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Adapting Descriptive Psychological Phenomenology to Include Dyadic Interviews: Practical Considerations for Data Analysis

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Abstract

Dyadic interviews are an approach to qualitative data collection designed to understand the meaning pairs of individuals make from experiences. The greatest benefit of dyadic interviews, and perhaps a reason for their gaining momentum in the literature, is that they encourage participants to interact, resulting in detailed and complex descriptions of phenomena. However, dyadic interviews pose challenges to qualitative researchers. Researchers must figure out how to account for the presence of two interviewees, any differences in perspective, and interactions. Unfortunately, no known study demonstrates how the interactions of dyadic interviews can be analyzed in accordance with a methodological approach. Rather, researchers tend to observe pre-existing methods without direct mention of modification for conducting and analyzing dyadic interviews. Thus, the degree to which participant interactions are being analyzed in current studies remains unknown. In the following paper, we use Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology as an exemplar for how dyadic interviews may be applied to qualitative investigations. The theoretical fit of dyadic interviews with Giorgi's approach, proposed modifications, and their limitations, are discussed.

Keywords
Dyadic Interviews, Qualitative Research Methods, Descriptive Phenomenology, Descriptive Psychological Phenomenology, Shared Experience

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Dyadic interviews are an approach to qualitative data collection designed to understand the meaning pairs of individuals make from experiences. The greatest benefit of dyadic interviews, and perhaps a reason for their gaining momentum in the literature, is that they encourage participants to interact, resulting in detailed and complex descriptions of phenomena. However, dyadic interviews pose challenges to qualitative researchers. Researchers must figure out how to account for the presence of two interviewees, any differences in perspective, and interactions. Unfortunately, no known study demonstrates how the interactions of dyadic interviews can be analyzed in accordance with a methodological approach. Rather, researchers tend to observe pre-existing methods without direct mention of modification for conducting and analyzing dyadic interviews. Thus, the degree to which participant interactions are being analyzed in current studies remains unknown. In the following paper, we use Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology as an exemplar for how dyadic interviews may be applied to qualitative investigations. The theoretical fit of dyadic interviews with Giorgi's approach, proposed modifications, and their limitations, are discussed. Keywords: Dyadic Interviews, Qualitative Research Methods, Descriptive Phenomenology, Descriptive Psychological Phenomenology, Shared Experience

Dyadic (or paired/joint) interviewing is an approach to data collection used to gather information about how pairs of individuals perceive and make meaning from shared experiences (Arksey, 1996; Wilson, Onwuegbuzie, & Manning, 2016). The defining feature of dyadic interviews is that participants are encouraged to interact with one another to devise a collective meaning from an experience (Morgan, 2010; Morgan, Ataie, Carder, & Hoffman, 2013). The interactions that occur during dyadic interviews are valuable in developing detailed and multifaceted understandings about experiences as participants build upon each other's ideas (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013) and explore areas of tension or difference in perspective in a reciprocal manner (Arksey, 1996; Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012). Dyadic interviews allow participants to explore shared experiences in a joint context, which may help researchers develop more holistic, thorough, and transferable knowledge of such experiences (Arksey, 1996; Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Polak & Green, 2015).

Due to the presence of two speakers and their cyclic communication (Morris, 2001), the data obtained from dyadic interviews is qualitatively different from that of individual interviews (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012) or focus groups (Morgan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2013). For instance, unlike individual interviews, there is potential for members of a dyad to disagree with one another, which needs to be accounted for (Morgan, 2010). Likewise, unlike focus groups, where multiple interactions occur, dyadic interviews permit a single continuous interaction, (Morgan, 2010) offering participants the reciprocal opportunity to share and incorporate or refuse ideas (Morgan et al., 2013). Given these unique features of

dyadic interviews, methodological adjustments may be required to obtain and evaluate interaction data (Eisikovits & Koren, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). Unfortunately, such adjustments are rarely discussed in the literature.

Researchers who have used dyadic interviews often neglect to provide information on how the analyses were conducted or modified to account for participant interaction (e.g., Alghafli, Hatch, & Marks, 2014; Henninger, Hohn, Leiber, & Berner, 2015; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Knoble & Linville, 2012; Regan, Levesque, Lambert, & Kelly, 2015; Robinson, Clare, & Evans, 2005; Wojnar, 2007). No known published work outlines a specific procedure for how one might obtain and analyse dyadic interview data in accordance with a methodological approach (Wilson et al., 2016). Following pre-existing methods without modification when conducting and analyzing dyadic interviews may mean that the greatest benefit of dyadic interviews, the participants' reciprocal interaction (Morgan et al., 2013), is not adequately explored or demonstrated (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016).

In the present paper, we aim to begin a dialogue with qualitative researchers about ways to approach interviews that are not conducted with individuals or focus groups. We use Giorgi's descriptive psychological phenomenology (Giorgi, 2009) as an exemplar for how qualitative methodologies may be modified to prioritize the interactions of dyadic interviews. First, we consider the methodological limitations of the available literature where dyadic interviews have been conducted. Second, we review the research interests and professional backgrounds of the authors to situate the paper within the psychological and research context. Third, we describe current suggestions for navigating the challenges of conducting and analyzing dyadic interviews. Fourth, we discuss the tenets of descriptive phenomenology and how such studies may benefit from the use of dyadic interviews. Fifth, we outline the tensions and risks of using dyadic interviews for phenomenological studies and provide suggestions for how researchers might mitigate these risks. Finally, we propose modifications to Giorgi's descriptive psychological phenomenology for use with dyadic interviews.

