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Scientific production about electoral debates in Spain: Bibliometric analysis (1993-2018)

La producción científica sobre debates electorales en España: Análisis bibliométrico (1993-2018)

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Abstract

Electoral debates have been studied extensively in The United States. However, there is no known study devoted to analyzing and evaluating research on electoral debates in Spain. For this reason, the objective of this paper is to come to know the current state of research in this field. For this purpose, the bibliometric analysis of journal articles, book chapters, books, conference proceedings and theses published in the last twenty-five years (1993-2018) has been used. Five databases were consulted: Dialnet, ISOC, Theseus, Scopus, and Web of Science. The total number of documents was 107. The document type, authorship, temporal evolution of publications and language have analyzed. As for the articles, the distribution by journals, the affiliation centers, the main lines of research, the most researched debate, the disciplines, the type of research, and the most used technique have been considered. The results show, amongst other issues, that research is disseminated primarily through articles in scientific journals; collaboration between authors is rare; the most used language is Spanish, and the presence in journals with an impact factor is very low.

Keywords

Electoral debates; presidential debates; Spain; bibliometric analysis; scientific production

Resumen

Los debates electorales han sido extensamente estudiados en los Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, no se conoce ningún estudio dedicado a analizar y evaluar la investigación sobre debates electorales en España. Por este motivo, el objetivo de este trabajo es conocer el estado actual de la investigación sobre este campo. Para ello, se utilizó el análisis bibliométrico de los artículos de revistas, los capítulos de libros, los libros, las actas de congresos y las tesis publicados en los últimos veinticinco años (1993-2018). Se consultaron cinco bases de datos: Dialnet, ISOC, Teseo, Scopus y Web of Science. El número de documentos fue de 107. Se analizaron la tipología documental, la autoría, la evolución temporal publicaciones y el idioma. En cuanto a los artículos, se estudió la distribución por revistas, los centros de adscripción, las principales líneas de investigación, el debate más investigado, las disciplinas, el tipo de investigación y la técnica más utilizada. Los resultados muestran, entre otras cuestiones, que la investigación se difunde principalmente a través de los artículos de revistas científicas; la colaboración entre autores es poco frecuente; la lengua más utilizada es el español, y la presencia en revistas con factor de impacto es muy baja.

Palabras clave

Debates electorales; debates presidenciales; España; análisis bibliométrico; producción científica

1. Introduction

The term debate derives etymologically from the verb debate (lat. debattuĕre) and has the meaning of the action of discussing. It also means "battle, fight, combat", according to the Diccionario de la lengua Española of the Real Academia Española (Royal Academy of the Spanish Language). In a figurative sense, it is a struggle or internal personal conflict between two contradictory options or drives. A debate is a discussion between several people who expose their - sometimes contradictory - points of view, their ideas or different opinions on a topic. Turns to speak in conditions of equal time and space are taken with the purpose of achieving adherence to their approaches. A debate can be classified in different ways. Based on the subject, debates can be scientific, economic, philosophical, political, sociological, etc. According to the media, they can be written, oral, broadcast on radio, television, the internet, etc.

Within political debates, there are different classes, such as parliamentary debates, press conferences, cabinet meetings or electoral debates (Blas Arroyo, 2003: 397). Marín defines the latter type as "the most important and attractive element of modern electoral campaigns [...] because they offer an immediate comparison of two or more opposing opinions, giving the voter the possibility to choose the one that suits him best" (2003: 207-208).

Electoral debates are important because they allow citizens to get to know the candidates and what their proposals are. These debates have the ability to influence voters in a context of hard-fought elections with a high number of undecided, as they reinforce "convinced" voters and help shape and even change the direction of the undecided vote (Lledó, 2001: 165; Arceo, 2007: 7). The relevance of electoral debates is such that some authors (Cisneros, 2006) have claimed the figure of the political debate as public heritage of the whole society.

Spain is a country with little tradition in holding electoral debates. Proof of this is that in thirteen general elections only eight electoral debates have been organized with the leaders of the major parties[1]. This is because "multiparty parliamentary systems are less suitable for these types of events or because the big political parties have not seen in them real benefits for their electoral campaigns" (García Marín, 2015: 137). The first electoral debate that was organized faced Felipe González (PSOE) and José María Aznar (PP) on May 24, 1993. The most recent one occurred on June 13, 2016 and brought together, for the first time in history, the leaders of the four major parties: Mariano Rajoy (PP), Pedro Sánchez (PSOE), Pablo Iglesias (Podemos), and Albert Rivera (Ciudadanos). Despite this fact, electoral debates raise the interest of citizens and generate massive audiences. The debates of 1993, 2008 and 2011 had high audiences, "with ratings comparable only to major sporting events (above 60% on average)" (García Marín, 2015: 137). According to the TV audience report elaborated by Barlovento Communication (2016), the last screened debate aired (13-J) registered 10.5 million spectators with 57% of the screen share on seventeen channels.

Research on televised electoral debates has traditionally been monopolized by The United States (Luengo, 2011: 83). This is due to the fact that it is the country with the oldest tradition of televised debates; following one another since the confrontation between Nixon and Kennedy in 1960. This tradition is less consolidated in Europe than it is in North America (Fernández, 2009: 268). This is the case in Spain, where the first debate among representatives of the major parties was held more than three decades later (1993). This fact led to the investigation of this field being initiated later, and the first doctoral thesis on debates that is registered in Teseo date of the late nineties (Vidal, 1998). The celebration of the two debates in 2008 entailed the consolidation of the culture of the electoral debate and generated an increased "interest in the investigation of this format, its evolution, its media coverage, its electoral consequences, and its political potential" (García -Marín, Calatrava and Luengo, 2018: 626).

Nevertheless, it has been proven that there is still no work aimed at describing and analyzing scientific production on electoral debates in Spain. Martínez-Nicolás and Saperas state that "the interest in knowing the state of research in any field of scientific knowledge must be taken as an indicator of its maturity" (2011: 105). Therefore, this research aims to analyze the production on electoral debates in Spain in the period 1993-2018 through a bibliometric analysis. This study has a double purpose: a more general one, aimed to analyze and describe the scientific production as a whole, and a more specific one, that deals with the research published in scientific journals. This is due to the fact that journals are the main channel of dissemination of scientific production today (Martínez-Nicolás y Saperas, 2011).

