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## **Open Strategizing and accelerated internationalization process in different contexts**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** Due to the changes in organizational, social, cultural and technological factors, companies from different contexts are shifting towards open forms of strategy-making with more widened inclusion of internal and external actors and greater transparency regarding their strategic issues, including their internationalization processes. The purpose of this paper is to understand how Open Strategizing occurs in the accelerated process of internationalization considering different contexts.

**Design/methodology/approach:** We conducted a qualitative comparative case study in Brazilian and English technology-based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which rapidly internationalized. Furthermore, data was collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and documental analysis.

**Findings:** We suggest that openness contributes to the accelerated process of internationalization. Additionally, we show that the home-country and the national cultural contexts affect openness. We also disclose openness as crucial and inherent to the accelerated process of internationalization, while context is relevant but not determinant in the Open Strategizing.

**Originality:** We contribute to Open Strategy (OS) literature by presenting how Open Strategizing unfolds daily during the internationalization process and by evidencing the role of home-country and national cultural contexts in the configuration and dynamics of Open Strategizing. We also contribute to the International Entrepreneurship (IE) literature by advancing the understanding of the strategies and drivers adopted by technology-based SMEs internationalizing in an accelerated way.

**Keywords:** Open Strategizing; Internationalization; Home-Country Context; National Cultural Context.

**Paper type:** Research paper

## Introduction

With the recent phenomenon in the strategy-making process, companies are shifting towards open forms of strategy-making, or ‘Open Strategy’ (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Whittington *et al.*, 2011). Open Strategy is a concept involving a bundle of inclusion and transparency practices to internal and external stakeholders, mostly enabled by information technology, which varies in “different organizations, sectors and national contexts” (Whittington *et al.*, 2011, 532).

Open Strategy is highly porous, and many strategic processes may be amenable to Open Strategy including innovation and internationalization. Yakis-Douglas *et al.* (2017) investigated Open Strategy focused on external transparency during Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) but there is much to be understood about how Open Strategy develops in other internationalization strategies and processes (Hautz *et al.*, 2017), for example, in the accelerated process of internationalization.

The IE literature elicits that the accelerated process of new ventures internalization is benefited by the characteristics and strategic orientations of the entrepreneur, who is the founder and key decision-maker (Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994; Hsieh *et al.*, 2019; Child *et al.*, 2022), and the small groups in which he is involved, such as social networks and strategic alliances (Coviello and Munro, 1997; Hagen and Zuchella, 2014; Zuchella *et al.*, 2007). We recognize these social networks and relationships as forms of openness because entrepreneurs include external actors in their international strategic conversations and share strategic information with them (Adobor, 2020; Hautz, 2017). Tournois and Very (2021) call these networks ‘Open Internationalization’.

Despite internationalizing new ventures “may benefit from their leader’s connections and international experience, these are also context-dependent” (Child *et al.*, 2022, p. 1). Thus, the home-country context has been recognized as a driver and determinant in the rapid

internationalization of new ventures (Child *et al.*, 2022; Musteen *et al.*, 2014). Whilst in emerging markets entrepreneurs engage in external connections to escape the constraints caused by the context (Lamott and Colovic, 2015; Musteen *et al.*, 2014), in developed countries, characteristics, such as strong institutions and a stable and regulated environment, help the entrepreneur engage with a larger number of international partners (Kiss and Danis, 2008). The national cultural context is also relevant to the new ventures' decisions of early internationalization (Fan and Phan, 2007) and it may affect the international entrepreneurship orientation and practices (Child *et al.*, 2022).

Context has been recognized as an important factor in Open Strategy also (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). Mack and Szulanski (2017) and Adobor (2020) for instance, compared different organizational contexts and their effect towards more inclusion and transparency. Adobor (2021) argued that the national cultural context may affect Open Strategy regarding the organization's attitudes to inclusiveness and transparency as well as individuals' reactions to opportunities for openness. The cultural context has been highlighted as playing a relevant role in strategy management (Haj and Christodoulou, 2017; Park and Paiva, 2018; Schneider, 1989). Nonetheless, despite the growing effort in the literature to comprehend the role of context in strategy, including in Open Strategy, the domain remains under-investigated. As an example, we are still unaware of the kind of influence national cultural contexts may have on Open Strategy and how Open Strategy plays out in different home-country and/or national cultural contexts (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). According to Hautz *et al.* (2017), comparative studies in different contexts present a promising opportunity for a deeper understanding of how openness develops distinctively. Adobor (2021, p. 1291) also challenges us for a greater understanding of how country idiosyncrasies affect Open Strategy as it "should enrich our knowledge of both international management and strategic management".

To fill these gaps in the literature, we associate the OS and IE concepts to answer the

research question: *How does Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization occur, considering different contexts?* We have assumed the term *Open Strategizing* as it is sustained by the Strategy as Practice (SAP) perspective since *Open Strategy* demands constant *strategizing* (Doeleman *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, as this perspective investigates the organization's micro-level (Johnson *et al.*, 2003; Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2007), it can explain which open practices are performed, how they are developed, and who participates in openness (e. g. Dobusch and Kepeller, 2017; Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017) in the accelerated process of internationalization.

To answer the research question, we conducted a qualitative comparative case study based on semi-structured interviews, direct observation and documental analysis in two technology-based SMEs in two different contexts, Brazil and England.

Our findings indicate that openness contributes to the accelerated process of internationalization and that the home-country and the national cultural contexts affect openness. In this regard, we found that, in both companies, Open Strategizing was crucial and inherent to the accelerated process of internationalization. We highlighted that, despite being located in two different contexts, both companies presented similarities in their Open Strategizing. Additionally, we found that the home-country context affected the configuration of openness in terms of practitioners involved, and the national cultural contexts influenced the dynamics of Open Strategizing, that is, the degree of inclusiveness and transparency of practices inherent to the internationalization process.

In light of these findings, our study advances the OS and IE literature as it brings a new understanding of the accelerated process of internationalization through the perspective of Open Strategizing. For the former, we reveal how Open Strategizing unfolds daily and influences the accelerated process of internationalization. The effect of home-country and national cultural contexts on Open Strategizing is also disclosed. For the latter, this study

contributes by expanding the understanding of the strategies and drivers adopted by technology-based SMEs to rapidly internationalize.

### **Theoretical framework**

We developed the main subjects that are sustaining this research: open strategizing, the accelerated process of internationalization, and emerging and developed home-country and national cultural contexts.

