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Rigor and Reliability of Qualitative Research Conducted in Various Languages: Fundamentals and Their Application

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Abstract

Lack of a common language between researcher and participants, especially when participants speak different languages, complicates and makes the qualitative research process more difficult. Since language is the vehicle through which meaning is eventually communicated to the reader, interpretation and translation are essential to qualitative research. The researcher must adopt the principal tenets of cross language research to extrapolate the knowledge to all the spheres for a methodologically reliable and valid framework that is culturally sensitive in this situation. The purpose of the article is to acquaint qualitative researchers, including physician-researchers, with the fundamentals of qualitative study being carried out in various languages for rigorous and reliable results. This has been amply presented in the article with practical application of fundamentals from planning to publication. These fundamentals are reflexivity, positionality, empathy, and conceptual equivalence. These have been systematically applied to all the aspects of the research process, starting from creation of the informed consent documents and interview guide, and continuing through the interview process, including interpretation, translation, analysis of data and publication. An effort has also been made to provide logical solutions for the impediments likely to be faced in the process. A qualitative practitioner undertaking multi-lingual, cross-cultural research will gain broadly from this article and develop a transparent methodology.

Keywords

multilingual, interpreter, translator, fundamentals, reflexivity, positionality, sensitivity, qualitative research

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Lack of a common language between researcher and participants, especially when participants speak different languages, complicates and makes the qualitative research process more difficult. Since language is the vehicle through which meaning is eventually communicated to the reader, interpretation and translation are essential to qualitative research. The researcher must adopt the principal tenets of cross language research to extrapolate the knowledge to all the spheres for a methodologically reliable and valid framework that is culturally sensitive in this situation. The purpose of the article is to acquaint qualitative researchers, including physician-researchers, with the fundamentals of qualitative study being carried out in various languages for rigorous and reliable results. This has been amply presented in the article with practical application of fundamentals from planning to publication. These fundamentals are reflexivity, positionality, empathy, and conceptual equivalence. These have been systematically applied to all the aspects of the research process, starting from creation of the informed consent documents and interview guide, and continuing through the interview process, including interpretation, translation, analysis of data and publication. An effort has also been made to provide logical solutions for the impediments likely to be faced in the process. A qualitative practitioner undertaking multi-lingual, cross-cultural research will gain broadly from this article and develop a transparent methodology.

Keywords: multilingual, interpreter, translator, fundamentals, reflexivity, positionality, sensitivity, qualitative research

Introduction

Qualitative research is a descriptive and objective science based upon the researcher who interprets the collected participant data. The qualitative research process is complicated and made more arduous by the absence of a common language of choice between the researcher and the participants, especially when there are participants who speak different languages (Fryer, 2019).

Over the years, it has become increasingly common to witness research being conducted in various languages across the world. There is ever increasing migration of people from the developing countries to the developed countries and sometimes also within the same nation continent. (Fassin, 1986; Kirkland, 1984; Knights & King, 1998; Malm et al., 2020; Michalowski, 1987; Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation, 1993; Ram, 1987; Sassen, 1989). The reasons for the latter are beyond the scope of this article. Alternatively, in the subcontinent of India, as of the 2011 census report, there are around 121 languages spoken (Kulkarni-Joshi, 2019). The bottom line is that any research done on people will only be considered trustworthy when it is conducted in their own language and not the language of the researcher. There is ever increasing emphasis on the ethics involved in such research and trust issues of the data involved.

Trustworthiness of qualitative data is owing to the fact that it "documents the world from the point of view of the people... rather than presenting it from the standpoint of the researcher" (Ratner, 2012). The crucial questions posed by qualitative approaches are: "Explain it to me - how, why, what's the process, what's the importance?" rather than asking only “what is it?” (Ratner, 2012).

A keen eye on the associated methodological concerns is essential if the researcher is to avoid affecting the validity and reliability of interview interpretation and subsequently the translation and the transcribed data. Interpretation and awareness of meanings are crucial to qualitative research and text is the medium through which meaning is ultimately transferred to the reader (van Nes et al., 2010). The positivist (quantitative) criteria of the physician researcher cannot be adopted to "make assumptions and comprehend people in the context of their own society and culture in a cross-language research (Squires, 2009). This aspect riddles the methodology with complexity derived from interpretation of colloquial terms, jargon, idiomatic expressions, word clarity and meanings (Manohar et al., 2019). A "verbatim" or "word-for-word" translation of the data into the presentation language would seem like a safe way to maintain participant meanings, but it typically falls short of taking into account language and cultural variations. (Oxley et al., 2017).

