

# Clinical Placements in a Francophone Context to Learn How to Work Within OLMCs<sup>1</sup>

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# Plan of the presentation

- Context
  - Health services in French
  - Interprofessional Rehabilitation Clinic
- Objectives of the project
- Objectives for the students
- Methodology
- Results



# Context: Health services in French

- Lack of professionals who can offer services in French
- Francophone or bilingual personnel often poorly equipped
- Obstacles to active offer: language in the workplace, linguistic insecurity, diverse clientele, lack of tools and measures in French, lack of knowledge of francophone resources, work overload



# Context:

## Interprofessional Rehabilitation Clinic



- University clinic geared towards training future health professionals to work in French
- Offers services in French to school-aged children and seniors
- Services mostly offered by the student trainees, under the supervision of clinical educators in professional domains:
  - ❖ audiology
  - ❖ occupational therapy
  - ❖ speech-language pathology
  - ❖ physiotherapy



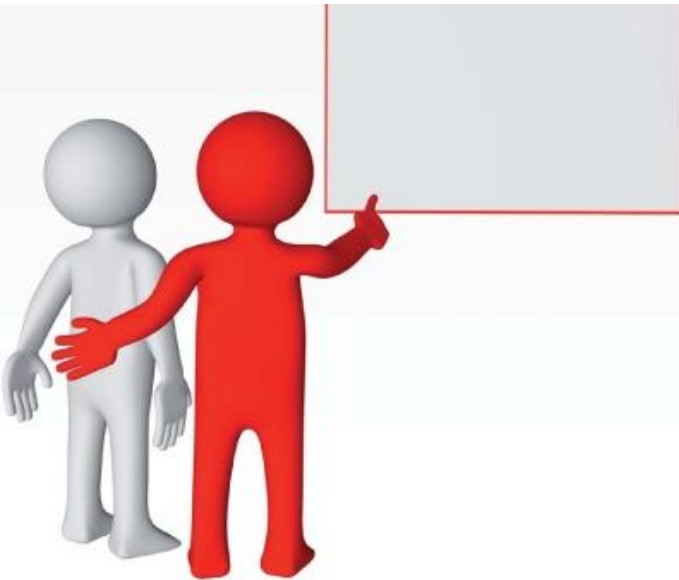
# Objectives of the project

- Evaluate a clinical training model for students in English programs, geared towards preparing them to offer services in French
- Improve the model
- Distribute the model





# Objectives for the students



- Reduce the feeling of linguistic insecurity
- Practice the professional terminology in French
- Increase the knowledge of resources in French
- Create a professional network