#### *Open Strategizing*

Over the past ten years, strategy, which was once a taboo subject and rather secretive (Whittington *et al.*, 2011), has been considered a practice of thousands (Dobusch and Mueller-Seitz, 2012), or Open Strategy. Derived from open innovation (Chesbrough and Appleyard, 2007), Open Strategy involves the inclusion of people (Dobusch and Kapeller, 2017) and strategic transparency (Yakis-Douglas *et al.*, 2017) for internal and external audiences (including stakeholders) in the strategy and decision-making process (Whittington *et al.*, 2011) and is facilitated by technology information tools and systems (Dobusch and Mueller-Seitz, 2012). According to Hautz *et al.* (2017), the balance and extent of Open Strategy respond to evolutionary contingencies derived from within and outside organizational boundaries.

According to Whittington *et al.* (2011, p. 535) “inclusion refers to the participation in an organization’s strategic conversation, the exchange of information, views and proposals” intended to shape the organization’s strategy whereas “transparency refers to the visibility of information in an organization’s strategy”. Hautz *et al.* (2017) distinguish participation and inclusion in the sense that the former has low intensity of involvement from the practitioners to openness while the latter has a greater commitment and engagement from those involved in the strategic practices. Particularly in the inclusion, the participating actors are more intensely

interconnected in strategic practices and, consequently, inserted into networks of social relationships (Burgelman *et al.*, 2018; Hautz, 2017).

Open Strategy is dynamic in achieving greater openness through the inclusion and transparency. Hence, a company can be more open or closed depending on its choices and practices. Thus, a more closed approach can be related to a low inclusion and transparency while a more open approach is characterized by higher degrees of both dimensions (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Whittington *et al.*, 2011).

A group of practices characterizes Open Strategy in both dimensions (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). Common practices of inclusion are conferences and summits (Whittington *et al.*, 2011), social media (Rottner *et al.*, 2019), crowdsourcing (Stieger *et al.*, 2012), online forums and community platforms (Hautz *et al.*, 2017), and jamming (Whittington *et al.*, 2011). Transparency may be recognized as presentations to the media and analysts or detailed strategic reports (Whittington *et al.*, 2011), strategy announcements (Yakis-Douglas *et al.*, 2017), or blogging (Hautz *et al.*, 2017).

The term *Open Strategizing* in this study involves the connection of the strategy as a practice (SAP) perspective (Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2007; Whittington, 2006) and the Open Strategy dimensions (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Seidl *et al.*, 2019; Whittington *et al.*, 2011). Open Strategy demands constant “strategizing” considering the SAP perspective (Doeleman *et al.*, 2021) which addresses the actions and interactions of the individuals practicing the strategy (Whittington, 2006). The strategy is, from this perspective, something that people do, not something that the company has (Whittington, 2006). The focus of the SAP perspective is on the analysis of three main elements: practice, praxis and practitioners and it is at the intersection of these elements that the strategy formation process occurs (Whittington, 2006; Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2007). Practices refer to the “shared routines of behaviour, including traditions, norms and procedures”. Praxis is what practitioners do, that is, the various activities involved in the

formulation and implementation of strategy. Practitioners are the internal and external actors themselves who are responsible for practicing the practices (Whittington, 2006; Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2007).

In this sense, Open Strategizing refers to the open practices, how they are developed, and who participates in openness (Dobusch and Kepeller, 2017; Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017). Open Strategizing may cover a range of possible strategies (Burgelman *et al.*, 2018) which include internationalization strategies. According to Hautz *et al.* (2017, p. 4), because internationalization involves processes, it may also be amenable to Open Strategizing.

### *The accelerated process of internationalization*

Companies that internationalize in an accelerated way have been referred to mainly as international new ventures (Oviatt and McDougall, 1994) or born globals (Knight and Cavusgil, 1996). In short, they are “organizations that are international from inception” (Oviatt and McDougall, 1994, p. 46) or, technology-oriented SMEs that have operated in international markets from the “earliest days of their establishment” (Knight and Cavusgil, 1996, p. 11; Jain *et al.*, 2019) either through physical product exports (Knight and Cavusgil, 1996), or by digital internationalization (Cahen and Borini, 2019). The time of establishment in the international market of international new ventures or born globals may range from 0 to 10 years (Romanello and Chiavesio, 2019).

The IE literature emphasizes that technology innovation, entrepreneurs’ previous knowledge and experiences (Child *et al.*, 2022), their cognitive aspects (Acedo and Jones, 2007), their observations and strategic actions (Mathews and Zander, 2007), their networks and strategic alliances (Coviello and Munro, 1997); their strategic orientation and focus (Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Kalinic and Forza, 2012), and their competitive advantages and strategic choices (Oyna and Alon, 2018) can be decisive in the accelerated process of



internationalization.

Research on born globals and international new ventures is highly interdisciplinary and requires the integration of different perspectives or theoretical models for the development of a theory that can be globally accepted (Romanello and Chiarvesio, 2019). From the strategic management approach, it is known that the accelerated process of internationalization is a result of competitive strategies such as product, technology and marketing (Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004).

From this perspective, the literature posits those flexible strategic focuses on proactive guidance (Kalinic and Forza, 2012), emergent strategies (Rialp-Criado *et al.*, 2010), personal networks and collaborative partnerships with large customers and suppliers as well as the use of advanced technology (Hagen and Zuchella, 2014) as essential for optimum international performance.

*Context: Emerging and developed home-country and national cultural contexts*

The IE literature indicates that the characteristics of the home-country context, emerging and developed, play a critical role in the accelerated process of the internationalization of new ventures (Kiss and Danis, 2008).

Factors such as the market size, the cultural and economic forces (Fan and Phan, 2007), the regulatory (Cieslik and Kaciak, 2009) and institutional environment (Knight and Liesch, 2016), for example, contribute to the accelerated internationalization of SMEs, especially those from emerging countries or those with low institutional development.

It is also understood that such characteristics encourage entrepreneurs to have a greater proactivity towards international markets which are usually conditioned by information exchange, customer knowledge and experience and a pool of suppliers and partners (Kiss and Danis, 2008). According to Kiss and Danis (2008), the institutional context, be it lower or

higher; directly influences the configuration of these international connections and consequently on the acceleration of the internationalization process.

In contrast to developed countries, emerging countries are characterized by uncertain environments, with scarce resources and high bureaucratic institutional structures (Kiss and Danis, 2008). For this reason, companies are often “deprived of the superior technologies and supporting structures” that are found in developed countries (Mesquita and Lazzarini, 2008, p. 359). In this sense, institutions are unable to provide the support required for companies to produce knowledge and innovation (OECD, 2011).

Institutions such as government agencies, industry associations, research institutes and consultants can provide information for foreign markets, accessibility to relevant technical knowledge and financial aid to support entry into the international market which, in the case of SMEs, especially from countries with less developed environments, is generally deficient (Child *et al.*, 2017; Child *et al.*, 2022). SMEs located in developing economies often suffer from the inefficiency of the law and regulations enactment, the prevalence of corruption and bureaucracy and the limitations of support systems and infrastructures (Mesquista and Lazzarini, 2008). Thus, operating in such conditions, implies facing different challenges to those encountered by companies based in developed economies, the conditions of the home-country contexts directly and indirectly influence the behaviour and internationalization of companies as well as the development of resources and their practices (Cuervo-Cazurra *et al.*, 2018).

