

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:  
Structures Formelles du Langage (SFL)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE  
FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND  
RESEARCH BODIES:

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique –  
CNRS

Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint Denis

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**EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2018-2019**  
GROUP E



In the name of Hcéres<sup>1</sup>:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the experts committee<sup>2</sup>:

Mariapaola D'Imperio, Chairwoman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 November 2014,

1 The president of Hcéres "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the experts committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

2 The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the experts committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2).

This report is the sole result of the unit's evaluation by the expert committee, the composition of which is specified below. The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial reviewing by the committee.

Tables in this report were filled with data provided by laboratories and supervising bodies in the unit's application and in the Excel files "Données du contrat en cours" and "Données du prochain contrat".

## UNIT PRESENTATION

<b>Unit name:</b>	Structures Formelles du Langage
<b>Unit acronym:</b>	SFL
<b>Requested label:</b>	UMR
<b>Application type:</b>	Renewal
<b>Current number:</b>	7023
<b>Head of the unit (2014-2019):</b>	Ms Sophie WAUQUIER
<b>Project leader (2020-2024):</b>	Ms Marzena WATOREK (Director) & Mr Mohamed LAHROUCHI (Deputy Director)
<b>Number of themes:</b>	3 themes → 5 themes

## EXPERTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<b>Chair:</b>	Ms Mariapaola D'IMPERIO, Aix Marseille Université (representative of CNU)
<b>Experts:</b>	Ms Anne BAKER, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands
	Ms Angela BARTOLO, Université de Lille
	Mr Giancarlo LUXARDO, CNRS, Praxiling, Montpellier (supporting personnel)
	Mr Gabriele PALLOTTI, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy
	Mr Benjamin SPECTOR, Institut Jean Nicod (representative of CoNRS)

## HCÉRES REPRESENTATIVE

Ms Anne CARLIER

## REPRESENTATIVES OF SUPERVISING INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

Ms Hamida DEMIRDACHE, CNRS

Mr Arnauld REGNAULD, Université Paris 8

## INTRODUCTION

### HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

The laboratory "Formal Structures of Language" (SFL), under the dual supervision of the University Paris 8 and the CNRS, was created in 2001. Its premises are spread over two sites: University Paris 8, rue de la Liberté, in Saint Denis, for a surface of 90m<sup>2</sup> (4 offices and a meeting room) and CNRS building, rue Pouchet, Paris, for a surface of 168m<sup>2</sup> of offices to which is added an experimental platform of 68m<sup>2</sup>.

### MANAGEMENT TEAM

Ms Sophie Wauquier

### HCÉRES NOMENCLATURE

SHS Sciences humaines et sociales  
SHS4 Esprit humain, langage, éducation  
SHS4\_1 Linguistique

### SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

Since its creation, the unit is organized around three strong teams, which have given it a strong national and international visibility: formal linguistics, sign languages and gestures, psycholinguistics and language acquisition.

### UNIT WORKFORCE

	Unit workforce	
	SFL	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions	12	11
Assistant professors and similar positions	17	18 <sup>1</sup>
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	3	2
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	8	9
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	4	5
<b>Permanent staff</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>

<sup>1</sup>Subject to obtaining, in 2020, a frozen post for the 2019 campaign.

Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	2	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	39	
<i>PhD Students</i>	38	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	2	
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>	<b>43</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>45</b>

## GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The SFL unit has proved to be at the forefront of linguistics research in the last period, with a scientific output that is quite remarkable in terms of presence in some of the main international journals, as well as with other publications, in several domains: formal linguistics, psycholinguistics and sign language studies. Its visibility, both national and international, is strong, witnessed by the involvement in the organization of various events (conferences, workshops, etc.) and several national and international invitations to give talks at various venues. The committee notes that the recommendations of the previous evaluation report have been successfully implemented by the unit. Valorization of knowledge transfer has also been successfully carried out thanks to the elaborations of several applied themes and projects.

Its future reorganization in themes is seen as a promising way to encourage cross-team collaboration and is thus welcome. The committee recommends though that the unit attempts to increase financial support to unfunded PhD students which will result in shorter thesis completion and a stronger presence on the job market. Also, they recommend that, with regard to the Paris 8 site, all linguists (UFR and UMR) currently having access to separate premises (UFR in Building A and UMR in Building D of the University of Paris 8) be grouped together in a single location on the University of Paris 8 site. Finally, dispersion of scientific themes and lines of research should be closely monitored in the proposed reorganization.

## DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

### UNIT'S RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the previous evaluation concerned three main points. First, the unit was asked to be vigilant with regard to the financial burden and sharing of expenses. The second point was to avoid dispersion in projects and strengthen collaboration among laboratory members and laboratory teams when scientific expertise exists within the lab. Finally, the suggestion was made to address the valorization of the research.

In general, the recommendations of the previous evaluation report have been satisfactorily taken into account. Concerning the first point, the laboratory maintained the policy of partial sharing of the financial resources and encouraged the members to apply for local grants (AAP Paris 8, COMUE and the TUL federation). The unit is aware of the situation and has given it their attention, though it needs to continue to be alert as the resources are decreasing rather than increasing. With respect to the second point, the team addressed the issue of strengthening collaboration between the different teams by abandoning the previous three-team structure and opted for a more flexible structure with five themes in order to favor and intensify collaboration. Collaboration is also strengthened among the groups by the creation of the CNRS International network "European Sign Languages Comparative Approach". Moreover, the future organization of the laboratory foresees a theme, DIM, in order to bring together in the projects LaboDanse and CIGALE into a single one in order to avoid dispersing energy on different small projects and to avoid the problem of spread in locations of the projects. The risk of dispersion remains a challenge however. Concerning the valorization of the research, several actions have been taken: a person is now in charge for the maintenance of the website; several applied themes (such as second language acquisition), and projects (LaboDance, MEDIAT, Temdance et ICREA and LaboPoetique) have been developed to facilitate valorization knowledge transfer. In the same vein, the lab participated to the *Salon Innovatives* of the CNRS, to the *Forum des Sciences Cognitives*, to the *Festival Futur en Seine* and to the *Fête de la Science*.

### CRITERION 1: QUALITY OF SCIENTIFIC OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

#### A – Scientific outputs and activities, academic collaborations, reputation and appeal

<b>Scientific outputs and activities, academic collaborations, reputation and appeal</b> From 01/01/2013 to 30/06/2018	<b>SFL</b>
<b>Articles</b>	
Scientific articles	183
Review articles	3
Other articles (professional journals, etc.)	5
Clinical articles	
<b>Books</b>	
Scientific book edition	3
Book chapters	161
<b>Meetings</b>	
Meeting abstracts	373
Meetings and congress organisation	83
<b>Electronic tools and products</b>	
Software	2
Databases	0

Tools for decision making	0
Corpus	yes
<b>Instruments and methodology</b>	
Prototypes	yes
Platforms and observatories	yes
<b>Other products</b>	
Artistic creations	8
Movie or theatre play creation	0
Movies	0
<b>Editorial activities</b>	
Participation to journal editorial boards (books, collections)	21
<b>Peer reviewing activities</b>	
Reviewing of journal articles	yes
Grant evaluation (public or charities)	yes
Participation to lab site visit committees (Hcéres, etc.)	yes
Participation to institutional committees and juries (CNRS, Inserm, etc.)	yes
<b>Academic research grants</b>	
European (ERC, H2020, etc.) and international (NSF, JSPS, NIH, World Bank, FAO, etc.) grants	13
National public grants (ANR, PHRC, FUI, INCA, etc.)	15
Local grants (collectivités territoriales)	1
PIA (Labex, Equipex, etc.) grants	3
Grants from foundations and charities (ARC, FMR, FRM, etc.)	4
<b>Visiting senior scientists and post-docs</b>	
Post-docs	9
Visiting senior scientists	7
<b>Scientific recognition</b>	
Prizes	0
Distinctions	3
IUF members	1
Chair of learned and scientific societies	yes
Invitations to meetings and symposia (out of France)	48
Members' long-term visits abroad	5