As a result, it is critical that the researcher invest additional tiers of deliberations and construct a culturally perceptive methodological process required in this circumstance. Reliability and validity assessment is not to be undertaken at the end of the study but needs to be validated in the entire research process including study design, data collection, and analysis decisions.

It is demanding on researchers to plan out multilingual in–depth interviews and figure out exactly what will be said and how, in contrast to questionnaire-based surveys. In order to achieve a rigorous process in this complex scenario, four suggested essential prerequisites are: encouragement of original methods, sensitivity to the cultural diversity in perceptions and articulations, logical identification of interpreter’s active role within the study, and promote production of knowledge pertinent to the study's objective and how it may be understood and used for knowledge (Fryer, 2019).

Engaging translators or interpreters without due consideration when undertaking any form of research where the participants and/or the researcher speak different languages can jeopardize the credibility of cross-language qualitative research and as a result the relevance of the translated findings to participant populations. The term "cross-language research" was first parented by Temple (2002) to refer to qualitative studies that involve a translation or interpreter at any stage during the research.

Both interpretation and translation are language tools with the potential to directly affect the validity of the gathered data (Cormier, 2018). Before venturing further, we need to define the usage of the terms, “interpreter” and “translator.” Language translation services are offered by translators and interpreters, and they are sometimes used synonymously, but the two offer different assistances (Squires, 2009). Recent literature questions the role of interpreter on whether interpretation should be "anonymous" or whether the dynamic interplay of the interview with an interpreter requires rigorous treatment with respect to authority and bias. The older literature, however, often gravitated towards logistical and technical aspects of translation (MacKenzie, 2019).

Data collection, findings, research expenditures and the extent of prejudice in the results are all impacted by the interpreter or translation. It is also important to determine the timing and method of translation, as well as the editing and presentation of the translation in the final study report (Cormier, 2018). Because the final report will be written in a language spoken by the majority of people, most likely English, it is a fair conclusion to draw that a cross-language qualitative research with interviews will encounter complexity due to the involvement of translation, interpretation, and researcher positionality (Cormier, 2018). Consideration of these difficulties is a crucial first step towards accurately portraying the participants, regardless of the language they may use (Cormier, 2018).

Objectives

The aim of writing this article is to define and elucidate the foundation for a rigorous and methodologically sound qualitative study being conducted in various languages. There is an additional attempt made to bring forth the realistic application of these fundamentals to their conduct from planning onwards until publication. We have also pursued the available past literature to identify the potential challenges and the strategies employed to bring rigor and transparency into the process. Attention has been paid to considerations prior to the study, during and after the study, including specific role preparations, pre and post briefings, inductions, empathy, positioning, interpreting tactics, and being reflexive.

Cross-Language Qualitative Study Foundation Stones

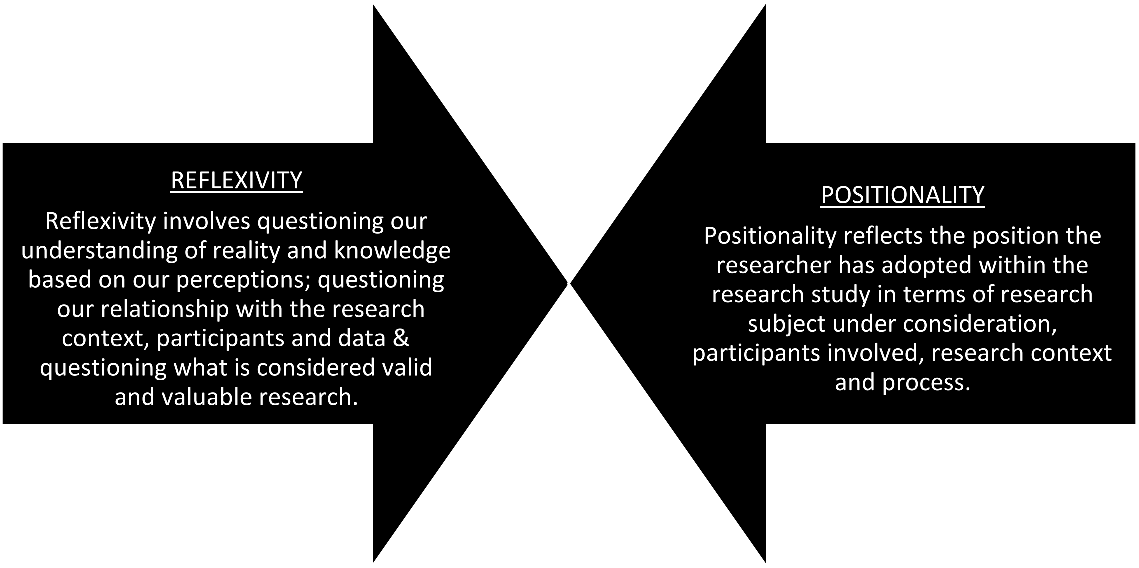
Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a concept defined as the "self - conscious critical reflection and evaluation of oneself as a researcher (MacKenzie, 2019) and how one's opinions and standing may affect the research"; (Manohar et al., 2019). It brings rigour, transparency, and reliability to qualitative research by bringing forth the contrasts between researcher and the participant by active participation of the involved researchers which enables checking for bias (MacKenzie, 2019). However, reflexivity goes beyond reflecting on our experiences in the world.

