13th International Lab Meeting – Winter session 2009
January 28th-30th, 2009

State of the Art of the Meta-Theoretical analysis of the Social Representations literature

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European Ph.D. on
Social Representations and Communication

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A long term project: towards the Meta-theoretical Analysis of the whole S.R. corpus

The project for a meta-theoretical analysis of the complete body of Social Representations literature was launched by de Rosa in 1994, to provide an organic, comprehensive understanding of the overall development of this theory over time and across continents. (See de Rosa 1994, 2001 a,b, and 2002.).

Main motivation for being committed to an endless term project

- The firm belief that to be able to contribute to develop a theory and to strongly deal with its critics grounds on a systematic study of the scientific production inspired by the theory itself, was my **main motivation** for launching this project and for being committed to work on it for several years (or for an **endless term**, considering that the literature is continuously developing, or at least till I will be able to entrust this heritage to a group of interested researchers).

Main objectives of the Meta-ANALYSIS of the S.R. corpus

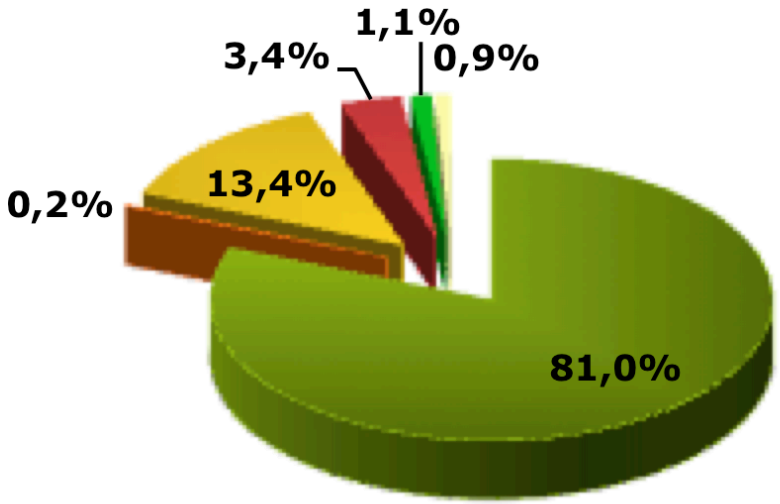
Some of its main objectives are:

- "to **MAP THE THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION AROUND THE WORLD** (i.e., the anchorage of the theory to the different cultural contexts and research centres) **AND OVER THE TIME** (i.e., the development of the theory across different generations of researchers and schools of researchers)"
- **to bring some brightness in the S.R. galaxy**, by reconstructing analitically the complexity of its various theoretical and methodological approaches .

TO MAP THE SOCIAL REPRESENTATION THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION AROUND THE WORLD AND OVER THE TIME

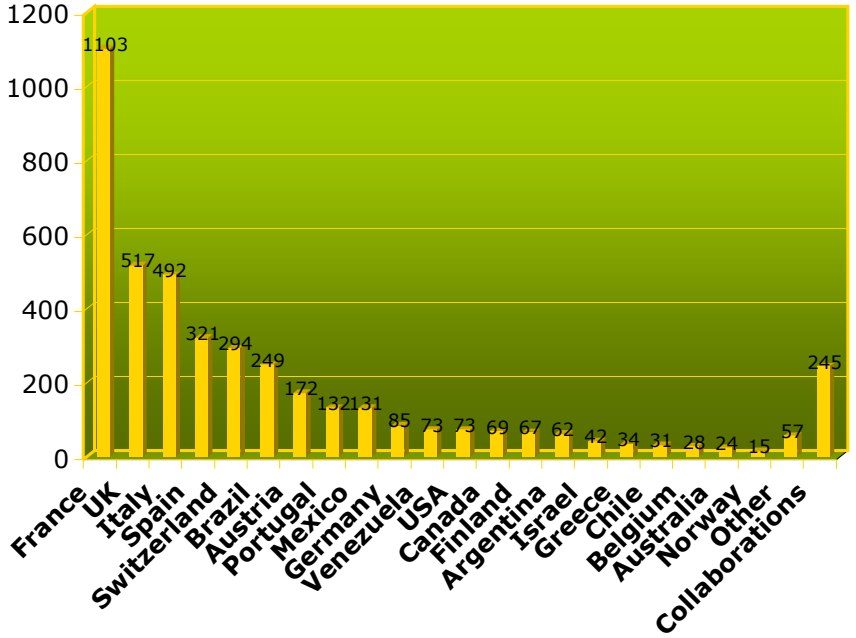
- There is empirical evidence that during the last 45 years the S.R. theory has become a **multi-cultural, multi-language, and multi-generational enterprise** spread over all the continents.

Social Reoresentations around the World



Source:
on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory
Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680

AUTHOR INSTITUTION COUNTRY



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Université de Bretagne occidentale-FR
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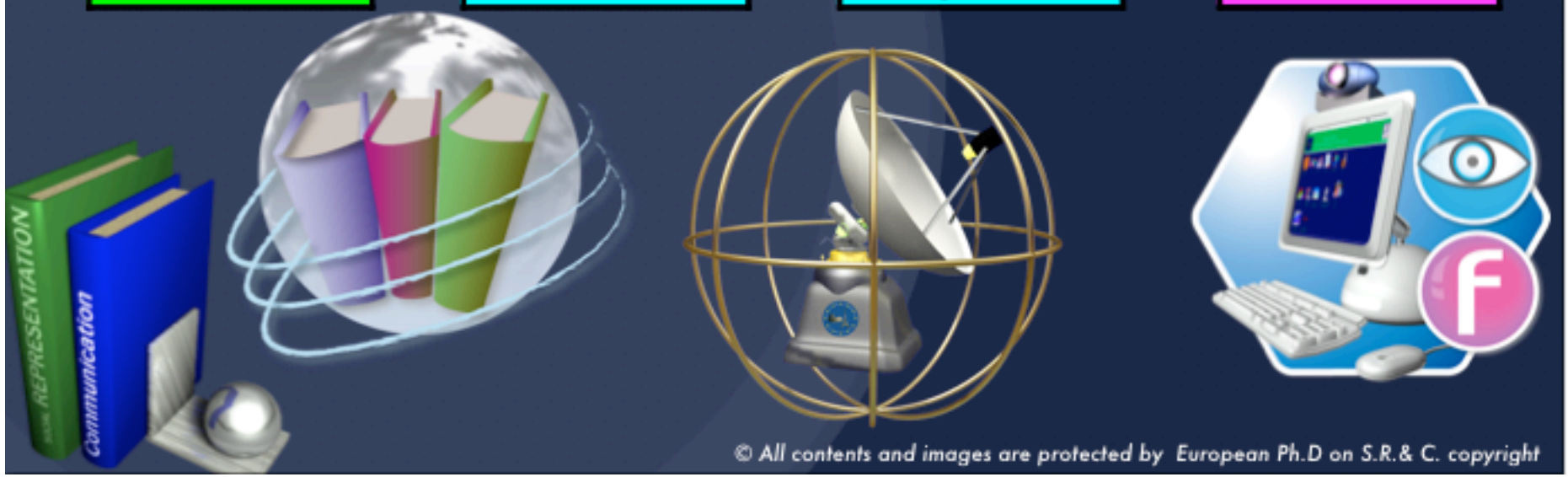
Fully bibliographical Inventory on SR & C	Web-Auditorium and E-meeting with the video-chat tool, whiteboard for d for sharing applications and present	European Doctoral Programme Good Practice Management Guidelines
Meta-analysed inventory on SR & C	Magisterial Lectures and Video-lesso produced in real time and transmitted in streaming video or in playback via Web-Auditorium	Web-Auditorium for all 95 partners simultaneously conn for project management and wider circulation of information	Virtual Campus SR &C scientific community online database
Advanced searching engine on both inventories	Video-chat based on interviews on critical topics or for tutoing and co-tutoring	E-meetings restricted to specific target groups of partners according to the different role and tasks in the project	Intensive face to face review evaluative meetings with the Euro PhD partners during the InternationalSummer Schoo
Intelligent Virtual Library on SR & C	Moderated Thematic Forum on Special Societal Issues	Audio and Video Conferences for small group discussion and even individual partner into using video-chat tool	Euro Conference on Social Sciences for dissemination of the multimedia tools