## Strengths

In the last five years the SFL laboratory has had a very good scientific output, publishing 183 articles in peer-reviewed journals (that is 4.16 by statutory member over the entire period, hence 0.83 by member per year), including 125 in English or languages other than French. A number of these works have appeared in some of the best international journals in theoretical linguistics (*Linguistic Inquiry, Natural Language Semantics, Natural Languages and Linguistic Theory, Journal of Semantics, Language, Lingua, Sign Language and Linguistics...*), as well as excellent journals in cognitive science, psychology and psycholinguistics (*Language, Cognition and Neuroscience, Journal of Child Language, Quarterly Journal of Psychology, Neuroimage, First language, Studies in Second Language Acquisition*). Apart from top journal publications, over 500 papers were published in conference proceedings and as book chapters. SFL members participated in many of the most important international conferences of the field.

Overall, this is a productive lab that manages to publish papers in the most prestigious scientific medias. As detailed below, SFL includes one of the most important groups in formal linguistics in France, and the core domains of linguistics are covered (phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics). It is also an important center for the study of sign languages, which has also recently received the attention of formal linguists within the unit, as well as of language acquisition, both for L1 and L2 aspects. Researchers working on first and second language acquisition too have a very strong international reputation and are considered to be major experts in their fields.

## Weaknesses

The unit, together with its teams, tackles a very wide range of topics. Although some of them show interesting and promising interactions, there is a risk of dispersing research into too many strands, perhaps following occasional funding opportunities, which may allow for short-term developments, but which might not substantially contribute to the general identity of the unit. In some cases, a higher degree of collaboration between sub-groups would be welcome. Hence, the future reorganization is seen as a positive evolution.

Another point that needs to be taken into consideration is the promotion of open-access publications, for instance by considering open-access journals and series as a possible medium, or financially supporting open-access journals rather than commercial ones.

### Assessment of scientific outputs, reputation and appeal

SFL is a very productive lab which manages to publish papers in the most prestigious journals and publishers relative to the core domains of linguistics (phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) as well as psycholinguistics and the study of sign languages. Thematic dispersion should be nevertheless avoided in the future organization.

## B – Interactions with the non-academic world, impacts on economy, society, culture or health

Interactions with the non-academic world, impacts on economy, society, culture or health From 01/01/2013 to 30/06/2018	
<b>Socio-economic interactions / Patents</b>	
Invention disclosures	0
Filed patents	0
Accepted patents	0
Licensed patents	0
<b>Socio-economic interactions</b>	
Industrial and R&D contracts	0
Cifre fellowships	1

Creation of labs with private-public partnerships	1
Start-ups	0
<b>Expertise</b>	
Consulting	3
Participation in expert committees (ANSES, etc.)	0
Legal expertise	0
Expert and standardization reports	0
<b>Public outreach</b>	
Radio broadcasts, TV shows, magazines	20
Journal articles, interviews, book edition, videos, etc.	16
Other popularisation outputs	yes
Debates on science and society	44

## Strengths

Some of the research and activities conducted at SFL have clear social benefits. For instance, the **creole linguistics** group is collaborating with the University of Haiti in very active ways, by providing teaching onsite and by welcoming Haitian students in Paris. Moreover, the **sign language** research group plays an important role in promoting 'deaf culture' and the presence of deaf people in society, by including deaf researchers and working with deaf students, as well as by conducting research which is relevant for the education of deaf people. The **language acquisition** research strand includes an important component that is directly relevant to teaching ("Didactique des langues") and has organized some seminars and activities for teacher training, besides developing practical tools for assessing typical and atypical language development.

The LGDIF project ("Projet Langues et grammaires en (Île-de-)France") has also a very clear social impact on a wide public of teachers and even ordinary citizens.

Moreover, SFL members are present in the media in order to popularize science. Finally, the lab is to be commended for playing a role in helping researchers who are refugees from the Middle East to find academic jobs in France, by hiring for instance a Syrian linguist for a year, as well as a Turkish PhD student who had been prevented from pursuing her research in Turkey for political reasons.

Various teams have made their corpora available to the research community and the wider public (e.g. VILLA, PLPNat).

## Weaknesses

Nothing to declare here.

### Assessment of the interactions with the non-academic world

Some of the research and activities conducted at SFL have clear social benefits, especially in the areas of creole linguistics, sign language and language acquisition.

## C – Involvement in training through research

<b>Involvement in training through research From 01/01/2013 to 30/06/2018</b>	
<b>Educational outputs</b>	
Books	5
E-learning, MOOCs, multimedia lessons, etc.	5
<b>Training</b>	
Habilitated (HDR) scientists	32
HDR obtained during the period	14
PhD students	41
Defended PhDs	18
Mean PhD duration	5 years
Internships (BTS, M1, M2)	22
<b>Education</b>	
Courses with international label (ERASMUS, etc.)	

### Strengths

SFL manages to provide students with funding for buying computers as well as for travel expenses for conferences and summer schools. The number of PhD students in 2013-2018 (38, which is 1,19 by HDR member) is reasonable, as well as the number of students who defended during this period, though not particularly high given the size of the unit. The phonology group has created a workshop for PhD students. 4 PhDs were recruited during the preceding contract: 3 as associate professors (MCF) (University de Lorraine, University of Paris 8, CNAM) and 1 as Researcher (CR) at CNRS. A large number of HDR (12) were completed in this period, which positively influences the proportion of number of potential supervisors with respect to the number of doctoral students.

### Weaknesses

The unit hosts 38 PhD students, which is a large number (1,2 doctoral student by HDR "Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches" on average). It is unfortunate though that only 8 PhD students out of 41 had a doctoral contract with funding. The committee understands that this is not necessarily something that the lab can easily act upon; the lab needs to engage in a dialogue with its funding bodies. However, it would be possible to aim for more Cifre contracts and to request funding for doctoral contracts as part of funded research projects (e. g. ANR). Another weak point is that the average length of a PhD is 5 years, which might be attributed to shortage of doctoral contracts attributed to the student population. This explains why the students need to work outside of academia. Furthermore, many PhD students do not have adequate working space in the lab, and do not seem to participate as much as would be desirable to collective research events (student seminars, for instance). The unit is encouraged to find the means to foster interactions of PhD students with each other, and between PhD students and faculty (including CNRS researchers), beyond one-to-one exchanges between PhD students and their advisors.

### Assessment of the involvement in training through research

The unit hosts a large number of PhD students who are well equipped and can count on a large number of potential HDR members who can advise them. Funding is however limited to 20 % of the PhD population.

## CRITERION 2: UNIT ORGANIZATION AND LIFE

Unit organization and life From 01/01/2013 to 30/06/2018	
Women/men ratio in the unit	30% H / 70 % F
Women/men ratio among unit scientists	32% H / 68% F
Women/men ratio among unit PhD students	29% H / 71% F
Women/men ratio among team leaders, unit head and deputy heads	20% H /80% F

The governance of SFL is ensured by a director and, as a rule, a deputy director. As of October 2017 (date of election of a new direction team and in order to make the handover easier), the two prospective directors for the next contract have been elected as deputy directors (who were then three until the retirement of the former deputy director in May 2018).

