Understanding doping

Preventing doping

A command from UNESCO to investigate public policies on the prevention of doping. This first analysis should result in a comparative study of these policies in several countries.

TRABAL P., 2014, La prévention du dopage dans le sport, UNESCO. (To be downloaded here)

Criticism-proof antidoping devices (project funded by MILDT and INSERM)

Anti-doping measures, whether coming from the State or sports institutions, are widely criticised. Chronic dysfunction, lack of means and the gap between these measures and existing deviant practices are highlighted. Sometimes people put the blame on the inertia of the decision-makers, an inertia which appears revealing of the enormous economic and political issues at stake. This is the reason why we work on the assessment of these anti-doping measures, not in a normative way but through listing the judgements expressed by different actors in various situations.

The pragmatic sociology we propose to mobilize encourages us to “follow actors” and link their judgements, accounts, arguments and criticisms to the system of constraints within which they express themselves. This is why we have decided to set up three types of survey.

Through the accumulation of digitalized archives and the setting up of appropriate techniques of analysis, the first level of investigation reconstructed the history of the actors, their arguments and the systems which have had an impact in the field of anti-doping measures and French public action since 1960.

The second line of action consisted in collecting the many accounts and observations of situations related to people whose job it is to fight doping in the field. The point was to elaborate a place of expression for the many forms of narrative or argumentative elaboration, gathering together spontaneous stories of past experiences. This approach was more “ethno-methodological” as we followed the actors implied in prevention or dope tests.

Finally, we elaborated a basis of thorough interviews, asking questions to spokespersons, experts and public decision-makers, letting them develop their own space for reasoning.

To process the corpus made up of all these texts (press, interviews, survey reports, etc.) we used the Prospero software. Coming from the contributions of multiple theoretical fields (linguistics and the philosophy of language, artificial intelligence, network analysis and cognitive sociology), it was meant to enable us to apply the same framework of analysis to the three collections and thus spot the core of the difficulties met in the fight against doping, the tensions between actors and the gap between actual experiences and public discourses.

A report:

- To be downloaded here

Publication:

In 2008, the Ministry in charge of sports asked our team to lead a research on the tools used in the prevention of doping behaviours. We built up a methodology to gather together the tools in use and organized their assessment.

The Ministry chose to use only part of our survey and publish a synopsis in the form of a guide:


On several occasions, we retained the functioning of the World Anti-doping agency as a subject for study. Few publications:

- DEMESLAY J., BUISINE S., 2012, Lorsqu’un cas de narcolepsie met à l’épreuve la lutte antidopage - Le temps de la dispute comme élément reconfigurateur des jeux d’arguments, Temporalités, juin 12, n°15. (Text on line)

The TRASCINTER project (Interdisciplinary scientific work) - Project financed by the ANR (ANR Blanche, 2008).

Our work consists in questioning the reality of interdisciplinary studies. More precisely, we are trying to describe the activities of researchers coming from different disciplines: some may be maintaining their own and defending their specificities and territories; others try to establish a dialogue and manage (or not) to produce new knowledge in so-called “interdisciplinary” institutions…

To answer this demand of understanding the modalities of interdisciplinary studies, we have built up a fluctuation space with a relative unity guaranteeing the coexistence of several disciplines open to dialogue. We chose to focus our analysis on a subject which rallies a plurality of disciplines: the science of sport. Sport, unanimously qualified as a multidisciplinary subject, presents the advantage of representing a theoretical and empirical challenge for so-called “hard” sciences (including the “technical” aspect induced by the “engineering” but also related to health issues) and for human and social sciences.

To achieve this project, we started from studies carried out by the three associate laboratories and created...
collaborative computing tools with an aim to compare our data and analyses, to collectively enrich the necessary empirical material and to create the place for reasoning required for the production of new knowledge concerning this subject. Therefore, the proposition has two simultaneous targets: understand the tensions and processes related to the implication of several disciplines called upon on subjects belonging to the same field (sport); be equipped with tools allowing different teams to collaborate. This way, we want to share in the renewal of the developing of tools for human and social sciences, share methodologies which allow experiences on bodies of texts to be carried out and thus ensure the traceability of reasoning (Chateauraynaud, 2003).

Our project enables us to be equipped with collaborative tools. It goes beyond the desire to create a “virtual work space” where documents could be exchanged. It is a matter of developing systems aiming at sharing files but also at allowing collective reflection. To do so, we are determined to take advantage of the latest advances in socio-computing which concern the development of a sociological investigator.

The researchers mobilized on this project have at their disposal two major resources: on the one hand, they have a corpus on “sports files” constituting a pertinent fluctuation space for approaching the issues related to interdisciplinarity; on the other, they share common tools. Strengthened by these two assets, we still have to consolidate the bodies of texts to enhance their interdisciplinary properties and to develop these instruments to obtain a better collaboration and envisage models enabling the understanding of our subject.

Doping is one of the study subjects.

**Publications:**

- TRABAL P., COLLINET C., TERRAL P., 2013, Le travail scientifique Interdisciplinaire, Rapport de recherche ANR, 154 p. ([Text online](#))

**Pour tout renseignement sur les travaux du groupe "Sciences Sociales & dopage" :**

- Patrick Trabal
  - t) parisnanterre.fr

**postale :**

- université Paris Nanterre
- Équipe Sciences sociales
- Sciences Sociales & Dopage
- le la république
- nterre

**The “Social Science & Doping” group**

- Anti-doping systems
- Practices
- Fairs
- Tations of doping