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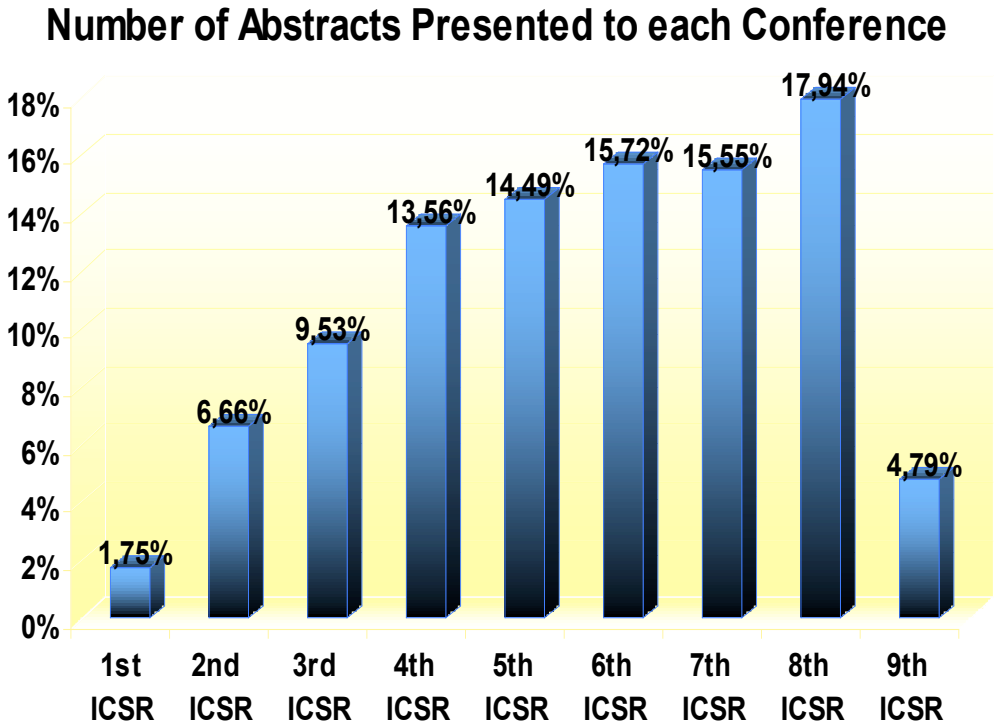
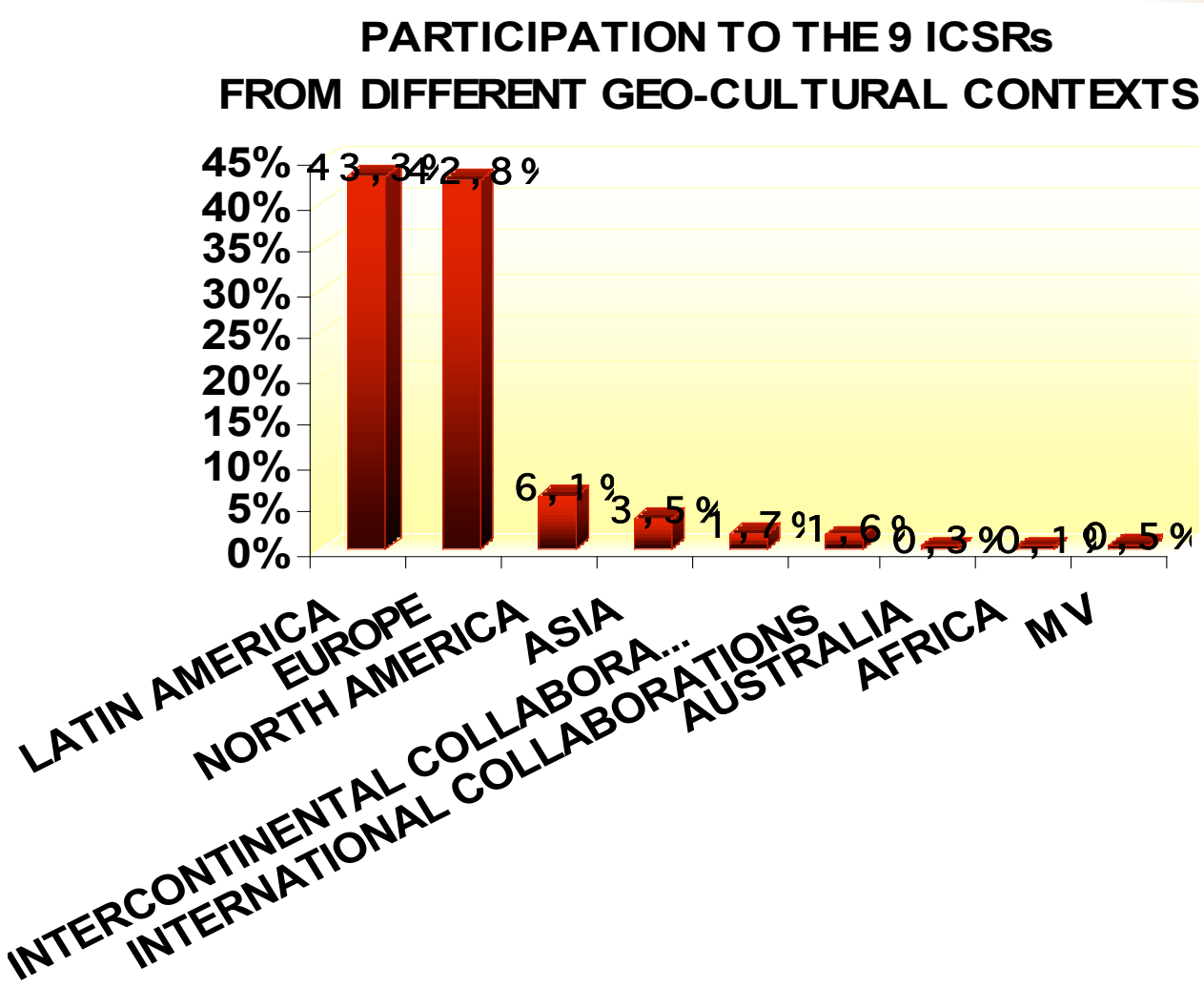
The acceleration of growth in the number of papers between 3rd and 4th ICSR and between 7th and 8th ICSR



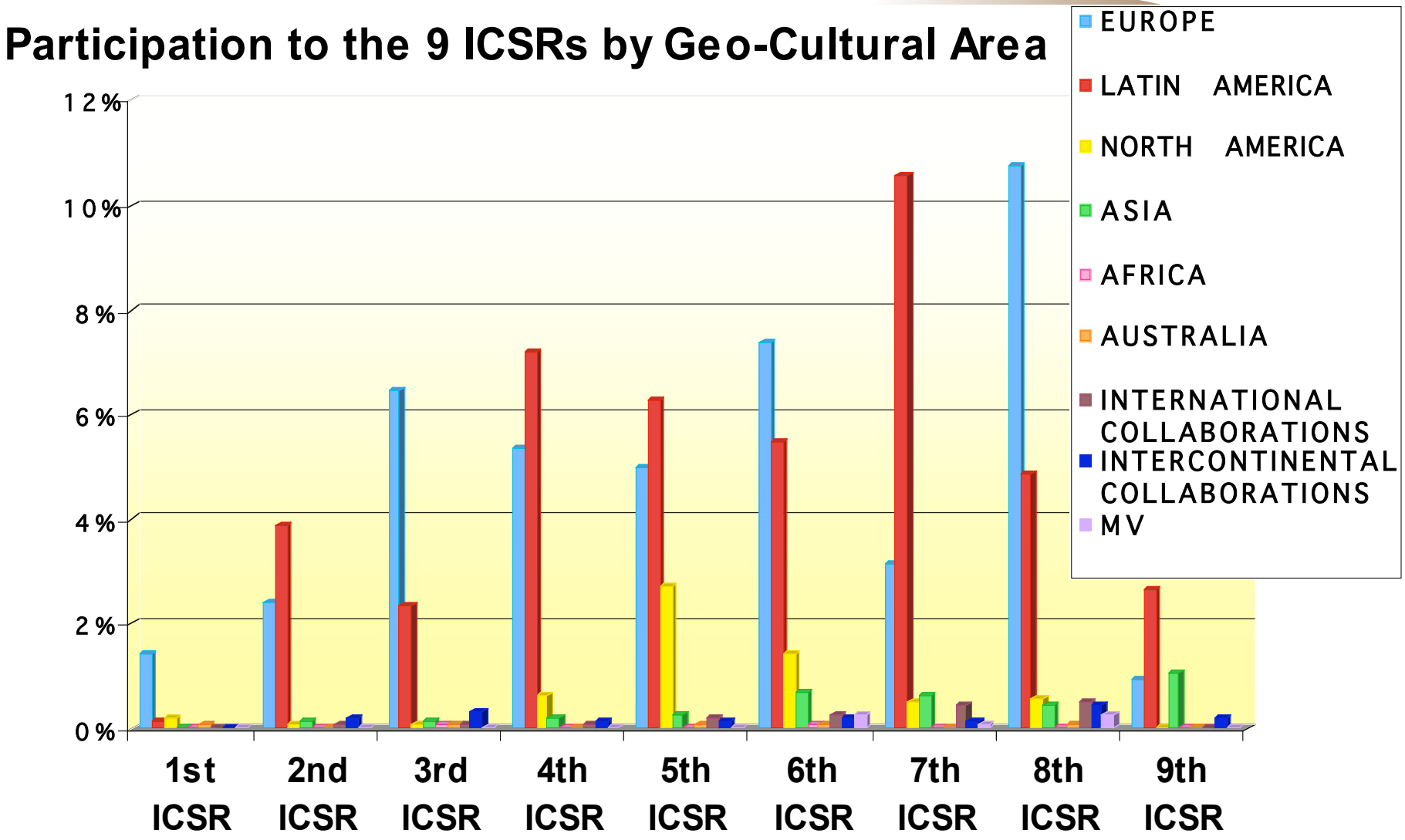
On the graph and by the table regrouping the eight conferences in three periods (1992-1997, 1998-2002, 2003-2008), we note how from 1992 to 2002 the number of papers presented, registered a constant increase, the acceleration of which is stronger within the first period compared to the latest. Still, starting from the Conference held in Mexico City the increase of papers presented is higher than 230. The only exception is represented by the 9th ICSR, but not all the abstracts submitted have been available for our analysis.

Contribution according to Author's Institution Country

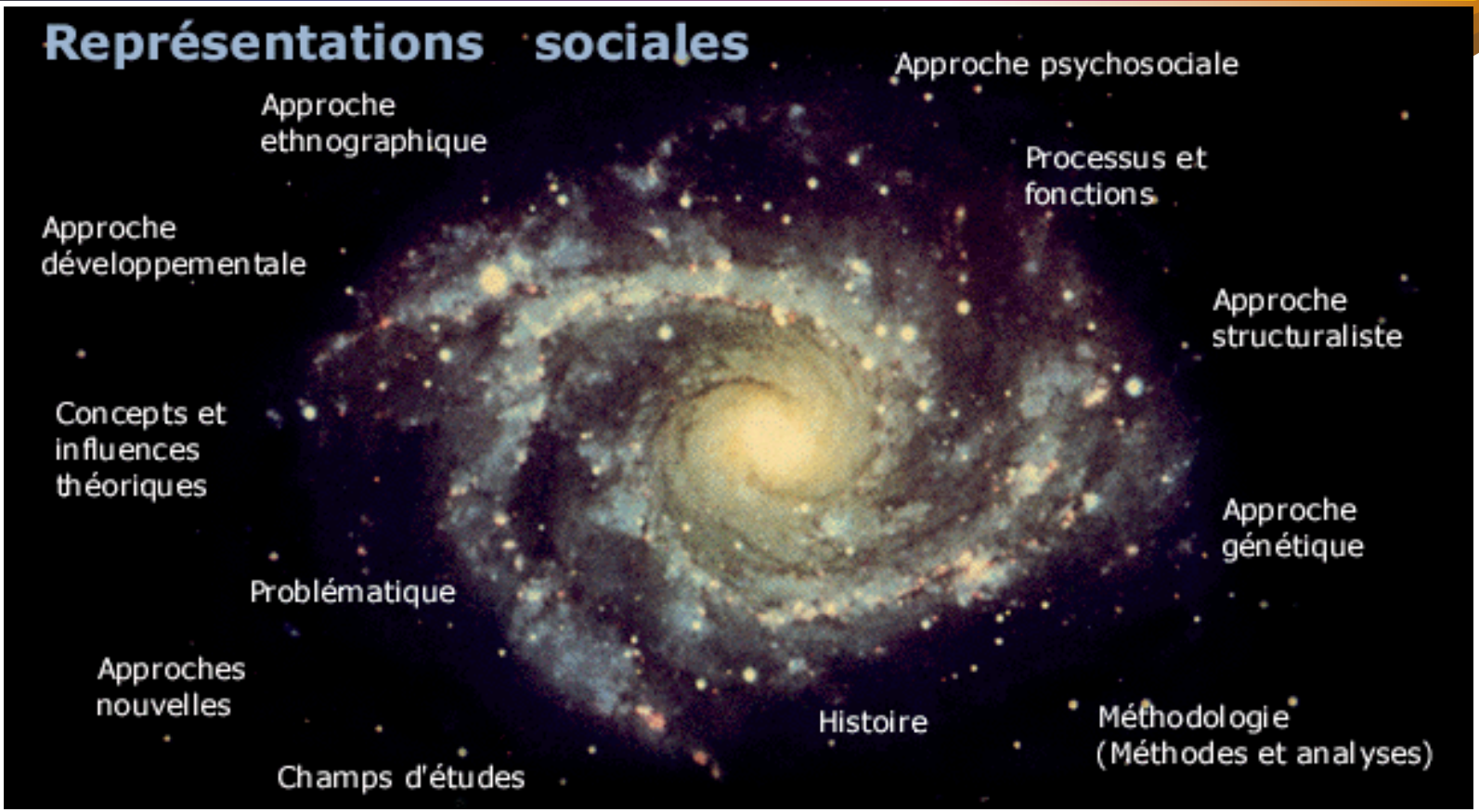


- It is self-evident the dominant presence of Latino-American contribution: **43,2% of the total contributions as well as the role of European contributions 42,8 %.**
- Follow North American Contributions and Asian ones with opposite trends after the 5th ICSR: decreasing the North American and increasing the Asian one.
- The *international and intercontinental collaborations* represent respectively 1.6% and 1.7%.