Therefore, the specific objectives are the following:

- 1. To identify the types of published documents.
- 2. To be aware of the temporal evolution of the publications

- 3. To determine the most used languages in these publications.
- 4. To identify the authors; know the dynamics of authorship and co-authorship; determine the sex of the authors

Regarding scientific journals, the specific objectives are:

- 1. To identify the journals that have published articles on the subject.
- 2. To determine the countries of origin of the journals and publishers
- 3. To have knowledge of the categories of the journals.
- 4. To identify the production centers.
- 5. To determine how research on electoral debates is and its content (the most researched debates and the disciplines of its study, the methodology and the most used technique).

The results can be useful to get to know the status of scientific research in this area. Thus, it will be possible to be aware of the existing progress and deficiencies in order to, firstly, assume them, and, then, correct the latter and contribute to the development of this field of knowledge.

2. Methodology

This paper is a retrospective descriptive study of scientific production on electoral debates in Spain published in the last twenty-five years (1993-2018). The research methodology that has been used is quantitative, since a bibliometric analysis has been conducted. This analysis consists of "the application of mathematics and statistical methods to analyze the course of written communication and the course of a discipline" (Spinak, 1996: 34). A bibliometric analysis has been chosen because, as Bordons and Zulueta affirm, "bibliometric studies provide an interesting insight into the scientific activity of the country itself, as well as its situation in the international context [...]" (1999: 791).

The universe of study consisted of journal articles, book chapters, books, conference proceedings and doctoral theses related to the topic of research published between 1993 and 2018. The search of the documents and the extraction of the data took place from January to June 2018.

The searches were carried out using five databases, three of which were Spanish: Dialnet, ISOC and Teseo, and the remaining two international: Scopus and Web of Science (WOS) [2]. In reference to the search of doctoral theses, the Teseo database has been used because it is the file of reference when registering theses nationwide and offers a very detailed description of each registry since 1976. Some studies (Repiso, Torres and Delgado, 2011a and 2011b) indicate that this database presents problems with the records, as it does not include all theses. However, it is the only resource that compiles the Spanish theses as a whole and is a must for research on Spanish doctoral theses (Sorli and Merlo, 2002: 203). For this reason, and to complement the records of Teseo, Dialnet was also used.

The searches on Dialnet, ISOC and Teseo were carried out with the following group of descriptors: "electoral debates", "electoral debates", "face-to-face debate", "presidential debates", "electoral political debate", "televised debates", "debate AND Zapatero AND Rajoy", "debate AND Rajoy AND Rubalcaba", "debate AND Rajoy AND Sánchez". (The descriptors in the original language of research –Spanish– were: "debates electorales", "debates electorales en televisión", "debates políticos televisados", "debates políticos", "debate cara a cara", "debates presidenciales", "debate político electoral", "debates televisados", "debate AND Rajoy AND Raj

These databases do not allow to delimit the time frame, so the selection of the documents was subsequently carried out manually. As Scopus and WOS are international databases, descriptors were used in English: "election debates", "electoral debates", "face-to-face debates", "political electoral debates", "political debates", "presidential debates", "televised debates", "Spanish political-electoral debates". In both databases, the search was limited to the period of time being researched (1993-2018). The title of the paper, the abstract and the keywords were searched on Scopus. The search was made by title and subject on WOS. In this way, the elaborated corpus collects the publications written in both Spanish and English, since the latter has become the official language for the publication of scientific research in any field.

To complement the searches carried out on the aforementioned databases, the tool Google Academic (a Google search engine specialized in scientific literature that allows to locate available open access

documents on the internet) was used. The Collective Catalog of the Network of Spanish University Libraries (Catálogo Colectivo de La Red de Bibliotecas Universitarias Españolas - REBIUN) was also searched. This catalog allows to consult the funds of the libraries of 76 universities and the CSIC. Finally, the catalog of the National Library of Spain (Biblioteca Nacional de España) was also consulted, since it includes the bibliographic and documentary heritage of our country.

On the collection of documents, texts that did not constitute scientific research, such as introductions and editorials of journals, opinion articles or book reviews, were not collected. With regard to books, the works coordinated by Gallego Reguera (2009, 2012) on the debates of 2008 and 2011 were accounted for in the category of books, for being the only existing monographs on the topic. However, the same was not done with the chapters of these books because it has been considered that they lack the necessary scientific rigor compared to the other chapters registered. This decision is based on two reasons: the first is its short length (between four and eight pages), as it prevents the deepening of the topics; the second is the general absence of bibliographic references that support these texts. Some exceptions have been detected: two chapters in the first book mentioned and four chapters in the second, which have an average of five references in the footer. Similarly, the book coordinated by Arceo Vacas (2007) on the debates during the electoral campaign of Madrid 2003 was taken into account. However, only three of the eight chapters were included because they were the only ones that included a list of bibliographic references.

The following variables in each of the documents were analyzed: year of publication, type of publication (journal article, book chapter, book, proceedings, thesis), title, authors, language (Spanish, English, others). In terms of journals, the following were investigated: type of journal (Spanish, foreign), indexing (in Thomson's Journal Citation Reports -JCR-, in Elsevier Scopus, in the MIAR database of the University of Barcelona), publishers, institution of origin of the authors (university, others). When it comes to the research of the debates the lines of investigation of the debates, the object of study, the most investigated debate, the most used discipline of study, the type of investigation and the techniques of investigation used were considered.

This analysis was performed by calculating the frequencies and percentages of the aforementioned variables, and they were represented by using tables and graphs. For the introduction and analysis of the data, a database was created using the program Microsoft Excel 2007.

3. Results

3.1. Scientific production

The documents found in the five databases and in the catalogs consulted amount to 107. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the works – 60.7% are journal articles; 16.8% correspond to book chapters; the books represent 8.4% of the total; the proceedings amount to 7.5%; and, lastly, doctoral theses come to 6.6%.