Beyond the characteristics of the home-country context, the national culture context is also of great relevance in the fast internationalization of new ventures (Fan and Phan, 2007). The cultural distance between countries and regions as well as the role of culture in the strategic decision-making process have been noted by international business (Konara and Mohr, 2019)

and international management disciplines (Adobor, 2021; Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Park and Paiva, 2018).

As first noted by Hofstede (1980) and Kogut and Singh (1988), the cultural values of a firm may influence the firm's choice of foreign market strategies, or entry modes (Konara and Mohr, 2019). Moreover, national cultural traits shape the internationalization outcomes (Shenkar *et al.*, 2020) as well as influence international entrepreneurship orientation and practices (Child *et al.*, 2022). Schneider (1989, p. 149) argued that national cultural context affects the strategy formation process because "it influences the nature of the relationship of an organization with its environment as well as relationships among people within an organization". Park and Paiva (2018) suggest that national culture is the key to the operation strategy process.

National cultural context is also important to build a better understanding of Open Strategizing because it may affect the approach companies have toward inclusiveness and transparency as well as how participants react to openness (Adobor, 2021). Based on Hofstede *et al.* (2010), Adobor (2021) suggests that, in collectivist cultures, with a low power distance, a low uncertainty avoidance and with a tendency to have a long-term orientation, people are more willing to participate in openness and have more transparent managers. On the contrary, people tend to be more passive and unwilling to participate and managers are more restrictive in the way they open the strategy in individualist cultures with high uncertainty avoidance cultures and high-power distance.

## **Methodology**

A qualitative comparative case study (Creswell and Poth, 2016) was conducted to answer the research question: *How does Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization occur, considering different contexts?* The case study is an efficient

method to attain an in-depth comprehension of how inclusion and transparency practices occur in the accelerated process of internationalization since it allows the examination of the cases in their singularities (Lavarda and Bellucci, 2022; Yin, 2017). Yet, the qualitative approach is “potentially more conducive to surfacing and exploring new contextual dimensions” as well as to understanding SMEs collaborations that assist their internationalization (Child *et al.*, 2022, p. 5).

### *Case selection*

The cases selected for this study were consequently: (i) technology-based SMEs (EUR-LEX, 2019); (ii) that internationalized in an accelerated way; (iii) that were in different contexts (home-country context: an emerging and a developed country; national cultural contexts). Technology-based SMEs are the most listed in OS and IE literature as the ones that have open strategic practices (Hautz *et al.*, 2017) and internationalize faster (Child *et al.*, 2022; Knight and Cavusgil, 1996).

In Brazil, the selected company (BRZ) is in Florianópolis, Brazil. We selected Brazil because it is an emerging country and, as so, it has less developed institutional, social, and structural dimensions (Cuervo-Cazurra and Genc, 2009). According to Hofstede *et al.* (2010) dimensions, Brazil presents a collectivist culture that has high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance whilst tending towards a short-term orientation. The island of Florianópolis is a technological hub of high representation in Brazil (32% in total) and Santa Catarina State is the fourth-largest hub in the technology sector in the country (Acate, 2020). Moreover, there are scarcely any studies that use Brazil as a context to study SMEs’ internationalization (Child *et al.*, 2022).

In England, the selected company (ENG) is in Oxford, Oxfordshire. We selected England because it is a developed country and, as so, boasts developed institutional, social and

structural dimensions (Cuervo-Cazurra and Genc, 2009). According to Hofstede *et al.* (2010), the UK is an individualist culture that has low power distance and low uncertainty avoidance besides tending towards long-term orientation. Technology companies are at the heart of the United Kingdom's economy and play an important role in promoting its growth and development (UK Government, 2019). Oxford has quickly built a reputation as a leading technology centre in the UK and has a history of creating new technology start-ups with a particularly strong information technology (IT) sector in the region (Oxford City, 2019). The names of the companies have been changed for anonymity purposes.

BRZ was founded in 2002 and has two types of software to help SMEs to control sales, inventories and their products. The software is called the *Brax* system which was launched in 2012 and an application (*App*) for mobile devices, launched in 2018. The *Brax* system is an online Point of Sales (POS) software with a larger scope for more complex sales. BRZ adopts a self-service and freemium system from which people from all over the world can download and use for free over a period of time. This strategy has enabled the company to expand its sales rapidly both nationally and internationally. The *Brax* system is being used by clients located in more than 150 countries while the *App* has been downloaded more than ten thousand times both in Brazil and on a global scale.

ENG, the English company, was founded in 2013 and has a presence in more than six countries with a system for monitoring illegal fishing. Using satellites and artificial intelligence, ENG empowers fishery authorities and seafood buyers to understand the compliance of fishing around the world.

### *Data Collection*

Data collection allowed data triangulation by in-depth semi-structured interviews, direct observation and documental analysis (Yin, 2017). We interviewed a total of 14 people

from all hierarchical levels to capture different perspectives of the phenomenon. The interviews were conducted both personally and via technologies such as Skype between April and September 2019 as presented in Table 1. It is worth clarifying that all the practitioners interviewed were involved in the strategizing of the companies studied but not all those involved were interviewed as a result of saturated data collection, meaning that any efforts to obtain additional data could no longer be justified in terms of the additional expenditure of energy and resources (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Due to the cross-country character of the research, the interviews were conducted in Portuguese with the Brazilian company and in English with the English company. This was made possible due to the first author being a native Portuguese speaker with fluency in English (Welch and Piekkari, 2006).

The observations were carried out virtually in BRZ and personally in ENG. Virtually, recordings of meetings were sent by the company to the researchers. In addition, videos of conversations with customers during visits made by CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) at their locations were sent as well as videos that illustrated the communication functionality of the platform used for the internal members. Videos of BRZ's internal events have also been shared with the researchers for the research purposes. In the ENG, one researcher attended meetings and observed *in loco* the members' conversations and interactions. The documents analysed from BRZ ranged from graphics, texts on social networks such as Blogs, Twitter and LinkedIn, videos from the YouTube channel, photos and stories posted on the company's Instagram and printed screens of the internal communication platforms Basecamp and Slack. From ENG, the documents analysed were the 2019 Company Overview and Slack screenshots.