The management team is assisted by a laboratory council (*conseil de laboratoire*) comprised of 18 members (and temporarily up to 20): the director, the deputy director(s), the three team leaders and the administration assistant (6-7 ex-officio members), one member appointed for disability purposes and 11 members elected (6 researchers or teacher-researchers, 2 representatives of the supporting personnel and 3 representatives of the PhD students). The laboratory council meets once every two months, or under specific request.

### Strengths

SFL has solid governance and clearly stated formal rules of procedure (*règlement intérieur*), approved by a general assembly in September 2017 and provided to new members of the laboratory. In addition, PhD students are provided with a booklet (*livret d'accueil*) also downloadable from the Internet.

The laboratory is supported by a skilled technical and administrative staff, present on both sites (Paris Pouchet and Saint-Denis). The technical responsibilities include the management of the experimental platform and the creation, maintenance, or archival of the corpora produced within the laboratory. Internal software applications are also developed in order to facilitate administrative procedures. The options for training are complete, including in sign language.

The experimental platform is quite effective, including a rich instrumentation which is also being expanded.

Privacy and security are also issues that are becoming more publicly discussed. Security for deaf colleagues appears to be addressed.

Despite the fact that the laboratory is located on two different sites, this does not seem to cause major problems for members to work in acceptable conditions and meet with colleagues for both informal and formal discussions.

### Weaknesses

The issues of space across both locations, already observed in the past, have been addressed (with the Pouchet site being favoured, given the lack of premises specifically dedicated to research at the University of Paris 8). Infrastructure works have been carried out on the Pouchet site. However, the dimensions of the premises are not adequate yet.

With respect to the University of Paris 8, the linguists of SF are geographically divided between the UFR (building A) and the UMR (building D). The scattering of sites hinders master's students from being in contact with laboratory resources, doctoral students and CNRS researchers and makes it difficult for SFL CNRS researchers to supervise doctoral students since they almost never meet master's students.

The unit states that they conform to the general ethics standards, but since the ethics committee is only now being built within the university, this issue should draw attention in the future.

While the rules of procedure are clearly written (including provisions oriented to deaf staff members), they do not fully comply with the latest model provided by the CNRS. In particular, they lack details about the use of information systems (security, data protection).

Gender distribution (about 70% women) apparently results from previous efforts to promote parity within laboratory, but also from gender imbalance in the student population. Although the ratio may be less in favour of women in other laboratories in the same disciplines, there is no gender parity.

Following the retirement in 2017 of an engineer responsible for the LSF (French sign language) encoding, no replacements could be found for this position. Overall, the number of engineers in the unit is low, with respect to the number of researchers.

### Assessment of the unit's life and organisation

The unit has appropriate resources (financial, technical platforms) and shows a good internal organization. It should achieve the goal of being assigned enough space for both offices and the experimental platform within the same building. It should also pursue its efforts to recruit more support staff. The procedure employed to meet ethical standards needs to be rendered more explicit in the future.

## CRITERION 3: SCIENTIFIC STRATEGY AND PROJECTS

In the next five years, a major restructuring of the laboratory will be put in place to respond to changes following the departure of two members and new hires. This restructuring will lead to the emergence of 5 themes that will reflect the inter-team collaborations initiated in the previous contract. This restructuring makes it possible to better identify the laboratory on the basis of the strengths that emerged during the previous contract. In particular, the original LAGRAM team will be organized around two sub-themes, one of which was developed through previous collaborations with the LCA team. Hence, the original team organization will be abandoned in order to allow the co-existence of different theoretical perspectives on the same theme.

### Strengths

The restructuring seems to provide more homogeneity to the laboratory and fits well the new, theme-based implant of the unit. It will allow cross-fertilization between different themes in a multidisciplinary approach. As a consequence of the proposed restructuring, each member of the laboratory will be able to better develop its activities in one or more themes while promoting intra-laboratory collaboration.

### Weaknesses

In the previous contract several cross-theme collaborations were already present, which favored the introduction of 2 additional themes. Since many members will be involved in different themes, the challenge will be to work hard on the organization of the lab activities in order to avoid the risk of dispersion and the loss of scientific identity of some of the members.

### Assessment of the scientific strategy and projects

This restructuring will lead to the emergence of 5 themes that will reflect the inter-team collaborations initiated in the previous contract. This restructuring makes it possible to better identify the laboratory on the basis of the strengths that emerged during the previous contract, though risk of scientific dispersion should be monitored.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNIT

### **A – Recommendations on scientific production and activities (criterion 1)**

The unit should strive for more opportunities for funding PhD students through external grants (ANR, regional fellowships, etc.) and aim for more Cifre contracts.

### **B – Recommendations on the unit's organisation and life (criterion 2)**

The unit should seek strong support from the University in order to obtain appropriate premises. Additional possibilities to recruit supporting personnel should also be considered, so as to avoid an overload of the current staff. Privacy and security of data for the populations being studied need to conform to the ethical standards internationally.

### **C – Recommendations on scientific strategy and projects (criterion 3)**

Though it is a potentially good strategy for the lab to focus on multi-disciplinary themes, the risk of scientific dispersion cannot be underestimated. In fact, although the five-year scientific project was developed to respond to a theme-based logic, this restructuring might have as a consequence the loss of strong scientific identity of some of the members. Hence, care must be taken to preserve the scientific identity of each member while pursuing the proposed restructuring. Finally, some of the proposed themes include only a few members. Moreover, the organization of theme meetings and seminars might represent a problem for those members being enrolled in more than one theme. Hence, the organization of each theme activity will have to be coordinated according to this restructuring.

## THEME-BY-THEME ANALYSIS (ON-GOING CONTRACT)

**Theme 1 :** **LaGrAM** (Langues, Grammaire et Modélisation)

→ **Theme 1 et 2** pour le prochain contrat

Nom des responsables :

Ms Patricia CABREDO & Mr Mohamed LAHROUCHI

→ Mr Francesc TORRES-TAMARIT & Mr Joaquim BRANDÃO DE CARVALHO (**TH 1**)

→ Mss Patricia CABREDO & Isabelle ROY (**TH 2**)

### THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Theoretical linguistics and Creole studies

### THEME WORKFORCE

	TH1	
	LaGrAM	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions	6	5
Assistant professors and similar positions	6	6 <sup>2</sup>
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	2	2
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	3	4
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	0	0
<b>Permanent staff</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	1	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students	18	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	10	
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>	<b>11</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>

<sup>2</sup> Subject to obtaining, in 2020, a frozen post for the 2019 campaign

## Global assessment of the theme

The "Langues, Grammaire et Modélisation" team (LaGrAM) is one of the leading research groups in formal linguistics in France, particularly in generative linguistics. Its research activities cover the core areas of theoretical linguistics: phonology, syntax, and semantics. Overall, the research conducted includes both a strong typological and comparative dimension and a theoretical dimension, guided by the search for universals of the linguistic competence, with the aim of characterizing the properties of universal grammar.

The research conducted in the first axis, 'Phonology and Metrics', aimed at characterizing the nature of abstract phonological representations, such as the syllable and metrical structure. The work of a large number of researchers is in the "CVCV" theoretical framework and has focused in particular on the notion of phonological feature, the syllabic representation, the notion of template and phenomena of allomorphy. The work done in metrics is mainly couched within the Optimality Theoretical approach (OT) with a typological dimension, though recent work has also been couched within the CVCV approach. Research has been carried out on several language families (Semitic and Romance languages, in particular). This axis is also interested in the interactions between phonological and morphosyntactic processes.

