1. Background & rationale

- During the last decade the SLT field has broadened and created a need for specialization.
- Stuttering is one of the least understood communicative disorders and SLTs feel less comfortable in treating this disorder (Sommers & Caruso, 1995), possibly due to the fact that quite often it does not have a prominent place in the curriculum & clinical training of students (Yaruss & Quesal, 2002). Moreover, the disorder is commonly treated by SLTs but the number of clients on case-load is the lowest of all conditions (Bernstein-Ratner, 2006).
- Stuttering is one of the least understood communicative disorders and SLTs feel less comfortable in treating this disorder (Sommers & Caruso, 1995), possibly due to the fact that quite often it does not have a prominent place in the curriculum & clinical training of students (Yaruss & Quesal, 2002). Moreover, the disorder is commonly treated by SLTs but the number of clients on case-load is the lowest of all conditions (Bernstein-Ratner, 2006).
- Brisk et al. (1997) to the conclusion that there is a need for quality continuing education programs, particularly in the area of treatment for preschool children and adolescents who stutter.

2. Goals & management

- Harmonization of fluency courses in Ba/MA curricula with respect for individual differences.
- Development of a clinical one-year specialization course.

Procedure:
- 10 EU universities from 7 countries (Belgium, Ireland, Malta, Sweden, Germany, Finland, The Netherlands).
- Erasmus curriculum development project: 28095-IC-1-2005-1-BE-ERASMUS-MODUC-1.
- 2 year development (’06-’08) & implementation in 2008.

3. Harmonization core Ba/MA courses

- Uniform competencies (prevention, assessment, & intervention) & learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes).
- Minimal 5 ECTS (+125-150h. overall study time).
- Joint e-learning platform (challenging learning environment, broader & different viewpoints, discussion platforms, joint tasks, international context).
- Joint evaluation of BA/MA students (besides institute specific evaluation).

4. Specialization course

- The specialization course had to meet the following requirements: a) optimal learning environment, b) compatibility with current SLT workload, c) cost efficient, d) optimal student recruitment. Therefore it had to include lecturing and self-study, supervised clinical internship, and evaluation of acquired competencies.
- After careful weighing of different models, the consortium decided on a model with 2 intensive weeks of lecturing (2 different locations) with in between home-follow-up sessions.
- For a more efficient learning, lecturing is combined with preparatory readings & home assignments. The specialized clinical training, under supervision of a fluency specialist, can start after intensive week 1. Evaluation is portfolio-based.
- Intensive weeks are a combination of lecturing and training of clinical skills. Home assignments consist of critical reviews, papers, and exercises.

5. EU, participant & external review

- EU commission: “very well performed/managed project where all planned outcomes are being fulfilled”.
- Participants: scores averages ‘very good’ to ‘excellent’ on a) Overall session formats, b) Practical & useful information, c) Lecturer’s ability to present information, and d) Overall course evaluation.
- EU commission: “very well performed/managed project where all planned outcomes are being fulfilled”.
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6. Development & future goals

- Partnerships with other EU/non-EU universities.
- Partnerships with EU representative organizations both for clinicians and for clients (CPLOL, ELSA, …).
- To develop content in light of research.
- Setup follow up system of continuing education of graduates.
- Possibly future recognition of EU fluency specialists.
- Biennial EU symposium on Fluency Disorders.

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