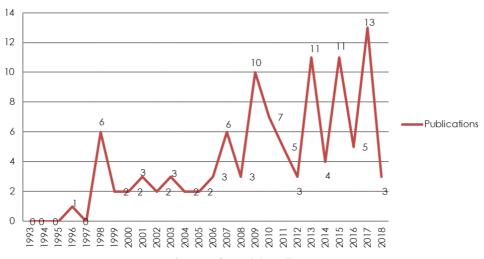
Table 1: Types of documents					
Type of document	N.º doc.	% doc.			
Journal articles	65	60,7			
Book chapters	18	16,8			
Books	9	8,4			
Proceedings	8	7,5			
Doctoral theses	7	6,6			
Total	107	100			

Source: Own elaboration.

Figure 1 shows the temporal evolution of scientific production in the last twenty-five years (1993-2018). As can be seen, the research does not follow a line of constant growth. It presents notable differences throughout this period. Although there is a document published in 1996, the production on televised electoral debates in Spain actually began in 1998, in which 6 documents were published. Production suffers a sharp decline during the following ten years, in which 28 documents were published, with an average of 2.8 documents per year. The investigation rises in 2009 with the publication of 10 documents. During the next three years, production decreases progressively until 2013, when the highest level of production until then is reached, with 11 documents published. In the last five years (2013-2018), production has been very

irregular with sharp falls and two key moments: the year 2015 (11 published documents) and the year 2017, which is the most productive of the entire period with 13 publications.

Figure 1: Temporary evolution of scientific production on televised electoral debates in Spain (1993-2018)



Source: Own elaboration.

To determine the scientific production, the language in which each document was published was analyzed. As can be seen in Table 2, the results show the predominance of Spanish over the rest of the languages in all published works (89 documents, totaling 83.2%). The presence of works in English is a minority (10 documents, 9.4%), while other foreign languages, such as French, are hardly used. In addition, articles in English are published more frequently by a single author (8 of a total of 10). A minor use of the Catalan language is observed in some texts (6 documents, 5.6%).

Table 2: Language according to type of document [3]

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Languages	Journal	Book	Books	Proceedings	Doctoral	Total	%
	articles	chapters			theses		
Spanish	52	17	8	6	6	89	83,2
English	10	0	0	0	0	10	9,4
Catalan	2	0	1	2	1	6	5,6
French	0	1	0	0	0	1	0,9
Bilingual	1	0	0	0	0	1	0,9
Total	65	18	9	8	7	107	100

Source: Own elaboration.

The 107 documents were written by 94 authors (46 men and 48 women). The presence of both is fairly even, although it is slightly higher in the case of women who total 51.1% compared to men who total 48.9%. Table 3 reflects that, regardless of the type of document in which it is published (articles, chapters of books, books and minutes), the research is written by a single author^[4]. The proceedings that collect contributions to congresses are those that register a higher percentage of sole authors (87.5%), followed by books (66.7%), articles (64.6%) and book chapters (53,3%).

Co-authored documents have an irregular presence depending on the type of publication. As for the articles, the most frequent circumstance is the collaboration between two authors (26.2%), a figure that does not amount to half of the total number of articles signed by one author. Articles with three signers have a very low presence (4.6%), followed by those with six signers (3.1%), and those with four (1.5%). In reference to book chapters, the most common circumstance is for them to be signed by two or three authors (20% respectively), and the collaboration of more than four authors (6.7%) is non-existent. As for books, references with more than six authors constitute a small trend (22.2%). Finally, there is a minority presence of two authors in proceedings (12.5%).

Table 3: Distribution of documents according to the number of authors [5]

N.º signatures	N.º art.	% art.	N.º b.c.	% b.c.	N.º b.	% b.	N.º pro.	% pro.	N.º d.t.	% d.t.
1	42	64,6	8	53,3	6	66,7	7	87,5	7	100
2	17	26,2	3	20	0	0	1	12,5	0	0
3	3	4,6	3	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1	1,5	1	6,7	1	11,1	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	2	3,1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
> 6	0	0	0	0	2	22,2	0	0	0	0
Total	65	100	15	100	9	100	8	100	7	100

Source: Own elaboration.

The most productive authors come from Spanish public universities. Above all authors, José Luis Blas Arroyo, with 13 documents, Francisco Fernández García, with 11 documents, and Maria Josep Marín i Jordá, with 9 documents stand out. Table 4 shows only the researchers who have published at least three documents because the list of authors is extensive. A noteworthy fact is that the most productive author, Blas Arroyo, is the only one whose thesis is not about electoral debates, but about sociolinguistic aspects of the Catalan language [6].

Table 4: The most productive authors [7]

Authors	Institution	J.A.	B.C.	В.	P.	D.T.	Total
Blas Arroyo, José Luis	UJI	11	1	1	0	0	13
Fernández García, Francisco	UJA	7	1	2	0	1	11
Marín i Jordà, Maria Josep	UV	4	1	1	2	1	9
Gallego Reguera, María	Next IBS	3	0	0	0	1	4
Marín Pérez, Benjamín	UV	2	1	0	0	1	4
Cuenca, Maria Josep	UV	2	1	0	0	0	3
García Marín, Javier	UGR	2	1	0	0	0	3

Source: Own elaboration.

3.2. The dissemination of research in scientific journals

Once the scientific production in general was analyzed, the analysis of the dissemination of research in scientific journals was tackled. For this purpose, Table 5 shows the distribution of the articles according to the year of publication and the journals that have published them. The 65 journal articles published during the 1993-2018 period have been found in a total of 50 scientific journals, with an average of 1.3 articles per journal.

80% of the journals (40) published one single article, which reveals that research in this field is widely dispersed. There is a low concentration of texts in a group of 10 journals. The ones that concentrate the most are: Oralia. Análisis del discurso oral, Revista Española de Ciencia Política (both with 4 articles each, totaling 12.8% of the articles) and Tonos Digital (with 3 articles, amounting to 4.8% of the articles). Another seven mastheads are matched with 2 published texts – the Spanish journals Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación (CLAC), El Profesional de la Información, Español Actual, LinRed. Lingüística en la Red, and Tiempo Presente. Revista de Historia, and the foreign ones Palabra Clave and Discourse & Society. These hold 22.4% of the published articles.

