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Centre for
Language Studies

2015 Proposed Joint Research Project

between

Unité de recherche PLIDAM (EA 4514)
Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales
(INALCO-Université Sorbonne Paris Cité)

&

Centre for Language Studies
National University of Singapore (NUS)

LASiPA

LOCAL LANGUAGE POLICIES & LANGUAGE **A**PPROPRIATION IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT –
COMMUNITY LANGUAGES, SECOND LANGUAGES & FOREIGN LANGUAGES.
CASE STUDIES IN **S**INGAPORE AND **P**ARIS.

*POLITIQUES LINGUISTIQUES LOCALES ET APPROPRIATION DES LANGUES EN CONTEXTE MONDIALISÉ:
LANGUES COMMUNAUTAIRES, LANGUES SECONDES ET LANGUES ÉTRANGÈRES. ÉTUDES DE CAS À
PARIS ET SINGAPOUR.*

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A. PROPOSED PROJECT TITLE

**LaSiPa:
LOCAL LANGUAGES POLICIES & LANGUAGE APPROPRIATION IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT –
COMMUNITY LANGUAGES, SECOND LANGUAGES & FOREIGN LANGUAGES.
CASE STUDIES IN SINGAPORE & PARIS.**

**Politiques linguistiques locales et appropriation des langues en contexte mondialisé: langues
communautaires, langues secondes et langues étrangères.
Études de cas à Paris et Singapour.**

B. ABSTRACT

The objective of this 12-month research project is to investigate the learning and teaching connections between the various languages which are spoken in multicultural and globalized societies. The two cases in point focus on the different ways France and Singapore manage their multilingualism in educational settings. Indeed, some researchers have highlighted the tensions between what is learned in school and what is needed to come to grips with the complexities of diverse societies in a globalized world. In particular, how can contemporary language appropriation enable one to interpret the new social patterns produced by the encounter of local community organization and global activity? By bringing together two research teams from two universities set in very remote and differently organized societies, the project sets the ground work for an original reflection and new proposals on the roles of the diversity of languages, both heritage and foreign, in societies constantly trying to adjust to multiculturalism and globalization.

Keywords:

Local language policies - global language practices - globalization - language learning and teaching - diversity, multiculturalism and multilingualism

C. NARRATIVE

C1. Background of NUS-INALCO cooperation

This project is to be considered as the initial stage towards a larger project to be developed in the longer term. It mostly stems from the contacts made in 2014 between CLS-NUS and PLIDAM-INALCO, on the occasion of the International Conference on “Policy and Ideology in Language Teaching and Learning: Actors and Discourses of Language” organised by PLIDAM team in Paris, and of the CLS International Conference, CLaSIC 2014, on “Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies in Foreign Language Education” held in Singapore in December 2014. It falls within the scope of Axis 1 of the PLIDAM five-year research programme.

The two conferences constituted the first steps of an informal collaboration between INALCO-PLIDAM and NUS-CLS. It also provided platforms for researchers, scholars, practitioners and developers from all over the world to share insightful findings and formulate new perspectives in response to transformations in the global context and impulses from relevant research. The project submitted here is meant to turn this initial and informal encounter between our two centres into a formal research collaboration. The project will facilitate intensive academic exchange between both institutions, the sharing of their respective academic networks, and the seeding of further research collaborations, including joint applications for research grants at local, national and European levels.

C2. Project rationale

Stakeholders in general and language education (such as governmental ministries, educational institutions, curriculum planners and developers, materials developers, publishers, researchers, teachers, and even learners) are facing increasing challenges to respond to the changes brought about by globalization, as defined and analyzed by sociologists (Vertovec, 2007), sociolinguists Blommaert,

2010 ; 2013) and language educators (Kramersch, 2012 ; 2014 ; Castellotti, 2013). Given the scope of these developments, international collaboration is necessary to explore and chart these changes as well as to identify issues and new directions in educational theory and practice arising from these changes.

It is with this intention that INALCO-USPC (Paris), as represented by the Research Unit PLIDAM, and the National University of Singapore, as represented by the Centre for Language Studies, are proposing a joint research project to be launched in 2015.