The second axis 'Lexical categories: words between lexicon, morpho-phonology and syntax' concerns the lexicon/syntax/semantics interface. One of the issues is whether grammatical categories are inherently lexical properties, or are instead added to roots in syntax. Several studies have been conducted on the semantics of proper nouns and more generally nominal categories, as well as on nominalizations, tense and verbal aspect.

The third axis "Creole Grammar" studies Creole languages through formal linguistics, especially from the point of view of their morphology and syntax. This very dynamic group has established cooperation with the State University of Haiti.

The fourth and last axis "argumentational structure and event structure" deals with the argumentative structure of predicates, the structure of events, with a particular emphasis on pluractionality. Here again, the committee appreciates the combination of a comparative dimension, the very fine descriptions of the grammar of several languages, and the formal approaches of the data.

Researchers very often participate in several areas.

The LaGrAM team has developed several projects of dissemination of research to the general public. For instance, the project "Languages and Grammars in Ile-de-France" makes available information on languages spoken in Ile-de-France, especially for teachers of migrant children's classes. Many researchers of the team contributed to the production of its documentation. The project has created a body of sound resources hosted by the ORTOLANG and COCOON platforms. It has received financial support from MSH-Paris-Nord, DGLFLF (*Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France*), and scientific support from INALCO (*Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales*).

## Strengths

The LaGrAM team conducts internationally recognized research in several areas of formal linguistics. Its research program is very coherent, and combines a) an effort to provide maximally explicit descriptions (thanks to formal methods) of linguistic systems, b) a strong comparative dimension, c) a strong theoretical dimension, the empirical work being guided by specific fundamental theoretical questions in formal linguistics.

It has good scientific productivity, with 72 articles in peer-reviewed journals (hence 0,9 per year by member), including 63 in English, and more than 120 book chapters, including 57 in English. Over the period evaluated, it has published in some of the best international journals in the field (such as *Language*, *Natural Language*, *Linguistic Theory*, *Linguistic Inquiry*, *Natural Language Semantics*, *Lingua*, *The linguistic review*, *Morphology*, etc.), with incursions into philosophy (a paper in *Erkenntnis*), cognitive psychology (*Psychological Science*) and neuroscience (an article in *Brain Stimulation*).

The evaluation activities of the members of the team, and their membership in several editorial committees, shows their scientific recognition.

There is also an important involvement in projects of social interest beyond research.

## Weaknesses and recommendations

There is a lack of doctoral contracts: among the 16 doctoral students affiliated to this team in the last period, only 5 theses have been financially supported. This is all the more regrettable given that all but three of the 16 researchers associated to this team hold a habilitation to conduct research (HDR). Similarly, it is unfortunate that over the period, the team hosted only 2 postdoctoral fellows.

Team members are encouraged to submit research projects including a dedicated budget for doctoral grants and postdoctoral fellowships. Also, though some experimental and corpus-based research has been carried out in the team, more efforts in this direction should be done in the future, in particular within the phonology section of the group.

**Theme 2 :****LSG** (Langue des Signes et Gestualité)→ **Theme 3 et 5** in the next contractual period

Nom des responsables :

Ms Brigitte GARCIA

→ Ms Brigitte GARCIA & Marie-Anne SALLANDRE (**TH 3 - SLS**)→ Mr A. Bachrach & Ms M. Blondel (**TH 5 – DIM**)

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Sign language and gesture studies

## THEME WORKFORCE

	TH2	
	LSG	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions	2	2
Assistant professors and similar positions	5	5
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	0	0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	0	0
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	0	0
<b>Permanent staff</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	1	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students	8	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	12	
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

The members working in this team, who built their identity around the semiological model for the description of sign languages, have structured their research in 4 operations: 1) studies between SL and human gesture, 2) the comparison between SL and oral languages, 3) studies on the evaluation of written skills in the deaf population in relation to writing skills of typically hearing learners L2, 4) and the preparation of a corpus of visual-gestural data.

Two of the ECs ("enseignants-chercheurs") working in this team have left the lab during the five-year period (respectively in 2014 and 2015). One member assistant professor defended an HDR ("Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches") in 2014 and currently is full professor level 2. Several assistant professor have been recruited: 1 in 2013, 1 in 2014, 1 in 2015, and 1 in 2016. The team currently has 1 full professor level 1, 1 full professor level 2, 1 PAST and 5 assistant professors without HDR. Among the PhD students, 5 were financially supported during the last period and 4 were recruited very recently (from 2016). More or less half of the PhD students come from other universities, which reflects how attractive the unit is with respect to the domain of sign languages.

## Strengths

The committee acknowledges the dynamism of the members working around this theme.

First, there has been an extension of the research paradigm from the semiological approach emphasizing on iconicity to the more formal grammatical approaches during the period 2013-2018. In the previous period, the semiotic approach was idiosyncratic of the Paris group and restricted exchange with other researchers. The broadening of the theoretical approach is hence a desirable development since more international exchange will be possible.

The team has several collaborations at a national and international level (e.g., Italy, Belgium and UK) several research contract funds, both international (INR Eurasign) and national (LabEx Arts H2H)). Among the 12 PhD students, 7 are funded, one of them on a Cifre contract. Three of the PhD students are in co-tutelle with the UFPA (N=2) and the UNESP (N=1) in Brazil. In fact, approximately half of the PhD students come from other universities, three postdoctoral fellows joined the team during the period 2012-2015 for 7 to 18 months and a foreign colleague was hosted for a period of 2 months. This point shows that the team has a strong international visibility, which has grown in the period of evaluation. In addition, the two visiting doctoral students as well as the visiting professor were funded through the LabEx Arts H2H project.

Given that all the members associated to this team have extensive teaching duties (all of them are lecturers), the number of publications is satisfactory (1.16 publication per year per faculty member), with a paper published in a top journal (*Sign Language & Linguistics*). A LS/LV traductology journal, "Double Sens", was created in 2014 by two members of this team as part of Operation 3. The recruitment of one lecturer also allowed the development of a multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary approach in line with an international epistemology (Deaf Studies). LSG has developed several collaborations with members working on the other teams (1 and 2), in particular, with the LaGrAM team.

It is worth noting that the team includes two deaf persons. All members of the LSG team practice sign language including doctoral students and some professors or assistant professors give their courses entirely in LSF. Moreover, some administrative staff and research support staff who do not belong to LSG (secretary, engineers, management, members of the UPS Pouchet who do not belong to SFL) have been initiated to the LSF in order to promote inclusion. The activity Coffee-Signs also shows the effort of the team to favour inclusion.

The societal impact of this theme is very good. There have been many contributions to public debates and events.

## Weaknesses and recommendations

Although the academic output is satisfactory, most of the publications are in conference proceedings and conference presentations. Furthermore, if one considers the articles in scientific journals, professional articles, books and book chapters, in the previous five-year period some members of the team have not produced any publication. In addition, all publications are in French except two journal articles and four chapters in English and one in Portuguese, which could limit the impact at the international level, though this is partly justified by the need to make this research available to the deaf community. This seems to be a specificity of this team, because 50% of the publications of the laboratory as a whole are international. The lab encouraged the publication in international journals or book collections through the "English à la carte" credit system, yet this system did not produce substantial English-language publications in this team. The output needs to become more internationally accessible. Also, the website needs to be updated making publications and other information also accessible to deaf people.