Dyadic Interviews: A Review and Critique of the Literature

Researchers have begun to use dyadic interviews to explore shared experiences with a variety of psychological phenomena. Dyadic interviews for research purposes have predominantly been used with couples as dyad pairs, but other forms of dyads are emerging. For example, dyadic interviews have been used to examine (a) the empowerment experiences of partnerships between academic and community liaisons (de Sayu & Chanmugam, 2016), (b) the experiences of young men with automatic enrollment in a pension plan (Shaw & Waite, 2015), (c) the concept of masculinity for African American men (Rogers, Sperry, & Levant, 2015), (d) how women and important individuals in their lives (e.g., romantic partners or family members) made sense of post-partum psychosis (Wyatt, Murray, Davies, & Jomeen, 2015), (e) young people's experiences smoking and using cannabis (Highet, 2003), and (f) daughters' religious beliefs and their impact on family dynamics (Sands & Roer-Strier, 2006). Likewise, dyadic interviews have been used to study the ways in which couples make meaning or come to understand (a) Islam (Alghafli et al., 2014), (b) a cancer diagnosis (Antoine et al., 2013; Regan et al., 2015), (c) an obesity diagnosis (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008), (d) a dementia or Alzheimer's diagnosis (Robinson et al., 2005; Wawrziczny et al., 2015), (e) a miscarriage (Wojnar, 2007), (f) "outness" as a homosexual couple (Knoble & Linville, 2012), (g) an erectile dysfunction diagnosis (Henninger et al., 2015), (h) an HIV prevention program (Ngure et al., 2016), and (i) parental infant feeding practices (Majee, Thullen, Davis, & Sethi, 2017). Qualitative researchers have used dyadic interviews to explore a variety of relational and psychological phenomena.

Despite the growing number of studies which use dyadic interviews for data collection, authors of studies often fail to report how they facilitated, or accounted for, participant interaction during data collection and analysis. Authors tend to adhere to the administration and analytical steps of pre-existing methods, which do not include specific recommendations for interaction facilitation or analysis (Eisikovits & Koren, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). Dyadic interview data has been gathered and analyzed in accordance with (a) grounded theory (Alghafli et al., 2014; Antoine et al., 2013; Henninger et al., 2015), (b) thematic analysis (Knoble & Linville, 2012; Majee et al., 2017; Ngure et al., 2016; Regan et al., 2015; Rogers et al., 2015; Shaw & Waite, 2015), (c) interpretive phenomenological analysis (Robinson et al., 2005; Wawrziczny et al., 2015; Wyatt et al., 2015), and (d) descriptive phenomenology (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Wojnar, 2007). While these methods may be modified for use with dyadic interviews, published researchers have not directly stated how, if at all, such modifications have been made.

For example, while Knoble and Linville (2012) noted the dyadic interview format allowed them to see areas of tension between members of homosexual couples in "being out," their manuscript only provided sample quotations from one participant at a time. Thus, couples' interactions were never demonstrated directly. Likewise, there was no mention of how interviewers encouraged reciprocal discussion during data collection. Without such interaction information, one cannot determine if "true" dyadic interviews were conducted or if they more closely approximated simultaneous individual interviews (Morgan et al., 2013). Finally, interactions were not mentioned in the analysis section of the article, leaving one to wonder how, or if, they were interpreted.

Likewise, Wawrziczny et al. (2015) completed dyadic interviews with couples to gather their experiences with an early-onset Alzheimer's diagnosis. The authors stated dyadic interviews were chosen to "capture their interactions in the context of individual and shared experiences" (pp. 695). However, there was no mention of interaction facilitation or analysis, and the results of the manuscript only included quotations from one member of the dyad at a time. Based on the way the findings were written, it was difficult to tell if dyadic interviews had been conducted. It seemed plausible that separate individual interviews with both members of the couple had been completed. Although dyadic interviews were chosen to create interactions between the research participants, information about how interactions were encouraged or analyzed, with concrete examples (Morgan et al., 2013), were lacking. Similar patterns of reporting can be seen in other studies as well (e.g., Henninger et al., 2015; Highet, 2003; Regan et al., 2015; Wojnar, 2007).

Current authors do not address methodological considerations for dyadic interview facilitation and analysis, which undermines the reason for conducting dyadic interviews in the first place; to demonstrate a complex, reciprocal, and relational account of a shared experience (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). There is a need for methodological recommendations for conducting, analyzing, and reporting dyadic interviews, which take participant interaction into account.

Paper Context: Author Backgrounds and Research Interests

Prior to a discussion of the available suggestions for conducting and analyzing dyadic interviews or the proposed methodological modifications, an overview of the authors of this paper is warranted. Such an overview is included to situate the paper within the psychological and researcher context.

All four authors are mental health practitioners affiliated with a large university in Western Canada. Each author's professional background includes one or more specializations relevant to the current paper. Michelle Tkachuk is a provisionally registered psychologist and

counseling psychology doctoral candidate. The present paper is one of three manuscripts in her doctoral dissertation exploring the experiences of couples in couple therapy where weight related concerns (e.g., food and weight preoccupation) were present. Ms. Tkachuk's dissertation emphasizes the shared meaning couples construct about their experiences in such therapy. Dr. Russell-Mayhew is a registered psychologist and professor specializing in the study of weight related issues including individuals with eating disorders and weight bias. Dr. Russell-Mayhew uses qualitative research methodologies to identify the personal and/or systemic nuances of weight related issues. Dr. Kassan is a registered psychologist and assistant professor specializing in social justice and diversity issues in psychology as well as qualitative research methodologies. Dr. Kassan has previously published works using Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology; her expertise was imperative in developing the proposed methodological modifications in the present paper. Dr. Dimitropoulos is a clinical social worker and assistant professor specializing in the treatment of individuals with eating disorders as well as marriage and family therapy. Dr. Dimitropoulos has previously published works about the potential benefits of couple therapy in the treatment of individuals with eating disorders. Each of the aforementioned authors believes in the integration of psychological research and practice. The authors hope to provide a more comprehensive approach for the use of dyadic interviews in qualitative research to deepen the understanding of shared experiences of psychological phenomena so meaningful practice recommendations may be illuminated.