Table 5: Distribution of articles in journals and years of publication

Scientific journals (n = 50)	Years	N.º art.	% art.
Oralia. Análisis del discurso oral	2001, 2009, 2015	4	6,4
Revista Española de Ciencia Política	2001, 2010, 2011, 2015	4	6,4
Tonos Digital	2009, 2010	3	4,8
Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación (CLAC)	2014, 2016	2	3,2
Discourse & Society	2003, 2014	2	3,2
El Profesional de la Información	2017, 2018	2	3,2
Español actual	2009, 2010	2	3,2
Linred. Lingüística en la Red	2008, 2009	2	3,2

Palabra Clave	2010, 2018	2	3,2
Tiempo Presente. Revista de Historia	2013	2	3,2
Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación	2010	1	1,5
Cahiers de l' Institut de linguistique de Louvain	1998	1	1,5
Caplletra. Revista Internacional de Filología	2005	1	1,5
Catalan Review: International Journal of Catalan	2007	1	1,5
Culture			
Communication & Society	2017	1	1,5
Contratexto	2015	1	1,5
Cuadernos Manuel Giménez Abad	2016	1	1,5
Cultura, Lenguaje y Representación	2015	1	1,5
Dígitos. Revista de Comunicación Digital	2017	1	1,5
Discourse Studies	2007	1	1,5
Discurso & Sociedad	2010	1	1,5
Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico	2008	1	1,5
Informação & Sociedade: Estudos	2017	1	1,5
Intercultural Pragmatics	2015	1	1,5
ITL – International Journal of Applied Linguistics	2002	1	1,5
Journal of Catalan Studies	2006	1	1,5
Journal of Pragmatics	2000	1	1,5
Langues et Linguistique	1998	1	1,5
Marco. Revista de Marketing y Comunicación	2015	1	1,5
Política			
Mediterranean Language Review	1998	1	1,5
Miguel Hernández Communication Journal	2010	1	1,5
Nueva Revista de Política, Cultura y Arte	2008	1	1,5
Orbis. Revista Científica Ciencias Humanas	2013	1	1,5
Perspectivas de la Comunicación	2013	1	1,5
Pragmática Sociocultural	2015	1	1,5
Pragmatics: Quarterly Publication of the International	2013	1	1,5
Pragmatic Association 1			
Razón y Palabra	2017	1	1,5
Revista de Análisis Transaccional y Psicología	2016	1	1,5
Humanista			
Revista de Ciencias de la Información	2006	1	1,5
Revista de Investigación Lingüística	1999	1	1,5
Revista de las Cortes Generales	1998	1	1,5
Revista Latina de Comunicación Social	2009	1	1,5
Revista Mexicana de Opinión Pública	2015	1	1,5
RIPS.	2017	1	1,5
Sintagma. Revista de Lingüística	2015	1	1,5
Spanish in Context	2016	1	1,5
Teknokultura	2017	1	1,5
Trípodos	2017	1	1,5
Vivat Academia	2017	1	1,5
Zer. Revista de Estudios de Comunicación	2009	1	1,5
Total		65	100

The 50 journals have been published in 14 different countries. With 31 (62% of the total), Spain is the country with the largest number of mastheads containing articles on electoral debates. The second country in the ranking, but with a much smaller number of journals, is Belgium (with three journals, representing 6% of the total). By regions, Europe (Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, The United Kingdom and Sweden) has concentrated 18% of the journals, and Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela), 14% of the total.

Table 6: Journal publication countries

Country	N.º journals	% journals	Country	N.º journals	% journals
Spain	31	62	Canada	1	2
Belgium	3	6	Chile	1	2
Germany	2	4	Colombia	1	2
The United States	2	4	Peru	1	2
Mexico	2	4	The United Kingdom	1	2
the Netherlands	2	4	Sweden	1	2
Brazil	1	2	Venezuela	1	2

Source: Own elaboration.

With reference to the editors of the journals, an extensive and heterogeneous group of 41 editors has been found. It is a Spanish public university that manages the largest number of mastheads – the Complutense University of Madrid (la Universidad Complutense de Madrid) totaling 10%. They are the following: Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación, Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico, Revista de Ciencias de la Información, Teknokultura: Revista de Cultura Digital, and Vivat Academia. In addition, there is a small group of five publishers, which is formed by three publishers (Arco Libros, De Gruyter and SAGE Publications) and two universities (University of Murcia and University of Santiago de Compostela), which gather ten journals, representing 20% of the total. Universities are the institutions that predominate in the management of scientific journals, since they represent 63.4% of the editors, and they are also the ones that publish the largest number of journals (32 mastheads, totaling 64%). On the other hand, editorial groups have a lower presence with 21.9% and having only published 24% of the total number of journals.

Table 7: Journal publishers

Journal publishers	N.º journals	% journals
(n = 41)	(n = 50)	
Universidad Complutense de Madrid	5	10
Arco Libros	2	4
De Gruyter	2	4
SAGE Publications	2	4
Universidad de Murcia	2	4
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela	2	4
AECPA	1	2
AESPAT	1	2
Congreso de los Diputados	1	2
Elsevier BV	1	2
Fundación Manuel Giménez Abad	1	2
Fundación Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo	1	2
International Pragmatic Association	1	2
ITESM Campus Estado de México	1	2
John Benjamins Publishing Company	1	2
Liverpool University Press	1	2
Peeters Publishers	1	2
Publicaciones de la Abadía de Montserrat	1	2
Swets & Zeitlinger	1	2
Teun A. van Dijk	1	2
Universidad Abierta de Cataluña	1	2
Universidad de Alcalá	1	2
Universidad de Extremadura	1	2
Universidad de La Frontera	1	2
Universidad de La Laguna	1	2
Universidad de La Sabana	1	2
Universidad de Lima	1	2
Universidad de Lleida	1	2
Universidad de Navarra	1	2
Universidad de Sevilla	1	2
Universidad de Valencia	1	2
Universidad del País Vasco	1	2
Universidad Internacional de La Rioja	1	2

Universidad Jaime I	1	2
Universidad Miguel Hernández	1	2
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	1	2
Universidad Ramon Llull	1	2
Universidade Federal de Campina Grande	1	2
Universität Heidelberg	1	2
Université Catholique de Louvain	1	2
Universitè Laval	1	2
Total	50	100

Regarding the quality of the journals, only 18% of them are indexed in the JCR (Journal Citation Reports) and 28% are collected in Scopus. 88% of them are collected in the MIAR database –Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals (Matriz de Información para el Análisis de Revistas) – of the University of Barcelona. 12% are not registered in any of these indexes. The nine mastheads found in the JCRs are: Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación (2016), Discourse & Society (2003, 2014), Discourse Studies (2007), Informacao & Sociedade: Estudos (2017), Intercultural Pragmatics (2015), Journal of Pragmatics (2000), Pragmatics: Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatic Association (2013), Sintagma. Revista de Lingüística (2015) y Spanish in Context (2016). The journal that had the highest Journal Impact Factor was the German Intercultural Pragmatics in 2015 with a 1,070.

