Examining Response Processes in the Measurement of Personality Functioning

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Background

Nature of Measurement

- Activity whereby one gains knowledge about **properties** of an *object*; foundational to fields of science (Mari et al., 2023)
- *Self-reports* are one of the most popular measurement procedures in psychology; clear applications in clinical research/work (e.g., PROMs)

Critiques of *Psychological* Measurement

- Ambiguous justification for mapping qualitative item responses to numerical values/integers (Tafreshi et al., 2016)
- Presence of psychological terms within our everyday language complicates their meaning/interpretations (Maraun, 2021)
- Unknown response processes (Hubley & Zumbo, 2017)
  - **Defined as the 'mechanisms underlying what people do, think, or feel, when interacting with and responding to an item'**

It is argued that a deeper examination of our measurement procedures, via **response processes** (RPs), can clarify *what* we are measuring and *how* we are measuring

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Intrument of interest: **Level of Personality Functioning Scale-Brief Form 2.0 (LPFS-BF 2.0)**

- Aims to measure *generalized personality dysfunction*, including in domains of *self* and *interpersonal* (Weekers et al., 2019)
- Contains **12** items with four response options: *Very False or Often False | Sometimes or Somewhat False | Sometimes or Somewhat True | Very True or Often True*

Method

Sample

- Participants (*N* = 239) consisted of a diverse sample of undergraduate students (38% East Asian, 17% South Asian; 58% English as primary language; 71% Women)
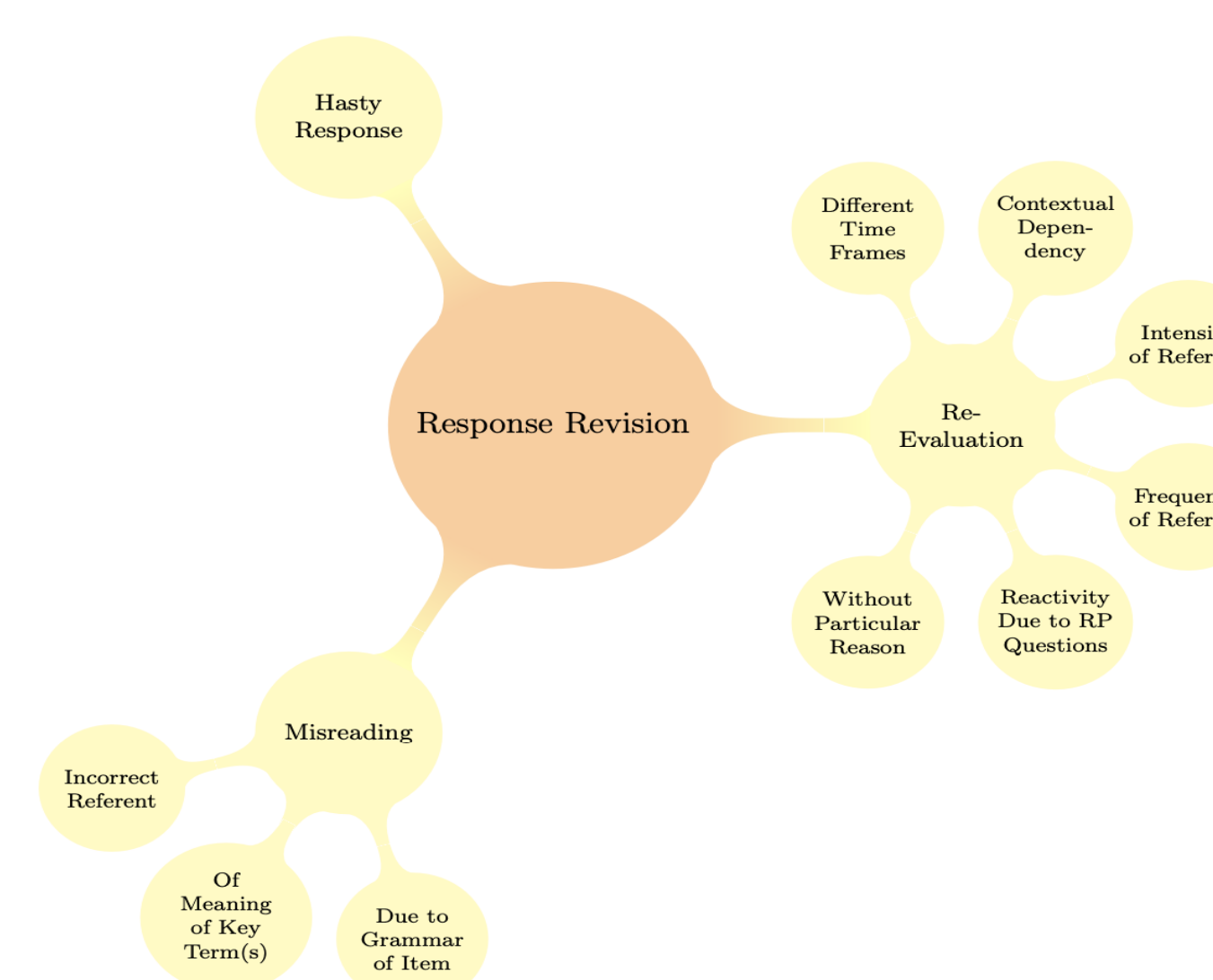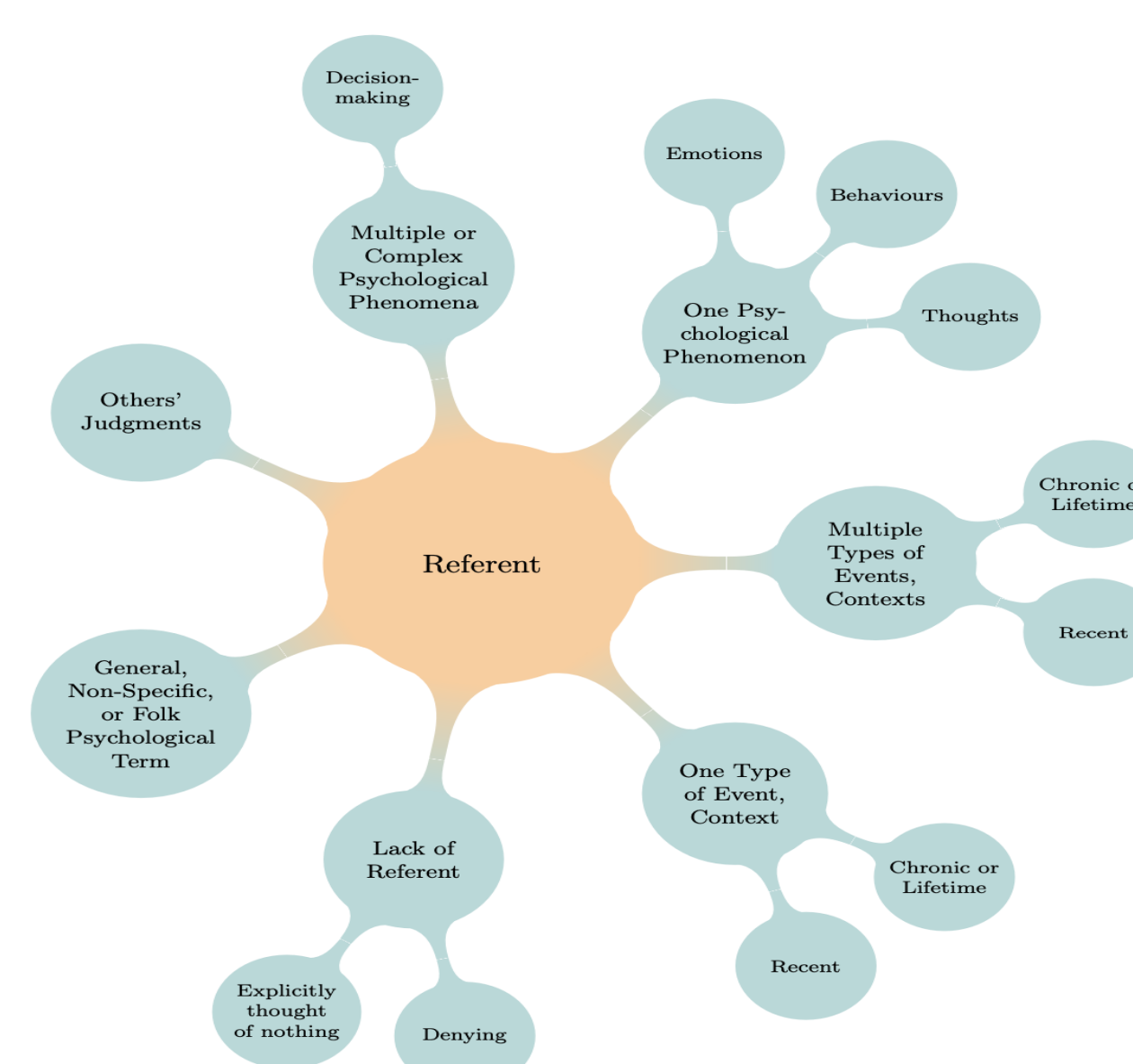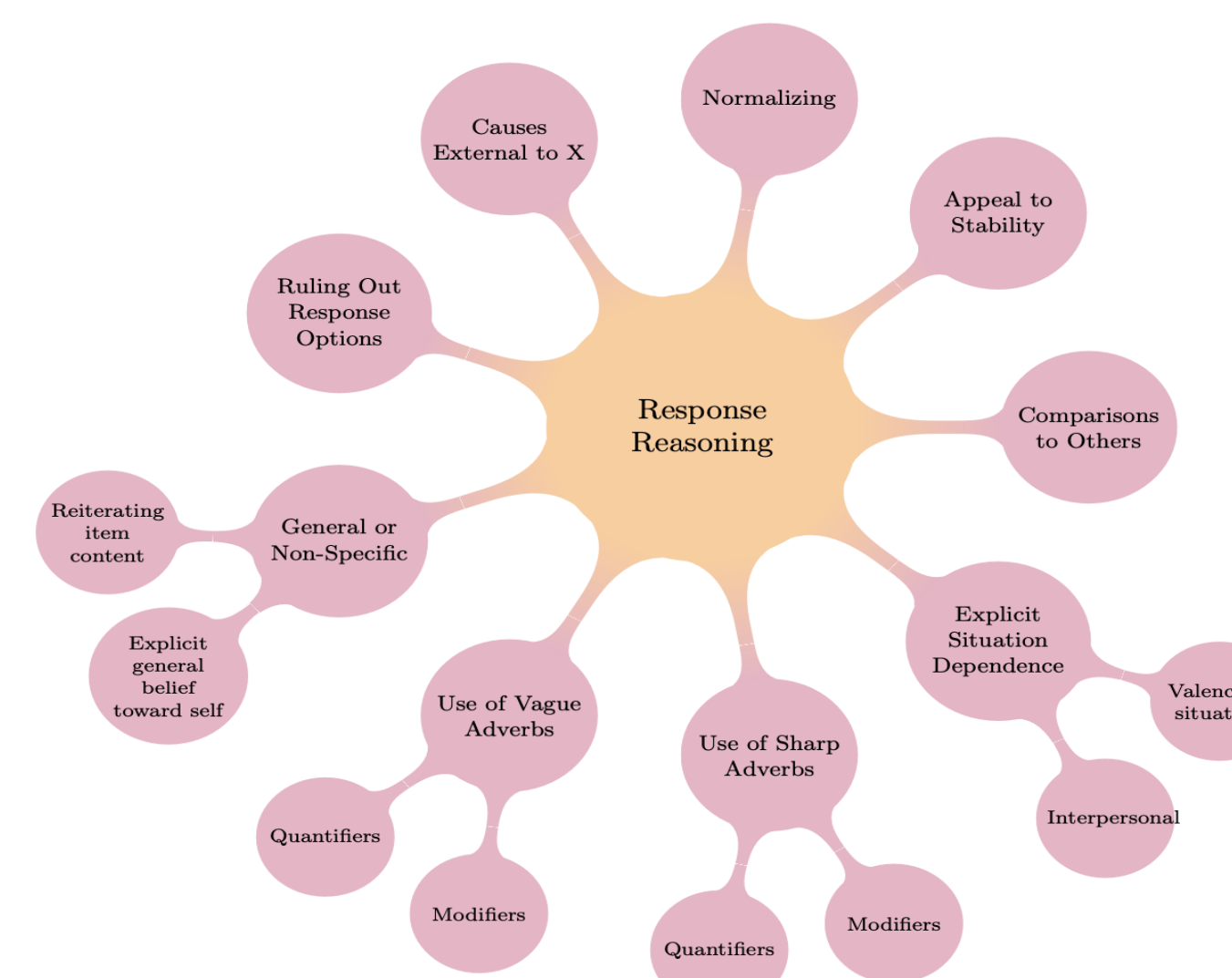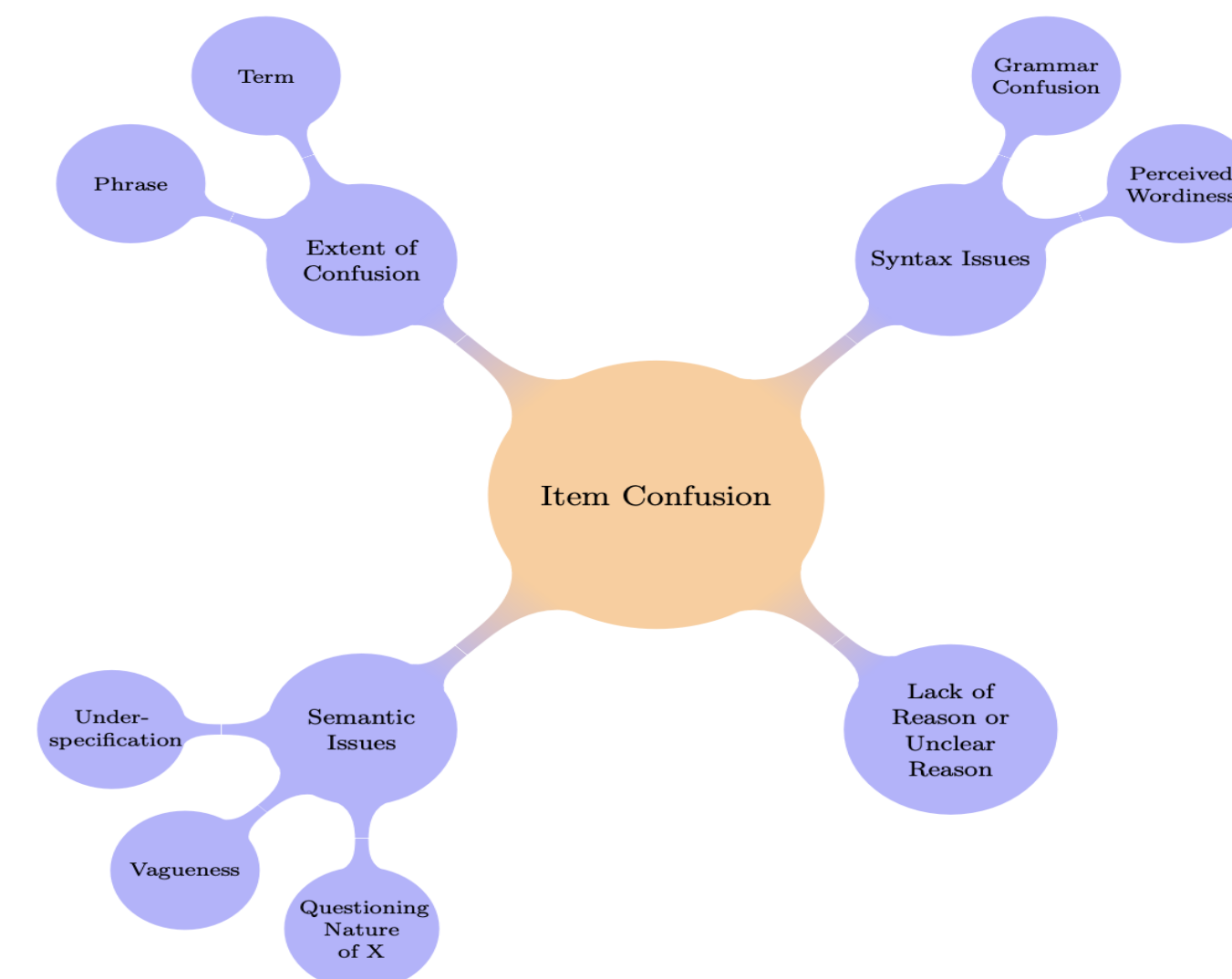- Item response statistics can be found on OSF page

Procedure

- Completed LPFS-BF 2.0, *then* completed open-ended RP questions probing each answered item (adapted and modified from Wolf et al. (2023))
- Questions on **item understandability**, **response selection rationale**, **item referents**, **response revision**

Analyses

- **Qualitative analysis** using thematic analysis (Robinson, 2022; Terry et al., 2017); themes developed in *inductive manner*

Results

Conclusions

- Examination of RPs reveals complexities and idiosyncratic nature of psychological measurement and phenomena related to personality functioning

- **Future directions**:
  - Topic models
  - Count analyses
  - Other commonly used symptom measures
  - Integrating RP info with responses

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Contact and Supplemental (Materials, Code, Output)

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