Addressing the Literature Gap: Preliminary Ideas

Researchers choosing to use dyadic interviews should be prepared to address three key methodological challenges, namely interaction facilitation, analysis, and demonstration. First, researchers should have techniques for conducting dyadic interviews that encourage pairs to interact. Second, researchers should have a detailed plan for how participant interaction(s) will be analysed. Third, researchers should have a blueprint for how they will demonstrate the interactions, typically accomplished by providing reciprocal quotations (Morgan et al., 2013), when reporting study findings. Each of these areas and recommendations for researchers are discussed in turn.

Facilitating Dyadic Interview Interaction

While the process of conducting dyadic interviews may seem somewhat obvious, there is a major pitfall associated with thinking that interviewing pairs together is synonymous with dyadic interviewing. Having two individuals in the room together while they are asked a series of questions does not guarantee an interactive discussion, and without participant interaction, researchers cannot say they conducted dyadic interviews (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). At best, researchers who fail to encourage participant interaction leave many shared meanings unexplored or superficial. At worst, researchers complete simultaneous individual interviews which fail to produce any sort of shared relational meaning. To be considered dyadic interviews, participants need to interact and build upon each other's ideas (Arksey, 1996; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013).

Researchers conducting dyadic interviews may facilitate dyad interaction in several ways including using open ended and/or pointed questions and interactive prompts (Morgan et al., 2013). For example, researchers may ask open ended and general questions about shared experiences and include prompts for the participants to discuss. Alternatively, researchers struggling to get participants to interact may ask one individual a pointed question about their view on what the other said. Such questioning would allow researchers to see areas of agreeance and divergence, while also promoting reciprocal discussion. Ideally, dyadic

interviewers should ask participants to address one another's comments without suggestion of what specific ideas to explore. Avoiding leading questions increases the likelihood that participants select and discuss what was most meaningful to them, promoting trustworthy data (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Taylor & de Vocht, 2011). Regardless of the interaction promotion method(s) chosen, researchers conducting dyadic interviews should list any strategies used in study manuscripts, so that readers may be confident that in-depth dyadic interviews, rather than simultaneous individual interviews, were conducted.

Dyadic Interview and Interaction Analysis

After researchers facilitate interaction during dyadic interviews, they are tasked with analyzing complex interactive data. As a stepping stone toward easing the methodological challenges of dyadic interview interaction analysis, Morgan (2010) poses two questions for researchers to consider. First, he recommends researchers ask themselves how they plan to include aspects of an experience where members of a dyad disagree. Including direct quotations or themes that support both individual's views would be one strategy. Second, researchers are advised to determine what aspect(s) of the interaction (i.e., verbal or non-verbal behaviour) they will emphasize in analysis. While theoretically, both aspects could be included, such analysis would be considerably more complex and may conflict with certain research ideologies/methodologies (Morgan et al., 2013). To decide what aspect(s) of the interaction to focus on, Morgan suggests researchers consider the study's guiding philosophy, research question(s), and method of analysis. For example, a descriptive phenomenological researcher, who attempts to avoid interpretation and reports only what participants say directly, would benefit from focusing solely on verbal interactions. Behavioural interactions tend not to be included in the analysis of descriptive phenomenologists (Langdridge, 2007). However, if a participant spoke about a behaviour that occurred during the dyadic interview, it would be indirectly analysed as it would have become verbal content. Therefore, researchers choosing to focus only on the verbal content of dyadic interviews should be purposeful in asking participants to speak about any observed behavioural interactions that occur during the interview. Otherwise, such content would not be included.

Alternatively, researchers who value researcher interpretation (e.g., interpretive phenomenologists) are theoretically situated to address verbal and/or behavioural interactions. However, addressing verbal and non-verbal interactions together requires considerable skill, and potentially significant methodological modification (Morgan et al., 2013; Wilson et al., 2016), as verbal interactions likely interact with non-verbal behaviours between and within dyad members. Given the lack of current literature to guide such a complex process (Wilson et al., 2016), we follow Morgan (2010) and with colleagues (Morgan et al., 2013) and continue to discuss verbal and non-verbal interaction analysis discretely. Our hope is that over time methodological modifications for dyadic interview analysis will become more available, at which point recommendations for analyzing both verbal and non-verbal interactions can be made.

Interaction Demonstration

After completing dyadic interview interaction analysis, researchers must demonstrate interactions in study findings. To illustrate dyadic interview interactions, researchers may benefit from providing examples of reciprocal quotations (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016). Morgan (2010) suggests researchers focus on one of two aspects of the interaction, namely the verbal content between participants (the "what" aspect of the interaction), or the non-verbal behaviours between participants (the "how" aspect of the interaction). Researchers focusing on

the "how" (i.e., behavioural) interactions of dyadic interviews should give specific examples of the participant's behavioural responses to each other to make the interaction concrete and observable. Alternatively, researchers aiming to describe the "what" (i.e., content) interactions of dyadic interviews should provide reciprocal quotations from both participants to demonstrate interactions. Providing quotes from both members of a dyad may be particularly important in areas where individuals disagree to demonstrate the intricacy and interpersonal nature of shared experiences (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016).

Recently, some authors have begun to include sample quotations from both members of a dyad in their study design. For instance, Wyatt et al. (2015) and Braybrook et al. (2017) included interactive quotes from both partners exploring their experiences with post-partum psychosis and health behaviours, respectively, to demonstrate areas of agreeance as well as discrepancies in views. However, studies rarely include reciprocal quotations (Wilson et al., 2016), and even these studies did not discuss how their chosen methods of analysis were modified to facilitate and account for participant interaction. Methodological modifications to assist researchers in maximizing data obtained and analysed from dyadic interviews are needed.

