The research team

PLIDAM

(Pluralité des Langues et des Identités :

Didactique, Acquisition, Médiations)

EA 4514

INALCO

(Institut national des langues et civilisations orientale)

The aim of « foreign language and culture pedagogy » as understood by PLIDAM, is to have the description and the transposition of languages and cultures fall within the objective of teaching, training and research; to master teaching methodologies and approaches and their theoretical foundations, based on a thorough analysis of educational contexts, of foreign language learning cultures and of the language and literature market. In this definition, the strength of the link between "languages" and "cultures" is reaffirmed. The research team is besides an innovation force which opens up the disciplinary field hitherto narrowed around applied linguistics. Through the thought proposed here, issues at stake in foreign languages teaching are positioned within an enlarged disciplinary framework. This disciplinary framework is dictated not only by the changes in our knowledge-based society but also by the educational and social projects and responsibilities assumed by the institutions involved in the spread and the promotion of languages, literatures and cultures. The works of the team attempt to shed light on the consequences and the prospects opened by the globalization process, the acceleration of the European construction and the Francophonie.

Such a scientific program involves a wide field of interdisciplinary researches.

The research team EA 4514 PLIDAM borders the following disciplines:

-applied linguistics as it relates to language and culture teaching (including the contributions of contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, literature and orality, as well as translation);

-pedagogy and education; social sciences applied to the description of the social link and to the functioning of the different representations (semiotics, sociology, cultural anthropology); language policy and geopolitics; information and communication sciences, natural language processing, educational technologies.

Scientific objectives

Positioned within the context of language, literature and culture spread, teaching and learning, PLIDAM's objectives are:

1) To analyze symbolic power relations between languages as they are realized in educational systems and to maximize the visibility of less widespread and less commonly taught languages. These languages are referred to as "small languages" or "minority languages", thus including the question of the dynamics of social representations;
2) To integrate the effects of university and migratory mobility into one or more teaching models regarding multilingual linguistic repertoires;
3) To provide answers to social inequalities caused by the underestimation of "small languages" emerging from a number of political, economic as social speeches;
4) To produce educational resources from a multilingual and multicultural perspective, so as to accompany the geopolitics opening of the "West" towards Africa and Asia.

Staffing

Our different activities have allowed us to set up the bases of a multilingual and multicultural pedagogy, to be understood not as an extension of bilingualism, based on Inalco's specificities: almost a hundred of languages and cultures and its mission to promote Francophony.

In recent years, various languages including those numerically larger at Inalco (Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Russian, have gradually been integrated in the team. Its openness to African languages (Swahili, Malagasy, Yoruba, Amharic …), European languages (Slovak, Czech, Hungarian, Romanian, Macedonian ….) and Western languages (French as foreign language or FLE, English, Italian) has been maintained and developed. PLIDAM has therefore expanded its range of scientific expertise by including new languages in the debate (Swahili, Hindi, Russian, Greek, Romanian, Urdu, Macedonian, Amharic, Italian …).

11	Full professors / Accredited Research Directors (HDR) / Research directors
15	Senior lecturers (MCF)
19	Doctors

Namely

45	Full researchers

and

31	PhD students

Add to that associate members and foreign members who have not entered into the accounts.

Management Team

Director: Thomas Szende, Full professor

Deputy Directors: Odile Racine, Full professor & Frosa Bouchereau, Full professor

Research areas

Area 1 – Language policies, multilingualism and representations. Supervisor: George Alao, senior lecturer and Elli Suzuki, senior lecturer

This section frames the issue of language policy in between two levels: the individuals and the states. In creating and developing a language policy-or not-, the states are taking an action regarding the relationship between the coexisting languages or dialects (i.e. vernacular and vehicular languages, national languages(s), official, regional or minority language(s), "deterritorilized" languages, etc.), and also regarding individual and community identities (i.e. communal, regional, national, etc.). The leading topics here include linguistic security/insecurity, and thus, the emergence of different forms of domination, marginalization and social inequality.

A common questioning shared among the members of this research area concerns the teachers' and learners' profiles and histories. They focus on the dynamics underlying the social representations of languages and cultures, the building of a multilingual and multicultural capital, the mobilization of a mobility capital and the ways of feeding the thought on the commodification of languages in an increasingly globalized world.

Area 2 – Language competency: construction and assessment. Supervisor: Georgios Galanès, senior lecturer and Jing Guo, senior lecturer

The discussion proposed in this research area is geared towards understanding the processes of appropriation and the development of the learner's second language competence, with the purpose of introducing autonomous behaviors, which are applied in the assessment of the language proficiency. Research on language competency assessment is often considered as a mere knowledge control test, though it is rather based on a paradigm shift: a shift from the knowledge paradigm to the competence paradigm. Therefore, assessment is inevitably linked to the processes of acquisition that condition the construction of the language competency.

This research area opens a multilingual perspective that combines: -a linguistic dimension, connecting languages that are geographically close to one another and which are likely to be

taught or learned in a context of mutual intelligibility; -a pedagogical dimension, associating languages with a strong teaching/learning tradition and languages without such a tradition; -an interdisciplinary dimension (pragmatic/cultural) that takes the notion of assessment beyond the differences peculiar to each language, so as to remove the partitions that have been built up around the notion of language teaching/learning.

