Author's response to reviews

Title: Language and rigour in qualitative research: Problems and principles in analyzing data collected in Mandarin

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Sheila Twinn  
This extensively revised paper reads well and makes a valuable contribution to the available literature on the use of language in qualitative research. The paper is now much more clearly focussed on the issues of language and rigour, highlighting the issues of working collaboratively across languages and how these issues might be addressed in ensuring rigour in the research process. In my view, the authors have addressed the comments made on the first version of the paper in a thoughtful and considered which has contributed to the quality of the revised version. 

Thank you.

Discretionary revision  
I recommend the paper is now accepted for publication. I would, however, like to suggest one discretionary revision relating to the reference to conceptual equivalence (page 7). It would be helpful to elaborate how this term is being used in the context of assessing the accuracy of transcribed data.  

We have elaborated on the term conceptual equivalence, and briefly described the implications of translation for achieving comparable meaning of terms (see page 7).

Emma Pitchforth  
I welcomed the opportunity to review this paper again. The paper is much better written as a correspondence article than a research paper and the authors have responded well to comments from all reviewers. There are only minor comments/suggestions remaining.  

Thank you.

Minor comments  
The structure of the abstract does not fit that well with the structure of the paper and authors may like to consider whether this can be revised or whether necessary. It may stand better as unstructured abstract if one is needed.  

We have revised the abstract; it is now unstructured, and we think it fits better with the paper’s structure.

The authors have tried to be much more reflective and this makes the paper more interesting and valuable to other researchers facing similar challenges. The terms Chinese, Chinese Mandarin and Mandarin are all used. It would be good to check that these are used consistently.  

We’ve checked the use of the terms Chinese, Chinese Mandarin and Mandarin throughout the manuscript. We have now used the term Mandarin consistently, where relevant.
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<td>Wai-Tong Chien</td>
<td>I am pleased to have this second look onto this revised manuscript. The revised paper addressed most important issues suggested by the reviewers and had been restructured into a 'Correspondance paper' as suggested. I appraise the efforts and detail revision made by the authors.</td>
<td>Thank you.</td>
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| Minor essential revisions | - adding statements on ethical considerations of research done and data used.  
- adding a paragraph in discussing more about the importance of more collaborations between researchers across cultures, particularly in the developing countries like mainland China. And thus, briefly explain how the issues discussed in the paper help in such collaborations. | All the data and examples used in our manuscript are drawn from previously published research, conducted with ethical approval, and data used are not traceable to specific individuals; the data presented in figs 1 & 2 also cannot be traced to individuals.  
About the TB study in Chongqing, we have added a statement about the ethical clearance for the published paper we draw on.  
We hope the above adequately responds to your comment.  
In the discussion we have added a paragraph about greater participation of Chinese researchers in international collaborative research – and explained how the issues we raise in this paper help in this endeavour (see page 13; para 2). |