



Students paid to teach French to small traders in Montreal

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The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal has found an original and effective way to allow small traders to learn French.

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The agency announced Friday that it was extending its francization pilot project in small businesses to three high-density immigrant boroughs.

The francization of small traders has always been a challenge. They do indeed very long hours and they rarely have time to take time off to take French classes.

However, the House has had great success with its pilot project, which consists of matching university students with small businesses to give them French classes at their workplace.

Students come to the business two hours a week for 12 weeks for this apprenticeship.

In addition, the shopkeeper himself wears a pin on which is written "I learn French, encourage me", which apparently leads to an enthusiastic participation of customers.



Emma, seamstress, can now speak French with her clients. Photo: Radio-Canada

The 30 merchants who participated in the pilot project saw their skills in French improve, measurable results that have attracted the interest of several companies to France, according to the President and CEO of the Chamber, Michel Leblanc.

The process was also noticed in Quebec City, which had delegated Friday morning the minister responsible for the Charter of the French language, Marie Montpetit, to announce a \$ 500,000 support for the project.

About 20 students - who are paid for the task - must be recruited and the goal is to train 160 traders by the month of March.

The pilot project was initiated in the Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough. It will continue and will be extended to the boroughs of Saint-Laurent and Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension.

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