In the remainder of the paper, we use Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology as an exemplar for how methodological modifications can be made for use with dyadic interviews. A descriptive phenomenological method was chosen for its theoretical fit and potential value-added to such investigations (outlined below). Descriptive psychological phenomenology was chosen because it considers the socio-cultural and relational influences on shared meaning and experience (Giorgi, 2009).

Dyadic Interviews and Descriptive Phenomenological Studies: Tenets and Benefits

Adapted from Husserl's (1970) phenomenological philosophy, and not unlike dyadic interviews, authors choosing descriptive phenomenological approaches aim to understand the similarities of experience that occur between individuals (Giorgi, 2009; Langdridge, 2007). However, unlike dyadic interviews which identify the shared meaning between individuals simultaneously, descriptive phenomenologists have traditionally interviewed people who have had similar experiences individually (Langdridge, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). After transcribing and developing a familiarity with each of the participants' perspectives, descriptive phenomenologists try to identify the aspects of an experience that seem to be shared across a variety of individuals (Langdridge, 2007; van Manen, 2014). A further difference is that while dyadic interviews are most often conducted with dyads (e.g., partners, family members) descriptive phenomenologists typically look for similarities of experiences from diverse and unfamiliar individuals (Giorgi, 2009; Langdridge, 2007). Nevertheless, as with researchers conducting dyadic interviews, the overarching goal of descriptive phenomenologists is to determine the similarities of experience that occur between people (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). The approaches are compatible for exploring shared experience, particularly for dyads in pre-existing relationships.

Benefits of Using Dyadic Interviews for Descriptive Phenomenological Studies

Dyadic interviews may be beneficial in descriptive psychological phenomenological studies for several reasons. Dyadic interviews may increase the depth of such studies due to the participants interactions. Depth of analysis may occur because participants can (a) trigger each other's ideas (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013); (b) aid each other in sharing experiences in detail (Arksey, 1996; Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012); (c) assist each other in responding to the researcher by creating a sense of comfort and collaboration (Arksey, 1996; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morris, 2001); (d) help to reduce the

role of the researcher due to participants prompting each other (Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012; Morgan et al., 2013; Polak & Green, 2015), resulting in more trustworthy data (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013; Taylor & de Vocht, 2011); and (e) help to give each other additional time to process what has been said, and determine what they would like to add (Morgan et al., 2013), lessening superfluous data (Norlyk, Haahr, & Hall, 2015). While many of these benefits could also be accomplished with focus groups (Morgan et al., 2013), they tend to require greater involvement by the researcher (Morgan et al., 2013) combating the goal of limited prompting or influence by descriptive phenomenological researchers (Giorgi, 2009). Dyadic interviews also provide a certain degree of privacy while promoting participant interaction (Morgan, 2010), which may be useful when inquiring into experiences with more sensitive phenomena (e.g., mental health; Morris, 2001; Polak & Green, 2015).

Another benefit of using dyadic interviews in descriptive phenomenological studies is the ease with which researchers may hear evolving or alternative perspectives. Descriptive phenomenologists are encouraged to look for alternative perspectives or "horizons" in their data (Giorgi, 2009; Langdridge, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). This process of "horizonalization" occurs after the data from an individual interview has been transcribed and broken into segments around underlying meaning (Langdridge, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). During this stage, researchers are attempting to identify the psychological meanings from what the participant said, including alternative meanings that were represented but may have been less obvious (van Manen, 2014). As such, descriptive phenomenological researchers are often trying to tease out the complexities of phenomena, which at times include contradictions within or between participants (Langdridge, 2007; van Manen, 2014). Looking for alternative perspectives for well-rounded data in descriptive phenomenological research may be eased by dyadic interviews, which allow participants to voice, and at times negotiate, differences in opinion together and in front of the researcher.

The dyadic interview format may also align with other goals of descriptive phenomenological researchers. Descriptive phenomenologists try to stay close to the data by maintaining the participants' language during data analysis and reporting, and limiting researcher interpretation (Giorgi, 2009; van Manen, 2014). Such a focus on participant language aligns well with Morgan's (2010) assertion that providing direct and reciprocal quotes from dyadic interview transcripts will help to prioritize interactions and lessen researcher and/or reader interpretation. In other words, reporting reciprocal interactive quotations would not only allow descriptive phenomenologists to stay close to the participants' voices, but may also allow researchers to demonstrate alternative perspectives of an experience directly and without interpretation.

Finally, descriptive phenomenologists aim to develop understandings of experiences that are rich and complex (Giorgi, 2009; Langdridge, 2007; Moustakas, 1994), which may be aided by dyadic interviews. When compared to the more standard individual interview format, dyadic interviews permit participants to interact and stimulate each other's ideas, which may result in content that would have not been addressed otherwise (Arksey, 1996; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013). By interviewing pairs of individuals together, researchers may directly observe areas of agreeance/tension, and behavioural patterns between participants, resulting in more comprehensive data (Arksey, 1996; Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Polak & Green, 2015). Interviewing pairs together may provide depth in understanding; the whole as reported by two individuals may be greater than the sum of individual interviews (Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Polak & Green, 2015).

Tensions, Risks, and Potential Mitigating Factors when Using Dyadic Interviews within Descriptive Phenomenological Studies

Despite the theoretical and pragmatic fit/benefit of using dyadic interviews in descriptive phenomenological investigations, there are also risks of combining them. For example, descriptive phenomenologists attempting to give a detailed and balanced perspective may struggle with dyadic interviews were one participant dominated the conversation (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008), or if they unintentionally prioritized one participant during the interview (Norlyk et al., 2015). Such circumstances may result in phenomenological descriptions that are skewed towards one individual's view (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012; Norlyk et al., 2015). Likewise, there is a risk of dyadic interviews bringing forth disagreements or conflict between participants during the interview(s) (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012) which may be exacerbated by the phenomenological researcher who is intentionally seeking alternative descriptions of the experience. Finally, there may be a tendency for dyadic interview participants to give "good" rather than honest answers (Norlyk et al., 2015), particularly if they believe speaking honestly will harm the other (Morris, 2001). Such participant "sensitivity" censoring will take away from the trustworthiness of the data (Norlyk et al., 2015) and the richness of the description of phenomena.