C3. State of the art & research questions

Under the immense influence of changing geopolitics and the effects of globalization, languages and education around the world are experiencing substantial transformations. Various publications in recent years have pointed to the interrelationships between global, regional and national developments and (language) educational planning and pedagogies. In particular, several scholars (e.g. Baldauf, 2005; Byram, 2008; Chan, Chin & Suthiwan, 2006; Chan, 2012; Kramersch, 2012; Lam, 2005; Forlot 2009; Hélot, 2011; Castellotti 2013) have pointed to globalization as a force that is reshaping language educational policies and promoting the teaching of foreign languages worldwide. For instance, in Asia, the desire to benefit in political, economic and technological terms from the winds of globalization has motivated governments and institutions to promote country and regional studies as well as the learning of foreign languages (cf. Chan, 2012; Hess, 2012; Lam, 2005; MEXT, 2003). In Europe, foreign languages learning and plurilingualism are being increasingly promoted by the Council of Europe as vital contributing factors to 1) cross-border mobility, and 2) the development of a common and cohesive identity in a multilingual Europe (Byram, 2008; Zarate, Lévy & Kramersch, 2011).

Most language education scholars acknowledge the highly diverse, modern and communicative approaches of language teaching/learning nowadays. However, some point to the remaining tensions between what is learned in educational settings and what is needed to come to grips with the complexities of diverse societies in a globalized world (Kramersch, 2014). In particular, one of the issues lies in the way language teaching and learning enables one to interpret “the new patterns of global activity, community organization and culture” (Blommaert, 2010).

Some researchers in Europe, North America and Australia claim that language learning should not necessarily equate with the acquisition of specific and individual languages, but with general educational and social development. In more specific terms, language learning also aims at enhancing social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural development and, in some cases, multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka, 2007). These issues are of considerable importance in societies which explicitly (i.e. *de jure*) recognize their multicultural nature, such as Singapore, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa or some European countries (e.g. the Netherlands, Great Britain) It is also one of the burning issues in “centralized” societies which are grappling both with globalization, multilingualism and ethnic diversity, such as France, Japan, China or Turkey.

In this context, what is generally known as under the term of community – or heritage – languages (“Mother tongues” or “langues d’origine” as they are called respectively in Singapore and France) play a significant role in shaping the plurilingual repertoires of the citizens of multicultural places. Both the CLS and INALCO are involved in teaching languages which possibly have dual functions: that of being languages of local communities (Malay, Chinese and Tamil in Singapore ; Arabic, Berber, Chinese, Russian, Turkish, Wolof, Yoruba, Vietnamese and many others in France), but also that of being internal languages spoken in other parts of the world, with the potential economic advantages attached to them.

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C4. Research objectives

Our research objectives are the following:

1. To investigate and document the effects of macro-level factors in a globalizing world, such as developments in geopolitics, society, religion, technology and research, on language development, language policies and language education;
2. To investigate and document the impact of minority language learning and teaching on the construction of multicultural societies; some questions hereby intended to be addressed are: to what extent can heritage languages be developed in order to change the perception of their minority status?
3. To investigate the impact of globalization and globalized, dominant languages on the way heritage language learning is perceived in multicultural societies;
4. To investigate the links between heritage and ‘mainstream’ language teaching in the French and Singaporean secondary and post-secondary education systems. We will try to address the question of how educators adapt their teaching with this dual dimensions, ie that of an international, globalized language and that of a local, community-restricted language. For instance, how does Malay take on other functions than being the symbolic national language of Singapore? In France, why is it that Arabic language courses are taken by so few pupils, while many French children and adults are of North African extraction? In such contexts, how can these languages interact with more dominant, international languages such as English, Spanish or French?

Despite the very different historical and sociopolitical backgrounds of the two countries, the objective is also to examine how one educational system can share its experience with the other.

C5. Investigation protocol and deliverables

This project constitutes the initial stage of a larger project to be submitted to future calls of research projects at national and international levels. The explicit objective at first is to set the grounds for a more developed and intense fieldwork in the future. For this project, given the restricted time frame of a year, the fieldwork is meant to test our investigation protocols and adjust the data collections procedures.

a) Fieldwork research in Singapore (November 2015):

The four INALCO researchers will undertake a four-day exploration of some central loci of language policy in Singapore. Some interviews of students and teachers at the CLS and on the NUS campus will be carried out. Some encounters with members of the National Institute of Education and of the Singapore Ministry of Education will be organized.

b) International Symposium (November 2015), National University of Singapore

The 4 investigators as well as a research associate from INALCO/USPC will attend the International Symposium organized by CLS at NUS on the research themes proposed in the projects. The 4 investigators from NUS as well as most CLS members will attend and deliver papers at this international gathering which will also feature participants from Taiwanese universities.

c) Research and Training Workshop in Paris (May 2016)

5 members of CLS-NUS and their INALCO partners will convene in Paris for a workshop on community and rare language teaching, to be held at INALCO. Some language teachers, students and trainees from postsecondary schools such as INALCO and ESPE Paris, as well as members of the French Education Inspectorate will be invited to share their experience and projects. Some colleagues from neighboring USPC Universities (Univ. Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle ; Univ. Paris 5 René Descartes; Univ. Paris 7 Denis Diderot), from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS – Univ. London) and from the University of Ghent (Belgium) will be invited. Students and staff from the department of Arabic, the department of Turkish, the department of African languages and the department of Eastern European Studies will take part in the workshop.