**Theme 3 :** LCA (Langage, Cognition et Acquisition)

→ **Theme 4 et 5** pour le prochain contrat

Nom des responsables : Ms Marzena WATOREK and Maya HICKMANN

→ Ms Sandra BENAZZO and Saveria COLONNA (**TH 3 - LCA**)

→ Mr Asaf BACHRACH and Ms Marion BLONDEL (**TH 5 - DIM**)

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Psycholinguistics and Language acquisition

## THEME WORKFORCE

	TH3	
	LCA	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions	4	4
Assistant professors and similar positions	7	7
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	1	0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	5	5
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0
High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	0	0
<b>Permanent staff</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	1	
PhD Students	13	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	1	
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

The group "Langage, Cognition et Acquisition" (LCA), despite having just 16 permanent staff, has produced a considerable amount of research in a wide range of areas. These can be grouped into four main axes.

1) **Emergence of grammaticalization in the L1.** This heading in turn includes three main research foci. The first concerns the acquisition of phonology and morpho-phonology in the L1 and the L2, tackling themes like opaque/transparent phonology, how phonology constrains the early acquisition of lexical categories in French, and how age, typology and input conditions play a mediating role.

2) **Acquisition and teaching.** This axis too is divided into three sub-areas. The first concerns absolutely initial varieties of L2 acquisition, following the VILLA international project (ANR ORA VILLA, 2011-2014), which has had, and still has, a considerable impact on the scientific community for its original and extremely rigorous research design, and whose unparalleled database is still the object of numerous investigations and publications. This was followed by the GDRI-SLAT on the same theme, and an application has been submitted in 2018 for launching an *International Research Network*. The second strand has to do with information structure in discourse (reference to entities, time and space), in both L1 and L2, and is a continuation of the highly successful international project *Langacross*. Members of the SFL group working on these topics are internationally recognized as leading experts in the field. The third area is relatively more recent and it concerns how research on L1 and L2 acquisition may be applied to teaching, with a specifically funded PARI project on English in primary schools, extending some of VILLA's main themes.

3) **Complex structures in children and adults.** The main areas that have been developed under this heading concern, firstly, the neurological correlates of syntactic-semantic phenomena, such as reference to causes, intentions, conditions and complex event chains, which have been observed both on linguistic phenomena and on bodily actions, such as dance. The second theme, which was clearly related to LaGram activities, has to do with the phonology-syntax and syntax-semantics interfaces, with studies dealing with nominalizations, phonological linearization and complex structures in young children. The third research strand in this area concerns the construction and interpretation of complex discourse structures, notably in the domain of discourse cohesion.

4) **Atypical context of language acquisition and use.** Research in this area has mainly focused on how children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) process utterances, with the aim of disentangling specific language deficits from more general cognitive troubles. These phenomena have been observed in monolingual and bilingual children, and some researchers of the group have developed important diagnostic tools for francophone children between 1.5 and 4 years of age. More recently, this area has expanded to include language use in the elderly.

## Strengths

Researchers have been involved in 5 highly successful international projects and networks that have left a significant mark on the field. This is also witnessed by the many international PhD students who have been working in the unit, in some cases in the context of bilateral agreements with European universities. The group is also very active in promoting nation-wide initiatives, such as a national network on L2 acquisition, also sponsored by Paris 8 University; it has also been involved in 7 national research contracts. Most members of the LCA group have a very strong international reputation and regularly present their research at important conferences worldwide (200 conference presentations, in France and abroad). Members of the LCA team collaborate with each other and with members of other units in the SFL group. The comparative nature of this research (comparing languages, learning conditions, ages, individual differences) makes it particularly interesting and original.

Overall, these multiple research strands have produced a considerable body of high-quality research, most of which has been published in important international journals and volumes (97 articles in scientific journals, 31 in proceedings, 24 editorships, 112 book chapters and 3 monographs; the vast majority of these works were published in English or other languages). Given that the group comprised only 17 permanent staff as of June 2018, it makes an average of 3.14 publications per person / year. A number of these works have appeared in some among the best journals in linguistics (e.g. *Phonology*, *Linguistics and Philosophy*, *First language*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*) and cognitive science (e.g. *NeuroImage*, *Language*, *Cognition and Neuroscience*).

## Weaknesses and recommendations

The vast array of topics tackled by the group is at the same time one of their strengths and weaknesses. In fact, there is a risk of dispersing energies across too many areas, perhaps following specifically funded projects, and lose some global sense of identity. Some of the projects (especially those on syntactic and semantic theory) seem to be more related to the LaGrAM group. The various themes tackled in the past five years have not often been integrated with each other, an issue that researchers are aware of and that will be addressed with the reorganization proposed for the coming years. Also, the relationship between researchers and practitioners is conceived rather traditionally as a transfer of knowledge, rather than as a more egalitarian exchange of expertise.

Although 14 doctoral students were affiliated to this team, and 10 of them graduated (given 13 EC having an HDR), it is unfortunate that only 3 of them benefited from doctoral funding. Team members are hence encouraged to submit research projects that include a budget for doctoral grants.

This theme has a strong potential to be applied to a number of socially-relevant domains, such as first and second language instruction, or diagnosis and treatment of language disorders. The group should be more involved in the future to work with teachers and other practitioners, in order to further increase the social impact of its activities.

## TRANSVERSAL AXIS « LANGUAGE FACULTY AND COGNITION »

The aim of establishing links across multiple research groups within the unit is commendable, as it promotes interdisciplinary and inter-theoretic dialogue. The title chosen for this broad axis is quite appropriate, as most researchers in the unit do indeed work on areas between language and cognition, often exploring the interfaces between the two levels. From the self-assessment report, it appears that this dialogue has produced so far a small number of seminars. One hopes that in the future this may lead to more substantial collaborations, as is envisaged by the reorganization of the unit into thematic areas. There is indeed potential for a number of fruitful interactions among members of different teams, sharing equipment, expertise, objectives. Such an interdisciplinary and inter-theoretic orientation would also be particularly beneficial for PhD students, who should be exposed, during their initial training, to a variety of methods, approaches and theoretical orientations.

## THEME-BY-THEME ANALYSIS (NEXT CONTRACT)

**Theme 1 :** Phonologie, interfaces et modélisation

Nom des responsables :Mr Francesc TORRES-TAMARIT and Mr Joaquim BRANDÃO DE CARVALHO

Cf. TH 1 of the on-going contract

### THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Theoretical phonology

### THEME WORKFORCE

	TH1	
	Phonologie, interfaces et modélisation	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions		2
Assistant professors and similar positions		3
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions		0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions		1,5
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")		0
High school teachers		0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)		0,8
<b>Permanent staff</b>		<b>7,3</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students		
Non-permanent supporting personnel		
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,3</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

The creation of a theme devoted to phonology and its interfaces is welcome. Previously this group was part of the LaGrAM team, but the group has recently grown, as it now includes two new researchers (one CNRS junior researcher and a full professor). Three operations will be pursued: a) the search for phonological primitives, b) morphophonology and c) metrical phonology. This group submits a coherent research program, though some of the themes were already previously pursued (such as metrical phonology). The present project is coherent and in line with the research that was conducted in the previous years, which is fully expected.

### Strengths

This is a dynamic and productive group that maintains a good balance between formal, theoretical work, comparative work and research on the interactions between different levels of representation.

### Weaknesses and recommendations

As the project is currently presented, this theme does not include the formal, mathematical work on the learnability properties of optimality theory (among others), which was previously part of the LCA team. Since this line of research appears to be pursued by some of its members, it should be more visible in the project.

We also regret the absence of intonational phonology (while prosody will be pursued in the semantics theme), and/or laboratory phonology approaches, which are in line with recent developments of the field. We recommend that a cross-theme approach to prosody will develop. Constraint-based phonology models (such as Optimality Theory) are being pursued by some members of the team with publications to come.