Qualitative researchers must strive for critical reflexivity by outlining their point of view in relation to the interviewees of the study during data collection and state how positionality and context may have affected the findings (Cormier, 2018). According to Roulston, it is really about how we experience our relationships with others, specifically others involved in the study, typically the participants (Roulston, 2010). How the researcher understands and perceives the meaning that people make of their lives is an essential part of qualitative research which means that researchers' experiences shape how that meaning is understood and how it is significant for them and others in the process (Tindall, 2009). It is also used to ensure trustworthiness, how the researcher is aware of inherent biases, and how biases interact with data. Providing account of this process adds another layer of understanding to the findings.

The question of how to apply reflexivity is put together by Patton (2014) in five questions to be answered by the researcher: What do I know? How do I know what I know? What shapes my perspective? With what voice do I share my perspective? What do I do with what I have found? As per these questions, reflexivity is an ongoing process to be practiced through each process and it is not only acceptable but necessary to acknowledge our biases (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Figure 1 presents the reflexivity and positionality concepts that converge to a central point in cross language research.

Figure 1
Reflexivity and Positionality



Reflexivity and Positionality:
Reflexivity is the application of researcher’s perception and understanding while positionality is their perception and understanding.

Positionality

Positionality refers to a researcher’s viewpoint, ethics, and stance taken in respect to a study endeavour that can have an unavowed impact on the research (Manohar et al., 2019). This influence can be on all the spheres of research including the research design, preparation of the interview guides, trainings, interview setting, conduct, and the analysis of collected data. The researchers' positionality should be addressed in regard to the participants, how the researchers see themselves, how others see them, and where they situate themselves within the framework of the research and the research process (Manohar et al., 2019).

Another aspect in respect to positionality is the insider/outsider status of the researcher. Insider researchers are those who have a close understanding of the context and the research participants and who have similar social, cultural, and linguistic traits with them (Cormier, 2018; Manohar et al., 2019). Insiders are sometimes criticised for being partial to their participants: to not pose challenging inquiries or conduct accurate analysis of participant responses as they may instinctively get the subjects and the subjects themselves might not provide a thorough response because they assume the researcher understands what they mean (Cormier, 2018). Curiously, linguistic insider researchers are thought of favourably mostly in a cross-language study (Cormier, 2018). As suggested by the name, the term "cultural outsider" describes an outside researcher who visits a local community to carry out research. They might not be able to converse in the participants' dominant language and may hold different opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge (Manohar et al., 2019).

To help fix this problem, learning even a few words of the participants' original tongue by the "cultural outsider" can help, as it demonstrates respect for the participants and their culture. Another fix is constructing research teams with a mix of insiders and outsiders so that the research gains from the merits of both views (Cormier, 2018). A researcher may, however, be both at the same time by identifying with the interviewee in certain facets such as their religion and not others like their language (Cormier, 2018). We suggest that before beginning the research process, the researchers and the interpreters should carefully determine their positionality and be forthright about the languages they speak.

Empathy

We introduce another essential attribute along with reflexivity and positionality which is empathy. The literature on qualitative research does not adequately highlight the importance of empathy. The ability to listen to participants and show empathy for them is a skill that all qualitative researchers should possess, regardless of their positionality (Savvides et al., 2014). Empathy is, however, well-known among healthcare professionals because it is similar to their regular work practices. It is reported that the patients would rather associate with a therapist who is culturally broad-minded than with a caregiver who is ethnically similar (Gallardo, 2013). According to Watts, empathy can be used in research to foster trust in a "shared narrative space" through verbal and nonverbal communication (Watts, 2008).