In relation to the SJR indicator, four journals are positioned in the first quartile (Q1): Discourse & Society (2003 y 2014), Discourse Studies (2007), El Profesional de la Información (2017) y Pragmatics: Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatic Association (2013). Regarding the ICDS index established by the MIAR database, two journals record the highest index, 10.9. These are: El Profesional de la Información (2017 and 2018) and Informacao & Sociedade: Estudos (2017).

If you look at the articles that were published in indexed journals, it should be noted that most of them were published in journals that were not indexed in the JCR or Scopus indexes, since only 15.4% of the articles were published in journals that are in the JCR, while 24.6% were published in Scopus. If the indexes are compared, the number of texts published in journals indexed in the JCRs was lower (10 articles, 15.4%) than those published in journals indexed in Scopus (16 articles, 24.6%).

Table 8: Indexing of journals I N.º % Scientific Journal Impact N.° % **journals** journals articles articles Indexes (n = 50)(n = 65)**ICR** 15.4 18 10 SJR 28 14 16 24,6 MIAR 44 88 38 58.5 12 No record JCR, SJR and MIAR 6 9,2

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 9: Indexing of journals II[8]

Journals	Year	JIF	SJR	ICDS
		(JCR)		
Intercultural Pragmatics	2015	1,070	Q2	7,5
Discourse Studies	2007	0,929	Q1	No data
Discourse & Society	2014	0,710	Q1	9,8
Discourse & Society	2003	0,677	Q1	No data
Journal of Pragmatics	2000	0,405	Q2	No data
Spanish in Context	2016	0,286	Q2	10,6
Pragmatics: Quarterly Publication of the International	2013	0,273	Q1	7,8
Pragmatic Association				
Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación	2016	0,258	Q3	8,7
Informacao & Sociedade: Estudos	2017	0,159	Q3	10,9
Sintagma	2015	0,118	Q3	9,9
Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación	2014	0	Q3	7,6

Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación	2010	No	No	No data
Cahiers de l'Institut de Linguistique de Louvain	1998	No	No	No record
			data	
Caplletra. Revista Internacional de Filología	2005	No	No	No data
Catalan Review: international journal of Catalan culture	2007	No	No	No data
			data	
Contratexto: Revista digital de la Facultad de	2015	No	No	3,9
Comunicación de la Universidad de Lima	001/			
Cuadernos Manuel Giménez Abad	2016	No	No	1,1
Cultura, Lenguaje y Representación	2015	No	Q4	8,5
<u>Dígitos: Revista de Comunicación Digital</u>	2017	No	No	3,3
Discurso & Sociedad	2010	No	No Q1	No record
El Profesional de la Información	2017	No		10,9
El Profesional de la Información	2018	No	No data	10,9
Español Actual	2009	No	No	6,4
Español Actual	2010	No	No	6,4
ITL - International Journal of Applied Linguistics	2002	No	No	No data
Journal of Catalan Studies	2002	No	No	No data
Langues et Linguistique	1998	No	No	No data
Linred. Lingüística en la Red	2008	No	No	No data
Linred. Lingüística en la Red	2009	No	No	No data
Marco. Revista de Marketing y Comunicación Política	2015	No	No	No record
Mediterranean Language Review	1998	No	No	No data
Miguel Hernández Communication Journal	2010	No	No	No data
Nueva Revista de Política, Cultura y Arte	2008	No	No	1,6
Oralia. Análisis del discurso oral	2001	No	No	No data
Oralia. Análisis del discurso oral	2009	No	No	6,0
Oralia. Análisis del discurso oral	2015	No	Q4	9,7
Orbis. Revista Científica Ciencias Humanas	2013	No	No	3,9
Palabra Clave	2010	No	No	No data
Palabra Clave	2018	No	No	9,8
Perspectivas de la Comunicación	2013	No	No	3,0
Pragmática Sociocultural/Sociocultural Pragmatics	2015	No	No	2,8
Razón y palabra	2017	No	No	6,3
Revista de Análisis Transaccional y Psicología Humanista	2016	No	No	4,5
Revista de Ciencias de la Información	2006	No	No	No record
Revista de Investigación Lingüística	1999	No	No	No data
Revista de las Cortes Generales	1998	No	No	No data
Revista Española de Ciencia Política	2001	No	No	No data
Revista Española de Ciencia Política	2010	No	No	6,0
Revista Española de Ciencia Política	2011	No	No	6,0
Revista Española de Ciencia Política	2015	No	Q4	9,7
Revista Latina de Comunicación Social	2009	No	No	6,0
Revista Mexicana de Opinión Pública	2015	No	No	No record
RIPS. Revista de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociológicas	2017	No	No	7,8
Teknokultura: Revista de Cultura Digital y Movimientos	2017	No	No	7,7
Sociales				
Tiempo Presente. Revista de Historia	2013	No	No	No record
Tonos Digital. Revista electrónica de estudios filológicos	2009	No	No	3,9
Tonos Digital. Revista electrónica de estudios filológicos	2010	No	No	3,9
Trípodos. Revista Digital de Comunicación	2017	No	No	7,8
Vivat Academia	2018	No	No	9,8
Zer. Revista de Estudios de Comunicación	2009	No	No	6,1
Communication & Society / Comunicación y Sociedad	2017	No	Q2	10,0
Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico	2008	No	No	3,6

As for the institution of origin of the authors, the researchers who published in journals were 67 out of a total of 94 and they came from 32 different centers. Most of them are universities –90.6%–, compared to 9.4% that are not universities. On the location of the production centers, the Spanish universities are the majority with 65.6%, while the foreign universities only represent 25%. Of the latter, 50% are Latin American, and the other 50% is distributed between French and American centers. Focusing on Spanish universities, the public ones concentrate the highest number of authors, with 65.7%, compared to private ones, which total 14.9%. The ranking of universities with the highest number of authors is headed by the University of Valencia, which gathers 16.5% of the authors. It is followed at a distance by the University of Seville with 9.0%. They both group 25.5% of the total authors. Both the CEU San Pablo University and the University of Granada gather 11.8% of the authors. Among the first seven universities there are five public and two private, which gather 50.5% of the authors.