Although these risks warrant consideration, there are ways in which descriptive phenomenological researchers may conduct dyadic interviews to mitigate them. First, researchers should do their best to invite both members of a dyad into the conversation (Ledyard & Morrison, 2008) and/or step in with pointed questions if one individual tends to speak more frequently (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012). Second, descriptive phenomenologists should address participant's disagreements promptly and validate both individual's perspectives throughout the interview (Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012). Researchers may even choose to emphasize the goal of hearing both similar and diverse perspectives at the beginning of all interviews, if/when conflicts arise. Third, descriptive phenomenological researchers may choose to use a combination of dyadic and individual interviews so both participants can provide honest answers and/or be given equal opportunity to speak (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008). Finally, descriptive phenomenologists, and all other researchers choosing to conduct dyadic interviews, should ensure to discuss the limits to confidentiality during informed consent, and at the beginning of all interviews (Morgan et al., 2013) to protect the safety and well-being of the participants.

While dyadic interviews may pose the risk of creating conflict or distress between individuals, and particularly individuals who have a previous relationship (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012), such a risk may not be unique to the dyadic interview format. Norlyk et al. (2015) states the risk of creating conflict when working with individuals who know each other exists regardless of the type of interview that is conducted. Norlyk et al. argue that while having people discuss potential areas of disagreement in a dyadic interview could lead to conflict, conducting individual interviews may lead individuals to believe that secrets are being disclosed to the researcher and thus also creating tension (Taylor & de Vocht, 2011). While conflict can also arise between unfamiliar individuals in dyadic interviews, such conflicts are less likely (Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012) and tend to be easier for researchers to manage (Taylor & de Vocht, 2011).

Finally, while dyadic interviews may run the risk of prioritizing one individual's voice, such a risk may also be present with individual interviews. For instance, one person may more engaged tand/or expressive than the other, resulting in more detailed descriptions from one perspective (Taylor & de Vocht, 2011). Thus, some of the risks of conducting dyadic interviews may exist in individual interview formats as well.

The tendency for descriptive phenomenologists to look for alternatives of experience, which may exacerbate the risk of conflict, should not be ignored. Descriptive phenomenologists who use dyadic interviews should be aware that asking about alternatives carries the risk of creating conflict between participants. Such increased awareness should help descriptive phenomenological researchers pose questions with sensitivity and address conflict quickly and with an air of appreciation for demonstrating the complexity of a phenomena. An appreciation for the complex may be particularly important for descriptive psychological phenomenological researchers, as psychological phenomena tend to be intricate, sensitive, (van Manen, 2014), and culturally and contextually bound (Giorgi, 2009).

Dyadic Interviews and Descriptive Psychological Phenomenology

Dyadic interviews may provide an excellent data collection tool for researchers using Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology. The unique feature of this approach is that Giorgi believed that experiences with phenomena were influenced by ones' cultural environment and context. In other words, the shared meanings constructed by one group may differ significantly from another. The dyadic interview format may be beneficial to descriptive psychological phenomenological researchers as it makes complex socio-cultural negotiations of meaning visible. Such visibility may encourage a more in-depth cultural and relational understanding of psychological phenomena. However, presenting and analyzing the shared and disparate views of dyads, may be quite complicated (Morgan, 2010; Wilson et al., 2016).

To assist researchers in accounting for the cultural and contextual influences of psychological phenomena, Giorgi (2009) devised the terms "structures" and "constituents." Structures are the shared aspects of an experience that comprise psychological phenomenon. According to Giorgi, a phenomenon may have multiple structures. Constituents on the other hand represent the details of structures that add to the richness and depth of the phenomenological description. Giorgi used the term constituents, rather than "sub-themes" used in other qualitative investigations, as he wanted to emphasize that constituents required detailed descriptions to add to the structures they existed within, which may include cultural or contextual explanations.

The process of identifying structures and constituents in Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology requires five steps of analysis: (a) data transcription and reading for the sense of a transcript as a whole, (b) the determination of meaning units, (c) transforming the meaning units into psychologically sensitive expressions, (d) writing structural statements for each interview transcript from the transformed meaning units, and (e) writing the final structural statement(s) that synthesizes the structural statements across research participants or interviews. In order for Giorgi's descriptive psychological phenomenology to be applied to dyadic interview analysis, modifications to each step are required. As with any proposed methodological modification, some theoretical tensions arise and warrant consideration. The traditional steps to the method, proposed modifications, and tensions are outlined in detail below and summarized in Table 1. The proposed modifications are illustrated with a brief analysis of a hypothetical dyadic interview transcript with a couple (Jill and John) discussing their experience in couple therapy.

Step One: Data Transcription and Reading for the Sense of the Transcript as a Whole

Researchers conducting descriptive psychological phenomenological studies begin by working with interview transcripts. The first step is interview transcription. During this phase, researchers familiarize themselves with the transcript, and develop a general sense of what the participant described. Researchers may choose to record some of their initial impressions but

should be prepared to discard such impressions if further analysis does not support them (Giorgi, 2009).

Proposed modifications to step one. Researchers using dyadic interviews in conjunction with Giorgi's (2009) method are encouraged to consider the perspectives of each member of the dyad when devising their initial impressions of interview transcripts. Writing down first impressions of areas of agreeance and divergence of perspective may help researchers maintain a complex and relational view of the phenomena. It may be helpful for researchers working with dyads who tend to agree more than disagree think of the areas of agreeance as potential structures of the experience, and areas of divergence, unless critical, as potential constituents of the experience. Alternatively, researchers working with dyads who tend to disagree more than agree could to think of the areas of divergence as potential structures and areas of agreeance as potential constituents. However, researchers choosing to think in this way need to remember this is only the first step of the analysis, and many of their initial impressions will need to be modified, or even discarded, before settling on the final descriptions of the phenomena.