### *Data analysis*

The cross-sectional data analysis (Yin, 2017) followed three stages: (i) we analyzed each case separately to have a comprehensive understanding of the case and to allow exclusive patterns to emerge within each one of them (first-order themes); (ii) we cross-analyzed the cases to identify common patterns and exclusive characteristics concerning the inclusion and transparency practices, praxis and practitioners of the accelerated process of internationalization in different contexts (second-order themes); (iii) we triangulated the outcomes (Creswell and Poth, 2016) following the pattern matching technique (Trochim, 1989); (iv) we identified three main constitutive elements of analysis (CEA) that emerged from the data collected and theory which were: Open Strategizing (CEA1); the Accelerated process of internationalization (CEA2); Characteristics of the home-country and the national cultural contexts (CEA3) (theoretical constructs).

Figure 1 shows the scheme of the data structure to allow a better understanding of how the data analysis occurred.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Table 2 demonstrates the first-order open coding of all open activities involved in the internationalization process of BRZ and ENG as well as the second-order themes which were assembled after the search for relationships between and among these first-order concepts. The coding process led us to identify the theoretical constructs that provided us the basis to present and discuss the results and contributions of this research.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Table 3 indicates the Constitutive Elements of Analysis (CEA) and their operational definition with examples of how we analyzed inclusion and transparency practices in the Brazilian and English company.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Based on the above, we explore and present the integrated cross-case comparison.

## Results

We identified inclusion and transparency practices that constituted BRZ and ENG's accelerated process of internationalization. We assume that it is a result of micro strategic open practices that have been carried out daily over some time by the organization's internal and external stakeholders (Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2016; Seidl *et al.*, 2019) in both contexts.

The BRZ's accelerated internationalization relied on a process that happened between 2002 and 2012 and all activities performed after that period. We divided BRZ's internationalization into two parts as they have two products with different stories and timing concerning the launching and first entry into international markets: *Brax* system and *BRZ App*.

In 2002, BRZ was founded with an online system designed for Lan Houses. In 2012, the founder and CEO, in partnership with a member of the Yahoo! team, decided to create the *Brax* system that, in the same year, was downloaded by clients from Portuguese speaking countries such as Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe and Portugal. This episode characterized the first entry into international markets.

In 2016, the founder and his partner decided that the system needed to be translated into English to have an international outreach. "That was our first step and effort towards the BRZ's internationalization process" (CEO). In 2019, the *Brax* system had been downloaded in more than 150 countries. The *App* was created in 2017 and, in 2018, it was translated into English and Spanish to be sold internationally. Different to the *Brax* system, the *App* had been developed with a global mindset, so it was promptly available for the international market six months after its launch in Brazil. In less than two years, the *App* had been downloaded more than ten thousand times in over 100 countries.

The ENG's accelerated internationalization comprises processes that happened between



2013 and 2015, and all other activities performed after that period. The English company started its activities in 2013 as a research and development (RD) innovation project financed jointly by two organizations, using satellite technology to fight illegal fishing. In 2015, the company made its first entry into international markets with tests of the system in the Pacific Islands. In 2017, ENG expanded its activities to Chile, Costa Rica and Thailand. In 2018, they acquired new clients in Cambodia and Maldives.

***BRZ's inclusion and transparency practices in the accelerated process of internationalization***

*Internationalization of the Brax system*

The partnership between BRZ's CEO and the external practitioner, Yahoo!, which to create the *Brax* system, may be considered as a first step towards inclusion in its accelerated process of internationalization. This open practice precipitated its international market penetration ten years after being founded. "Predicting the end of Lan houses, we started, in 2012, to plan our evolution and we launched the *Brax* system" (CEO).

At this stage, the company also involved internal and external practitioners. The international customer service (CS) team leader (I3) stated that he participated and suggested ideas in the *Brax* creation process: "one day, at one of our lunches, I brought the idea to use our system for another niche of the market". The CEO reported that the *Brax* system creation ideas also came from the customer service operations team and from the clients whom the CS were directly in contact with via online chats and e-mails: "With the information received from the CS team, we were able to see the big picture. As we were all together, working in a small room, we frequently exchanged information, we were very open. Our clients had a direct impact on our international strategy" (CEO).

After the first internationalization activity of the *Brax* system, the company decided to

translate the software into English. As reported by the CEO, it happened collaboratively with the participation of internal and external members. According to the CEO, “It was our first effort towards the internationalization process”.

The CEO reported that the final decision to translate the software was centralized on the founder and his partner, but participation and engagement of other internal and external stakeholders were highly essential. “We asked people their opinion about this strategy. They have a lot of autonomy, power of suggestion, and they really participate” (CEO). The CEO informed that the exchange of ideas and interactions about the translation and the democratic decision-making about the best terms to use usually took place daily at informal lunches in the organization.

As the international demand grew steadily, the founder decided to form an international team that would be responsible for receiving suggestions for the software’s improvement to reach a wider range of small businesses around the world. The synergy between the internal international team and the external customers generally occurred through various communication channels such as chats and e-mails. An international CS operational member of staff reported that the CS team transfers the information they receive from customers to the international team leader, who, in turn, discusses with the company’s founder what will be taken into consideration. “We make decisions together then the founder sees whether the resource will be implemented or not, which they usually are” reported the operational member of staff.

According to the CEO, after receiving the enquiries from the customers, he has weekly and monthly meetings with the internal team “to evaluate and assess, in a group, what needs to be done”. The joint analysis and negotiation for approval of ideas and suggestions occur through regular meetings and information exchange on the digital platform called *Basecamp*.

The digital platform serves as a communication tool which transmits the company’s

strategic practices as well as encouraging its internal members to collaborate on specific issues (Rottner *et al.*, 2019). In the BRZ's CEO's words: "*Basecamp* organizes the information for us. It is a virtual exchange of ideas".

In December 2019, the CEO disclosed the difficulties faced by the company in the Basecamp. At the same time, he transparently shared the declining figures and openly called upon the whole company to participate with suggestions and ideas on how the *Brax* system could become popular again and attract both a national and an international client base. According to the CEO:

Because you can't do that with just four heads, you must get more people on board. We were going through a difficult moment and important strategic decisions needed to be made. We have 80 people in the company today collaborating. With this inclusion, they will feel more like owners of the product since they will help us to build it brick by brick.

On that occasion, the strategic discourse was performed in an open, interactive, and public way: all professionals could read, follow and react to ongoing discussions (Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, the CEO spontaneously and constantly uses the company's blog to communicate the strategic activities to external stakeholders, which, in contrast to episodic disclosures or updates, generally provides greater interaction with its audiences.

### *Internationalization of the BRZ App*

Concerning the *App*, we identified that, in the period that comprises its creation until its availability to the international market, the company relied on collaborative forms of participation (Chesbrough and Appleyard, 2007) or co-creation (Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017) in activities that involved interactions with internal and external practitioners.

In the words of the CEO's partner: "the creation of the *App* was a very strategic discussion, discussed between the founder and I but with the participation of other people".