Table 10: Institutions of origin of the authors

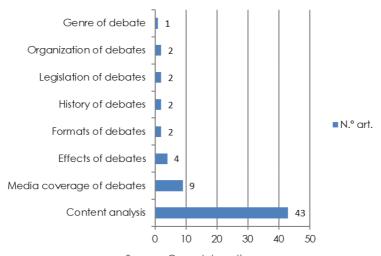
Institution (n = 32)	N.º authors	% authors
Universidad de Valencia	11	16,5
Universidad de Sevilla	6	9,0
Universidad CEU San Pablo	4	5,9
Universidad de Granada	4	5,9
Universidad Antonio Nebrija	3	4,4
Universidad de Almería	3	4,4
Universidad de Santiago de Compostela	3	4,4
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (México)	2	3,0
Next International Business School	2	3,0
Universidad Camilo José Cela	2	3,0
Universidad Complutense de Madrid	2	3,0
Universidad de Burgos	2	3,0
Universidad de Málaga	2	3,0
Universidad de Vigo	2	3,0
Universidad Jaime I	2	3,0
Academia de las Ciencias y las Artes de la TV	1	1,5
Instituto Juan March	1	1,5
Universidad Austral (Argentina)	1	1,5
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (México)	1	1,5
Universidad de Alcalá de Henares	1	1,5
Universidad de Alicante	1	1,5
Universidad de Jaén	1	1,5
Universidad de Murcia	1	1,5
Universidad de Navarra	1	1,5
Universidad de San Martín de Porres (Perú)	1	1,5
Universidad de Valladolid	1	1,5
Universidad del País Vasco	1	1,5
Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	1	1,5
Universitè d'Artois (Francia)	1	1,5
Université de Lille (Francia)	1	1,5
University of Georgia (EE. UU.)	1	1,5
University of Missouri (EE. UU.)	1	1,5
Total	67	100

Source: Own elaboration.

3.3. Research on electoral debates in scientific articles

In the research on televised electoral debates in Spain, the analysis of the contents of debates predominates (in 43 articles out of a total of 65, 66.1%), as shown in Figure 2. The analysis of the media coverage of debates is the second most common research area with 13.8%. The third corresponds to the effects of debates with 6.1%. The rest of the research areas have a much smaller presence. This is the case of the study of formats, organization, history, their legislation and the genre of debate.

Figure 2: Research areas of electoral debates



Next, the object of study is presented in the articles whose research area was the analysis of the content of the debates. The results shown in Table 11 indicate that the debates issued on the occasion of a general election have been the most analyzed by the researchers (79.1%). This contrasts with the figures of the debates for regional elections, whose study has been much smaller (4.6%)

Table 11: Object of study in the articles that present the content analysis research area

Types of electoral debates	N.º art. (n = 43)	% art.
General elections	34	79,1
Regional elections	2	4,6
Local elections	-	-
General and regional elections	2	4,6
General and European elections	2	4,6
Spain general elections and presidential elections in others countries	3	7,1
Total	43	100

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the most analyzed electoral debates, Table 12 reveals that these are the two held in 2008, resulting in twelve articles (27.9%). The second most researched debate is that of 2011, amounting to nine articles (21.0%). The third corresponds to the two debates of 1993, resulting in six articles (14.0%).

Table 12: Most researched electoral debates

	Debates analyzed	N.º art. (n = 43)	% art.
One	Spanish second presidential debate in 1993 (31-5-1993)	2	4,7
debate	Spanish presidential debate in 2011, called "El Debate 2011" (7-11-2011)	9	21,0
	Spanish presidential debate in 2015, called "7D El Debate Decisivo" (7-12-2015)	1	2,3
	Debate in the 1995 regional elections in Catalonia (Spain, 3-11-1995)	1	2,3
	Total	13	30,2
Two	Spanish presidential debates in 1993	6	14,0
debates	Spanish presidential debates in 2008	12	27,9
	Spanish presidential debate, called "7D El Debate Decisivo" (7-12-2015) and Spanish "Face to face 2015" ("Cara a cara 2015") (14-12-2015)	1	2,3

	"Face to face 2015" (14-12-2015) and Spanish presidential debate, called "El Deb4te 2016" (13-6-2016)	1	2,3
	Spanish presidential debate in 2011, called "El Debate 2011" (7-11-2011) and USA presidential debate in 2008 (26-9-2008)	1	2,3
	Total	21	48,8
Four	Spanish presidential debates in 1993 and 2008	1	2,3
debates	Debates in the regional elections of Andalusia	1	2,3
	Spanish presidential debates in 1993 and 1996 and Debate in the regional elections os Catalonia in 1992 and 1995	2	4,7
	Total	4	9,3
Five	Spanish presidential debates in 1993 and 2008	1	2,3
debates	Total	1	2,3
Six debates	Spanish presidential debates in 1993 and 2008; and Debate in the European elections in 2009	2	4,7
	Spanish presidential debates (2008), USA presidential debates (2008) and Mexican presidential debates (2006)	1	2,3
	Total	3	6,9
Unclassifiable		1	2,3
	SAMPLE TOTAL	43	100

The content of the debates has been analyzed fundamentally from a pragmatic perspective (51.2%), as can be seen in Table 13. The rhetorical analysis has a lower presence (30.2%) and, the linguistic aspects have been treated in a much smaller number of articles (11.6%). Among the pragmatic theories, the study of discourtesy has been the one that has interested researchers most (with 25.6%). Secondly, there is the analysis of the questions, that is, what is related to their nature, their functions, their types, etc. (with 7.0%). Regarding rhetoric, the study of discursive strategies stands out (with 9.4%). In relation to linguistics, nonverbal communication has been the most researched aspect and, within this, has highlighted the study of gestures and postures (with 7.0%).