Example application of step one. In order for step one to be demonstrated, consider the following hypothetical segment of a dyadic interview transcript. Jill and John* describe their experience in couple therapy:

> Researcher: What was your experience like in couple therapy?
> Jill: It was great. We were able to learn how to communicate with each other more positively. We don't argue like we used to anymore.
> John: I would agree with that. However, I would not say it was great. The communication exercises were helpful, but there were other things I think could have been better addressed.
> Jill: You think so? Like what?
> John: We never really touched on the stress we have about the kids. I think it is why we sometimes are short with one another. I like that we learned to communicate better, but I am worried our stress will just come out in other ways now.
> Jill: I had not really thought about that. Perhaps some things were neglected a bit.

After the researcher reads the transcript, they begin to develop a general sense of Jill and John's experience with the phenomena of couple therapy. Initially, Jill states she had a great experience in couple therapy. It then becomes apparent that Jill's experience was more positive than John's. As the transcript develops Jill and John's interaction adds to the depth and complexity of Jill's evaluation of the couple therapy. The couple begin to develop a shared meaning of the phenomena. The initial impression of the researcher of the transcript as a whole is that couple therapy was helpful for Jill and John because it addressed their communication difficulties and conflicts, however, couple therapy may have been more useful if the greater context of their conflicts was also addressed.

Step Two: Determining Meaning Units

After an interview transcript has been created and read for familiarity, the descriptive psychological researcher is then tasked with separating the transcript into a series of meaning units. Meaning units are the details in an interview transcript that carry cognitive or emotional

meaning (Giorgi, 2009). In some cases, a single sentence may carry several different meaning units, whereas in other cases an entire paragraph may represent just one meaning unit (Giorgi, 2009). To identify these units, researchers re-read the interview transcripts and make marks (i.e., draw backslashes) where any shift in meaning is felt.

Proposed modifications to step two. Descriptive psychological phenomenological researchers analyzing dyadic interviews can begin step two in line with the traditional method. However, it is paramount that researchers also label which member of the dyad said what during or after meaning unit determination. A failure to consider who was responsible for which meaning unit may result in a skewed representation of the participants' voices, or a loss of the interaction. For example, imagine a dyadic interview where person A and person B initially disagreed. However, let's say over time after interacting with person A, person B changed their perspective to align with person A. If meaning units had been identified without keeping track of who said what, person A's influence over person B's changing perspective would be absent in the data.

Another reason it is important to label meaning units by speaker when analyzing dyadic interviews is that it may be important to identify who was responsible for more frequent shifts in meaning. Without such consideration, the risk of one individuals' perspective overshadowing that of the other is quite high. With Giorgi's (2009) method, speakers responsible for more frequent shifts in meaning would be given more meaning units, many of which may be similar since talkative participants tend to repeat themselves (Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012). If such a pattern goes unnoticed, overlapping meaning units will be more likely to be maintained in later stages of analysis, and the views of the less vocal speaker may be disregarded. To reduce this risk, after meaning units have been identified, similar meaning units reported by the same speaker should be grouped. While more dominant speakers will initially be given more meaning units, the grouped meaning units will later be collapsed in step three to ensure a more equal representation of the participants' perspectives. While there is still a risk of one speaker dominating the conversation and getting greater representation in the data, researchers who label meaning units can be made more aware of such situations and choose quotations from the less dominant speaker as much as possible during the write up to demonstrate their views as well.

Example application of step two. To identify the meaning units from Jill and John's hypothetical transcript, the researchers' comments are first removed. Then, the transcript is put into paragraph form and the meaning units are identified and labeled by speaker. Note it is not necessarily a shift in speaker that denotes different meaning units. Rather it is where a new idea is introduced as follows:

> It was great (Jill). / We were able to learn how to communicate with each other more positively (Jill). / We don't argue like we used to anymore (Jill). I would agree with that (John). / However, I would not say it was great (John). / The communication exercises were helpful (John) / but there were other things I think could have been better addressed (John). You think so? Like what? (Jill). We never really touched on the stress we have about the kids. I think it is why we sometimes are short with one another. I like that we learned to communicate better (John), / but I am worried our stress will just come out in other ways now (John). I had not really thought about that (Jill). / Perhaps some things were neglected a bit (Jill). /

After the meaning units are identified in this manner, they are then collapsed where similarities within or between speakers are identified. For example, meaning units addressing the overall utility of the couple therapy made by both Jill and John are put together. The example transcript thus has four different meaning units:

1) It was great (Jill)…I would not say it was great (John)… there were other things I think could have been better addressed (John). You think so? Like what? (Jill). We never really touched on the stress we have about the kids. I think it is why we sometimes are short with one another (John). Perhaps some things were neglected a bit (Jill).

2) We were able to learn how to communicate with each other more positively (Jill). The communication exercises were helpful (John)… I like that we learned to communicate better (John)…

3) We don't argue like we used to anymore (Jill). I would agree with that (John).

4) …I am worried our stress will just come out in other ways now (John). I had not really thought about that (Jill).

Step Three: Transforming Meaning Units

After the meaning units from a transcript have been identified they are transformed into psychologically sensitive expressions. This process requires researchers to first change the participants' responses into third person descriptions. Next, the meaning units are re-written in such a way that emphasizes the psychological indications of the descriptions. This stage includes the process of horizonalization, where researchers seek possible alternative meanings from each identified meaning unit (Langdridge, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Identifying such alternative meanings may be made easier when using dyadic interviews as members of a dyad tend to share a variety of perspectives (Arksey, 1996; Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012).