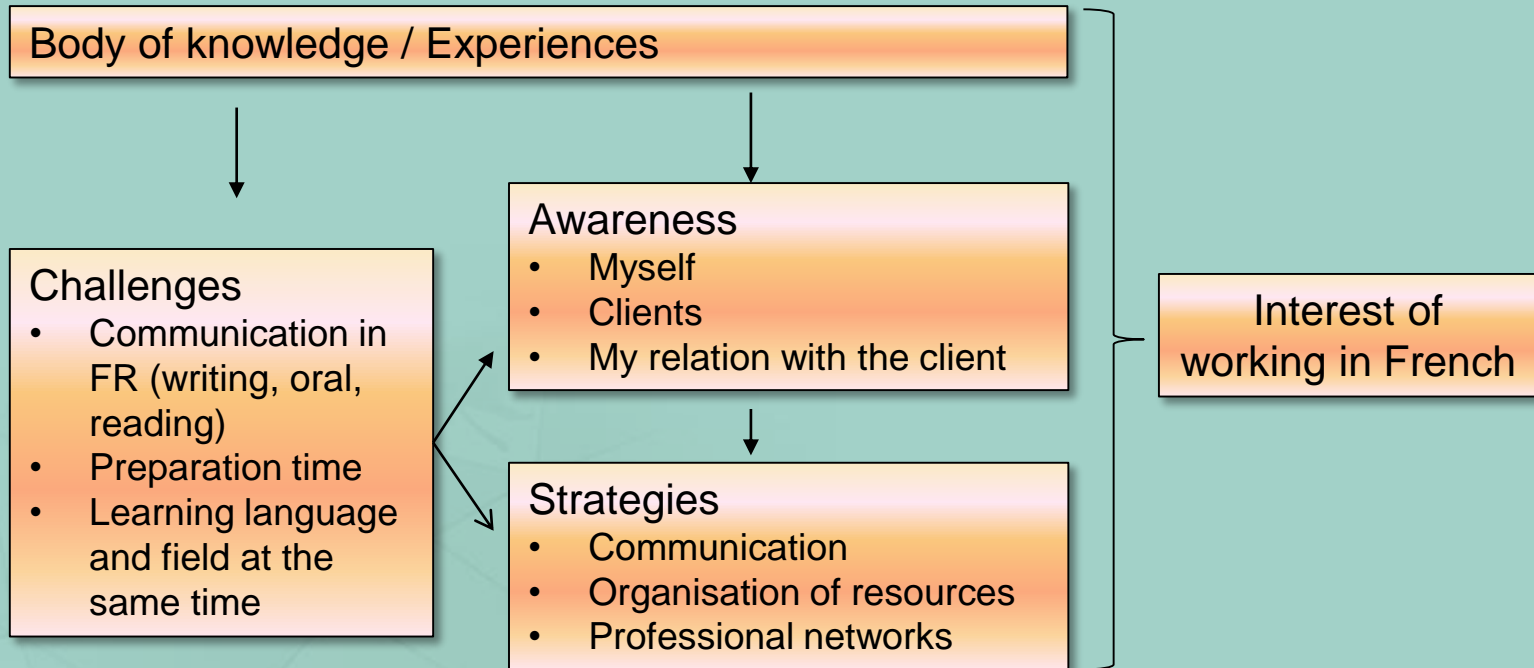
# Methodology

- Participants: 16 students from anglophone teaching institutions who are able to speak French
- Brief introductory training on the challenges of active offer
- Pre- and post-clinical placement measures
  - Satisfaction Questionnaire
  - Questionnaire on the clinical placement experience
  - Individual interview

# Results



## SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT





# Body of knowledge / Experiences



- Linguistic background
  - Francophones vs francophiles
  - Linguistic insecurity
- Professional knowledge
  - Empathy
  - Client-centered approach
  - Previous placements
  - Lack of knowledge about resources in French
- Courage and curiosity



*“...I am so much more aware of my mistakes....it’s hard on the ego somedays...”*

*“...there are days when I feel that I attained that goal, but other days I do not. It’s like a roller coaster.”*





# Challenges



- Communication in French (writing, oral, reading)
- Preparation time
- Learning the language and the professional skills at the same time





*“...I didn’t even know that a wheelchair was a “fauteuil roulant”...”*

*“...it’s definitely challenging at the beginning and then the added challenge of trying to learn the profession basically...like both of those going on at the same time was definitely challenging...So it was like double the learning opportunity.”*



# Awareness → active offer



- Myself
  - Awareness that it is difficult for me to speak in my second language
  - Awareness of my personal environment (me as a client)
- Client
  - Awareness of the client's difficulty to express himself in a language that is not his primary language
- My relation with the client
  - Awareness that I must offer to speak French with the client
  - Awareness of the client's interest to speak the language of his choice



*It's interesting because we were talking about people who cannot speak English very well and how it's frustrating for them, but for me, it's the opposite...but I think that as a therapist, it's different because I do not have the same level of stress as the client would have. So I felt frustrated, but I can imagine how much the clients must feel frustrated when they cannot speak the language.*





# Supportive environment

- Experiential learning
- Support and encouragement from the clinical educators
- Support from the clients
- Teamwork
- Supervision and preparation time





*It was really the fact that everyone here knows that French is not my first language, so they gave me time to explain myself. They also helped me refine the word choice that I was using...I never felt judged because my vocabulary wasn't as refined...*





# How do they deal: constant adaptation



- Communication strategies
  - Speak like the client (use plain language)
  - Help from the interprofessional team
- Organisation of resources
  - Toolbox
  - Sharing their discoveries
  - Compromise and adaptation for interventions and resources
- Development of professional networks
  - With the clinicians
  - With the other students
  - With professors



*“I was thinking about using plain language with the patients. It is something that I have difficulty doing in English because I use the English terminology of (the field) but in French, I find it easier because I don’t know the terminology so it’s just like speaking in a way that they will understand... so it’s like “win-win” for everyone because they understood and I did not use the technical language....”*





# **INTEREST IN OFFERING SERVICES IN FRENCH**



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*Finally, I would like to pursue a career in French. I really enjoyed the experience. For the cultural aspect, for me, my first language is French, even though it has been 12 years that I lost my French because I did all my studies in English and my career in English. I did not practice my language for 12 years. For me, to find it again, I really made a connection and I realized that I wanted to get back to my maternal language.*





*Yeah, and that's why I wanted to do this placement because I wouldn't have been before. But... because I would have been able to get by but I didn't feel comfortable enough, especially in relation to (field) being able to provide those services. So definitely now after completing this placement I do feel like I would be able to do that and I would be comfortable saying, you know, to my boss, my future potential boss, that I could provide those services.*



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**Questions?**



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