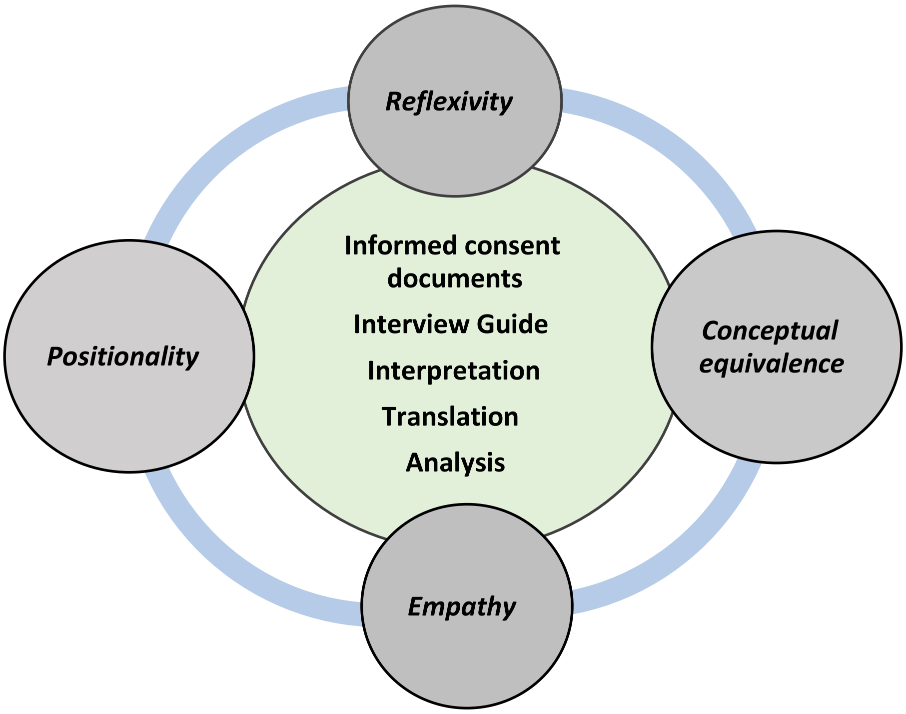
According to Phan et al. (2009), empathy is a crucial "principle of engagement" and is true in qualitative research, especially when working with underprivileged and minority populations. By the understanding of this context, cross-language research is a given, and it is unjustifiable of the researcher to show disrespect to the participant by thrusting the researcher's own language upon them. It is crucial to set processes in place that will treat participants with respect. It can be upheld with the researchers' ability to imagine and empathise through attentive listening in order to enhance their research experiences and their portrayal of participant narrations. The positioning of an insider in cross-language study in some respect hence proves advantageous. Researchers may still be skilled and knowledgeable on the study's subject matter even if they don't understand the participants' language, and their insights still remain essential (Cormier, 2018).

Conceptual Equivalence

For qualitative interpretative research, the concept of conceptual equivalence in the interpretation – as opposed to word equivalency – is crucial (Ratner, 2012). Conceptual equivalence is also defined as "essence of the process" of the interpretation which helps maintain the translation grounded in the data collected (Stern, 2009). In general, conceptual equivalence is preferred for qualitative research, since it is a method that translates participants' ideas rather than their words (Cormier, 2018). Medical terminology frequently lacks a directly corresponding equivalent in the participant language, hence it is especially vulnerable to gaps during translation (Frederickson et al., 2005). This can be accomplished by instructing the interpreter to consciously choose words or phrases, as opposed to a direct translation of the words spoken, to transmit the meaning as supplied by the participant to the researcher (Fryer, 2019).

Another strategy to pursue rigorous translation is to have a multilingual team to improve conceptual equivalence (Campbell & Werner, 1970). Additionally, there are three criteria suggested by Mohamad Nasri et al. (2020) to create conceptual equivalence; these are firstly to give an explanation for why the analysis is conducted in a language not spoken by the participants, secondly, creation of a translation vocabulary for cross- language study, and lastly, verification of translation by a qualified bilingual person. Maintaining the conceptual equivalence of what a participant said during an interview is, therefore, the most important part of mediating the methodological issues that arise from using interpreters and translators (Larkin et al., 2007). Figure 2 presents the cross-language study foundation stones and their application.

