has not been greatly researched; the parental perspective. By exploring the parental perspective, the evidence of this project may be useful to understanding the topic of child interpreters in a holistic manner. It is vital to approach multifaceted topics, such as that of child interpreters, in this manner in order to understand the causes, effects and results of the issue. Additionally, this project also provides recommendations for further research as well as for policy additions and/or modifications.

In conclusion, as per the evidence and analysis presented in this paper, by providing their immigrant parents with a voice, child interpreters are giving their parents access to Canadian society. From helping them understand the evening news and daily newspaper to helping manage their finances and health, it is quite evident that child interpreters do execute a vital role in their immigrant parent's immigration and settlement experience in Canada.

9. *Appendices*

Appendix A: Participant Questionnaire (English Version)

Questionnaire

1. Age Range

35-45 45-55 55-65 65-75 75 +

2. Gender

3. Place of birth

4. Country you emigrated from

5. Year and age upon immigration to settle in Canada

6. Did you immigrate on your own? If no, please specify.

7. How would you rate your English language proficiency upon migrating to Canada?

NO ENGLISH POOR SATISFACTORY GOOD VERY GOOD FLUENT

8. How would you rate your English language proficiency today?

NO ENGLISH POOR SATISFACTORY GOOD VERY GOOD FLUENT

9. Which of the following situations did you experience, and for which one did you require your child to interpret?

MEDICAL □

LEGAL □

EMPLOYMENT □

EDUCATIONAL □

SHOPPING □

BILLS □

FINANCIAL □

TELEVISION □

NEWS, NEWSPAPERS OR CURRENT EVENTS □

OTHER □ Please specify

10. For which one did you require another person to interpret?, and why?

MEDICAL □

LEGAL □

EMPLOYMENT □

EDUCATIONAL □

SHOPPING □

BILLS □

FINANCIAL □

TELEVISION □

NEWS, NEWSPAPERS OR CURRENT EVENTS □

OTHER □ Please specify

11. How often did you ask your child to interpret or translate for you?

MEDICAL
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

LEGAL
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

EMPLOYMENT
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

EDUCATIONAL
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

SHOPPING
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

BILLS
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

FINANCIAL

Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

TELEVISION
Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

NEWS, NEWSPAPERS OR CURRENT EVENTS

Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

OTHER (Please specify)

Everyday Every Week Every Month Few Times A Year

12. How would you rate your immigration and settlement experience in Canada?

VERY POOR POOR SATISFACTORY GOOD VERY GOOD

13. To what extent has your immigration and settlement experience been shaped and/or influenced by your child(ren) interpreter(s)?

NOT AT ALL VERY LITTLE LITTLE SOMEWHAT VERY MUCH

Appendix B: Participant Questionnaire (Portuguese Version)

Questionário

1. Idade

35-45 45-55 55-65 65-75 75+

2. Género

3. País de nascimento

4. País de emigração

5. Ano e idade de chegada e establecimento no Canadá

6. Imigrou sozinho(a). Se não, explique.

7. Como classifica o conhecimento da Lingua Inglesa quando chegou ao Canadá?

Nenhum Pouco Suficiente Bom Muito Bom Muito Fluente

8. Como classifica o conhecimento da Lingua Inglesa hoje?

Nenhum Pouco Suficiente Bom Muito Bom Muito Fluente

9. Em quais situações é que você precisou ou precisa do seu filho(a) como intérprete?

SAÚDE □

ASSUNTOS LEGAIS □

TRABALHO □

ASSUNTOS ESCOLARES □

COMPRAS □

PAGAMENTOS □

FINANÇAS □

TELEVISÃO □

NOTÍCIAS, JORNAIS OU EVENTOS CORRENTES □

OUTROS □

10. Em quais situações precisou de outro intérprete (familiar ou profissional)?

SAÚDE □

ASSUNTOS LEGAIS □

TRABALHO □

ASSUNTOS ESCOLARES □

COMPRAS □

PAGAMENTOS □

FINANÇAS □

TELEVISÃO □

NOTÍCIAS, JORNAIS OU EVENTOS CORRENTES □

OUTROS □

11. Qual é a frequência que o seu filho(a) interpreta por si?

SAÚDE □

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

ASSUNTOS LEGAIS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

TRABALHO

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

ASSUNTOS ESCOLARES

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

COMPRAS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

PAGAMENTOS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

FINANÇAS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

TELEVISÃO

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

NOTICIAS, JORNAIS OU EVENTOS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