Area 3 – Lexicon and translation: which pedagogy? Supervisors: Heba Lecocq, senior lecturer and Delombera Negga, senior lecturer

Based on the most recent linguistic and pedagogical researches, this research area profiles the lexicons of much diversified languages and establishes broader correlations between lexicon, culture and their acquisition. Members of different speech communities do not use the same linguistic material for externalizing their thoughts and feelings. Learning the lexicon of a language is thus appropriating the explicit and implicit values and properties of words illustrating the power some speech communities have to differentiate concepts that are yet not distinguished in other speech communities.

A delicate task consists in understanding the precise meaning of the terms used by the community, and to rightly define the concepts they include. Bilingual/multilingual lexicography and terminology mean to do a contrastive analysis of various lexicons, to take into account the needs of the public and the knowledge acquired in the teaching/learning of the observed languages. Such questionings provide an opening to translation as related to language contact and to a reformulation and reinterpretation exercise leading to social and ideological implications.

Area 4 – Culture and literature in language teaching/learning. Supervisors: Frosa Bouchereau, full professor and Nathalie Carré, senior lecturer

The purpose of this area research is to study the place and function of oral or written literature in the teaching/learning of a language; to define a different approach to the literary text, in order to conceive different relationships and different possible uses. This means understanding literature as a language on reality, a product of reality, having an effect on reality, as reality comprises non-oral communication and expression, yet still making orality the foundation of its internal structure. This language which covers all the ways of expressions, overflows and hides, incorporating both orality and writing, the expressible and the inexpressible, the thinkable and the unthinkable, the factual and the imaginary. Learning a language is primarily about grasping and making meaning, apprehending reality and humanity in its diversity, its otherness and its complexity. Literature, which expresses the meaning of reality and humanity, is therefore inevitably linked to language teaching.

The literary text, being the product of a specific culture, is the place where culture is best expressed. Discovering a text in its original language is entering a cultural universe with its own codes. Literature hence offers a particular corpus that allows one to get into the culture of the Other, and by a mirror effect, to get into one's own culture: it is a privileged space for reading

alterity and identities. The literary text is an esthetically pleasing shape of the representations shared among the members of a community in as much as it does reveal the historical, political and social contexts of a given community. Through the uniqueness of the interpretation and of the writing it suggests, the literary text opens doors to new ways of thinking, new relations to the world, which reveal a social and cultural imaginary world that is collectively acknowledged by the community.

Area 5 – Pedagogy-mediation-digital issues

Program A – Designing pedagogical tools in a multilingual perspective. Supervisors: Diana Lemay, senior lecturer and Ivan Smilauer, senior lecturer

The program is organized in three complementary task groups.

I.   Text, corpus and database processing: textual, linguistic and cultural corpora creation; automatic processing chains preparing automatic analyses and lexicographical studies; multilingual and multifunctional databases designed for dictionaries.
II.   Language teaching platforms: portable lexicons (tablets, smartphones); teaching platforms (Moodle, MOOCs);
III.   E-learning portals: projects for the creation of information/language training websites, using CMS such as Wordpress; web 2.0 language learners community; design and implementation of training systems.

Program B – SemioMed – "Sémiotique, patrimoine numérique et mediation culturelle". (Semiotics, cultural heritage and cultural mediation) Supervisors: Peter Stockinger, full professor and Louise Ouvrard, senior lecturer

This program has the following objectives:

1.   Provide a platform for collaboration and scientific exchanges to researchers members of PLIDAM and involved in research projects concerning digital technology, cultural and linguistic heritage as well as cultural and linguistic mediation.
2.   Contribute to the creation and the promotion of the scientific and cultural heritage of Inalco, of PLIDAM and of its institutional partners in France and abroad, through concrete actions such as "recording fields, creation, archiving and diffusion of corpora, especially audiovisual (films and photographs)".
3.   Contribute to the development of a coherent scientific discourse and of a joint activity of Research and Development on issues concerning scientific and cultural heritage, audiovisual archives, cultural mediation and digital and computer instrumentation of the work of analyzing and promoting legacy corpora.
4.   Contribute to the training of the stakeholders (researchers, PhD students and other students) in the works of heritage creation and promotion.

Training through research

The team bets on a strong investment in training for and through research (master's degree and PhD), as its driving force.

1)   Master's
   The connections between PLIDAM and research master's degree are many. PLIDAM's researchers are strongly involved in the teaching task within this program. Others are even teaching managers.

2)   Doctorate
   PLIDAM is a member of the Doctorate School n°265 "Langues, littératures et sociétés du monde" (Language, literature and world's societies). The team thereby contributes to the emergence of a new generation of researchers: 31 dissertations are in progress. 12 were defended between 2012 and 2017.

Scientific project for the next five-year term (2018-2023)

Attached to Inalco, PLIDAM is a unique observatory. Indeed, it brings together researchers, doctors and doctorate students, coming from different geographical and academic milieux, possessing primary scientific data on a variety of languages, literatures and European, African and Asian civilizations. Theoretical thinking and field research are also carried out in the domains of language teaching, learning and usage. Such a scientific project suggests a lot of different perspectives and at the same time a strong link between its research fields.

PLIDAM will continue to provide a coherent experimental framework for multiple research prospects, having as its major concerns the quality of the link between the various disciplinary contributions, its openness towards USPC (Université Sorbonne Paris Cité), towards the international and socio-economic world, building strong links between its projects and training for research through research, as well as the promotion of our activities. As shown by the continual staffing increase, the unit is attractive. The arrival of new researchers, involving a wide range of scientific skills, will certainly strengthen the links and collaborations within Inalco and within our relationship with USPC.