



When an accused wishes to have his criminal trial in French, Provincial Crown lawyers like Micah Rankin are called on to take the case. As part of a team of around 30 who speak French, the Provincial Crown prosecutor's focus is on the rights of the accused.

"In British Columbia, an accused has the right to have a French Crown Counsel to communicate with the judge," explains Micah.

Growing up in Vancouver in a purely anglophone family, Micah wasn't exposed to French until Grade 6. His father had lived in Montreal after university, and wanted his son exposed to a different language - most notably Canada's second official language.

"That was the only connection I had to French. So, my parents put me in late French Immersion and I really enjoyed it," says Micah, adding he continued with the program in his high school years. "I made a lot of friends in the program, and I became quite competent in oral French."

When it came to university, Micah admits he never thought French could advance his career. He completed a Bachelor degree in International Relations at Simon Fraser University (SFU).

"After completing my Bachelor degree, I did a French exchange at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris (IEP – SciencesPO)," says Micah. "I was 24 and hadn't spoken French in a few years, so it was a little difficult to understand the lectures."

It was while at IEP – SciencesPO that he met his francophone wife. When he returned to Canada after a year, Micah attended the University of Victoria (UVic)'s Faculty of Law.

When Micah is in front of the Supreme Court of Canada, his clear understanding of French and the judicial process has helped him to work in the system that he is proud to serve.

"Speaking French can literally change the course of your life," says Micah, adding both his sons are in French Immersion. "I suggest that anyone who is considering working for the provincial or federal government should seriously contemplate going into French Immersion."