Geo-Cultural Area's Contribution according to I.C.S.R.s



In other terms to bring brightness in the S.R. galaxy



CIRADE, 2000

The Meta-Theoretical Analysis of the whole Social Representations Corpus

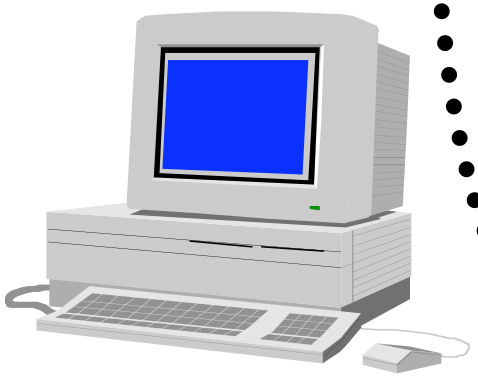
- Brief history of the research programme
- Management and organisation of this ambitious enterprise

Open Distant Learning networking for co-operative international research programme reviewing the whole literature on Social Representations and Communication

- **1994**: launch of ambitious research programme aimed at carrying out a **meta-theoretical analysis of the whole scientific literature on Social Representations**, a leading theory of contemporary social psychology open to contributions of other social science
- **pilot study** : carried out with the support of two undergraduates on Italian literature on S.R.
- The **research programme** has been developed over more than ten years with the support of
  - an **Italian team of more than 50 students engaged in the Socrates inter-University exchange programme** working on the meta-analysis in several European University libraries as their Master Thesis in Social Psychology of Opinion and Attitudes (University of Rome "La Sapienza").
  - a **trans-national, multi-language co-operative team of young research trainees** as part of their European doctoral training on Social Representations and Communication
  - Another piece of research dealing with the analysis of the abstracts **Bi-Annual Conferences** presented at the Conferences has been realised in co-operation with Maria Libera D'Ambrosio, currently enrolled in the last year of the European PhD programme on S.R. & C.
- A member of the staff has been engaged as **research-team co-ordinator** to be fully dedicated to the project acting as an intermediate **quality control filter**.
- A **web-engineer** is in the dynamic interface between the scientific demands and the technical replies. A **web company** was committed to transfer the pre-existing data base Four D to the web Object technology.
- As programme co-ordinator of the Euro PhD and **scientific responsible for the project** I take the responsibility of the **full quality control** of the meta-theoretical analysis.

DATABASE OF THE LITERATURE ON SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS:

- FULL INVENTORY OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES
- META-ANALYSED CORPUS



Euro PhD server

Double quality control filter

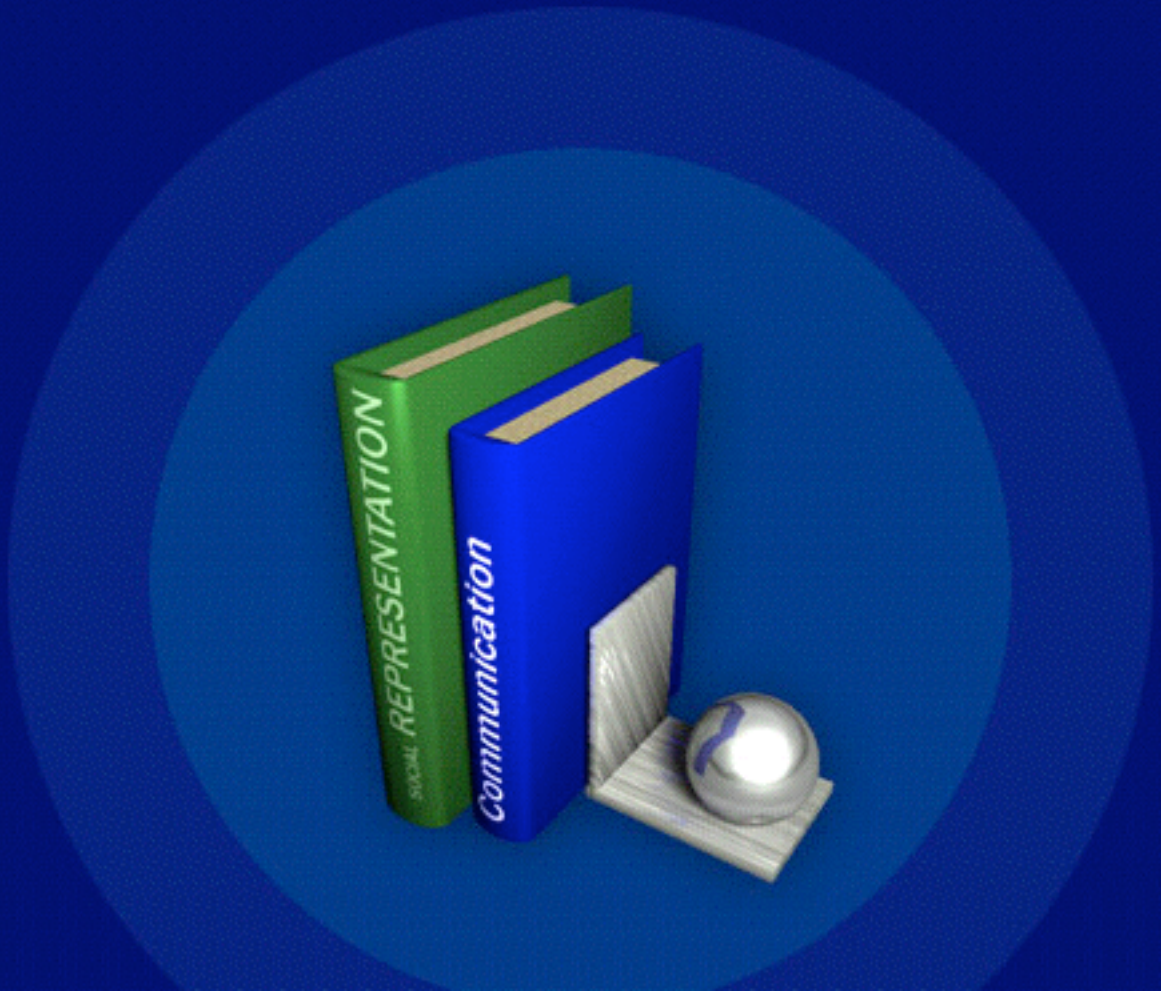
Scientific Community specialised in the field, acts as user and co-producer of the database

European Ph.D on Social Representations and Communication

Bibliographics Data Base on Social Representations

- Outline research programme
- Research team
- Bibliographic database
  - Basic search
  - Advanced search
  - Add new entry
- Help on-line

Bibliographics Database on Social Representations



The first on-line data base

The on-line integrated database is articulated in **two different inventories:**

- a) The **first database** contains a **fully bibliographical inventory of the literature** (journal and conference papers, books, special issues) on SR and communication and its related paradigm.
- This fully bibliographical inventory includes information limited to the **classic bibliographic details** (authors, year of publication, title, journal, volume, issue, journal pages, book editor, book title, book pages, location, publisher, congress, congress location, manuscript, University report, keywords, abstract, author's Institution).

The second on-line data base

- b) The **second database** contains a **meta-analysed inventory** of the literature on SR analysed according to the grid developed by A.S. de Rosa (1994) as described above. Its main aim is to develop the "meta-theoretical analysis" of the whole corpus of the specialised field (both theoretical and empirical literature).
- It is possible to have access separately to the two inventories or at the same time to both inventories for an integrated consultation and for a quality control filter (for example for deleting double references).
- The on-line database also contains a *temporary* database of new incoming information.

The new entry status in both the on-line data bases

- Each entry has a **different status**:
  - "**submitted**" (when it has been sent by the "analyser", but not yet accepted for the analysis or for its inclusion in the fully bibliographic inventory);
  - "**assigned**" (when the proposed bibliographic entry has been accepted and assigned to an analyser, identified by own identification code);
  - "**validated**" (when the entry has been positively assessed by the double quality control filter to be included in one of the two inventories);
  - "**rejected**" (when the entry has been rejected, because it is unrelated to the specialised field, or definitively evaluated as incorrect).
- The analyser may change information and correct the filled sheets only before the entry has been validated.
- New entries are included in the **permanent database** only after a double quality control filter made by a research co-ordinator and by the scientific co-ordinator of the *European PhD programme*, as described below.

A double quality control filter system

- A **research-team co-ordinator** is fully dedicated to the project acting as an intermediate quality control filter, checking if:
  - ✓ bibliographical references are formally correct,
  - ✓ cancelling unrelated references,
  - ✓ co-ordinating the work of the students. This means, for example:
    - ✓ changing the status of each reference "submitted" as proposal into "assigned" reference to be analysed.

A double quality control filter system

- The programme co-ordinator of the European PhD and **scientific responsible** for:
  - ✓ the management of the whole project and
  - ✓ its necessary technical and human resources,
  - ✓ takes the responsibility of the full quality control of the meta-theoretical analysis. This means, for example:
  - ✓ controlling if the contents of the publications have been interpreted correctly, filling in the grid of meta-analysis;
  - ✓ guiding strategies for new data entries collection;
  - ✓ planning data analysis and discussing results.

A double quality control filter system

- The research team coordinator has a **personalised "password"** and **"identification code"** to have access to the system, with a **different degree of freedom**:
  - ✓ to consult information,
  - ✓ to change information,
  - ✓ to change the reference status from submitted to assigned, to validated, to delete information,
  - ✓ etc.

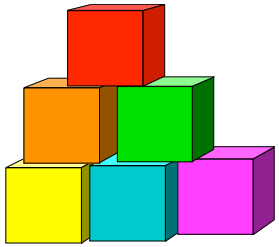
The **meta-analysis** is based on a **grid** designed by Prof. Annamaria de Rosa (1994, 2004) to be filled in by the research team coordinator through the website

www.europhd.psi.uniroma1.it

– This ongoing process will enable a complete, fully-researched bibliography for social representations and communication to be mapped out.