The product development leader confirmed that he participated in the creation of the product and contributed with relevant ideas that led to the company's rapid international expansion with the *App*: "I was the one who gave the idea of translating the *App* and the CEO accepted". The design operational member explained how these strategic inclusion practices took place: "Participation occurs both in scheduled meetings as well as in sporadic chats daily and using digital platforms like Slack". Strategic transparency has been identified as inherent to the inclusion of people in meetings and interaction among the members involved (Seidl *et al.*, 2019).

Inclusion and transparency practices have also been identified in the international expansion of the company's *App* which started after clients from all over the world downloaded and used the *App* in their small businesses.

The marketing team leader revealed that the terms used to capture the user's attention are "always debated among the team". Ideas are also exchanged with the *App*'s CEO and his partner and obtained from the participation of external practitioners such as clients and people that mention the company's brand on the internet. The marketing leader reported: "We gather all the information and feedback from chats, e-mails, social media and meet weekly to decide collaboratively and democratically what the best terms to be used are. We also discuss it through our digital platforms Slack and Notion".

The CEO's partner reported that clients' participation is crucial for the *App*'s strategies as it allows the company to recognize opportunities that perhaps would not be seen. Similar to what happens with the *Brax* system, it is the customer service team that makes the first contact with the client and passes on the information received. Hence, the openness, in this case, is not only for external stakeholders but also for the internal ones as specified by the CEO: "That's why we keep people with this dynamic participation, because sometimes the client comments

on something with the customer service team and they expose the feedbacks which conduce impacts on product development”.

It is relevant to highlight that in both the *Brax* system and the *App* internationalization process, talking to customers was a form of mere participation while the suggestions of the internal members based on customers’ opinions were a form of inclusion as they had always been asked to collaborate with openness (Hautz *et al.*, 2017).

Strategic transparency practices have also contributed to the fast international expansion the *App*. To increase both the company reputation and its number of global users, the CEO’s partner constantly informs the internal and external stakeholders the company’s daily strategic activities and specific strategic issues, including internationalization projects using digital platforms, social media and blogs (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Spiegel *et al.*, 2017).

### ***ENG’s inclusion and transparency practices in the accelerated process of internationalization***

The first entry of ENG into the international markets was marked by practices of inclusion such as co-creation, between internal and external practitioners, to create the system to detect illegal fishing around the world. In the words of ENG’s CEO:

Strategically, I had a board essentially made up of people from the accelerator, as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the CEO, someone from their strategy team and then, from the investor, the environmental Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), I had the project director and some of their staff members.

After that, in collaboration with the investor and his networks, the technology was tested in the Pacific Islands to check its reliability and effectiveness, leading to the ENG’s first entry into the international markets, where meetings and the exchange of ideas, as well as complete transparency, were part of the whole process (Seidl *et al.*, 2019).

The NGO played a key role in the first internationalization activity of the English company as well as after that. It was through the inclusion of the NGO in the ENG's strategic activities that the English company obtained its first customers abroad and was consolidated as a global company. As reported by the CEO: "Again we used their networks to find other countries that were interested in collaborating with us, and we found Thailand and the UK Government".

The accelerator also played a determinant role in the ENG's international expansion: "[...] through the accelerator we found opportunities in Chile and Costa Rica as well as in South Asian countries as Cambodia and Maldives" (CEO).

Open Strategizing has also been identified as part of the company's daily routine and we found that it was essential for the ENG's accelerated internationalization process. For instance, openness was observed in the quarterly 'all hands' meeting where the CEO transparently presents the company results and decisions taken by the board using PowerPoint presentations. The business manager reported: "These meetings happen every eight weeks where we inform everyone what is happening financially, where we are going and what we are doing". The junior analyst explained: "We sit together in a semi-circle and whoever makes a presentation explains the strategy for the next six months". In these meetings, "everyone on the team is invited to come and provide their comments about strategic things discussed [...]", stated the business manager.

Idea generation also happens in brainstorming meetings and informal lunches that include the internal organizational members. The ENG's senior analyst reported that: "everyone is expected to participate in these interactions which can be face-to-face or via our digital platform Slack". A senior software developer concluded by saying "Slack is very useful because we can communicate all the time, give suggestions and opinions, including internationalization endeavours".

The latest Open Strategizing episode in the ENG's internationalization was to adjust the mission and its vision to present to the external public. This happened through participation calls (Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017). Such practice of inclusion allowed the participation of the whole company plus an external actor, a consultancy company from the United States of America. We observed that the joint interaction occurred mainly through interviews and internal communication using the Slack platform. The CEO detailed: "The consultant will help us make clear where we are, where we should be and everyone in the organization will be able to participate and say what they think about it".

As transparency practices, ENG's CEO participates in summits, makes school visits, appears in institutional videos and posts on the company's blog to communicate to the internal and external stakeholders ENG's strategic issues.

### ***Similarities and Differences in the Open Strategizing of the accelerated process of internationalization in different contexts***

By comparing the Open Strategizing of the accelerated internationalization in two different contexts, it was possible to note similarities and differences in the processes.

Concerning similarities, in both companies, it was noted that the inclusion and transparency practices in the accelerated process of internationalization were similar in both home-country and national cultural contexts, despite the context differences. This was due to the use of information technology and strategic tools to include both internal and external stakeholders, and to share strategic information transparently either internally and/or externally. Similarly, both companies were open in their practices as indicated by their democratic decision-making, joint analysis and great collaboration among people involved, and also in terms of strategic transparency, as they revealed to disseminate their strategic issues and call for participation using the same tools such as community platforms (Slack, Notion,

Basecamp), PowerPoint presentations, e-mails, informal meetings and social media (Blogging, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram). Accordingly, the openness to ideas that came from internal employees and external stakeholders, such as customers, investors and consultants, has been identified in the Brazilian and in the English company which is a sign that both companies are receptive to new ways of strategizing rather than preferring the traditional ways (Adobor, 2021).

In contrast, the companies present significant differences in their Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization which can be related to their home-country and national cultural contexts.

Regarding the home-country context, the main difference was in the configuration of the Open Strategizing in relation to the practitioners involved in the accelerated process of internationalization. While the English company was predominantly influenced by external practitioners (investors), the Brazilian company boasted mainly internal members (from all hierarchical levels) actively participating in the strategic activities part of the internationalization process. Transparency practices can also be included in this matter.

We argue that such difference was mainly due to the heavy investments that the English company received at the beginning of their internationalization and the financial and structural support obtained from these external practitioners during the entire process. The Brazilian company, on the other hand, had no investors that leveraged its international entry and expansion. Excerpts from the interviews with members of BRZ's and ENG's CEOs confirm: "If there were good investments, which is a difficulty in Brazil, the internationalization process would be much easier" (BRZ CEO). "The accelerator is an organization funded by the UK, so we had the money from the government to help in the beginning" (ENG's CEO).

