Reviewer's report

Title: Interviewee Transcript Review: Assessing the Impact on Qualitative Research

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Reviewer: Barbara DiCicco-Bloom

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This is an excellent subject for analysis and one that I think qualitative researchers will find valuable. This analysis focuses on an important subject, interviewee review of their own interview transcripts to allegedly improve the quality of the data. I think this work is important although I think there are some oversights that if addressed may strengthen the manuscript and its contribution to the literature.

Minor Essential Revisions

The authors set out to assess the impact of interviewee transcript review (ITR) on the data and whether ITR should be incorporated in general into study designs. The question posed by the authors was well defined and the methods for analyzing the issue were adequate and well described. Although I am in agreement with the conclusion of the authors that ITR may not contribute enough to the accuracy of interview data to make it worthwhile, I think there are qualifiers that make this issue more complex. The authors present the issue as black or white. Methods similar to ITR have been used previously, for example, in feminist interview research studies that focus more on experiences of participants. Feminist researchers share the interview transcript with the interviewee to co-create the meaning of the interview data. Interviewee responses to interview transcripts are noted but may or may not be incorporated directly into the transcript itself. Instead the interviewee responses can be included in the data analysis and integrated into the interpretation the interview data. The authors do address the limitations of their study by stating that their data does not focus on experiences but rather on events and factors which they suggest may have contributed to a straight forward analysis and therefore influenced their conclusions. However, I think the importance of this issue warrants that it be addressed at the beginning of the paper since so much qualitative interview research does focus on interviewee experiences this providing the reader with the context of the analysis and conclusions in the beginning of the manuscript.

The present manuscript doesn't present any of the history of ITR. I am not an expert in this area but different approaches to analysis, such as feminist and critical theory, may have different perspectives on the value of ITR while here it is presented solely as a method to maintain accuracy of data. I would have liked to some information about the history of ITR to provide a context to better understand how it emerged and its perceived value.
The use of ITR simply to improve the quality of the data seems complicated as presented in this manuscript. The authors conclude that ITR may bias data because some individuals will make changes to their transcripts while others will not bother. On page 7 the authors report that in “204 instances interviewee made grammatical changes and/or revised the manuscript in an effort to clarify or articulate better a point made in the interview…there were 39 instances in which interviewees added new information that had not been discussed during the interview. This last category is particularly noteworthy.

Although the authors concluded that ITR does not affect the researcher, in fact, the time and delay in obtaining completed data sets would seem to be at best an inconvenience and at worst a big expense in time and resources. Overall I agree with the authors on their conclusions based on their data analysis and data set. ITR does not improve the accuracy of data enough to make up for the negative impact it can have on the overall data collection process. I would have liked to see a little more information about the background of ITR and its perceived value to other disciplines if that information is available.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.