Figure 2
Cross-Language Study Foundation Stones and Their Application



Application of the Foundation Stones

Informed Consent Documents

The informed consent document comprises a study information sheet which has details containing the aims and objectives of the study along with important information pertaining to their rights while the actual consent form is shorter. Informed consent has been described as a "thorny subject" in cross-cultural research (Ratner, 2012) and it needs to be reported with emphasis in a cross-linguistic study. The ethics committees typically demand that it be prepared in the participant's language of choice to ensure that the participant is properly informed and is capable of making wise decisions regarding their involvement. Study information sheets may get expensive to transcribe into the participant language but are an ethical necessity. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the interpreter aiding with interviews in that language verifies the textual translation of the consent form before its initial usage.

Participants from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds may find the formality of consent procedures overwhelming. To ease this delicate and personalised process, it is suggested that the researcher be reflexive and do this in the form of a conversation, with both the researcher and the interpreter stating their positionality and easing participants enough to let them ask queries in their chosen language. The approach to read consent forms out loud with successive interpreting is also beneficial in participants with literacy or reading difficulties. During this conversation, to make sure that participant understands what is expected of them and why, the researcher may use a teach-back or teach-to-goal method (Kripalani et al., 2008).

Interview Guide

Creating interview questions is challenging enough, even without the burden of translating into several languages (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The researcher should start by reviewing semi-structured interview guidelines from previously published academic articles or instructional materials and follow up with practice and pilot testing to craft the complete interview guide. To hone the skills, the researcher can practice interviews in their native tongue for developing interviewing techniques of effective listening, sensitive phrasing, and intonation (Fryer, 2019). This will also help to determine whether the interview guide is applicable to the subject at hand and elicits the information to fulfil the aims of the study. An interviewee usually relies on the interviewer's ability to properly direct and steer an interview; this skill in turn is hinged on the interviewer's proficiency in the language of the interview (Baumgartner, 2012). Therefore, proficiency in the inquiry language is a crucial factor defining the quality of the interview and of the acquired data (Baumgartner, 2012).

To balance the issue of the inquirer not knowing the participant’s language, there is need of extra efforts in preparation of the semi-structured interview guide. The researcher needs to hold practise interviews with participants to check and test the question sequencing with pacing and clocking of questions along with probes with an interpreter. Pre-brief sessions with qualified interpreters are crucial to ensure the sensitivity and integrity of the interview process if it is not feasible to test the interview guide across all languages and interpreters (Fryer, 2019).

Interpretation Process

The language interpreter in research is not just a neutral channel for discourse. The interpreter’s positionality with respect to their past, social standing, perspective, and belief about the research topic may skew their interpretations. Interviews with interpreters may become cumbersome if there are frequent discontinuities when an interpreter interrupts participants’ mid-story to provide interpretation. This can lead to short, brief responses which is contrary to the rich qualitative data sought in interviews (Kosny et al., 2014). Also, because the same conversation is repeated, the interview process becomes longer and arduous. It cannot be stressed enough that the researcher should be cognizant of the potential pitfalls and validity issues that interpreters might present and employ reflexive methodology to implement safety measures.

Interpreting the Interpreter

We have attempted to outline several suggestions to ease the wrinkles in this triangle. The first step begins with the selection of the interpreter. It has been suggested to hire interpreters who are from the local region and thereupon assess their language skills (MacKenzie, 2019). This person will have the benefit of serving as a "cultural translator," providing a deeper understanding of the interviews so that the participants and interpreters connect right away. This way the interpreter will have some traits in common with the researcher and others with the respondents; hence the outsider/insider balance will be restored.

The second help would be asking the interpreter to speak in the first person to participants so as to enable an actual dialogue such that it should appear that he/she is asking the questions (Cormier, 2018). Thirdly, it is adjudged that conceptual equivalence, or "essence of the process" (Stern, 2009) may be translated back to the primary researcher, so that the collected data remains grounded. This is accomplished by instructing the interpreter to actively choose words or phrases to transmit the meaning as supplied by the participant as opposed to a direct translation of the words spoken to the researcher. This pre-briefing meeting sets boundaries and the tone for the future interviews.