According to Mesquista and Lazzarini (2008) and Cuervo-Cazurra and Genc (2009), any support at country level and foreign investments are not always available for entrepreneurs



from emerging countries, which is the case of BRZ, whereas companies from developed countries usually received government funding for innovation and technology support for their international activities (Mesquita and Lazzarini, 2008; Child *et al.*, 2017; Child *et al.*, 2022), which is the case of ENG.

Concerning the national context, the main difference was in the dynamics of open strategizing. For instance, although both companies presented open practices that led to their fast internationalization, we perceived that the Brazilian company had a higher degree of openness in terms of the inclusion and transparency than the English company. We also observed greater organizational attitudes toward inclusiveness and transparency and frequent willingness from internal and external stakeholders towards participation both daily and when called upon (Adobor, 2021; Hautz *et al.*, 2017).

Specifically, we define BRZ as more open because, in comparison to the ENG, the company included internal and external people at higher levels of strategic decisions. By understanding that the *Brax* system needed profound improvements, the CEO was very transparent when addressing the whole company about sensitive figures and humbly called upon their participation and involvement in the process. BRZ also conveys the impression that it is open daily, rather than practicing isolated called participation. We observed that any internal member could approach personally or through the digital platforms, at any time, to provide suggestions on any strategic issues. The same is true of the customers. The company revealed itself to be very open to external clients that frequently proposed ideas and improvements both to the *Brax* system and the *App*. As the BRZ's CEO declared, they try to keep people very autonomous and grant them power to freely participate and contribute from the simplest to the more complex strategic issues. This high degree of openness, especially to internal members, can be explained using Hofstede *et al.* (2010) dimensions. Brazil, being considered a collectivist culture, has stronger interactions among people due to their similar

values, stronger ties and common language which facilitates the inclusion of people who have a higher willingness to participate (Adobor, 2021).

The difference between BRZ and ENG lies in the frequency and degree of openness in terms of giving opportunities to additional actors (especially internal members) to participate or to be included in the decision-making process, as well as sharing strategic information with internal and external stakeholders (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). If we analyze in a *continuum* (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Whittington *et al.*, 2011), we can assume that ENG made different choices about the degree to which the inclusion and transparency is allowed, closer to being partially open, unlike the BRZ company. Instead, ENG was more open to the Top Management Team (TMT) when it came to more important strategic issues and called upon participation and shared strategic information transparently in more specific strategic episodes. Thus, it is possible to reason that this is because ENG, as in an individualistic culture, tends to have weaker and less dense networks of ties among people (Adobor, 2021; Hofstede *et al.*, 2010).

In short, we assume that the home-country context influenced the configuration of Open Strategizing, and that the national cultural context influenced its dynamics in the accelerated process of internationalization. However, despite these differences, we noted that the open practices in the Open Strategizing of companies from different contexts were similar and this happened because the characteristics of the home-country and national cultural contexts were mostly mitigated by the information technology tools and systems used for openness. Due to the context not affecting the open practices that contributed to the internationalization process of the companies studied, we perceived it had a relevant but not determinant role in the Open Strategizing. Table 4 summarizes the Open Strategizing practices involved in the BRZ's and ENG's accelerated process of internationalization by showing the main similarities between the open practices of the companies as well as their differences in relation to the characteristics of home-country and national cultural contexts where they are inserted.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

## Discussion and contributions

Open Strategizing is still an emerging concept and how it performs in different strategies and contexts, such as internationalization strategies in developed and emerging or national cultural contexts, is yet to be explored (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). This study aimed to acquire this understanding and contributed to OS and IE literature as well as to managerial practices.

First, this study adds to the knowledge of strategies and drivers of the accelerated process of internationalization by suggesting that Open Strategizing contributed to and potentialized the internationalization of both companies in different contexts. In this case, the practitioners, in both contexts, applied inclusion and transparency practices as a strategy of internationalization. We pointed out that the accelerated process of internationalization of both companies was a consequence of open practices such as strategic partnership, co-creation, openness to ideas, democratic decision-making, joint analysis and negotiation, collaboration, and call of participation for example, which happened daily through formal and informal interactions among the internal and external members (Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2016).

Additionally, the IE literature points out the entrepreneur as one of the main drivers of the accelerated process of internationalization (Oviatt and McDougall, 1994). Despite the significance of the entrepreneur in such a process (Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994; Zuchella *et al.*, 2007), we stated that he is not the only practitioner who plays a major role in the early internationalization of firms (Whittington, 2019). In addition to these studies, our findings highlight and recognize the role of other practitioners involved in the process such as the internal members of all hierarchical levels – apart from the management team – and the external members like consultants, customers and external strategic partners (Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Whittington, 2019; Whittington *et al.*, 2011).

Moreover, SMEs usually depend on their entrepreneurs' network connections to internationalize faster (Coviello and Munro, 1997; Child *et al.*, 2022; Zuchella *et al.*, 2007). We say that these alliances and networks are forms of openness (Adobor, 2021; Hautz, 2017) as they include external stakeholders in the strategic process (Tournois and Very, 2021; Whittington, 2006; Whittington *et al.*, 2011). Additionally, while Child *et al.* (2022) reveal that the theory of networking with external parties illuminates context and SMEs' internationalization, we highlighted the importance the collaborations with internal parties within organizations in the internationalization process.

Likewise, while studies in the OS and IE literature acknowledge the context also as a driver and relevant to the internationalization process (Adobor, 2021; Child *et al.*, 2022; Hautz *et al.*, 2017; Kiss and Denis, 2008) we found that, when it comes to the Open Strategizing, context may be relevant but not determinant in the accelerated process of internationalization. We noted that openness, in both cases, was similarly enabled by information technology tools and systems (Dobusch and Mueller-Seitz, 2012) such as Slack, online platforms (Basecamp, Notion), social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) as well as formal and informal interactions using information technology.

Second, by finding that home-country and national cultural contexts affect openness in terms of its configuration and dynamics, our study evidenced a clear connection between context and Open Strategizing and highlighted how open strategizing of technology-based SMEs unfolds in different contexts. Prior studies in OS literature consider organizational contexts and their impact on openness (Mack and Szulanski, 2017; Hautz, 2017). Adobor (2021) argued that national cultural context variables influence the Open Strategizing formation process. In our study, we endorse Adobor's (2021) arguments and advance his effort by empirically evidencing that, not only does the national culture but also the home-country context affect openness.

Furthermore, by undertaking a comparative case study, we fill gaps in the OS and IE literature as, in the former, most research explains the phenomenon in single contexts (Hautz *et al.*, 2017), and, in the latter, there has been a relative dearth of research comparing different contexts (Child *et al.*, 2022).