**Theme 2 :** Syntaxe et sémantique

Nom des responsables :Ms Patricia CABREDO and Ms Isabelle ROY

Cf. TH 1 of the on-going contract

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Theoretical syntax and semantics

## THEME WORKFORCE

	TH2	
	Syntaxe et sémantique	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions		2
Assistant professors and similar positions		3
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions		1,5
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions		2,5
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")		
High school teachers		
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)		0,80
<b>Permanent staff</b>		<b>9,8</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students		
Non-permanent supporting personnel		
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>9,8</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

The topic "Syntax and Semantics" will bring together research that belonged to a section of the LaGrAM team, but also those of the LCA team working on syntax and semantics. This grouping seems quite natural and will help to make the structuring of research in SFL more transparent and consistent.

This theme will be organized around 4 operations: "Ontology and Combinations", "Sense, Modality and Interaction", "Formal Syntax and Interfaces" and "Creole Grammars".

The first operation focuses on the underlying ontology of the semantics of natural languages - types of events, possible worlds, types of reference to individuals (in relation to the countable/mass distinction), propositional attitudes, dispositions, etc. This operation is partially a continuation of the research of the members of the team in the previous contract, as is quite natural.

In the second operation, emphasis will be placed on: a) the analysis of non-assertive statements (this part will rely in part on new semantic formalisms, such as inquisitive semantics); b) the analysis of interactions between modality and time, with particular interest in the nominal domain (for example, research is planned on the epistemic indefinite); c) speech acts, in relation to prosody. These projects are clearly part of the latest developments in international semantics research.

In the third operation, the emphasis will be on the syntax of complex predicates, argument structure and its interactions with the aspect. Projects dealing with the treatment of temporary ambiguities during the interpretation of a sentence are planned (and in part already started). The originality of this part of the project is that it aims to test by psycholinguistic methods specific hypotheses on the syntactic structure of relative and completive clauses.

The fourth operation ("Creole grammars") is in continuity with previous periods, which aims to strengthen exchanges between detailed descriptions of Creole languages and theoretical developments in linguistics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

## Strengths

Overall, this theme is very coherent, and brings together researchers highly recognized in their fields of research, who have all the skills required to carry out the project. The planned research fits well with the developments of research in formal linguistics in an international context.

This theme contributes to a welcome restructuring of the laboratory, integrating part of the LaGrAM team whose research is related to syntax and semantics into the research that was conducted in the LCA team. Fruitful collaboration between the two groups can be envisaged, for instance, in the domains of prosody and complex structures.

## Weaknesses and recommendations

The question of the training of a sufficient number of doctoral students in good working conditions will arise as for the team structure of the previous period. It is therefore important to plan a strategy to obtain a reasonable number of doctoral contracts.

**Theme 3 :** Sourds et langues des signes

Nom des responsables : Ms Brigitte GARCIA & Ms Marie-Anne SALLANDRE

Cf. TH 2 of the on-going contract

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Sign Language

## THEME WORKFORCE

	TH3	
	Sourds et langues des signes	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions		2
Assistant professors and similar positions		5
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions		0
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions		0
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")		
High school teachers		
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)		0,8
<b>Permanent staff</b>		<b>5,8</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students		
Non-permanent supporting personnel		
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,8</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

There are four operations proposed by theme 3, Deaf and Sign Language (SLS), which aim to restructure the operations of the previous five-year period. Two operations deal with the linguistic description of various aspects of the LSF and other LSs and the semiology of the body with a comparative approach. In the third operation the team will continue the work started around the epistemology of deafness adopting a multidisciplinary approach thanks to the recruitment of the four new members during the last five years. The project on the written/oral relationship will be continued in operation 4.

## Strengths

Through the project of theme 4, the unit aims at developing a dialogue between members having different theoretical approaches. This project is supported in the context of the GDRI EURASIGN (2018-2022) that will allow the comparison of 8 sign languages from Europe once again bringing together researchers with different theoretical orientations, always with the aim of a trans- and multidisciplinary approach. The conditions for carrying out this project are met, considering the skills of its members and the available resources. Several PhD students will be associated to the various operations, as well as the SIGN-HUB project, which is a project funded by the European Commission within Horizon 2020, involving teams from several European countries (Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, France) as well as some non-European teams (Turkey, Israel).

## Weaknesses and recommendations

In this theme, as in the previous one, the lack of CNRS researchers might have negative effects on the scientific output. A continuous effort to disseminate knowledge at the international level is recommended.

**Theme 4 :** Acquisition et psycholinguistique  
 Nom des responsables : Mss Sandra Benazzo et Saveria Colonna

Cf. TH 3 of the on-going contract

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Language acquisition and psycholinguistics

## THEME WORKFORCE

		<b>TH4</b>	
		<b>Acquisition et psycholinguistique</b>	
	<b>Active staff</b>	<b>Number 30/06/2018</b>	<b>Number 01/01/2020</b>
	Full professors and similar positions		3
	Assistant professors and similar positions		4
	Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions		0,5
	Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions		3,5
	Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")		
	High school teachers		0,8
	Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)		
	<b>Permanent staff</b>		<b>11,8</b>
	Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
	Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
	<i>PhD Students</i>		
	Non-permanent supporting personnel		
	<b>Non-permanent staff</b>		
	<b>Total</b>		<b>11,8</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

This theme corresponds to the part of the former LCA team that focused on language acquisition. The reorganization envisaged for the next years will address some of the issues that have been previously pointed out in the assessment of the LCA group (previous contract). More specifically, it will increase coherence among research strands and will overcome disciplinary/theoretical boundaries to favour thematic unity and multi-disciplinary approaches.

Thus, the vast arrays of themes and topics that have been tackled in the past will now be reduced to two main "operations". The first, "Language acquisition: comparative perspectives", builds on the successful experience of VILLA, PARI and Langacross and capitalizes on one of the group's most distinctive features, that is, its comparative orientation. One of the key features of this project is that it will be based on an in-depth comparison of different languages, and, specifically, on the way the grammatical structures of the L1 language influence L2 acquisition. It will be mostly based on two types of methodologies, namely corpus-based work using longitudinal data, and experimental studies. One of the theoretical goals of the project is to better understand the notion of linguistic input, and the treatment of the input, as well as the theoretical implications of the distinction between implicit and explicit learning. Previous findings and methodologies will be expanded by adding new languages (including non-verbal ones), new conditions and new experimental stimuli. Other features contributing to this group's identity are the focus on very initial learners, both in the L1 and the L2, and a special attention to input, which is universally recognized as a key factor for acquisition but has not yet received all the attention it deserves, especially in second language acquisition studies. A new line of research will be developed, thanks to a new member of the team, on the prosodic aspects of L2 learning, and the way L2 acquisition of prosody can shed light on the prosody of L1 adult native speakers.

The second project, "Language acquisition and teaching", clearly relates to the former, which adds further coherence to the whole proposal. The intention here is to pursue an applied perspective on how language acquisition research may be relevant for language teaching. With a focus on the differences between children and adults, individual differences, different teaching philosophies, etc. The PARI project is a case in point, as it applied to English as a foreign language context some features of the theoretical and methodological approach developed in the VILLA project.

## Strengths

This is a coherent theme, and it makes a lot of sense to make it autonomous. It is a rich project, with a mixture of fundamental and applied research. The new axes build on the results of previous projects, which is positive, as research is capitalized and fully exploited. At the same time, the group is opening up or strengthening new directions, most notably that of language teaching, and new research domains, such as prosody, literacy, gamification and the study of the links between aging and language among elderly people who sign. The idea to make input one of the key topics for future research is especially valid, as this represents one of the areas where the group has made substantial contributions to the field and it thus part of its core scientific identity. The comparative approach, too, is one of the former LCA group's distinctive features and belongs to these researchers' constitutive scientific identity.