Table 13: Research disciplines

Table 13: Research disciplines			
	Disciplines	N.º art.	% art.
		(n = 43)	
PRAGMATICS	Impoliteness	11	25,6
	Questions	3	7,0
	Politeness	2	4,7
	Interruptions	2	4,7
	Discursive markers	2	4,7
	Personal deixis	1	2,3
	Humour	1	2,3
	Total	22	51,2
RHETORIC	Discursive strategies	4	9,4
	Discourse structure	3	7,0
	Argumentation	1	2,3
	Personal image analysis	1	2,3
	Fallacies and metaphors	1	2,3
	Manipulation	1	2,3
	Rhetorical resources	1	2,3
	Repetitions	1	2,3
	Total	13	30,2
LINGUISTICS	Non-verbal communication	3	7,0
	Political lenguage	1	2,3
	Lexicon	1	2,3
	Total	5	11,6
NON-LINGUISTIC	Audiovisual production	1	2,3
	Total	1	2,3
Unclassifiable		1	2,3
Not recovered		1	2,3
	SAMPLE TOTAL	43	100

Source: Own elaboration.

In order to get to know the type of research that has been carried out in the articles published on debates in Spain, it was checked whether the works were theoretical-methodological; that is, those that are dedicated to the presentation or discussion of theories, approaches or concepts, or research procedures, or empirical, which are those that generate knowledge about communicative phenomena (Martínez-Nicolás y Saperas, 2011: 17).

According to the data in Table 14, the research on electoral debates in Spain that has been done is mostly empirical (37 of the 64 articles, 57.8%). Regarding the empirical research techniques used, Table 15 indicates that qualitative techniques predominate (with 73.0%) over quantitative techniques, whose use is lower (with 27.0%). Discourse analysis is the qualitative technique that most authors use (43.2%), while content analysis is the most widely used quantitative technique (18.9%). The rest of the techniques used have a minority presence.

 Table 14: Type of research 19

 Type of research
 N.º art. (n = 64)
 % art.

 Empirical
 37
 57,8

 Theoretical
 27
 42,2

 Total
 64
 100

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 15: Techniques used in empirical research [10]

Type of technique		N.º articles	% articles
		(n = 37)	
Quantitatives	Content analysis	7	18,9
	Survey	3	8,1
	Bibliometric analysis	0	0
	Total	10	27,0
Qualitatives	Discourse analysis	16	43,2
	Descriptive articles	10	27,0
	Discussion groups	1	2,7
	In-depth interview	0	0
	Direct observation	0	0
	Total	27	73,0
·	SAMPLE TOTAL	37	100

Source: Own elaboration.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The results obtained from carrying out the bibliometric analysis shows that the scientific production on electoral debates in Spain available in the databases and the catalogs consulted is scarce. The research is disseminated mainly through the articles of scientific journals, since they represent 60.7% of the total documents. The number of articles published is clearly insufficient (sixty-five for twenty-five years) if one takes into account that the average publication is 2.6 articles per year and that the number of potential authors is ninety-four. Regarding the distribution of work by number of authors, the data indicates that the majority trend is that of a single author, which shows, on the one hand, the limited collaboration between researchers in this field and, on the other, the lower presence of research groups interested in this issue.

Regarding the temporal evolution of the publications in the last twenty-five years, it is observed that the growth in scientific production has not been constant but has developed irregularly and three phases in its evolution are detected. It is proven that, in the first phase (1993-2007), research was initiated late, with a five-year delay since the broadcasting of the first electoral debate between González and Aznar in 1993. This initial stage coincides with a period of fifteen years marked by the absence of electoral debates during three general elections (1996, 2000 and 2004), and brings together 29.9% of the published works. In the second phase (2008-2012), there is the emergence of the investigation, motivated largely by the holding of the 2008 debates. 26.6% of the total documents are gathered in this phase. The third phase (2013-2018) registers a strong growth in research, totaling 43.9% of the published texts, but with large fluctuations. The

growth during the last five years could be explained by the issuance of the debates of 2011, 2015 and 2016, which seems to indicate the consolidation of the electoral debates as a fundamental piece of elections. However, strong drops in production are also detected, so this aspect must be corroborated and interpreted in future works.

With regard to production by language, the predominant use of Spanish (with 83.2%) stands out compared to the minority presence of English (9.4%). This hinders the internationalization of research.

The data related to the authors shows the existence of a few very prolific researchers (three gather 30.8% of the total production), while a very large number of them have only published one work (66 of 94, 61.7%). It seems that Lotka's bibliometric law (1926) on the productivity of authors comes into effect. According to this law "most of the articles come from a small portion of highly productive authors" (Ardanuy, 2012: 9). These figures are also an indicator of the lack of specialization of the authors who have written about this object of study. However, among the most productive researchers, the following figures stand out: José Luis Blas Arroyo, professor at Jaime I University, who has published 13 papers; Francisco Fernández García, senior lecturer at University of Jaén, with 11 papers and, Maria Josep Marín i Jordà, senior lecturer at the University of Valencia, with 9 papers.

Scientific production in journals reveals that research is widely dispersed, since most journals (40, which amounts to 80%) published a single article. Only three journals (*Oralia*. *Análisis del discurso oral*, *Revista Española de Ciencia Política* and *Tonos Digital*) have published 16.9% of the total articles. These data could be explained with Bradford's law (1934). According to Professor Ardanuy, Bradford explained that the majority percentage of the scientific literature of a subject was concentrated in a small number of journal titles (2012: 12). In this case, it should be taken into account that most of the articles (40, 61.5%) are dispersed in forty different mastheads.

