

Tuesday lunch and poster walk (Track B), Tuesday, Sep 23 2025, 13:00-14:00

Location: Seminar 1

Session: Posters

PO-19

Naming and defining scientific integrity: a challenge. The case of French in an international context

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In recent decades, the scientific lexicon has been enriched with a new “word” : scientific integrity. Initially limited in its use to the NIH bodies, where it had appeared in 1989 (“Office of Scientific Integrity” creation), in order to deal with certain misbehaviors found in researchers. The word had not been defined otherwise than indirectly, by the type of problems that OSI would have to deal with (falsifications of results, fabrications of data, plagiarism...). Given the moral resonances, of the problems treated, the name has gained popularity outside the scientific world.

Gradually, the research communities and policy-makers became aware of misbehaviors of scientists in other disciplines than those in charge of the NIH and also in other countries. Various instances of scientific integrity thus appeared in countries other than the United States, confirming the universality of the phenomena to be treated. The name being born in an English-speaking country and being used in a scientific context (whose main language of use is also English), these new structures have therefore simply been associated with the original lexical unit “scientific integrity”, or translation layers of the latter (i.e. «intégrité scientifique» in French or «Wetenschappelijke Integriteit» in Dutch, etc.).

During this time, however, regardless of the language, no one seemed to realize that the concept associated with these lexical units had hardly been the subject of definitory reflections. However, as noted by Anderson et al. [1], In most contexts where scientific integrity appeared, structures already existed in charge of related concerns (ethics committees, deontological commissions, etc.), all having, in various capacities, also to deal with the acceptability of specific research practices.

As a matter of fact, there was a soft consensus about the non-equivalence between the quasi-synonymic terms, but it would be necessary, one day or another, to succeed in differentiating positively the denominations. Corvol [2] is one of the first, in a francophone context, to have outlined an interesting contrastive approach, unfortunately remained too little developed in the reference literature.

Today, many thinkers of scientific integrity argue for a certain distancing from its initially repressive dynamics and ipso facto call for the emergence of a constructive dynamics of scientific integrity, encouraging the growing development of scientific integrity training initiatives. Now, therefore, it is important to be able to answer precisely and convincingly the question of every novice: “what is scientific integrity?”. We intend to investigate the *modus operandi* to be developed for this purpose, placing ourselves in the context of “Francophonie”, a geopolitical space with a transnational, official body, the OIF, which brings together 93 states (323 million citizens) having in common the use of French, including emerging countries that have or will have to deal urgently with issues of scientific integrity.