It is interesting to note here that according to Edwards et al. (2005), interviewees prefer either a professional interpreter who is likable and fulfils the duties specific to their position, takes initiative on their behalf and, in particular, on their personality, outlook, and integrity; or the interpreter may be a family member or friend who possesses professional skills and expertise and exhibits some of the qualities of a professional with good practise.

The Interview Process

It is recommended to have one interpreter for each language group to ensure uniformity in interpretations for rigorous investigation (Ratner, 2012). During the interview, there is usually the process of real-time interpretation which enables each participant to speak in a language that they are comfortable with while also enabling the researcher to hear the interview dialogue as it is being conducted and to step in to explain answers or rephrase questions as needed (Fryer, 2019). And when interviewees are sharing personal experiences, consecutive interpreting is effective. In this method, the interpreter gives the speaker a reasonable amount of time to finish speaking before beginning to interpret (Fryer, 2019).

The "active interpreter" model is also suggested to resolve these conflicts where the interpreter conducts most of the interview, but it actually has the researcher sit out a portion of the interview (Pitchforth & Van Teijlingen, 2005). It seems impossible to put into practise the idea that the researcher may prevent these issues by viewing the interpreter's function as constructively participatory.

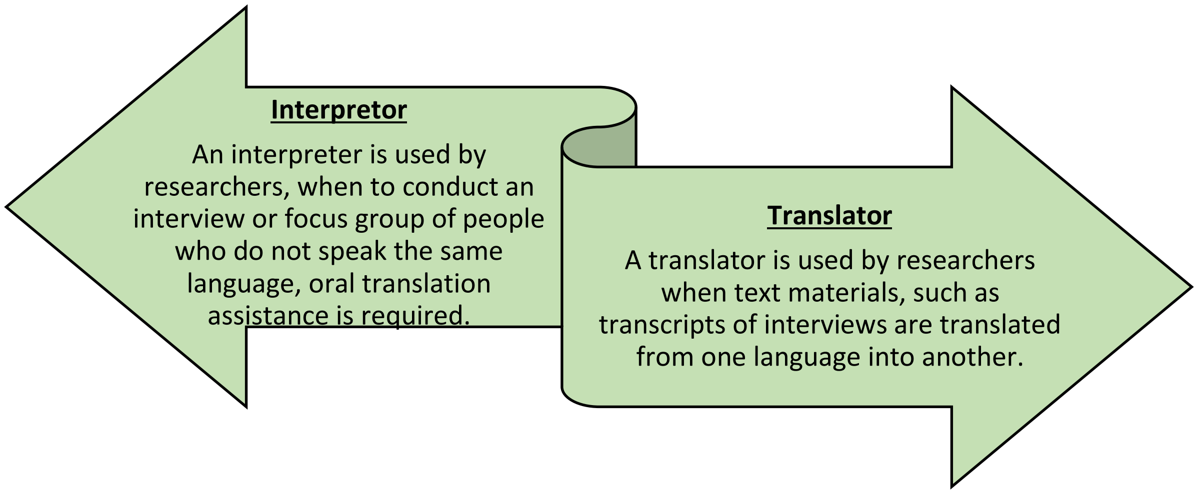
Following the participant interviews, it is helpful to conduct a debrief meeting to get feedback from the interpreter on their general perception of the interview, participants' comfort level, and any difficulties they may have noticed (Fryer, 2019). The researcher may also provide the interpreter with feedback on their participation in the conversation and any language or cultural attributions can be clarified (Fryer, 2019). Field notes should be created for each interview, which will be useful as a reference during the data analysis.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups are sessions conducted by the principal researcher to provide cumulative information from multiple participants to address sensitive topics. Focus groups minimize the impact of researcher biases because they facilitate the undertaking of unstructured interviews, provide more freedom to the study participants, and allow the group to take control of the interview (Liamputtong, 2013). They are quite suited for a language group to give their opinions, as it creates a non-threatening environment in which participants are free to express openly. Because focus groups are structured and directed by the facilitator along with the interpreter, but also expressive, they can yield a lot of information in a shorter span. Diligent focus group techniques planned with careful design and execution can yield accurate data in context, lend itself to proper analysis and may be interpreted in a way that is culturally sensitive (Esposito & Powell-Cope, 1997; Morgan, 1998).