Proposed modification to step three. When analyzing dyadic interview data during the fourth step of Giorgi's (2009) method, the meaning units/unit groupings determined in step three should be re-coded into psychologically sensitive expressions, such that each unit or grouping is turned into one expression. In this way, more dominant speakers assigned more initial meaning units are less likely to be over represented, particularly if they tended to repeat themselves. Next, researchers can begin to combine any psychologically sensitive expressions that were similar across dyad members. Such expressions should be marked as an area of agreeance, and sample quotations, which include the dyads interaction, should be provided. Alternatively, any psychological expressions that were not shared by both members of a dyad should remain intact but marked as areas of divergence or uniqueness. Statements should be labeled as unique if one member of the dyad addressed them while the other member failed to comment. As such, quotes that signify a unique perspective should be used sparingly as the perspective of the other member of the dyad remains unclear. Statements should be labeled as divergent when one dyad member expressed a perspective that and the other disagreed with. Quotes of the participants' interactions for any divergent areas should be provided to ensure that both views are demonstrated, and the interaction is prioritized. Any psychologically sensitive expressions that demonstrate partial agreeance should be marked as such, and sample quotations of interactions where the participants agreed and disagreed should be provided.

Example application of step three. The four meaning units identified in the sample transcript are next transformed into psychologically sensitive expressions. Areas of agreeance, partial agreeance, and uniqueness are present in this transcript:

1) Original meaning unit: It was great (Jill)…I would not say it was great (John)… there were other things I think could have been better addressed (John). You think so? Like what? (Jill). We never really touched on the stress we have about the kids. I think it is why we sometimes are short with one another (John). Perhaps some things were neglected a bit (Jill).
   Transcribed meaning unit: Couple therapy was a somewhat positive experience for Jill and John, although it may not have been as in depth as they needed. Deeper considerations of the context of the couples communication challenges may have been helpful. John was particularly concerned about the lack of attention to underlying issues, resulting in a less positive evaluation than Jill. Area of partial agreeance.
2) Original meaning unit: We were able to learn how to communicate with each other more positively (Jill). The communication exercises were helpful (John)… I like that we learned to communicate better (John)…
   Transcribed meaning unit: Couple therapy was helpful because it included education around effective communication. Area of agreeance.
3) Original meaning unit: We don't argue like we used to anymore (Jill). I would agree with that (John).
   Transcribed meaning unit: Couple therapy was helpful because it changed the way the couple approached their conflicts. The couple learned how to have conflict without things escalating in the way they did in the past. Area of agreeance.
4) Original meaning unit: …I am worried our stress will just come out in other ways now (John). I had not really thought about that (Jill).
   Transcribed meaning unit: While couple therapy improved the couple's communication, since the underlying reason for their conflicts was not addressed John feared other types of conflict will manifest between the couple. Jill neither agreed or disagreed with John. Area of uniqueness.

Step Four: Writing Separate Structural Statements for Each Interview

After the meaning units for a transcript have been transformed to psychologically sensitive expressions, they are collapsed into structural descriptions of the phenomena ranging from a paragraph to a page in length. Structural descriptions are prepared for each individual transcript first to ensure the key structural constituents and variations of each participant's experience are included. The structural statements created from individual transcripts may be considered a summary of the psychologically sensitive expressions, where overlapping expressions are given greater weight (Giorgi, 2009). Such weighting will help ensure the most salient aspects of an experience for one individual are maintained in the final structural statement(s) that summarize the experiences of individuals across all interviews.

Proposed modification to step four. The first step for descriptive phenomenological researchers in devising initial structural statements from dyadic interviews is the summarization of the psychologically sensitive expressions of agreeance, divergence, partial agreeance, and uniqueness from individual interview transcripts. Supporting quotations for each expression should be included to demonstrate the interactions of the dyad members while

maintaining the participants' own language (Giorgi, 2009). Expressions of agreeance should be supported by quotes where both members of the dyad confirmed each other's perspective (Morgan, 2010), whereas expressions of divergence should be supported with interactive quotes of each member sharing their own opinion. When members of a dyad partially agreed, sample interaction quotations from both expressions of agreeance and divergence should be provided, and the complexity of the experience should be emphasized. Unique expressions only addressed by one member of the dyad should come at the end of the structural statement and be flagged for additional scrutiny in the final stage of analysis.

While structural descriptions are traditionally a paragraph to a page in length (Giorgi, 2009), the statements resulting from dyadic interviews where two speakers interact are likely to be larger. However, structural statements from dyadic interviews should remain two pages or less, not including interaction quotes, as researchers need to be able to cross compare statements in the final stage of the analysis. Comparison of individual structural statements would become difficult if they were too large (Giorgi, 2009).

Example application of step four. When the transcribed meaning units from John and Jill's dyadic interview are combined, a structure of their experience may be created. Note the resulting structure can re-organize the transcribed meaning units. Likewise, sample quotations from the couple's interview transcript are utilized:

Couple therapy was a somewhat positive experience for Jill and John. It helped to change the way the couple communicated with one another; they learned how to have conflict with less escalation. For example, Jill stated "We don't argue like we used to anymore," to which John agreed "I would agree with that." Psychoeducation about effective communication helped the couple accomplish this change. However, although couple therapy was helpful, it may not have been as in depth as the couple would have liked. Deeper considerations of the context of the underlying stressors for the couple's conflicts may have been helpful, particularly for John, who fears such stresses will find a new way to manifest, negatively impacting in their relationship, "…I am worried our stress will just come out in other ways now (John)." Jill neither agreed or disagreed with John's concerns, but her evaluation of the couple therapy shifted from "great" toward the end of the transcript, "Perhaps some things were neglected a bit."