Third, our findings sum up the research on internationalization as a strategic process (e.g., Rialp-Criado *et al.*, 2010; Yakis-Douglas *et al.*, 2017). While Rialp-Criado *et al.* (2010) revealed that there are emergent and deliberate strategies in the early phases of the new ventures as well as in their international expansion and Yakis-Douglas *et al.* (2017) provided information about Open Strategizing in an merger and acquisition (M&A) strategy, we analyzed the open practices in the accelerated process of internationalization through the SAP lenses, connecting practice and process perspectives (Kohtamäki *et al.*, 2022; Whittington *et al.*, 2011). Our results confirm what stated Hautz *et al.* (2017) by empirically evidencing that internationalization is amenable to Open Strategizing also.

Lastly, by showing the relevance of Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization, we make a call for managers to use more widened inclusion and greater transparency to open up their strategies and, as a benefit, receive and share ideas with different people who may bring different knowledge and background to the strategic issues. By opening up their strategies, managers may face some dilemmas (Hautz *et al.*, 2017) but can also have, as an outcome of openness, a change in the organizations' directions or in their own strategic decisions.

## **Conclusion**

This research aimed to compare the Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization of two companies from different home-country and national cultural contexts. Our findings revealed that openness contributes to the accelerated process of

internationalization; that the home-country and the national cultural contexts affect openness; and that openness is crucial and inherent to the accelerated process of internationalization, while context is relevant but not determinant in the Open Strategizing.

### *Limitations and future research*

The first limitation concerns the contexts chosen for our research. We found that home-country context affected the configuration of Open Strategizing and that the national culture influenced the degree of openness in the internationalization processes. However, context is very challenging to capture because it “literally refers to all aspects of a situation within which something exists” (Child *et al.*, 2022). In this sense, other contexts (apart from home-country and national cultural contexts) could have an impact on openness in the process. For example, openness is also influenced by organizational context as studied by Adobor (2020) and Mack and Szulanski (2017).

Additionally, the size of the company would be of great exploration value to check its impact on the dynamics of openness (Hautz *et al.*, 2017). In this regard, a comparison of the Open Strategizing of SMEs and multinational enterprises (MNEs) in their internationalization process would benefit the advancement of OS, IE, and International Business (IB) literature.

Furthermore, we highlighted the open strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization within technology-based SMEs. However, different types of companies (low-tech or public, for example) could also present open practices and, by studying them, we could be exposed to new ways of opening strategy (Whittington *et al.*, 2011).

The second limitation is the home-country and national cultural contexts analysed in our study. Regarding home-country context, we noted that inclusion and transparency practices were very similar in both emerging and developed contexts as they were enabled by the information technology in use. However, if different countries were involved in our research,

the Open Strategizing process could have shown differences in the cross-comparison study. For example, it could have been different if the comparison was with/or between countries from least developed countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, and Cambodia (United Nations, 2021) or with less internet penetration to benefit from online technologies that enable openness, for example, North Korea, Central African Republic, Nigeria and Somalia (Statista, 2022).

As for the national cultural context, a boundary condition is that our research focused on analysing the connection and intertwinement of open strategizing and Hofstede *et al.* (2010) individualism and collectivism dimensions. Future research could examine empirically the various implications related also to power distance, uncertainty avoidance and time orientation (Adobor, 2021).

As a final boundary condition, once our study translates one of the first efforts to connect OS and IE literature, many aspects related to Open Strategizing were left behind. Future studies could focus on the dilemmas of Open Strategizing (Hautz *et al.*, 2017), the digital transformation and leading styles (Doeleman *et al.*, 2021), the strategy tools (Wawarta and Paroutis, 2019), the roles and power, the skills and will, the ethical conditions, the emotions and the challenges of Open Strategy in the internationalization process of new ventures (Spitter *et al.*, 2023).

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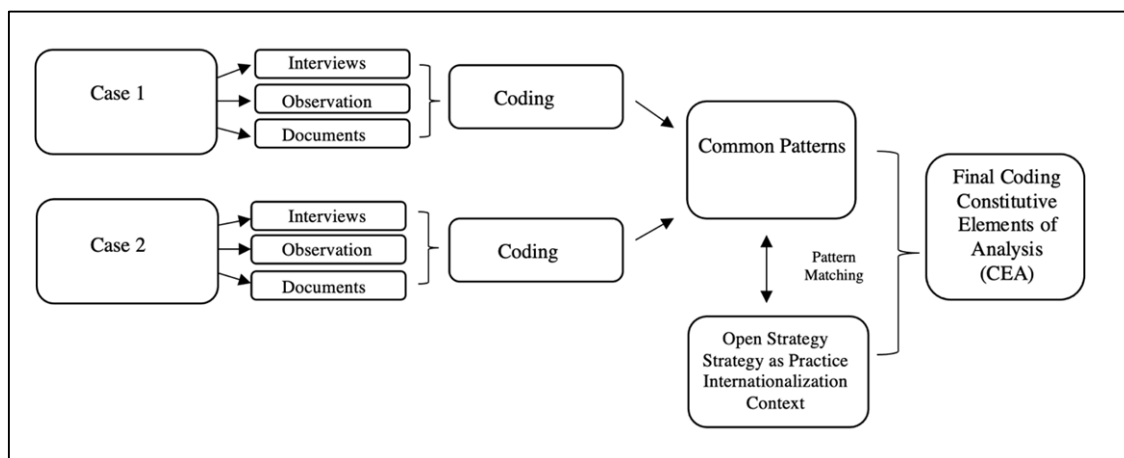
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**Figure 1***Scheme of the data structure*

**Table 1***Protocol of data collection by Interview*

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>I1</b>	<i>Brax and App</i> Founder and CEO	BRZ	<i>Skype and Whatsapp</i>	2h 15 min
<b>I2</b>	<i>Brax and App</i> Partner	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	2h 45 min
<b>I3</b>	<i>Brax</i> International CS team leader	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	1h10 min
<b>I4</b>	<i>Brax</i> International CS operational	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	45 min
<b>I5</b>	<i>App</i> Marketing team leader	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	50 min
<b>I6</b>	<i>App</i> CS team leader	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	1 hour
<b>I7</b>	<i>App</i> Development team leader	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	47 min
<b>I8</b>	<i>App</i> international team leader	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	1h 10 min
<b>I9</b>	<i>App</i> product design operational	BRZ	<i>Skype</i>	<i>e-mails</i>
<b>IA</b>	Founder and CEO	ENG	Personally	53 min
<b>IB</b>	Business manager	ENG	Personally	1h 35 min
<b>IC</b>	Senior Analyst	ENG	Personally	41 min
<b>ID</b>	Junior Analyst	ENG	Personally	51 min
<b>IE</b>	<i>Software</i> developer	ENG	Personally	1h 24 min