The most common problem encountered may be that it becomes difficult for the researcher to steer and refocus the conversation in response to participant comments (Esposito & Powell-Cope, 1997; Morgan, 1998). In this scenario, immediate interpretation by the interpreter is advantageous as the results of translated focus group study will be more comparable to studies conducted in the same language (Esposito & Powell-Cope, 1997; Morgan, 1998). This is achieved by enhancing the researcher's involvement in the data collection process while focus groups are being conducted in real-time. Hence, parallel data analysis and query being redirected to the focus participants to confirm insights via participant feedback are all effective tactics (Esposito & Powell-Cope, 1997; Morgan, 1998). Figure 3 presents the related yet contrasting function of the interpreter and the translator.

Figure 3
The Differences: Interpreter and Translator



Translation Process

For qualitative researchers, the quality of the translation is of vital importance since poorly translated words or phrases which do not maintain the depth of the interviewees' feedbacks will influence the multiple tiers of coding for thematic analysis and have a bearing on the results significantly. It is essential that the translator be highly skilled in both languages and the target cultures, whether they are of the researcher or of the participant. The usual practice is providing an audio recording to the trained translator, who then translates it to create a written transcript.

Translation Predicaments

Translation moral dilemmas are to be anticipated by cross-linguistic investigators. There are various aspects which can lead to conflict. The most challenging part of translation is the fact that interview data may not adequately reflect a participant's detailed account and fail to capture the source's cultural-specific tone (Cormier, 2018). Bias may also creep in due to translator's positionality which is influenced by their understanding of the research, the subject’s past experiences, and translator’s authority of power, since the participant's words are converted into the researcher's language by them (Cormier, 2018). During translation, researchers may infuse their own codes and beliefsinto the participant's words (Venuti, 1998, 12). As a result, the participants are misquoted, and the data becomes unreliable.

Translating the Translator

After establishing the conflicts which may arise, a few strategies can be applied to counter these. It is important for researchers to understand that "no language precisely replicates any other" (Dalby, 2003, 271). There are two primary approaches to translation: try to translate verbatim or achieve verbal equivalence; or aim for conceptual equivalence (Cormier, 2018). Translating verbatim is essentially translating word for word with focus on finding the most precise word equivalents. Conversely, conceptual equivalence places more of an emphasis on "the interpretation of concepts," which happens more frequently at the "sentence level" (Sutrisno, Nguyen, and Tangen 2014, 1359). Researchers should eventually choose which method they like and should explain their decision.

One approach is to use more than one translator; this will result in a translation that is more reliable and accurate, but it is expensive, time-consuming, and challenging (Nurjannah et al., 2014). Alternatively back translations of the transcript may aid but may not be very fruitful for conceptual equivalence and will lead to further increase in efforts and economics.

Additionally, Cormier (2018) asserts that using a translator in the early stages of a study saves time and effort when it comes to editing translations later on and debating on the ideal translation is effective as it can sometimes reveal deeper layers of meaning. The researcher must have a detailed discussion with the translator and describe some of the study's concepts and theoretical underpinnings and address any queries.

It is ideal for translators involved in a multilingual study to be certified by a professional, academic, and practical board where the translator's standards of language proficiency are accredited and confirmed. We are conscious of the fact that hiring a professional translation raises the price of a study. Nevertheless, these expenses help to increase the credibility of the study and the effectiveness of how well the results are communicated to the readers.

Language of Analysis

The next step is analysis of the data which is to look at results obtained within the text and draw inference from them. Data evaluation poses a decided problem for credibility in qualitative research when participants speak different languages (Ratner, 2012). If impartiality is attained during the research process, it makes no difference who is in charge of the analysis (Temple & Young, 2004). Hiring multilingual analysts for each language group would be the ideal approach, but due to availability and cost, this is frequently not feasible. Once translation issues are "solved," the researcher can speak for others by virtue of this objectivity.

It is a given that the data will be transcribed in the language spoken by the researcher for the analysis to occur and to be presented. When the researcher chooses language that most closely resembles their technical first language, analysis can move along more quickly (Oxley et al., 2017). Despite some slight changes in writing, it has been shown that this type of analysis yields the same key conceptual groups as when data are evaluated in the participant's spoken language (Twinn 1997). It is also advocated for a grounded theory approach because it is more important to understand the denotation of the interview data than the precise grammar (Stern, 2009).

