E-Poster

EP-442

Lack of Medical French Educational Resources for English Speakers

Topic: Education (Medical Student, Residency & Post-Graduate)

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BACKGROUND

With the globalization of healthcare increasing– including initiatives like Rehabilitation 2030– it is imperative that there are resources for learning appropriate medical terminology in other languages, particularly French. In fact, French is the world's fifth most spoken language, with ~62% of speakers living in Africa. To bolster international collaboration as rehabilitation in Africa expands, it is important that more individuals are proficient in medical French. Given the global popularity of English for science communication and healthcare education, there is value in identifying resources for English speakers seeking to learn medical French. To understand the scope of available resources, we conducted an informal review of available resources as a prelude to a more formal review.

METHODS

In collaboration with a research librarian, we collated a list of relevant search terms and identified appropriate databases for scholarly and gray literature. A medical French expert was consulted for her real-world expertise. After conducting our search, it was concluded that too few resources were publicly available to warrant a full-scale review. Therefore, we conducted an environmental scan.

RESULTS

There were no comprehensive, publicly available medical French language learning resources for English speakers. We found no published literature in either English or French in medical, educational, or linguistic journals describing any educational interventions for teaching English speakers medical French. Though we did find dictionaries, there were no published workbooks or textbooks specializing in teaching medical French to English speakers. The most common mention of medical French was in news articles from American medical schools, noting electives or student-led groups. Many were years old, with no sign of continuation. Popular language learning resources like Duolingo, Babel and YouTube offered limited resources, all of which were geared towards one's experience as a patient or were for employees of specific companies. Anki has publicly available flashcard decks, but their accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Private companies and tutors were largely aimed at formal language certification exams, geared towards individuals who already speak French and at potentially significant cost. A collaborative organization, the Anglo-French Medical Society, provides classes and conferences for language learners in the UK and France.

CONCLUSION

There is a severe lack of available resources for English speakers to learn medical French, limiting international collaboration. The international rehabilitation community should come together to create resources that ameliorate this deficit.

Statement of Disclosures

Mme Szabo is a medical French teacher who specializes in the administrative support of foreign doctors to enable them to practice in France and runs an enterprise to that effect. She was consulted following the search and was not involved in analysis.

No other COIs to report.

Doi: 10.5606/archisprm.2026.EP-442

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