The team members are experienced researchers who have gained a considerable reputation in this domain and whose projects have been funded by a number of agencies in the past.

## Weaknesses and recommendations

The VILLA project had an extremely solid and rigorous research design, which makes it exemplary in the field of second language acquisition studies. However, these strengths from a scientific point of view may turn out to be potential difficulties in its application to teaching. In fact, teachers may not see its immediate relevance for their everyday contexts, where students are not absolute beginners of an 'exotic' language. Extending the VILLA design to typologically less distant languages, and perhaps studying the role of input in more advanced learners, may be possible solutions, which were already partially envisaged in the PARI project.

Furthermore, the orientation towards applied research seems to be rather traditional, as a unidirectional transfer of knowledge from researchers to practitioners. The group may wish to consider a more balanced approach, where teaching community is actively involved in the formulation of research questions and study planning. This would represent a true (participatory) action research design, with great benefits for both teachers and researchers. This interaction is already taking place on a limited scale because some researchers also teach French as a foreign language, but could be organized at a larger scale. The team informs us that projects involving educators are being set up for the near future.

Also, teachers of L1 and L2 may be involved together, as there are more commonalities between the two contexts as it is usually acknowledged and the group may contribute not just to the two areas separately, but also in their interaction (e.g. applying an interlanguage perspective to first language teaching, observing literacy development in the L1, the L2 and a foreign language, developing games for overall language development regardless of whether it is in L1, L2 or FL etc.).

Despite the effort to reorganize research in more coherent themes, there is still quite a wide range of topics, methods, contexts that the researchers would like to tackle in the future. On the one hand, this testifies to their dynamic attitude and their openness to exploring new directions; on the other, there is a risk of dispersion. Our recommendation is to identify fewer axes and pursue them in depth, strengthening what are currently the core research identities of this research unit, for which it is internationally recognized, such as the role of input in L1 and L2 acquisition, the initial stages of L1 and L2 learning, referential dynamics in discourse, phonology-syntax interfaces.

Finally, the former LCA team included mathematical research on the learnability properties of grammars. This theme or this line of research is not mentioned at all here, even though it is a strength of the lab as a whole.

**Theme 5 :** Dynamique Interactionnelle et Multimodalité (DIM)

Nom des responsables :Mr Asaf BACHRACH and Ms Marion BLONDEL

Cf. TH 2 and 3 of the on-going contract

## THEME SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS

Multimodal Communication

## THEME WORKFORCE

	TH5	
	Dynamique Interactionnelle et Multimodalité (DIM)	
Active staff	Number 30/06/2018	Number 01/01/2020
Full professors and similar positions		2
Assistant professors and similar positions		2
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions		0,5
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions		1,5
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")		
High school teachers		
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)		0,8
<b>Permanent staff</b>		<b>6,8</b>
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus		
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs		
PhD Students		
Non-permanent supporting personnel		
<b>Non-permanent staff</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,8</b>

## Global assessment of the theme

The theme has been built around the existing scientific projects and its recognition was already informally established into the laboratory with connections with two of the themes of the previous contract (2 and 3).

The DIM theme is the result of the convergence of two LabEx H2H-Arts projects (CIGALE, and Labodanse). The DIM group is interested in the verbal and nonverbal construction of meaning during interaction in the artistic performance (dance, poetry in sign language, musical gesture).

Three operations are planned, one on dance and cognition; a second operation on gestures to be realized using new technologies allowing the interaction between natural and virtual agent and a third on poetry. Specifically, the issues explored will be: verbal and non-verbal semiosis during interaction, multimodal data collection and modeling and cognition as sense-making.

The methodologies on which the theme is based are diverse, such as: Combining first, second- and third-person data; phenomenological approaches to lived experience; movement/motion capture, and virtual reality technologies; combining multimodal sensor data (e.g. physiology, kinematics, eye-tracking).

## Strengths

The project is very original and the introduction of new technologies is welcome (e.g. motion capture system, virtual reality, eye-tracking and collection of several physiological data). It represents an attractive topic and the use of multimodal data collection and modeling will favor the production of interesting outputs. Interactions are explored as dynamic phenomenon, including the context, social cognitive skills with a focus on special populations (e.g. aging, deaf, and individuals with autism).

## Weaknesses

Only one person is at the moment foreseen to be 100 % part of the team, which might create difficulties in the development of the theme activities. The technological part of the theme seems to be much more central and clear at this stage, while the specific theoretical aims are not well described.

## CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

### DATE

**Start:** 11 February 2019, at 09h00

**End:** 11 February 2019, at 17h30

### VISIT SITE

**Institution:** UMR, SFL

**Address:** UPS Pouchet, 59-61 rue Pouchet, 75017 Paris

### CONDUCT OR PROGRAM OF THE VISIT

09:00-09:30	Welcome (closed-door meeting, expert committee and Scientific Officer (SO)): roles and procedures of Hcéres Visit of the premises and the experimental platform"
09:30-09:35	Presentation of the evaluation to the members of the research team by the SO
09:35-10:00	Sophie Wauquier, Director of the UMR: administrative and scientific presentation of the UMR. Discussion between the Director and the committee members
10:05-11:05	Presentation of research results and scientific programs by the heads of themes (on-going contract)
LaGram:	Presentation and discussion: Mohamed Lahrouchi et Patricia Cabredo
LSG :	Presentation and discussion: Brigitte Garcia
LCA :	Presentation and discussion: Marzena Watorek
11:05-11:20	Coffee break
11:20-12:20	Presentation of research projects and programs by the heads of themes (next contract) project presentation = presentation / questions: Marzena Watorek Theme 1: Presentation and discussion: Joaquim Brandao de Carvalho Theme 2: Presentation and discussion: Isabelle Roy and Patricia Cabredo Theme 3: Presentation and discussion: Brigitte Garcia Theme 4: Presentation and discussion: Sandra Benazzo and Saveria Colonna Theme 5: Presentation and discussion: Asaf Bachrach and Marion Blondel
12:20-12:50	Interview with the supervisory authorities, Arnaud Regnauld & Herve Serry Vice-President and Deputy Vice-President for Research at the University of Paris 8, and Hamida Demirdache, representing the CNRS (closed-door meeting)
12:50-14:00	Lunch
14:00-14:30	Interview with teacher-researchers (closed-door meeting)
14:30-15:00	Interview with doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows (closed-door meeting)
15:00-15:15	Interview with engineers, technicians and administrative staff (closed-door meeting)
15:15-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:00	Interview with Sophie Wauquier & Marzena Watorek / Mohamed Lahrouchi respectively Director of the current contract and Director and Deputy Director of the next contract (closed-door meeting)
16:00-17:30	Closed-door meeting of the committee (in the presence of Scientific Officer Hcéres)
17:30	End of the visit

## **SUPERVISING BODIES' GENERAL COMMENTS**

**Objet : retour commentaires sur rapport HCERES 2019**

Structures formelles du langage  
UMR 7023 Université Paris 8 / CNRS

Cher.e.s collègues,

Nous tenons tout d'abord à remercier les collègues associé.e.s à cette évaluation du RAE de l'UMR SFL, ainsi que Madame la déléguée du HCERES, Anne Carlier.

Le rapport du comité de visite HCERES démontre le dynamisme indéniable de cette UMR à l'échelle du site, de la COMUE UPL, en Ile-de-France et plus largement, pour la recherche et la formation sur les domaines qui sont les siens.