Study Results Publication

We have been able to describe here the processes and aspects to remember using the rigorous principles for data collection, translation, and analysis. This is followed by writing the results, documenting each step of the process, and publication of the results. It has been observed that most scientific works notably lack research assistants and interpreters (Sanjek, 1993; Schumaker, 2001), leaving just the writers' voices audible in the article (Clifford, 1983) as if they were communicating head-on without any assistance from the research subjects. This pitfall needs to be avoided and the authors must reflect on their team and provide relevant details which shaped the research journey and the obtained results.

Another aspect during publication is the identification of a journal which brings to the intended audience all the details and rigorous documentation without constraint of space restrictions. It can hence be said conclusively that the publication should reflect the researcher's proficiency, or lack thereof, in dealing with the issue of communication among themselves and their participants and the veracity of the data. This will give the publication additional advantage in terms of transparency and reliability.

Table 1 presents stepwise processes involved in cross-language research and action taken by researcher with fundamentals to maintain rigor and reliability.

Table 1
Stepwise Processes and Action Taken by the Researcher with Fundamentals

Processes	**Action Taken by Researcher**	**Fundamentals Involved**
Document preparation	Preparing informed consent document in participant language Preparing in – depth interview guide considering the study objectives: pilot testing with participants is crucial	Empathy
Finding Interpreter and Translator	Insider to the region Assess language skills Cultural translator	Positionality Reflexivity
Pre-interview	Build understanding of the participant's language and culture	Empathy
	Pre brief with professional interpreter Share interview guide	Reflexivity Positionality
	Complete informed consent documentation	Empathy Reflexivity Positionality
During interview	Respect the participant's choice of language	Empathy
	Follow interview guide	Reflexivity Conceptual equivalence
	Seek professional interpreter	Conceptual equivalence
	Record interview	
Immediately after interview	Debrief session with interpreter	Reflexivity Positionality

	Record field notes	Reflexivity Positionality
Translation	Highly skilled in both languages and the target cultures	Reflexivity Positionality Conceptual equivalence
Analysis	Analysis in the language spoken by the researcher and the target language of publication	Reflexivity Positionality Conceptual equivalence
Publication	Describing the study team and entire processes; Identification of journal without space constraints.	Empathy Reflexivity Positionality Conceptual equivalence

Conclusion and the Way Forward

In the vast field of health research, the physician researcher is most attuned to the quantitative (positivist) research. Those of such researchers who embark on the journey of qualitative research try to deal with the qualitative research with an attitude of looking at the data; in this case, mostly in-depth or focus group interviews with a positivist frame of mind. A mind shift is required to pursue qualitative research by the same researcher to transfer their gaze from looking at numbers and percentages obtained in results to the participants' words.

As has been put forth in the introduction section, there is a voluminous chunk of patients and participants who are not speaking the same tongue as the researcher. To a physician researcher already dealing with the complexity of qualitative research, this adds another dimension.

The article has tried to tread through the entire process of qualitative research conducted in multiple languages in a systematic fashion and earnestly tried upskilling the physician researcher with the basic fundamentals to achieve rigor and reliability. The understanding of the concepts presented with anticipated issues along with the measures and techniques suggested should steer a positivist researcher in the direction of a qualitative research which is ethically perceptive with robust data. A thorough consideration of all the aspects of a study with participants from various languages begins well before and continuously throughout the entire process till the publication of the results. Each fundamental mentioned has been linked to each process of the research to bring clarity to the process beginning from the initial document preparation stage to hiring and working with interpreters and the translators till the study publication.

The article prepares the researcher with their primary role for obtaining trustworthy results. As a result, we anticipate that the researchers will demonstrate a high level of efficiency in handling the methodological issue and reducing the possibility of both interpreter and translation-related flaws. As has been stated by many writers, there is no one perfect translation of a text and how it is created (Temple & Young, 2004).

This article shows that language barriers can be broken down when the researcher is acquainted with the fundamentals and their application. There are suggestions provided which may weigh on the budget of the study but will help to increase the weight of the results. The budgetary aspect of these studies needs to be weaved into the study proposal to negate any chance to compromise on the study outcome. However, where there is needless spending, it has been suggested in the article to avoid such costs.

Cross-language data collecting challenges must be viewed as an opportunity rather than a roadblock and greater attention should be paid to the effect of an interpreter on the research process. The researcher is advised to seek value and impact in both qualitative and quantitative data collected in a second language and be open about the difficulties posed by carrying out research in a cross-language context and document the approach taken. We have strived in this article to help a cross-language qualitative researcher to factor in the issues and difficulties they may face and provided their solutions as well from the data available and our knowledge.

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