Step Five: Writing a Combined Structural Statement from All Interviews

After the structural descriptions have been written for each interview transcript, they are compared and collapsed into final descriptive structural statement(s) about the phenomenon. The goal is for the various intersubjective psychological meanings of a phenomenon to be described in a way that both participants and researchers understand. Variations in perspective that cross at least one-third of the interview transcripts should always be included in the final structural statement(s). Variations shared in less than one-third of the individual statements may be included if the researcher has a theoretical reason for their incorporation and/or can cite evidence from the literature (Giorgi, 2009).

Proposed modification to step five. When writing up the final structural statement(s), it is recommended that researchers first identify any expressions that were shared across structural statements. Then any expressions of that overlap in more than one-third (Giorgi, 2009) of the statements are written into the final structural statement, with sample interaction quotations from a single or multiple dyad(s) (Morgan, 2010). Any expressions shared in less than one-third of the individual structural statements should be scrutinized for inclusion, and only incorporated if they seem theoretically meaningful and/or have support in the literature.

Unique meanings should not be included in the final structure unless one-third or more of the other dyads addressed them, regardless if there is research or a theoretical rational for inclusion, since the perspective of the other member of the dyad is unknown. Alternatively, expressions of agreeance, divergent, or partial agreeance that were represented in less than one-third of the individual structural statements, but supported by theory or the literature, should be supported by reciprocal quotations from at least one dyad, along with a rational for their inclusion. Overall, final structural statements from dyadic interviews should include commentary about similarities and alternative expressions of dyads, as well as interaction quotations (Morgan, 2010), to demonstrate a multifaceted, relational, and complex understanding of a given phenomenon.

Example application of step five. For the present example interview transcript between Jill and John, step five could only be completed if other couples had also be interviewed. If other couples had been interviewed, steps one through four would be completed for these couples first. Then all of the couple's resulting structures of the experience would be compared, contrasted, and combined for a final between couple experience of the phenomena.

Table 1
Descriptive psychological phenomenology steps and proposed modifications

Descriptive Psychological Phenomenology Step	Proposed Modification for Dyadic Interview Analysis	Key Differences
Data transcription Reading for the sense of the transcript	Transcription First impressions of each participant's view are recorded Areas of substantial agreeance and/or divergence are considered potential structures	Areas of agreeance or divergence within **and** between participants are noted for later comparison, rather than within participants only
The determination of meaning units	Shifts in meaning are marked in each interview transcript and labeled/organized by dyad member Similar comments made by the same individual are grouped	For dyadic interviews, meaning units are grouped by speaker and similarity Grouping by speaker is not required or possible in the traditional individual interview approach
Transforming meaning units into psychologically sensitive expressions	Meaning units/unit groupings are transformed, but remain labeled by dyad member Expressions are grouped and labeled as expressions of agreeance, divergence etc. Sample reciprocal quotations are included	With dyadic interviews, labels are needed to account for the combinations of perspective dyads hold and to demonstrate the interaction Labels are not required in tradition individual interview approach as there is only one speaker
Writing separate structural statements for each interview	Short summaries of the expressions of agreeance, divergence, uniqueness, and partial agreeance from each interview transcript are created Supporting reciprocal quotations are included	In dyadic interviews, quotes from both members of the dyad reinforce the structural statement, demonstrate a balanced and relational perspective, and highlight the interaction Reciprocal quotes are not possible form individual interviews
Writing a combined structural statement across all dyadic interviews	Individual structural statements are combined with sample interaction quotations Areas of considerable overlap of agreeance or divergence between dyads are noted	In dyadic interview analysis, areas of agreeance or divergence within dyads are compared between the experiences within other dyads In individual interviews, within and between transcripts comparisons are not possible

Limitations

While the proposed modifications to Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology for completing dyadic interviews are reasonable, they are not without limitation. First, Giorgi's approach is already a time-consuming process, and the proposed modifications would require even more effort from researchers to account for interactions and variations in perspective. Second, even though the proposed modifications include procedures for balancing the viewpoints of each member of the dyad, researchers may continue to struggle to represent both members of a dyad when one participant had limited commentary. For example, if a participant tended to agree or disagree with the other using short phrases (e.g., yes, I agree, no) rather than elaborate on what had been said it would be difficult to demonstrate their perspective or voice. Third, using Giorgi's method to analyse dyadic interviews may not be appropriate when addressing certain sensitive psychological phenomena (e.g., reasons for a recent divorce), as such topics are more likely to result in conflict. Likewise, dyadic interviews may not be safe for pairs where one individual has significant power or influence over the other, such as situations of partner violence. Fourth, descriptive phenomenological researchers using a modified approach for dyadic interview analysis must inquire into any observed behavioural interactions directly during the interview, thus making them a part of the verbal interview content. Otherwise, such interaction data cannot be included as it would require researcher interpretation. Nevertheless, if researchers consider the appropriateness of dyadic interviews for exploring a given phenomenon and give themselves ample time to complete the analysis, dyadic interviews may be an excellent data collection tool for qualitative researchers, and particularly promising for those using Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology.

Conclusion

Dyadic interviews are an approach to qualitative data collection designed to establish the shared meanings pairs of individuals make from experience (Arksey, 1996; Wilson et al., 2016). Dyadic interviews encourage participants to interact, resulting in deep, multidimensional descriptions (Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Ledyard & Morrison, 2008; Morgan et al., 2013). However, due to participant interaction, the data produced from dyadic interviews are different from that of individual interviews (Arksey, 1996; Heaphy & Einarsdottir, 2012). This interaction component requires special consideration during data collection and analysis (Wilson et al., 2016). Unfortunately, current authors who use dyadic interviews often fail to discuss how they facilitated and accounted for the participants' interactions. To bridge this gap in the literature, we made some general recommendations for researchers and used Giorgi's (2009) descriptive psychological phenomenology as an example of modifications that may be applied for dyadic interview analysis. While modifying qualitative methods for use with dyadic interviews are not without limitation, such modifications are imperative in ensuring the interactions produced in dyadic interviews are addressed and accounted for, and for advancing this promising data collection method in qualitative research.

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