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. Please, find the additions highlighted in red color throughout the text.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)
In general: past tense should be used consistently in methods and results section.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have followed the reviewer’s suggestion and used the past tense in both sections (methods and results).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)
Abstract/conclusion: the study showed, that the nurse and patients used different root metaphors. It is a hypothesis to say that understanding would improve. This needs to be proven in an own study.
AUTHORS’ ACTION A

We have re-stated this section completely. This can be found on page 3 lines 66-71.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Background: I don’t understand the last sentence “Ultimately, empowered patients…” (p5. Lines 118-120) and also think an additional explanation is not necessary. Lines 115-118 describe the aim of the study adequately.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We agree with the reviewer’s suggestion and we have decided to remove this last sentence entirely.

We have re-stated the aim of the study (lines 115-117).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Theoretical framework: table 1 and text should be adapted showing consistency in the order of presenting the four categories.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

The order of presentation of the four categories started out being Formism, Mechanism, Organicism and Contextualism (see page 3, lines 132-147). We have now adopted that order in Table 1 and within the e-mail example that comes next (page 6, lines 149-185).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Participants: Nurse: I assume these aspects weren’t inclusion criteria but rather pragmatic approach to participate in the study. Sociodemographic and educational/training data of the nurse performing the consultations should be demonstrated.

AUTHORS’ ACTION E

We have re-stated this section to avoid misunderstandings. The nurse inclusion criteria remain the same, but this time without specifying the number of years. Later on we say that this nurse met the present inclusion criteria with 25 years of practice and 15 years teaching experience at the university (pages 8-9, lines 217-221). As the reviewer suggested, we have attached 2 letters from the university and the Ministry of Employment to show her working life as a proof.
Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Table 2 is a result of the analysis not part of the methods section. I do not quite understand this table. Does each theme have the five categories or do they represent different approaches of analyzing material?

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have moved table 2 from the methods section to the beginning of the results of the analysis (page 11, lines 287). We have deleted any references to the 3 themes throughout the manuscript.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Results: Each of the categories still has a results and an interpretation. The results section should only show the results in an objective manner: e.g., lines 305 to 320 show the results and then continues with a discussion of these. Maybe it would be better to demonstrate only the main results showing/demonstrating that nurses’ and patients’ use of metaphors are inconsistent. This may not need to be show for each category.

I do not quite understand the meaning/relevance of the quotes at the end of each category: e.g., lines 386 to 394 or lines 415-424.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have moved all the interpretation from the results’ section (for each of the categories), and placed them within the discussion section (page 18 lines 460-468, 473-478, page 19 lines 492-497, page 20 lines 515-521, 537-541). We have done this for each of the categories, as we thought we needed to be consistent.

The quotes are excerpts from the transcripts of the conversations between nurse and patient. We have now moved each of the quotes at the beginning part of each category to be more consistent and explicit.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Discussion/Limitations: I do not agree, that a nurse in such a single case study can be representative. I also recommend more qualitative studies before starting with qualitative studies (p. 24, line 633).

AUTHORS’ ACTION
We have deleted the word “representative” as it can be misleading for the kind of the study presented. Instead, we have used the word “example” (page 21 line 563-564).

We have included reviewer’s suggestion of including more qualitative study before starting with quantitative studies (page 22 line 575-576).

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Conclusions: The conclusions can not be derived from the results reported: “when both nurse and patients were using …into their knowledge” (p.24, lines 644-645). The manuscript has no results which confirm this hypothesis. Please add the results demonstrating this conclusion.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have deleted this sentence as it could be misleading.

Cornelia Mahler (Reviewer 2)

Regarding patient education aspects I assume it would be more helpful to train health professionals in using and understanding/reading root metaphors than by designing patient education leaflets.

AUTHORS’ ACTION

We have included this reviewer’s suggestion and deleted the “education leaflets”(page 22 line 588-590)

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