Author’s response to reviews

Title: Using root metaphors to analyze communication between nurses and patients: a qualitative study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor and Reviewers,

We would like to thank the two reviewers for their comments and suggestions, which have contributed to improving the article in many respects. In what follows, we shall explain precisely how we have incorporated the suggested changes and the reviewers’ contributions into the article.

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS A

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)

Among the background, there is a need for each root, to provide a good example. Readers may not be confident with the meaning of the concepts introduced and they may be helped by concrete or literature based examples.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Theoretical framework: I very much appreciate the description of this interesting theoretical framework. It would be helpful, if examples of the four different metaphors are illustrated with an example - maybe not from a medical perspective (table2)

AUTHORS’ ACTION A
Both reviewers address the same question; we have included it from a published paper (Kilbourn and Alvarez, 2008) using an email as an example to illustrate how each of the four root metaphors stresses a different aspect of a phenomenon. We also followed Reviewer 2’s suggestion about giving an example not from the medical perspective. This can be found on pages 6-8, lines 155-189.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Title: The manuscript does not show how root metaphors can improve communication between a nurse and patients, it rather describes the analysis. I therefore recommend the following title: Using root metaphors to analyse communication between nurses and patients: a case study.

AUTHORS’ ACTION A

We have followed the reviewer’s suggestion and have adopted the title suggested by. Further, we have been careful to replace any reference to “improving” with “analyzing” throughout the manuscript (page 2, line 48; page 10 line 252; page 11 line 267; page 24 line 631).

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS B

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

The background describes very well existing challenges in patient-health provider communication and the role of metaphors. It would be helpful if some specific information on communication with chronic ill patients is added, especially in which way counselling helps in their self-management.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have included a paragraph about chronically ill patients from the existing literature, particularly on the lines of counseling helping their self-management or empowerment (as suggested by Reviewer 2). We have also included five new references (page 4, lines 104-113).

REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)
It is not full clear at the end of the introduction/background the research problem and how discovering new knowledge may be valuable both for clinicians and researchers.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Background Research question: I recommend the research question/aim to be revised as the results do not show if the level of understanding has been improved.

It is otherwise not quite clear where the "categories mentioned above" (page 4, line 109) come from and why these may be relevant.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

The research problem has been re-stated (page 4, lines 115-120), making it clear why this could be valuable for clinicians (page 5, lines 119-120); any reference to the word “improvement” was deleted). We have also emphasized how this study can be valuable for clinicians and researchers with the new paragraph added (page 4, lines 111-113).

The “categories mentioned above” was a mistake, particularly the part that says “above”; it has been removed and replaced by “emerged categories” (page 5, line 124).

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS  C

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)

I suggest to distinguish the study design from the participants (nurse and patient); specifically, I strongly suggest to better support the rational of the purposeful sample (which is not mentioned in this manner) on the basis of which the unique nurse was selected.

AUTHORS’ ACTION  C

We have moved the paragraph on inclusion and exclusion criteria to the participants’ subheading (page 9 lines 222-227).

The term purposeful sampling is now included in the text and the basis for there being a single nurse is explained and has been elaborated on by bringing more concreteness to the criteria presented (page 8 lines 207-212).

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS  D

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)
There is a need to explain why this data has not been published before given that the data collection was performed around 10 years ago, may be this is a secondary analysis? Please provide an explanation or provide a sentence among the limitations. I do not think that patients and nurses are so different that the metaphors would be affected; however, there is a need to motivate why long time has been required to provide this publication.

AUTHORS’ ACTION D

This study came from a Doctoral Thesis. The doctoral student took six years to finish the first draft because he had personal problems, including a divorce. The thesis was finally defended on January 2014, just three years ago. Furthermore, the university's internal rules are clear that it could not be published until the viva voce had taken place. That is why we waited until that point before we started working on the paper. We have now changed the date to 2014 (page 8 line 194).

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS E

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)

I also suggest to describe better the figure one, which is not immediate in its meaning;

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

I am not sure if figure 1 is needed. If so, it needs more explanation.

AUTHORS’ ACTION E

As both reviewers suggested, Figure 3 needed further explanation, and as providing such an explanation would not make the meaning any clearer, we decided to remove this figure and every reference to it.

REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS F

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)

With regard the findings, these are well reported.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)
Methods:

It would be interesting to have a description of the setting the interviews took place in - hospital, out-patient, home-care.

What does "having … their own nursing practice" (page 6, line 150) mean?

As well as data on the "selected nurse" who performed the interviews.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

The setting has been explained by including a new paragraph. Also, the reasons for having a sample comprising a single nurse have been made clearer and are explained. Furthermore, we have deleted the word “selected” as it was misleading (page 8 lines 200-205).

After careful thought, we have changed the reference to the nurse’s “own practice”, as it may give the impression that it referred to a private practice. We have exchanged it for “nurse’s consultation office” (page 8, line 201).

REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Data collection: Page 6, line 165 "We interviewed …". Who is we? I thought one single nurse interviewed the patients?

Please elaborate on how the data of the interviews was collected - audio/video recording, field notes, …

It seems as if further ethnographic techniques were used.

Please describe in the analysis section how these were included in the analysis.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

Our mistake, changed for “the nurse interviewed” (page 9, lines 230-231).

This has been elaborated by including “audio-taped and transcribed verbatim”. (page 9, lines 232-233). The data collection has been re-elaborated by explaining the on-site observation conditions and who collected them (page 9, lines 234-241). Within the data analysis we have included a quote from one of the field notes (page 14 lines 354-361). We have elaborated the on-site observation technique and described that two authors were in charge (page 9 lines 235-237).
REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Data analysis: In my opinion this begins on page 6, line 171.

Please explain who was involved in the analysis.

Why were the specific categories (or topics, themes?) chosen and how were they extracted - only inductively or also deductively.

It seems to me as if five themes were chosen and key-words were identified. It would be helpful if this was made clearer.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We agree and as suggested by reviewer 2, we have changed and moved the paragraph that was on page 6, line 171 now to page 16 lines 426-440. We also moved the paragraph on page 17 lines 442-454 as it referred to results not to discussion.

The results section has been re-organized in two parts. To begin, the results according to the categories (page 12, lines 304-477) and secondly on page 18-21 lines 478-544, by the three identified themes.

This has been explained by elucidating the categories and themes inductively and deductively, and showing how each metaphor was identified (page 10 line 253, page 11 lines 268-274. We have also introduced this change within the background section page 2, lines 54-57).

Two authors acted as on-site observers and took field notes (page 9, line 235) and two authors conducted the coding independently and identified the root metaphors of the categories (page 10 line 252).

This has been made clearer on page 10 in lines 252-257 and also by including the three themes within Table 2 (page 10 line 244).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Tables 1 and 2 helped me understand the concept better.

Maybe table 2 could help describe the framework (background).

Which language was the analysis performed in, considering the quotes are displayed in English? Please explain at what stage the translation was performed.

AUTHORS’ ACTION
Yes, we have included Table 2 (now Table 1) within the framework section on page 6, line 153.

The entire manuscript was translated from Spanish to English by a professional translator, making sure that the meaning was correctly conveyed from the original.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Results and Discussion: The results and discussion are a little "mixed up" showing discussion aspects in the results section and vice versa

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have rearranged this, for instance by moving the result from page 13 to the Results section (pages 16-17, lines 426-440).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

It would be good to have examples / quotes underlying the synthesis of the root metaphors demonstrated in table 3.

In my opinion a good description with the underlying quotes for each metaphor would be sufficient in this manuscript (for example page 13, lines 342 - 355) if these results are discussed adequately afterwards.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have included four more examples explaining Table 3, complementing the existing one, and discussing each one afterwards. We have elaborated each example, with the result that it now comprises five pages (pages 12-16 lines 304-424).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

It would be helpful to describe how the different subheadings in the results section emerged.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

Subheadings corresponded to the three themes that were identified by the analysis. Themes are now also included now in Table 2 (page 10 line 244).
REVIEWER’S COMMENTS

Alvisa Palese (Reviewer 1)

I also suggest to report among the conclusion more implications for practice (e.g., patient education).

AUTHORS’ ACTION

Two implications for patient education have been included at the very end of the Conclusions section (page 24 lines 647-650).

We trust that we have managed to rectify all the issues identified by the reviewers’ to their satisfaction. Should there be any further matters which require our attention, please do not hesitate to contact us about them.

Best regards