The invitation of colleagues from other USPC universities is meant to pave the way for future research projects submissions, such as Horizon 2020, Erasmus + and/or Idex USPC projects calls.

Project Deliverables

- International Symposium : Singapore, November 2015
- International Research and Training Workshop : Paris, May 2016
- 1 thematic issue of the CLS *E-FLT* journal (2016 - in English)
- 1 edited book to published at *Éditions des Archives Contemporaines* Publ. (2017 - in French)

C.6. Outcome and value of the Franco-Singaporean collaboration - Potential for future collaboration

The proposed joint project will bring together two leading global institutions in language and language education research in a fruitful partnership that will produce significant cutting-edge contributions in the form of peer-reviewed publications (see *above: Project Deliverables*) and further innovative research and pedagogical collaborations in the foreseeable future.

Given the current strengths and research interests in both institutions and given that what is submitted here is the 12-month initial stage of a larger research project, it is envisaged that INALCO-PLIDAM (USPC) and NUS-CLS will collaborate fruitfully and secure research grants for joint projects in the following research areas:

1. Minority and Endangered Languages
2. Language Policy, Language Planning and Language Education
3. Global Trends and Language Pedagogies
4. Culture and Foreign Language Education
5. Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning

Some doctoral workshops and/or collaborations will also be envisioned, as USPC and NUS offer the possibility of students' mobility. In the second stage of the project, i.e. after the project proposed here, both PLIDAM and CLS would like to encourage their students to submit applications for INALCO-NUS co-supervised Master's and PhD theses ("thèses en co-tutelle").

The submitted project will undoubtedly bring about numerous benefits for the two institutions. Some of them are listed below:

- Researchers from both institutions will undertake common fieldwork activities in both Paris (or possibly other French cities) and Singapore.
- The two research units involved (PLIDAM & CLS) will co-organize two research and training workshops and a symposium;
- Researchers from both institutions will co-edit an issue of E-FLT
- Researchers from both institutions will submit together articles in internationally renowned journals;
- The projects opens doors to possible INALCO-USPC and NUS students to go for short term language or linguistic courses in the partner institution;
- The project is meant to create future opportunities for INALCO-USPC and NUS students to develop an interest and future Master's or PhD research projects in any field of the humanities in the partner country. In concrete terms, what is expected is the possible of co-supervision of doctoral theses in the two universities ("co-tutelles");

C7. Potential for external funding

Given the obvious international dimension of the project, external funding for a larger project is necessary and will be sought in the future projects, as described in the following paragraph.

INALCO researchers involved in this project, along with other partners such as SOAS London, Universiteit Gent and Université Montpellier 3, are to submit a proposal to the European Horizon 2020 call and to the European Erasmus + programme.

After completion of the current initial CLS/PLIDAM collaboration, NUS researchers will be invited to take part in the research as associate investigators.

As a follow-up to this initial project, a multidisciplinary research programme funded by partner institutions of USPC will be submitted in 2016. Potential partners include Brazilian (Universidade de São

Paulo), Canadian (Université de Montréal & Simon Fraser University, Vancouver), British (SOAS and Institute of Education, University of London), French (Univ. Montpellier 3 ; Univ. Bordeaux Institute of Education ; Aix-Marseille Univ....) as well as African universities (partners yet to be identified).

D. Proposed Project Timeline:

-June 1 st , 2015	Commencement of Project
-September 2015	identification of students' research project in relation to the project
-November 2015	2-day International Symposium at National University of Singapore Stage 2 fieldwork in Singapore by PLIDAM and CLS investigators
-April 2016	Submission of manuscripts to the supplementary issue of the electronic periodical <i>e-FLT</i> (http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg)
-May 2016	International Research and Training Workshop for researchers and postgraduate students, featuring CLS-NUS, PLIDAM-INALCO/USPC investigators as well as external experts
-April to June 2016	Selection and external reviewing of papers for <i>e-FLT</i>
-July to October 2016	Revisions and manuscript for supplementary issue of <i>e-FLT</i>
-December 2016	Publication of special supplementary issue of <i>e-FLT</i> related to the NUS-INALCO/USPC research project