- Doctoral research trainees **awarded 1 credit per each contribution positively assessed** within the wider schema of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) adopted by the European PhD programme.

- The contribution to the meta-theoretical analysis of the literature on Social Representations and Communication - made by the ODL system briefly describe - is a **fundamental part of the distance training in the bibliographic knowled their own subject area.**



NEXT STEP

- **Extension of the co-operative networking:**

  from master and doctoral students enrolled in the programme
  to the whole scientific community specialised in the field, acts as user and co-producer of the database

- **Intelligent Virtual Library on Social Representations & Communication:**

-possibility to download text-files in PDF-format, linked to the full bibliographical inventory and meta-analysed corpus.

-Possibility of searching the database, using the criteria of the grid of meta-analysis (example: find all articles which use the process “anchoring”), and not only searching on author/title/year/keywords

European Ph.D on
Social Representations and Communication

So.Re.Com. THEmatic NETwork eLibrary

Authors List | Subject Catalogue

So.Re.Com. THEmatic NETwork eLibrary

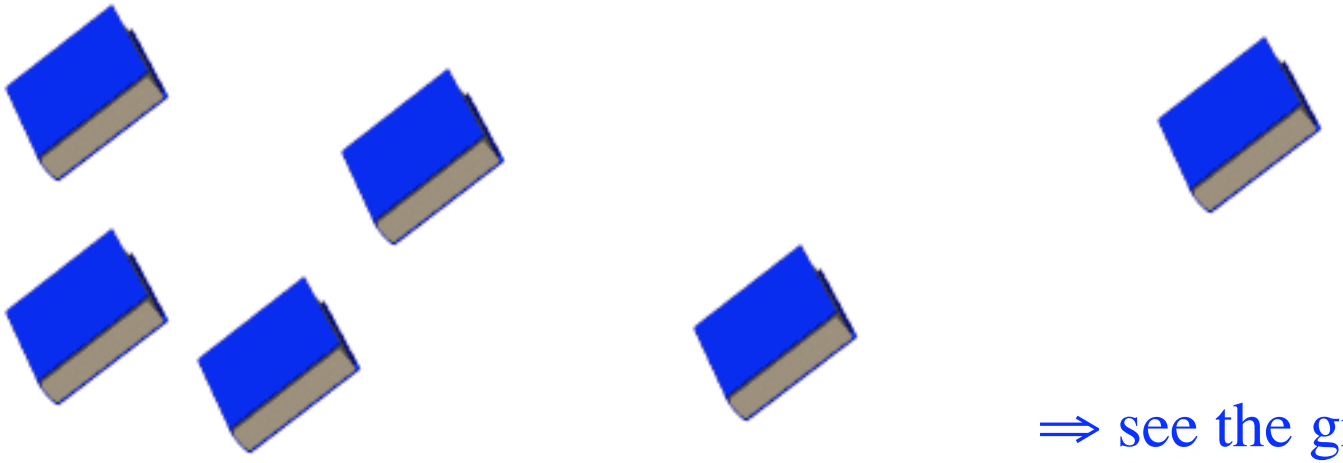
- Authors List
- Subject Catalogue
- Virtual Library Repository
  - Basic search
  - Advanced search
  - Upload publication
- Other bibliographic resources

SReCom Excellence network

Education and Culture

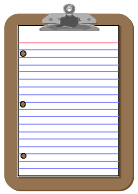
The grid analysis of the literature designed to ODL system is organised at two levels and may be used for analysis of different complexity:

- the *first* is aimed *to* review the literature at a ***purely descriptive level*** under a traditional bibliographic approach. Its aim is to organise information related to authors and their institution country, the years of publication, journal or book, the language of the publication, the type of paper (theoretical, empirical). This kind of information is commonly used to develop a sort of **epidemiology of diffusion of knowledge** and its development over time and cultural context.



⇒ see the grid

At a more specifically meta-theoretical level of analysis, the grid is organised in 5 main areas:



- **“THEORETICAL REFERENCE TO S.R. CONSTRUCTS”** aims to monitor whether the publication refers to S.R. theory in a very generic way, without addressing any specific paradigmatic element, the dimensional elements of the theory to which the contribution refers with respect to the genesis, processes, functions, structure, transmission, transformation of S.R. or whether the contribution refers to the theory itself as an object of critical analysis (meta-theory)

- “**THEORETICAL REFERENCE TO OTHER CONSTRUCTS AND THEORIES**” aims to identify whether the publication refers to other constructs, concepts and theories in relation to S.R. and which is the aim of this reference: integration, differentiation, both, comparison, substitution;

- “**THEMATIC ANALYSIS**” aims to categorise the contents of the empirical contributions according to a *purely thematic criteria*, by identifying the general *thematic areas* (i.e. health or environment) and the *specific object* of each study (i.e. AIDS or pollution), also in relation to the specific typology of S.R. (closed, open, polemic)

- The last parts aim to identify respectively the **METHODOLOGICAL PROFILE** of each study (its research design and location, its nature, instruments for data collection, channel used as source of information, techniques for data analysis) and the **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SELECTED POPULATION** (size of sample, variables considered, unit of analysis).

Finally the core of the meta-theoretical analysis carried out by using the above described grid is aimed:

- **to reflect on the pertinence-coherence** between the scientific paradigmatic-formulation definition of the problem and the methodological operationalisation;

- **to identify the possible paradigmatic re-definitions** operating explicitly or implicitly through recourse to inappropriate methodological designs (because they were modelled on other theoretical constructs).

⇒ see the grid of analysis

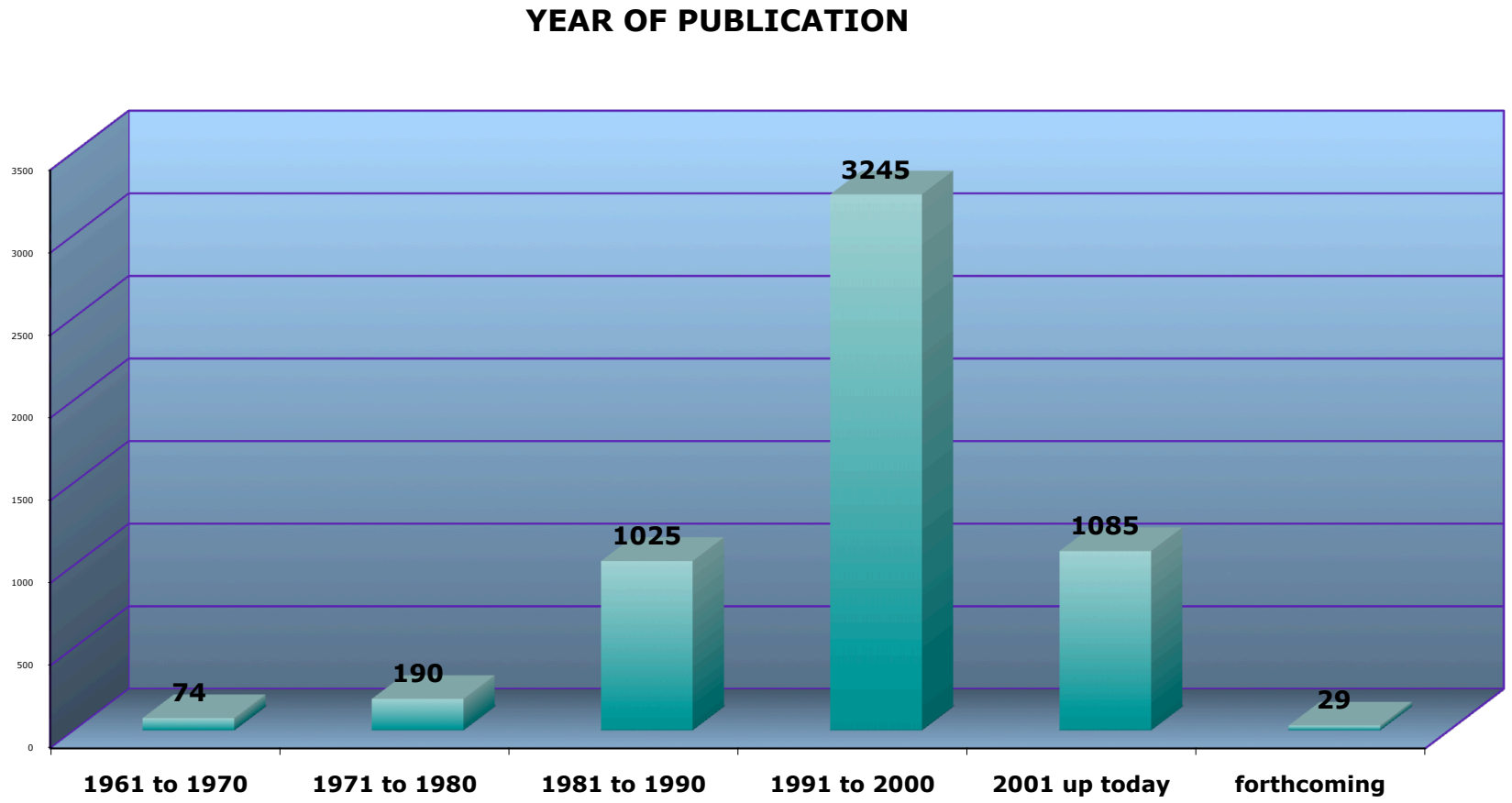
Articles published in International or National Journals

Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680

Journal	f
Papers on Social Representations	156
Bulletin de Psychologie	120
European Journal of Social Psychology	67
Les Cahiers Internationaux de Psychologie Sociale	62
Revue Internationale de Psychologie Sociale	49
Rassegna di Psicologia	42
British journal of social psychology	38
Social Science Information	35
Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour	35
Culture & Psychology	31
Giornale Italiano di Psicologia	30
Psychologie et société	25
Connexions	22
Ongoing Production on Social Representations	18
revista de psicologia social	17
Psychologie Française	17
Psicothema	15
Swiss Journal of Psychology	14
Journal of Health Psychology	14
Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology	14
Análise Psicológica	14
Psicologia	13
Public Understanding of Science	12
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology	12
Anthropos: revista de documentacion cientifica de la cultura	12
Theory & Psychology	10
Cahiers de Psychologie cognitive	10
AVEPSO. Asociaciòn Venezolana de Psicologìa Social	10
Anuario de psicologia	10
Análise Social	10
Under cutting point	1172
Total	**2106**