OUTRAS

Diariamente Todas as Semanas Todos os Meses Poucas Vezes ao Ano

12. Como é que avalia a sua experiência de imigração e establecimento no Canadá?

MUITO MÁ MÁ SATISFACTORIA BOA MUITO BOA

13. Até que ponto a sua experiencia de imigração e establecimento no Canadá tem sido influenciada pelo seu filho(a)

EM NADA MUITO POUCO POUCO LIGERAMENTE MUITO

Appendix C: Interview Questions (English Version)

Interview Questions

1. Have you ever taken English language classes or courses? If yes, for how long (go to question #2)? If not, why (go to question #4)?
2. If you did, what was your experience of learning English?
3. If you no longer take classes, why did you stop?
4. Why did or do you need an interpreter?
5. Has your need for an interpreter evolved over time? If so, how?
6. How many children do you have and what are their ages and gender?
7. Which one or ones do you most frequently use as an interpreter?
8. Why did you choose (name of child or children) as an interpreter(s), and based on what qualities?
9. Did you ever use another interpreter (family member or professional interpreter)? (If no, go to question #10)
10. If yes, how do you compare the use of other interpreters to your child?
11. How do you feel about having your child interpret for you?
12. What kind of role do you think they were taking on, advocate (someone who speaks on your behalf) or interpreter (someone who transmits your messages)? Please explain.
13. Of the situations you identified as needing an interpreter for in number 9 of the questionnaire, which ones did you require your child to interpret? For which one did you require another person to interpret?, and Why?
14. A neutral interpretation is one that is perceived to represent both parties equally, without prejudice. Do you feel your child's interpretations were/are neutral? Please explain.
15. Did you/do you feel your child interpreted for you, for the other person (or institution), or for both?
16. Did it vary depending on the situation they were interpreting for? Which ones did you feel your child was interpreting for you, and which ones that they didn't?
17. How do you feel your child influenced any decisions you made or continue to make?
18. Overall, how do you think your immigration and settlement experience would have been different had you not had anyone to interpret for you?
19. In your opinion, would your settlement experience have been the same without your child as an interpreter?
20. How would it have been different?
21. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix D: Interview Questions (Portuguese Version)

Perguntas para a entrevista

1. Alguma vez estudou Inglês? Se estudou, por quanto tempo (pergunta #2). Se não, por quê? (pergunta #4)
2. Qual foi a sua experiência a aprender inglês?
3. Se não estuda inglês agora, qual foi a razão para desistir?
4. Por que é que precisou ou precisa de um intérprete?
5. A sua necesidade de usar um interprete tem evolvido? Se sim, como? (número 9 e 10 do questionário)
6. Quantos filhos tem e quais são as suas idades e género?
7. Qual é que usa mais frequentemente como intérprete?
8. Por que é que escolheu (nome do filho) como intérprete, e por quais qualidades?
9. Usou alguma vez outro intérprete (outro familiar ou um intérprete profissional)? (Se não, pregunta #10)
10. Se sim, como é que compara outros intérpretes ao seu filho(a)?
11. Como é que se sente por ter o seu filho(a) a interpretar por si?
12. Que tipo de papel acha que o seu filho(a) estava a desempenhar, protector (fala por si) ou de intérprete (transmite a suas palavras)? Explique a sua escolha.
13. Das situações que identificou que precisa de um intérprete no número 10 do questionário, por quê precisa/ou do outro intérprete?
14. Uma interpretação neutra e uma onde os dois partidos são representados igualmente, sem inclinações a qualquer partido. Acha que as interpretações do seu filho(a), foram ou são neutras?
15. Acha que o seu filho(a) serve de intérprete para si, para a pessoa ou instituição com quem você quer comunicar ou para os dois?
16. Alterava dependendo da situação que eles estavam a interpretar? Em que situações sentia que o seu filho(a) estava a interpretar para si e quais para a outra pessoa(s)?
17. Como é que acha que o seu filho(a) tem influenciado quaisquer decisões que fez ou continua a fazer?
18. Acha que a sua experiência de imigração e establecimento no Canadá sería diferente se não tivesse ninguem como intérprete? Explique
19. Na sua opinião, o sua experiencia de imigração e establecimento no Canadá seria igual sem o seu filho como intérprete?
20. Como é que seria diferente?
21. Gostaria de adicionar mais alguma coisa?

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