**Table 2***First-order themes, second-order themes and theoretical constructs*

First-order themes	Second-order themes	Theoretical constructs
<p>“We had strategic discussion, very well discussed between me and the founder, but with the participation of other people, [...]”  <b>(Internal people involved in strategic discussion)</b></p>	Internal Practitioners	<p><b>Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization through inclusion and transparency practices to internal and external people (including stakeholders)</b></p>
<p>“He worked at Yahoo!, and he came up with the idea of making Lan House systems free and putting advertising on computers that Internet users used in stores”  <b>(External people giving ideas about the strategy)</b></p>	External Practitioners	
<p>“[...] that's also why we try to keep the company autonomous, with this dynamism of participation”  <b>(Participation and interaction between internal people)</b></p>	Inclusion of internal stakeholders	
<p>“The customer's first channel is customer service, support via chat and that's where we ask questions, solve problems and that's where we also collect feedback”  <b>(Participation and interaction with external people)</b></p>	Inclusion of external stakeholders	
<p>“In our lunches I always brought up the idea”  “[...] all people on the team are invited to come and provide their comments on this, in terms of the strategic things we were talking about [...]”  <b>(Openness to ideas)</b></p>	Inclusion practices	
<p>“[...] we are very open about the numbers that other people would keep more secret, right [...]”  <b>(External Communication)</b></p>	Transparency practices	
<p>“Another means of communication that we also use is Slack, which is an internal chat for us, and then it's just a chat, it's an internal chat tool”  <b>(Internal Communication)</b></p>	Transparency practices	<p><b>Influence of the characteristics of the home country and national context in the open strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization</b></p>
<p>“[...] if I had good investments, which is a difficulty for Brazil, I will answer you, of course it would be much easier”  <b>(Influence of home country context in the process)</b></p> <p>“[...] In fact, what really helped the most was the accelerator that attracted the non-governmental organization in the first place”  <b>(Influence of home country context in the process)</b></p>	Characteristics of home country contexts	
<p>“[...] Because you can't do that with just four heads, you must get more people on board. We were going through a difficult moment and important strategic decisions needed to be made”  <b>(Very inclusive to important decision – influence of cultural factor – collectivist)</b></p> <p>“I had a board essentially made up of people from the accelerator, as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the CEO, someone from their strategy team and then, from the investor, the United States environmental Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)”  <b>(More closed for important decisions – influence of cultural factor – individualist)</b></p>	Characteristics of national cultural contexts	

**Table 3***Constitutive Elements of Analysis (CEA) and Operational Definition*

<b>CEA</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
<b>(CEA 1)</b> <i>Open Strategizing activities and practices</i>	<i>Inclusion practices</i> Practices that allow the participation and interaction of actors who are internal and external to the organization in the accelerated internationalization process. <u>Examples:</u> Development of ideas for future markets, consumer needs, international operations and product improvement; collaboration among practitioners through portals; co-development of ideas, suggestions for problems by meetings via Skype; businesses collaboratively created; consensus search for present and future decisions; evaluation and decisions made through online / offline discussions; videoconferences to the alignment between decision makers; crowdsourcing, strategy jamming, online forums, community platforms, conferences, summits.
	<i>Transparency practices</i> Practices that allow the visibility and communication of strategic information with actors who are internal and external to the organization in the accelerated process of internationalization. <u>Examples:</u> Open and transparent discussions on strategic issues; discussions in virtual forums; blogging, broadcasting (communication of relevant information); public strategy presentations and discussions; access to information; sharing of documents and strategic information; public announcements.
	<i>Practitioners:</i> organizational actors from inside and outside the organization: Internal: Top management; collaborators selected as facilitators or creators of ideas; production line employees; CEO; Middle managers; All members who can be classified as creators of ideas and participants in Open Strategizing activities and practices. External: external researchers; agencies; customers; producers; consumers; external consultants; external managers; competitors; experts from the respective areas.
<b>(CEA 2)</b> <b>Accelerated process of internationalization</b>	Process of fast entry into the international markets as a result of micro strategic inclusion and transparency practices that have been carried out over the time that comprehends the foundation and first internationalization and all the activities after that period daily by organization's internal and external stakeholders (Johnson <i>et al.</i> , 2003; Jarzabkowski <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Tavakoli <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Seidl <i>et al.</i> , 2019).
<b>(CEA 3)</b> <b>Characteristics of the home-country context, emerging and developed and national culture</b>	<i>Institutional, social, structural and cultural dimensions</i> Factors such as market size, cultural and economic forces, domestic transaction costs and the regulatory institutional environment <u>Examples:</u> Investments received; workforce; infrastructure; absence or presence of resources, support for innovation, technology and Hofstede's dimensions that influenced in the configuration of Open Strategizing in the accelerated process of internationalization.

**Table 4**

*Open Strategizing of BRZ and ENG in the accelerated internationalization process and context differences*

<b>BRZ</b>		<b>ENG</b>	
<b>Home Country Context:</b> uncertain environments, with scarce resources, high bureaucratic institutional structures; deprived of the superior technologies and supporting structures, financial support deficiency; lack of support for innovation.		<b>Home Country Context:</b> developed institutional, social, and structural dimensions; support for innovation; greater financial incentives to internationalization.	
<b>National Context: High</b> Power Distance; <b>High</b> Uncertainty avoidance; <b>Collectivist</b> ; Tend to be <b>Short-term</b> .		<b>National Context: Low</b> Power Distance; <b>Low</b> Uncertainty avoidance; <b>Individualist</b> ; Tend to be <b>Long-term</b> .	
<b>Inclusion Practices</b>	<b>Transparency Practices</b>	<b>Inclusion Practices</b>	<b>Transparency Practices</b>
<p><b>(what)</b> Strategic partnership, co-creation, openness to ideas, democratic decision- making, joint analysis and negotiation, collaboration.</p> <p><b>(how)</b> External intervention, formal and informal meetings, internal interactions using IT, online platforms (Basecamp, Slack, Notion).</p> <p><b>(who)</b> External partners, internal staff members and clients.</p>	<p><b>(what)</b> Dissemination of strategic issues and call to participation.</p> <p><b>(how)</b> Meetings and communication inherent to partnerships, online platforms (Basecamp, Slack, Notion), informal meetings, blogs and social media.</p> <p><b>(who)</b> Founder and CEO and partner.</p>	<p><b>(what)</b> Strategic Partnership, co-creation, openness to ideas and joint discussions.</p> <p><b>(how)</b> Formal meetings, online platforms (Slack), formal and informal interactions using IT.</p> <p><b>(who)</b> Internal and external investors, company's board, internal staff members, consultants and clients.</p>	<p><b>(what)</b> Dissemination of strategic issues and call to participation.</p> <p><b>(how)</b> Formal meetings with the use of PowerPoint presentations; e-mails online platforms (Slack), blog and social media.</p> <p><b>(who)</b> CEO, internal staff and external members.</p>