



Call for Applications

Postdoc and Ph D. Positions in Cognitive Science

School and preschool children learning to read, write and count in Morocco: an experimental approach

African Center for Behavioral Sciences – Mohammed VI Polytechnic University

July 2019

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) is a recently established non-profit university that has the ambition to promote high-quality education and research in respect of international academic standards. Furthermore, it aims to contribute to the development of African countries.

African Center for Behavioural Sciences (ACBS) deals with social, economic and cultural issues as they arise in Morocco and, more broadly, in Africa by jointly mobilizing the contributions of social sciences and behavioral sciences. The Center focuses on research that addresses issues directly relevant to current public policies and their consequences.

Research program:

School and preschool children learning to read, write and count in Morocco: an experimental approach.

The project starts from an observation: the results of the Moroccan education system regarding writing, reading and counting remain unsatisfactory, even compared to countries with a similar level of economic development. The objective of the program is, firstly, to draw a diagnosis of the difficulties encountered by public policies concerning education, and more specifically, young children's learning of writing, reading and counting. The diagnostic phase will focus in particular on the teaching itself, in all its dimensions, as it is practiced in the classroom, and on the proximate and distant variables (social, economic, cognitive, interactional) that influence it. The program aims, after this first phase, to use results from both cognitive sciences and sociological observations of teaching practices to draw new guidelines for teaching young Moroccan children to read and write Arabic and to count. These guidelines will then be tested in experimental schools located in socially disadvantaged areas. The experiment itself will allow to refine and codify the guidelines for use by other teachers.

Job Description: The postdoc – or the Ph. D. – will first analyze the specific nature of the cognitive variables that influence the learning of children writing, reading and/or counting in Arabic. This study will be made in collaboration with the linguist involved in the program. Secondly, he or she will participate in the construction of pedagogical methods improving

teaching practices and in the writing of the guidelines. He or she is also expected to publish one paper in an internationally recognized and peer-reviewed academic journal and to participate in the activities of ACBS.

Qualifications: The candidate must have a Ph.D. – or a Master – in cognitive science, and a specialization in the study of children reading, writing and/on counting in French, English or Arabic.

Application requirements: The application folder consists of the following:

- ✓ Curriculum Vitae
- ✓ Full list of publications
- ✓ Abstract and table of content of the Ph.D. (for an application for a postdoc position)
- ✓ Digital copy of the Ph.D. degree certificate (for an application for a postdoc position) or of the Master's degree certificate (for an application for a Ph. D. position)
- ✓ Previous teaching experience (for an application for a postdoc position)

Applications must be submitted to: recruitment.humanities@um6p.ma, by **October 15, 2019**. Please attach a single electronic zipped folder containing all of the above to your email with the mention “*Post Doc ACBS Reading Writing – Cognitive Science*” or “*Ph. D. ACBS Reading Writing – Cognitive Science*”, in the subject. Applications will be reviewed by a scientific committee. The short-listed candidates will be invited to meet the university selection committee. For candidates unable to attend in person, this meeting can be conducted by videoconference.

Salary: Salary scales are competitive and meet international standards. Subject to certain conditions, the University provides practical assistance in relocating and accommodation.

Duration: 18 months for the postdoc position ; 3 years for the Ph D position.

Job location: Thanks to its prestigious architectural landscape and modern equipment, the University offers premium conditions for a desirable lifestyle. The campus is located in the Green City of Ben Guerir, only 60 km away from Marrakech.

For further information, please contact us: recruitment.humanities@um6p.ma