YEAR OF PUBLICATION from 1951 to 2008

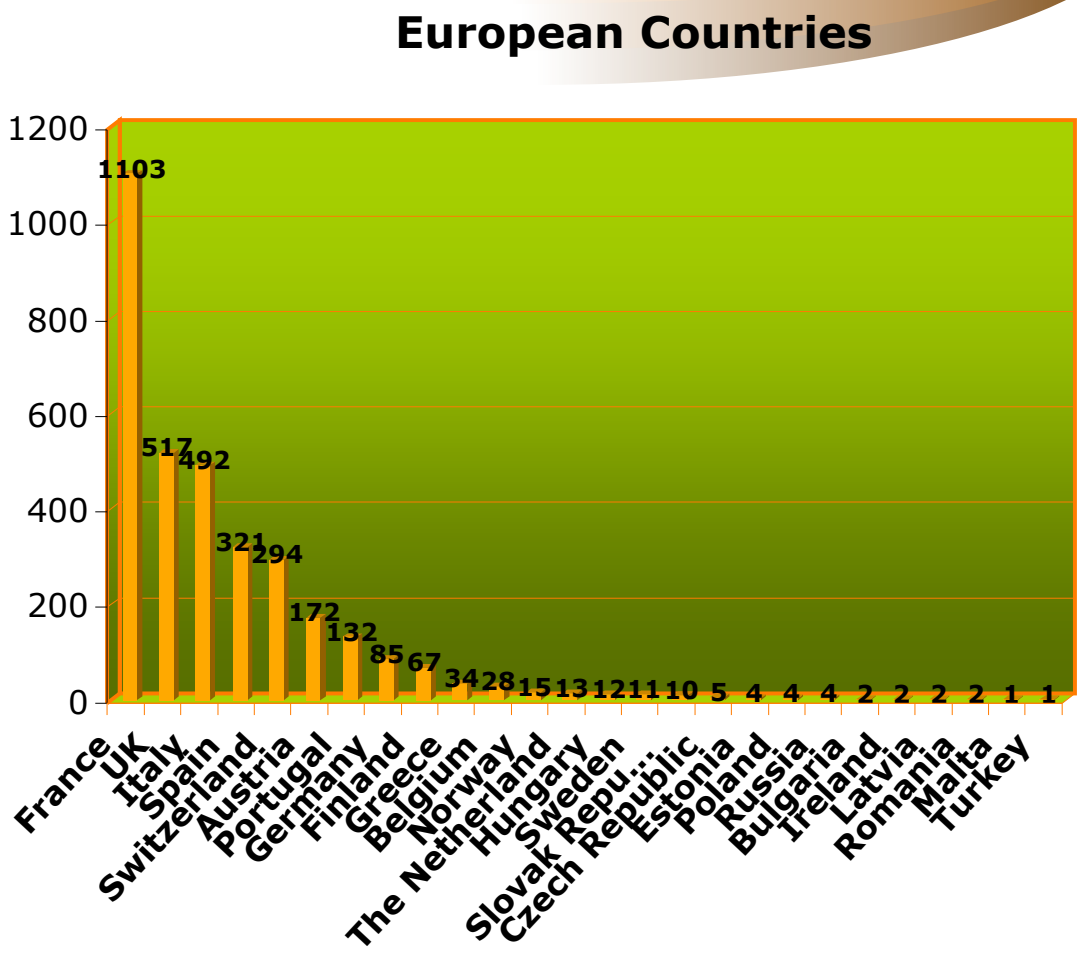
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



Author's Institution Continent: Europe

Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680

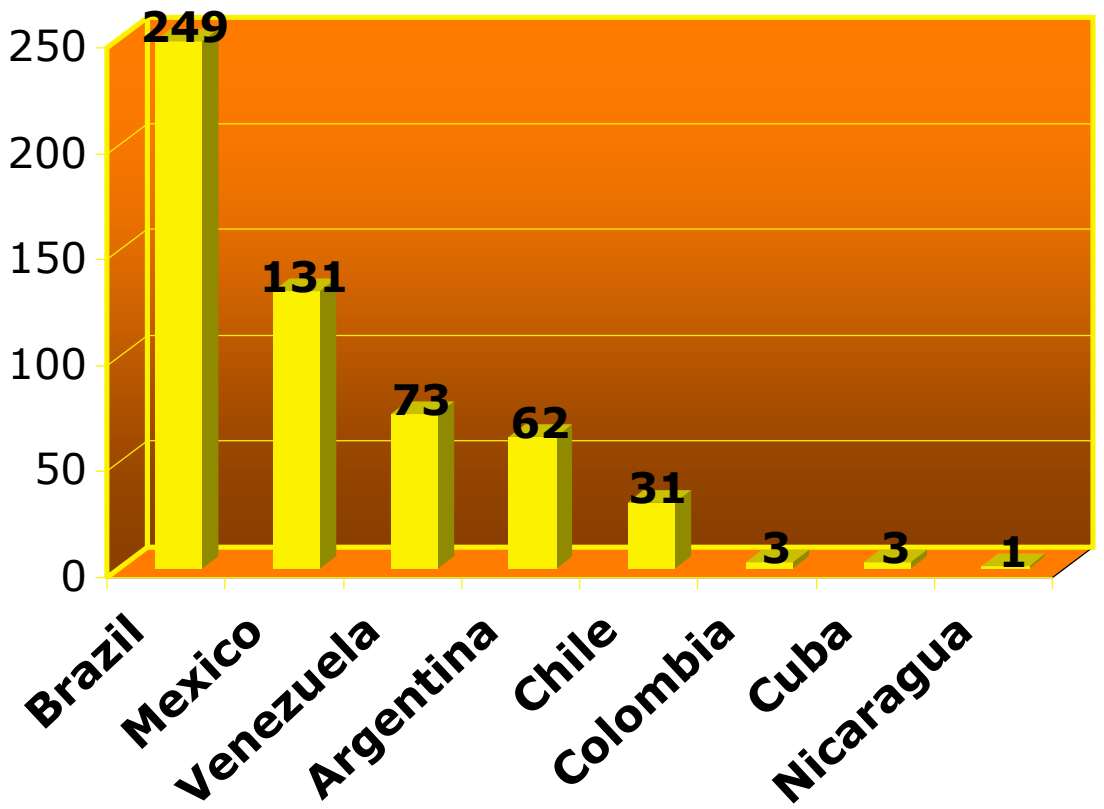
France	1103
UK	517
Italy	492
Spain	321
Switzerland	294
Austria	172
Portugal	132
Germany	85
Finland	67
Greece	34
Belgium	28
Norway	15
The Netherland	13
Hungary	12
Sweden	11
Slovak Republic	10
Czech Republic	5
Estonia	4
Poland	4
Russia	4
Bulgaria	2
Ireland	2
Latvia	2
Romania	2
Malta	1
Turkey	1
Total	3333



Author's Institution Continent: Latin-American Countries

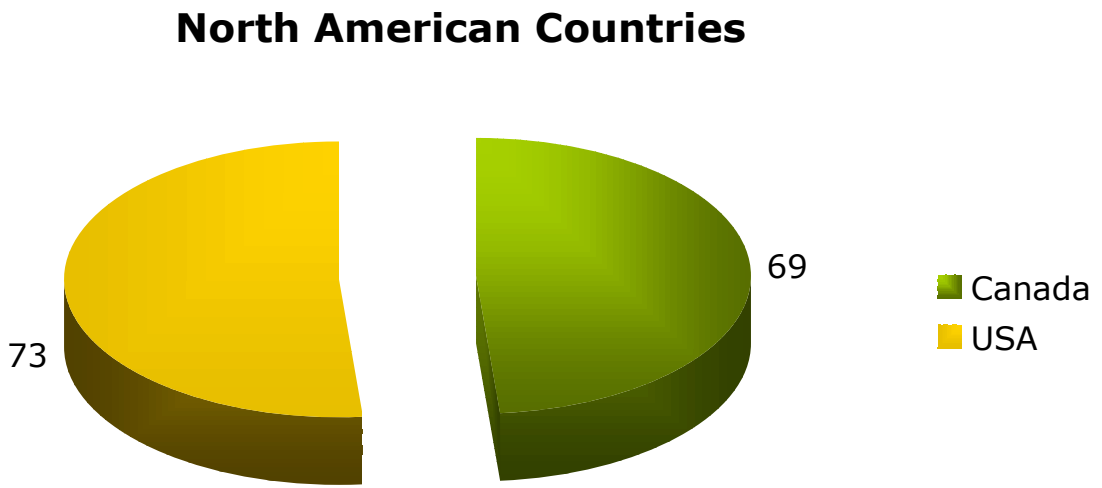
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680

Brazil	249
Mexico	131
Venezuela	73
Argentina	62
Chile	31
Colombia	3
Cuba	3
Nicaragua	1
Total	553



Author's Institution Continent: North-American Countries

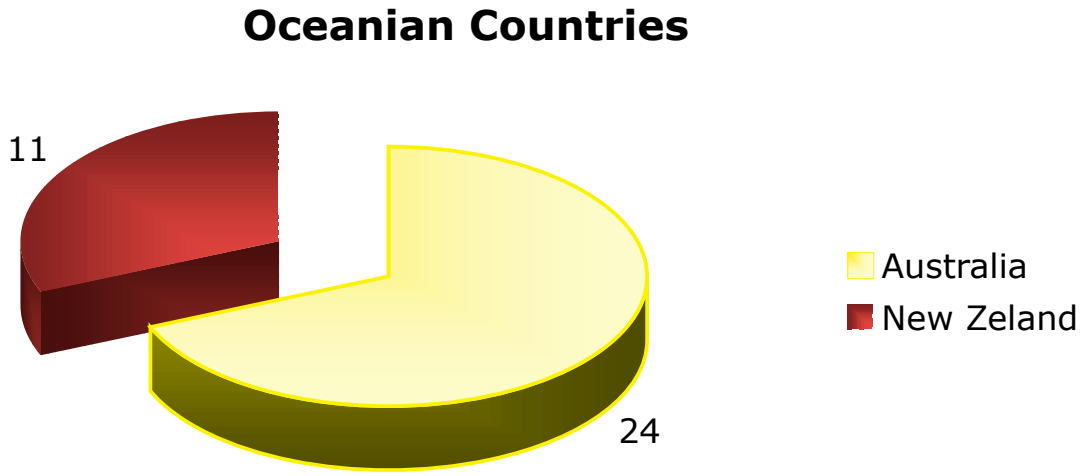
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



