

## **45th Biennial Convention (16-20 November 2019)**

### **How Caregivers Connect and Care for the Multilingual Older Adult With Dementia**

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This study identified some of the challenges caregivers experience when attempting to connect with their patients and care for the multilingual older adult with dementia. The study also provides some recommendations on how care and services should be provided for this population.

The Alzheimer's Association (2018) indicates that 5.7 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's Dementia, and approximately 7.1 million Americans will have Dementia by 2025. We are currently unaware of the prevalence of dementia in the US for people who are multilingual or speak a language other than English; leading to gaps in health services associated with formal and informal caregivers' experiences caring for this population in the community. One of the challenges of caring for multilingual and bilingual older adults with dementia is that they revert to their primary language as dementia progresses (McMurtry, Saito & Nakamoto, 2009; Hyltenstam & Viberg, 1993).

Constructivist Grounded Theory was applied to guide this study as it focused on determining how care was provided to multilingual older adults with dementia. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with caregivers from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds as they attempted to make connections with their patients and care for this population. A total of 14 caregivers were interviewed; some were family caregivers, others were formal/paid healthcare providers. The caregivers discussed several challenges that occur within the process of cultural translation. The process of cultural translation occurs as the informal caregivers, usually family members seek services in the community. The role of the cultural translator is to educate formal caregivers and providers on varying cultures such as Greek, Italian and Japanese cultural norms (Roche-Dean, 2018). The themes that emerged from this study included: Cultural Translator, Presence, Rigid healthcare system, Seeking help, Cultural identity and Mitigating relationships. These findings indicate a need to increase access to interpreters across healthcare settings. They highlight the intricate relationship between language and culture (Sapir, 2004; Tassavor & Chen, 2018) Lastly, they indicate the importance for caregivers to be aware that language and culture can affect patient/caregiver interactions when the patient has dementia (Hertzberg & Ekman, 2000).

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#### **Title:**

How Caregivers Connect and Care for the Multilingual Older Adult With Dementia

#### **Keywords:**

Bilingual, Constructivist Grounded Theory and Dementia

## References:

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## Abstract Summary:

This presentation focuses on the challenges formal and informal caregivers experience as they attempt to care for bilingual and multilingual older adults who have dementia. Constructivist Grounded Theory is applied to guide this study and elucidate the process of cultural translation that occurs as informal caregivers navigate the healthcare system.

## Content Outline:

### A. Dementia and Linguistic diversity in the US

1. Prevalence of dementia in the US was estimated at 5.7 million in 2018
2. Incidence of people with the diagnosis was estimated at 7.1 million by 2025
3. Languages spoken in the US according to the US Census Bureau 350 as of 2015

### B. How does dementia affect Bilingual and Multilingual adults?

1. Tendency to revert to primary language
2. Tendency for this population to be diagnosed with dementia at a later stage
3. Essential question then is: How do we care for the multilingual older adult with dementia as they revert to their primary language? a. Participants provide insights
4. How do caregivers both formal and informal support this population? a. Study results provide process and role for support.

### C. Connection between Language and Culture

1. Culture influenced by society
2. Culture influences how we communicate using language

### D. Challenges of caring for the Multilingual older adult:

1. Themes of study: Presence, Rigid healthcare system, Seeking help, Cultural identity and Mitigating relationships.
2. The role of the cultural translator
3. The process of cultural translation

First Primary Presenting Author

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**Author Summary:** Dr. Roche-Dean began her nursing career as a telemetry med-surg nurse at a small rural hospital in 1997. She explored other areas of clinical practice such as emergency and long-term care nursing. She began her teaching career at Maria College in Albany as a clinical instructor and progressed to teaching in baccalaureate and master's programs. Dr. Roche-Dean's research focused on multilingual older adult with dementia and their caregivers.