Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 1 Date: 25 Jun 2017

Reviewer: Cornelia Mahler

Reviewer's report:

Dear Dr. Alvarez and Co-Authors

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to revisit your revised manuscript titled: "Use of root metaphors to analyze communication between nurses and patients: a qualitative study".

The manuscript has definitely improved however I still have the impression that too many different aspects are trying to be included in the one manuscript. It may be an idea to focus on only one aspect - either the three themes or the five categories within this manuscript. I therefore still recommend major revisions at this stage and encourage to reduce complexity of the manuscript.

Here some suggestions and comments:

In general: past tense should be used consistently in methods and results section.

Abstract / Conclusion: the study showed, that nurse and patients used different root metaphors. It is a hypotheses to say that understanding would improve. This needs to be proven in an own study.

Background: I do not understand the last sentence "Ultimately, empowered patients ...." (p.5, lines 118 - 120) and also think an additional explanation is not necessary. Lines 115 - 118 describe the aim of the study adequately.

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

Participants: Nurse: I assume these aspects weren't inclusion criteria but rather a pragmatic approach to participate in the study. Sociodemographic and educational/training data of the nurse performing the consultations should be demonstrated.
Table 2 is a result of the analysis and 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 the material?

Results: Each of the categories still has a results and an interpretation. The results section should only show the results in an objective manner: f.ex. Diet - 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 shown for each category.

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

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 quantitative studies (p. 24, line 633).

Conclusions: The conclusions drawn 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.

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.

Kind regards

Cornelia Mahler

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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