Canada	69
USA	73
Total	142

Author's Institution Continent: Countries of Oceania

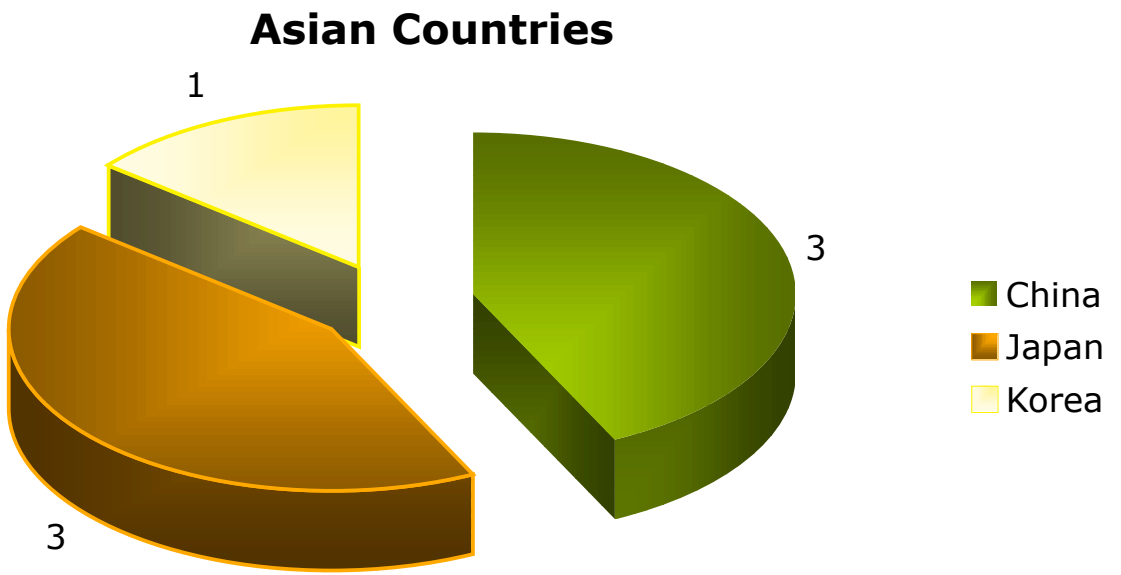
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



Australia	24
New Zeland	11
Total	35

Author's Institution Continent: Asian Countries

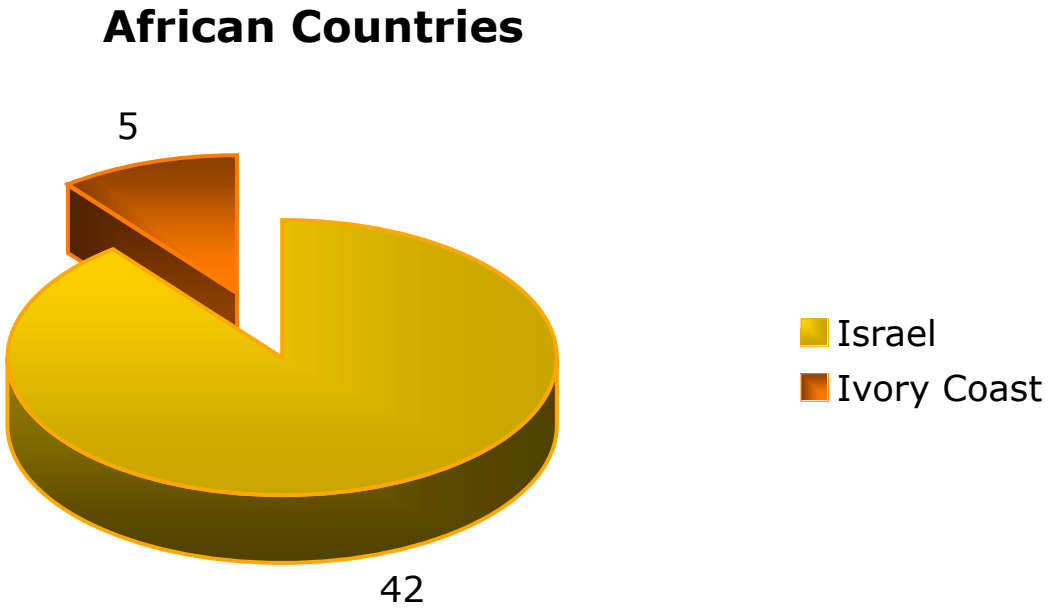
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



China	3
Japan	3
Korea	1
Total	7

Author's Institution Continent: African Countries

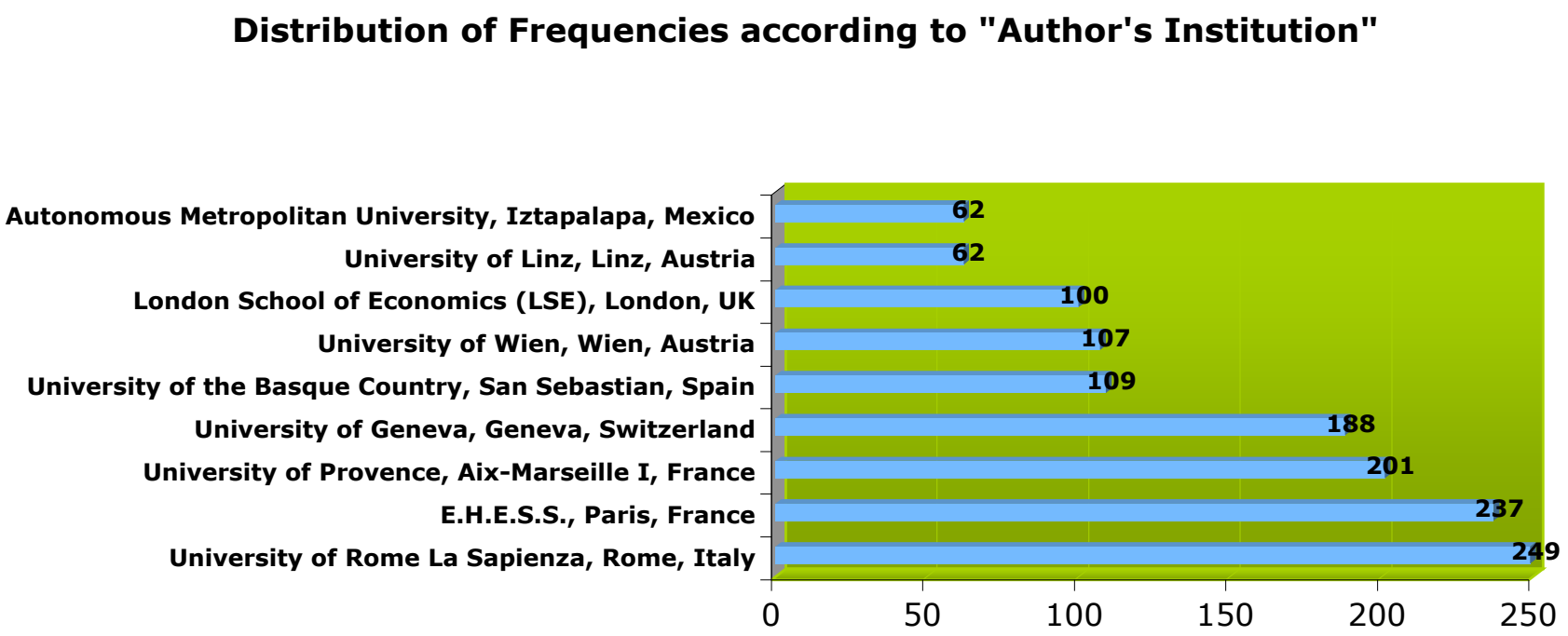
Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



Israel	42
Ivory Coast	5
Total	47

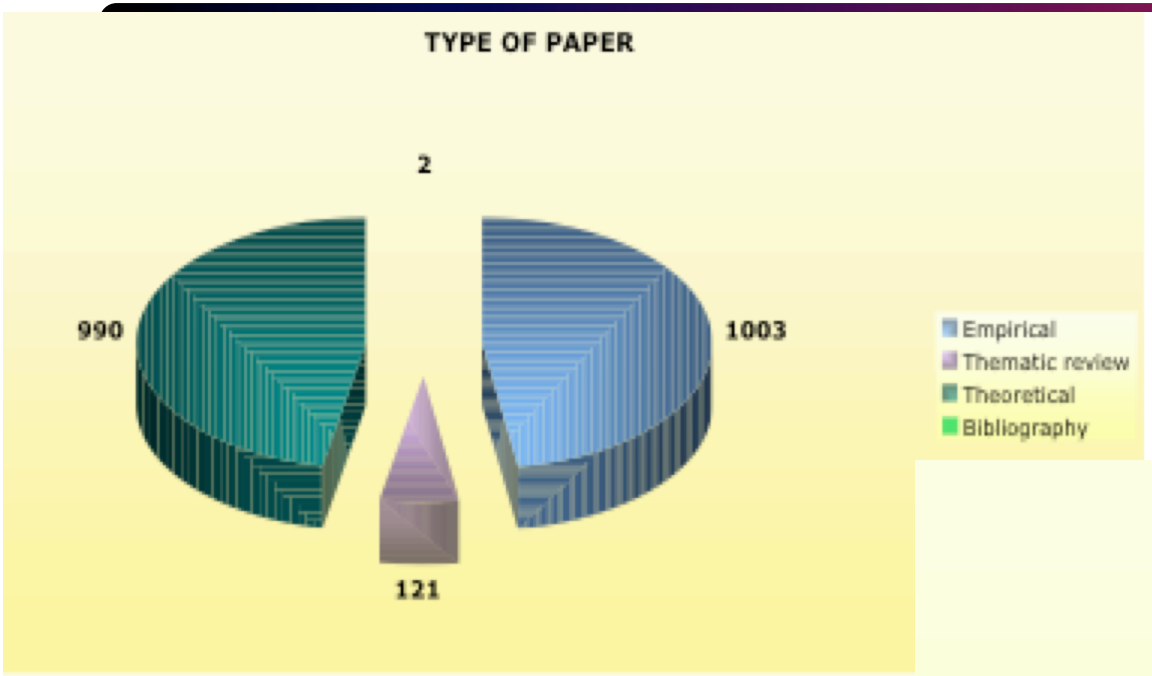
Sources for Meta-theoretical Analysis according to Author's Institutions: the top 9

Source: on-line Specialised Full Bibliographic Inventory Retrieved on July 2008 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 5680



TYPE of PAPER

Source: on-line Metanalysed Inventory Retrieved on January 2009 from http://www.europhd.eu
Total number of papers 2116



THEORETICAL REFERENCE TO SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS CONSTRUCT

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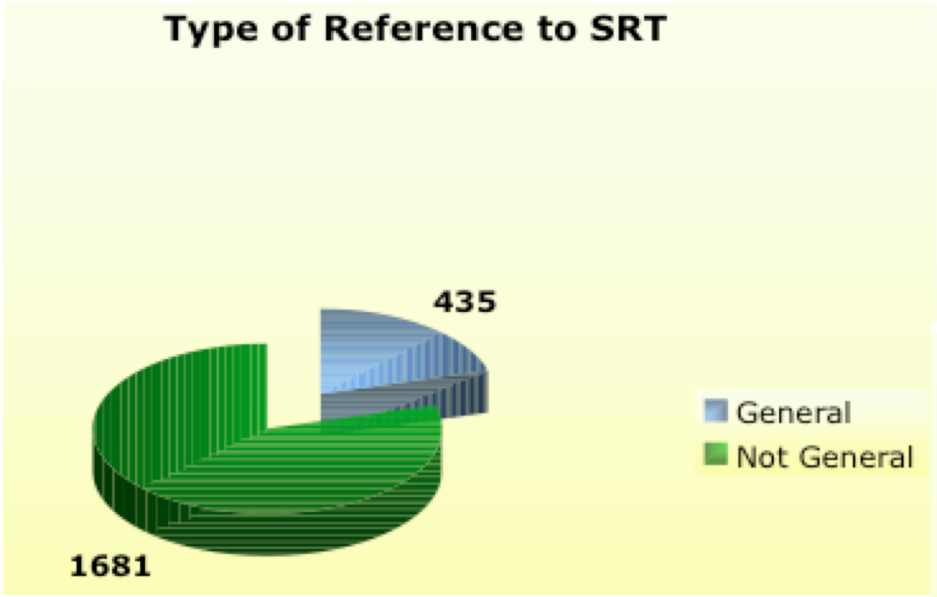