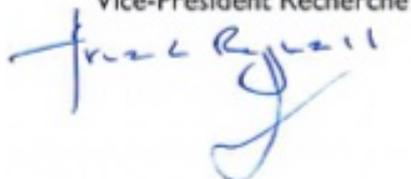
L'UMR SFL a su consolider ses effectifs, notamment du côté des recrutements CNRS. Elle sait se positionner sur les enjeux disciplinaires et thématiques qui sont ceux de la linguistique la plus contemporaine dans un espace de débats internationalisé – les reconfigurations internes pour le prochain contrat en témoignent –, et participe avec détermination et compétence aux différents niveaux du jeu institutionnel. Les relations de Paris 8 avec le CNRS au sujet de l'UMR SFL sont de ce point de vue excellentes. Les activités contractuelles et partenariales de SFL sont également très conséquentes. Elles confirment l'ouverture de cette équipe de recherche et sa capacité, à partir d'un socle d'une grande solidité, à poursuivre son essor et à se renouveler scientifiquement.

Son fonctionnement interne est également très satisfaisant, collégial et mené en parfaite transparence. Il est soutenu par une équipe administrative qui fait montre de grandes compétences et sait travailler en parfaite intelligence avec l'équipe de direction et les instances de l'UMR.

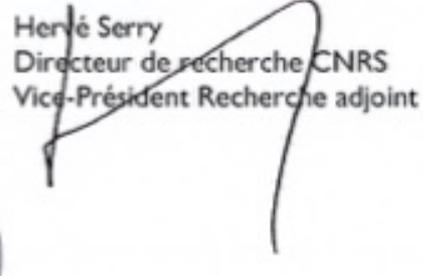
La future direction saura poursuivre cette dynamique tout à fait positive. Le soutien de l'université Paris 8 aux collègues de SFL est donc total et nous sommes très confiants quant au prochain contrat.

Avec nos plus cordiales salutations,

Arnaud Regnaud  
Professeur  
Vice-Président Recherche



Hervé Serry  
Directeur de recherche CNRS  
Vice-Président Recherche adjoint



Sophie Wauquier  
Professeur Université Paris 8  
Direction "Structures formelles du langage"  
UMR 7023 Université Paris 8 / CNRS  
2 rue de la Liberté  
93526 St-Denis cedex

Paris, le 10 avril 2019

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mail : [sophie.wauquier@orange.fr](mailto:sophie.wauquier@orange.fr)

Marzena Watorek, Professeur Université Paris 8 & Mohamed Lahrouchi  
Future direction de SFL et porteurs du projet 2020-2024

**Objet : retour commentaires sur rapport HCERES 2019**

A qui de droit

Bonjour

Nous tenons à remercier les membres du comité d'évaluation pour leur disponibilité lors de la visite du 11 février 2019, ainsi que pour la pertinence et l'intérêt des remarques et des recommandations qui nous ont été faites à cette occasion. Nous avons également apprécié la qualité des échanges malgré l'agenda malheureusement trop court imposé au comité par l'HCERES (pour une UMR de presque 100 personnes, vu la dynamique du laboratoire et la qualité internationale du jury deux jours n'auraient pas été de trop et nous auraient permis des interactions encore plus intéressantes)

Toutes les recommandations nous paraissent judicieuses et pertinentes. Elles recourent pour la plupart les conclusions auxquelles nous avaient amenés l'auto-évaluation et la préparation de la fiche SWOT en novembre 2016.

Nous souhaiterions néanmoins revenir sur trois points

### 1. Open access et publications

Nous sommes collectivement très conscients des menaces que font peser les éditeurs privés sur l'avenir et la liberté de la recherche et nous nous posons à cet égard beaucoup de questions quant à l'avenir de la revue LIA née à SFL, soutenue par SFL et éditée par J. Benjamins. Mais nous constatons d'une part que lors des évaluations (dont cette évaluation HCERES) les supports retenus comme des supports de référence prestigieux et internationaux ( par exemple *best international journals in theoretical linguistics*, p.8 du rapport : *Linguistic Inquiry, Natural Language Semantics, Natural Languages and Linguistic Theory, Journal of Semantics, Language, Lingua, Sign Language and Linguistics, Language, Cognition and Neuroscience, Journal of Child Language, Quarterly Journal of Psychology, Neuroimage, First language, Studies in Second Language Acquisition*) ne sont pas des supports en open access : à ce stade, il est peu probable que le choix de publier dans des supports « open access » constituent une stratégie intéressante de reconnaissance, ni pour les chercheurs, ni pour les laboratoires. Selon la même logique, la revue LIA a reçu un classement à l'ERIH et attire des publications de qualité en donnant une visibilité internationale à un champ qu'il aurait été sans doute infiniment plus difficile de faire émerger via l'open access.

Il en résulte que pour opérer un passage des éditeurs privés aux supports open-source, que nous appelons bien sûr de nos vœux, il est absolument indispensable qu'au-delà des injonctions aux bonnes pratiques, il y ait un réel accompagnement des tutelles (CNRS, Universités, Ministère) pour reconnaître les supports open access et soutenir ces mutations. Les tâches qui permettent l'édition d'une revue scientifique visant un classement avec « impact » sont lourdes et sans secrétariat d'édition dédié, il est extrêmement difficile pour un laboratoire de faire vivre une revue à ce niveau.

## 2. Risque de dispersion

Nous avons bien pris note des recommandations au sujet du risque de dispersion que comporte la réorganisation en 5 thèmes. Mais ce risque a été évalué lors de l'auto-évaluation mi-parcours et étant donné le nombre de chercheurs de notre laboratoire, nous pensons qu'il est faible. Les thèmes ont émergé spontanément des travaux des uns et des autres ainsi que des collaborations entre les uns et les autres et sont déjà la réalité de notre laboratoire. Ils entrent pleinement en continuité de l'existant qu'ils développent et diversifient sans finalement s'en écarter radicalement et ils ne constituent nullement des greffes exogènes. La réorganisation n'entraîne aucun abandon des thèmes qui identifient le laboratoire (Linguistique théorique et formelle, Langues des signes, Multimodalité et gestualité, Acquisition L1/ L2 et didactique) mais vise à donner plus de fluidité aux échanges et interactions possibles au sein du laboratoire.

SFL a à ce stade une assise internationalement reconnue dans son périmètre d'expertise qui lui permet aussi de s'ouvrir pour l'avenir à la curiosité scientifique dans des directions nouvelles, pourvu qu'elles soient soutenues par des méthodes scientifiques rigoureuses et documentées. Il nous paraît que c'est bien le cas des thèmes émergents et la nouvelle direction sera attentive à ce que cela le reste.

## 3. Interactions avec les doctorants

Nous prenons bien en compte la recommandation concernant les doctorants (*The unit is encouraged to find the means to foster interactions of PhD students with each other, and between PhD students and faculty (including CNRS researchers), beyond one-to-one exchanges between PhD students and their advisors*) et travaillerons davantage dans ce sens pour développer les outils que nous avons mis en place : Journée d'accueil des doctorants avec présentation des membres du laboratoire, livret des doctorants, travail sur le format des comités de suivi de thèse, séminaire des doctorants, co-publications, présentations des doctorants dans les séminaires des équipes et recherche de financements.

Pour le reste, nous veillerons à ce que les risques restent des risques et n'handicapent pas la créativité et la dynamique scientifique du laboratoire. Les conseils qui nous ont été donnés seront mis à profit dans ce sens pour la mise en œuvre du projet quinquennal. Nous en remercions encore le comité.

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