

Labex **EFL**



## Soutenance de thèse de Madame Anke AL-BATAINEH

**Titre : Cent ans après : politiques scolaires et vitalité des langues en danger, le cas de l'arménien occidental**

1 décembre 2015 à 14h30

Salons de l'Inalco, 2 rue de Lille, Paris

**Directrice(s)/ eur(s):** Madame Anaïd DONABÉDIAN Professeur des universités, Inalco

### **Membres du jury:**

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**Axe(s) du Labex concerné(s) :** Axe 3

**Abstract:** Western Armenian was declared “definitely endangered” in 2010, although the language is taught in private Armenian schools across a global diaspora. These schools sustain a centuries-old tradition of literacy & a culture with a written history dating back 3,000 years. Enrollment in Armenian schools in the Middle East has been declining for four decades, while the Armenian schools of France are growing & evolving; all are facing a rapidly changing educational climate. Conducted in Beirut, Amman, Paris & Marseille, and involving participants from Aleppo, this study analyzes data from more than 100 diasporan Armenians and a dozen schools. An interdisciplinary, post-structuralist & constructivist approach is taken to understanding the roles of school policies in attracting parents to enroll their children in Armenian schools, in effectively transmitting the language to students, & promoting the vitality of the language in each of the four contexts. Discourse Analysis is applied to both structural & personal representations of the language & of the schools. Ethnolinguistic Vitality & Language Socialization theories are used to understand the connections between policy, choice & the wider vitality of the language. Parent school choice is looked at in terms of consumer psychology, but ultimately Bourdieu’s concept of habitus is the most apt for explaining why Armenian parents choose non-Armenian schools, & why this becomes a definitive family break from the institution in most cases. Policy above the school level is found to have less impact than school enrollment & dominant discourses on language maintenance. Recommendations are made for changes in school policy & pedagogy.

**Keywords:** Endangered Languages, Minority Languages, Language Vitality, School Reform, Student-centered Pedagogy, Armenian, Discourse Analysis, Language Socialization, Ethnolinguistic Vitality, Language Immersion