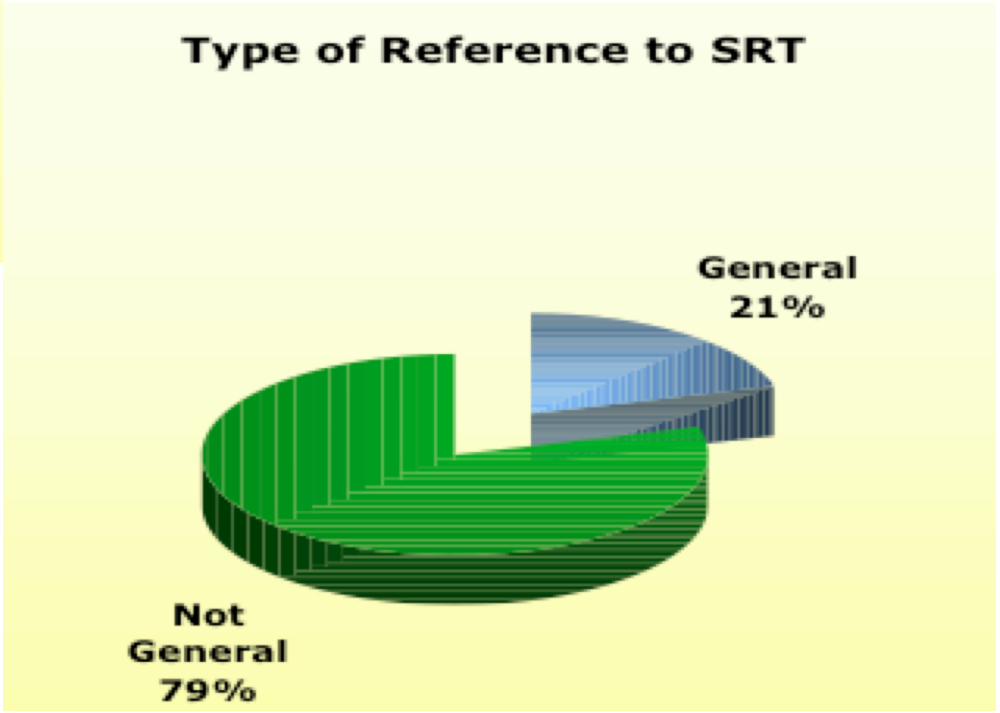

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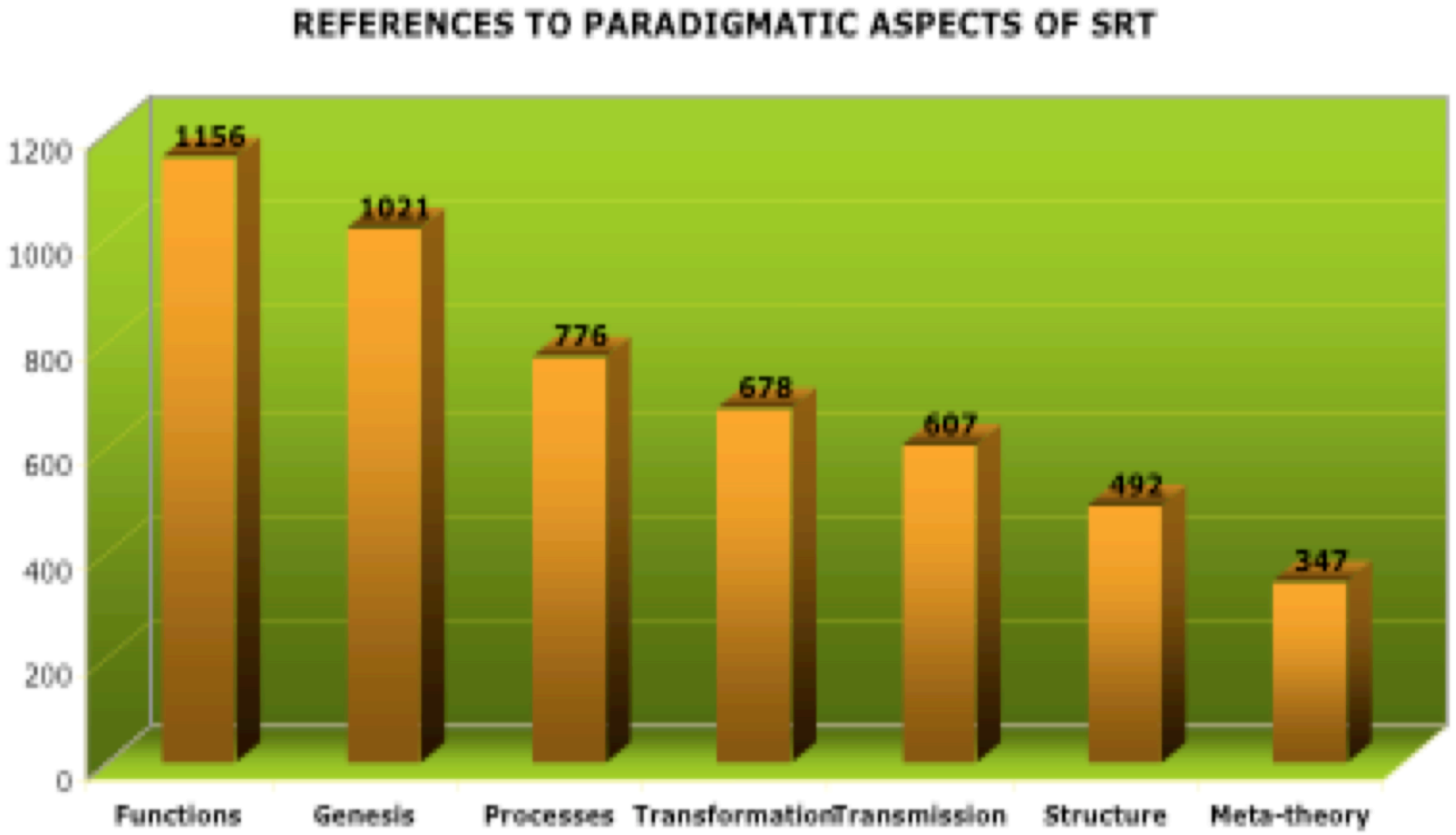

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

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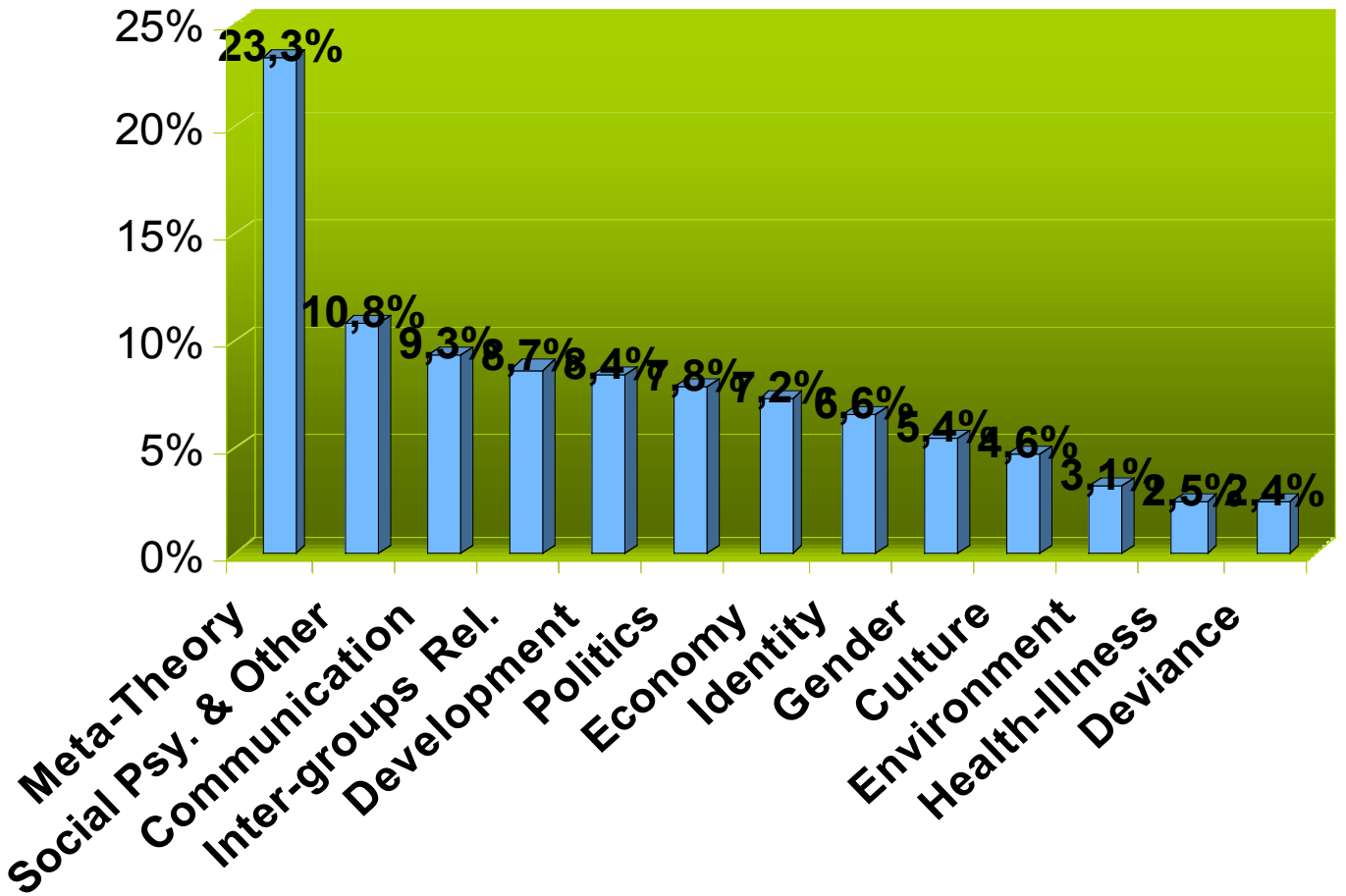

METHODOLOGICAL PROFILE: RESEARCH DESIGN

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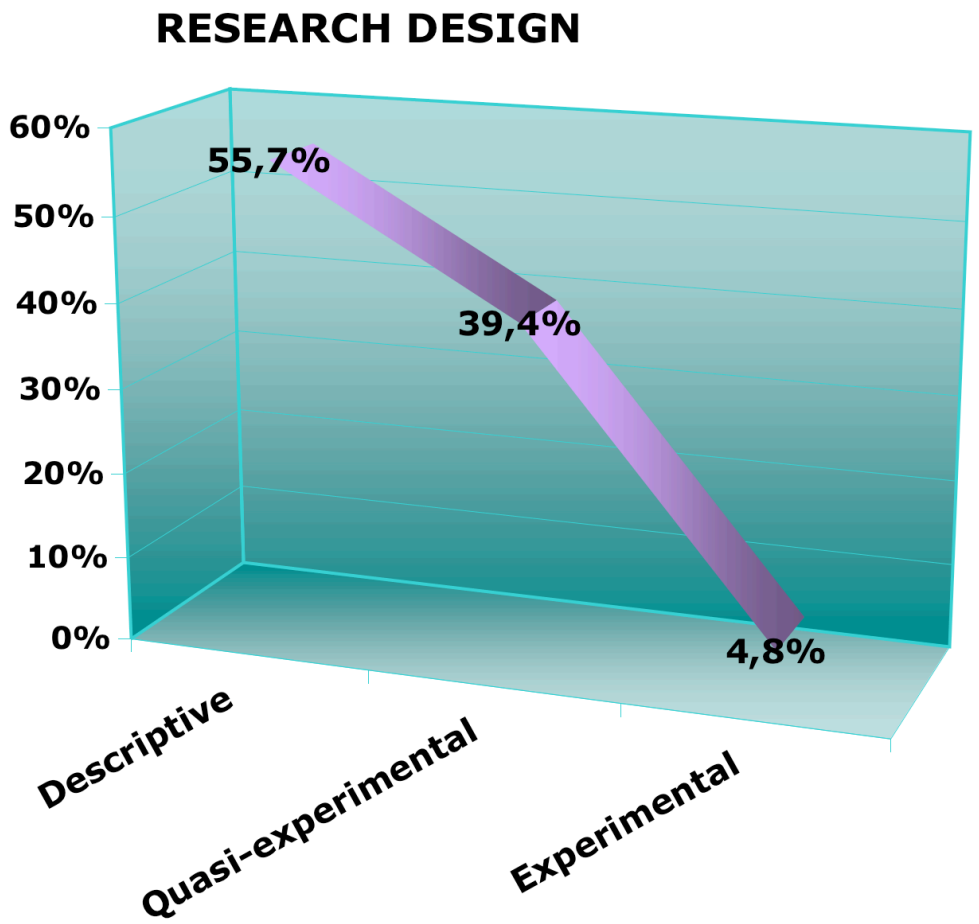
Total number of papers 2116



METHODOLOGICAL PROFILE: RESEARCH DESIGN

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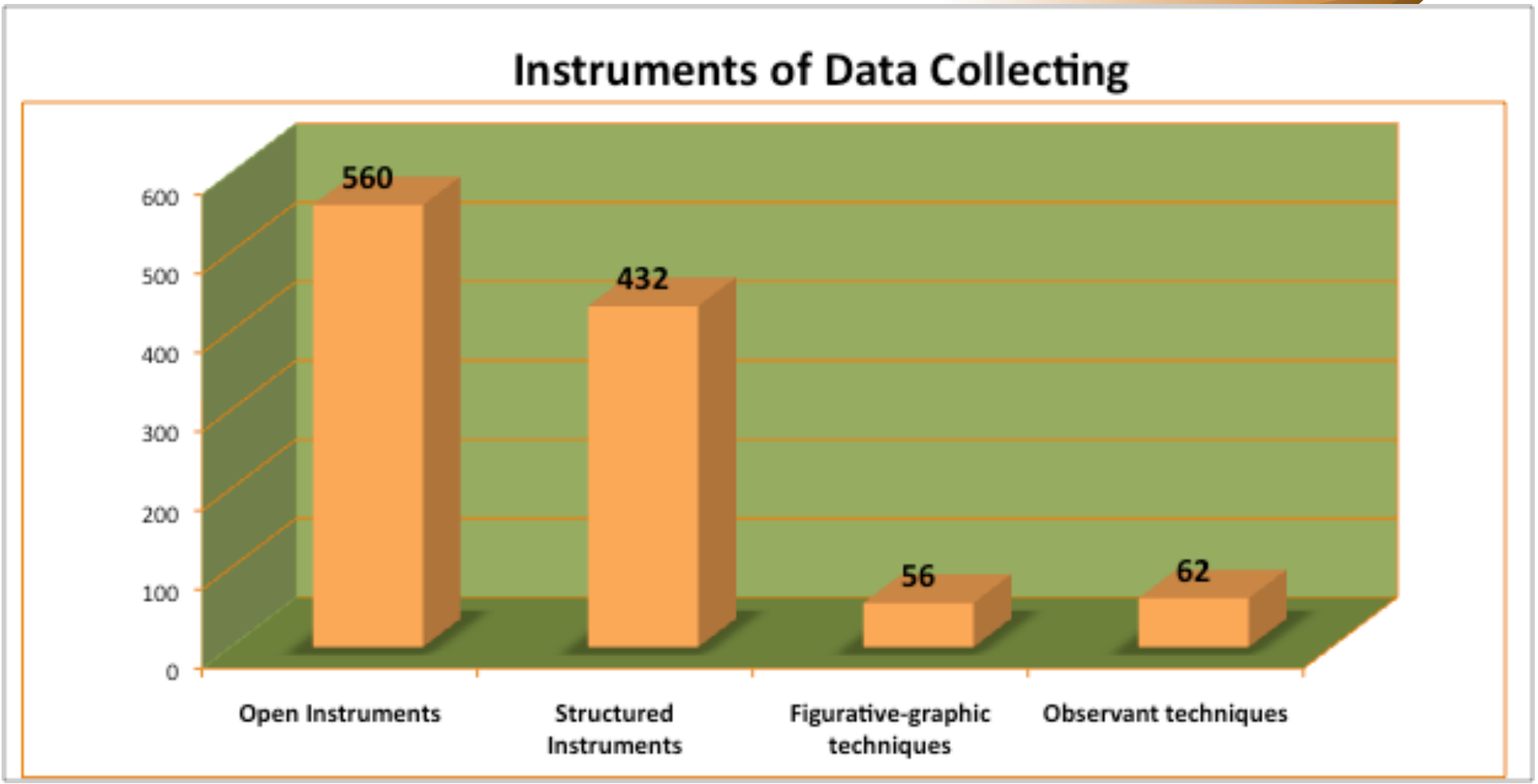

METHODOLOGICAL PROFILE:
Techniques for the data analysis

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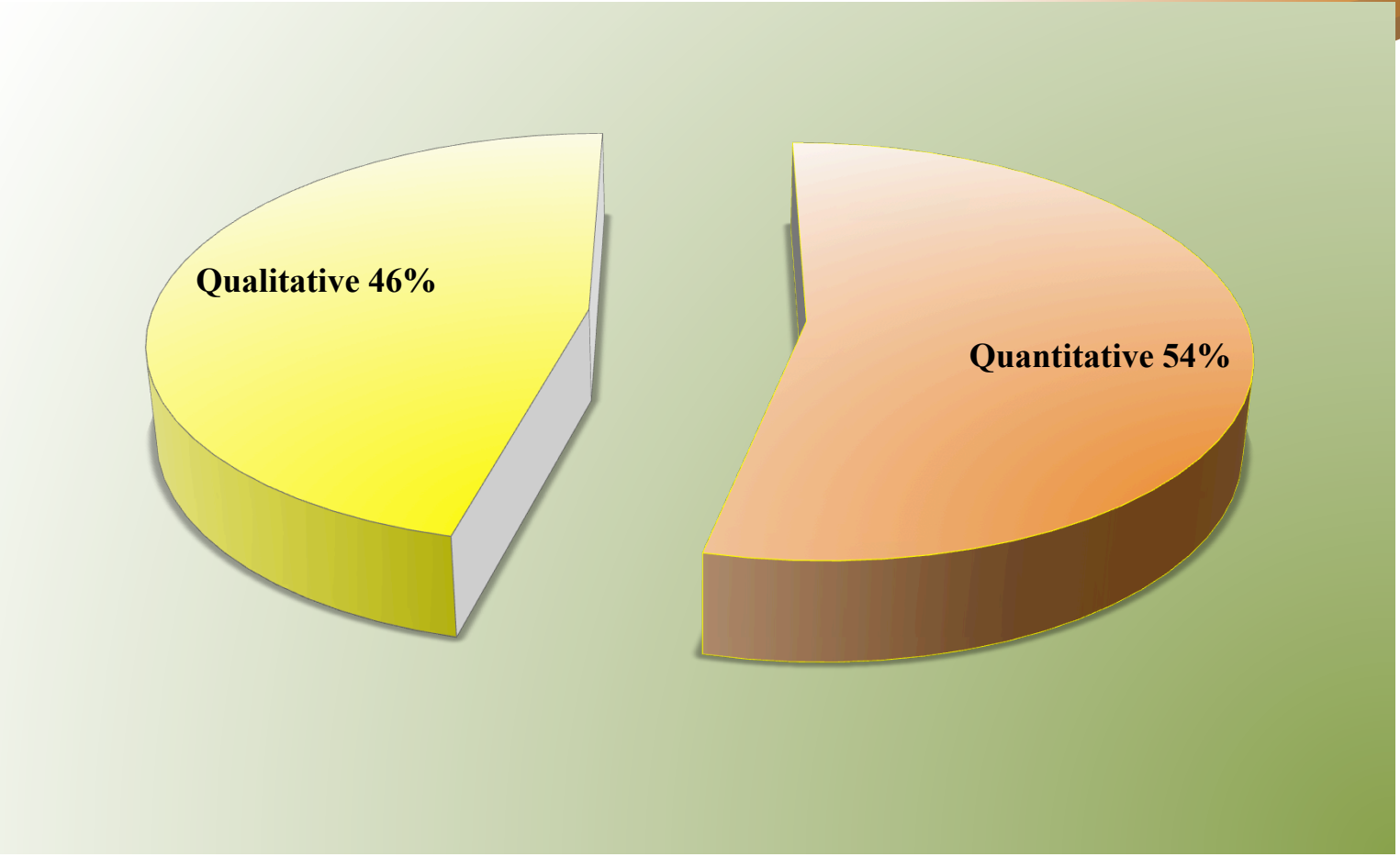

How to go beyond with data analysis

- A short selection of results from published contributions:
  - de Rosa, A.S. (2001)
  - de Rosa, A.S. d'Ambrosio, M.L. (2003, 2008)