The country that has published more journals is Spain, with 62% of the mastheads. The second, with a much smaller presence, is Belgium with 6%. By regions, Europe (Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, The United Kingdom and Sweden) has concentrated 18% of the journals, and Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela), 14% of the total. These figures together with the main tendency of the use of Spanish as a scientific language seem to indicate that the degree of internationalization of research is less than desirable.

Among the publishing entities, the universities stand out above companies or national or foreign publishing groups, because they house 63.4% of the journals compared to 21.9% that the publishing houses gather. In addition, it is a Spanish public university, the Complutense of Madrid (la Complutense de Madrid), which manages the largest number of journals, which account for 10% of the total. They are the following: Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación, Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico, Revista de Ciencias de la Información, Teknokultura: Revista de Cultura Digital y Movimientos Sociales and Vivat Academia.

As for the quality of the journals, only a small number is indexed in the JCRs and in Scopus; 18% in JCR and 28% in Scopus. On the other hand, 88% of the journals are present in the MIAR database and only 12% of these are not registered as listed in any of these indexes. In relation to the articles published in indexed journals, the number of these that were published in non-indexed journals was greater. Only 15.4% of the articles were published in JCR journals and 24.6% in journals in Scopus.

The institutions of origin of the researchers are, for the most part, universities (90.6%) compared to those that are not (9.4%). Within the universities, the Spanish ones stand out over the foreign ones (with 65.6% over 25%), and the public ones are the ones that host the largest number of researchers (with 80.9%). It should be highlighted that there is only one institution that can be considered as a great producer. This institution is the University of Valencia, registering more than 10 works on the subject of study.

The research on electoral debates in Europe and the United States presents important differences (Gauthier, 1998: 395). The American line of research has dealt with the effects of the debates on voters, whilst the French one has focused on linguistic aspects, such as political lexicon or verbal communication among others (Rospir, 2003, cited in Micovic, 2014: 226). According to the data of this bibliometric study, research on electoral debates in Spain has been developed mainly around one line of research: the analysis of the content of the debates, totaling 66.1% of the total articles. Another of the lines of research has been the analysis of the coverage of the debate in the different media, although its presence is much lower, amounting to 13.8% of the articles.

From this data, it can be affirmed that the research on electoral debates in Spain carried out during the last twenty-five years, has followed the research line of the French tradition instead of the American one, since the articles published on the effects of the debates are a minority.

The most analyzed object of study has been that of the electoral debates held on the occasion of a general election, with 79.1% of the articles. Within this group, the two debates in 2008 were the ones that most interested the authors (12 articles, 27.9%). The content of the debates has been approached from the discipline of pragmatics (with 51.2%) and, within the various theories, the interest in the study of discourtesy (with 25.6%) stands out.

The research present in the articles is mostly empirical (37 articles, 57.8%). Regarding research techniques, qualitative techniques predominate (with 73.0%). Researchers have favored discourse analysis (with 43.2%) over the rest of the techniques. However, difficulties have been detected in classifying some empirical research that calls itself discourse analysis or qualitative content analysis. This is due to the fact that the authors indicated in the articles that they used techniques which later did not correspond to what was done in the article. These works were "descriptions" or "reflections" of the content of the debates. These results coincide with those obtained by Martínez-Nicolás y Saperas in their research on Communication in Spain (2011: 119).

The limitations of this paper are based on the restrictions of bibliometric studies and on the choice of databases selected for the collection of documents. The Spanish databases Dialnet, ISOC and Teseo were selected for their recognized prestige in the academic field. The international databases Scopus and WOS were chosen as they are the main multidisciplinary databases and they are recognized by the international scientific community. In spite of this, there are more databases that can be consulted and, consequently, there will be some documents on electoral debates in Spain that have not been collected because they are not in these databases. Nevertheless, given the quality of the databases and the catalogs consulted and the number of documents obtained and analyzed, it is considered that this is a reliable and representative study of the scientific production on electoral debates in Spain.

Despite these limitations, this paper appears as the first of its kind and it contributes to expanding the scientific knowledge of published research on electoral debates in Spain. It would be pertinent, in future research, to analyze the scientific production on this subject in the United States and, especially, in France, as it is the country with which we share research lines, to make a comparison and, thus, get to know what the state of the research is in Spain in relation to these countries.

In conclusion, taking into account the results obtained, research on electoral debates in Spain is still at an embryonic stage. The consolidation of several electoral debates being held during the different electoral campaigns can be a decisive factor for this field of study.

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Notes

- ¹ Reference is made to the electoral debates held only during the period of the election campaign and which have confronted the leaders of the parties with greater representation. They are the following: general elections of 1993 (May 24 and 31); general elections of 2008 (February 25 and March 3); 2011 elections (November 7); 2015 elections (December 7 and 14), and 2016 elections (June 13).
- ² Dialnet, created by the University of La Rioja in 2001, is one of the largest databases of Hispanic literature. It gathers information from more than 10,000 journals, has more than 5,900,000 documents in the fields of Human, Legal and Social Sciences and more than 139,000 theses. ISOC is a database created by the Higher Council for Scientific Research (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas CSIC), which contains more than 786,000 references to articles in scientific journals. It is specialized in Social Sciences and Humanities and it has been published in Spain since 1970. Teseo is the database of doctoral thesis carried out in Spanish universities of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. It offers records since 1976. Scopus is one of the largest databases of abstracts and citations in the world; it is owned by the Elsevier company. It contains more than 21,000 peer-reviewed journals. Web of Science (WOS), which belongs to the company Thomson Reuters, is a platform that allows access to a set of databases. It contains more than 9,300 journal titles.
- ³ In the "Bilingual" category, a journal article that is available in both Spanish and English has been taken into account.
- ⁴ No reference is made to theses in this statement, since their authorship is individual due to their nature.
- ⁵ The journal article signed by Juan Cantavella Blasco and César Mejía Chiang (2010) has been counted as an article signed by six authors, instead of two as it appears, since it is understood that the researchers listed as co-authors of the text are part of the research group that already signed another previous article in the year 2008. Abbreviations: N.° art.: Number of articles; N.° b.c.: Number of book chapters; N.° b.: Number of books; N.° pro.: Number of Proceedings; N.° d.f.: Number of theses.
- ⁶ His thesis is a sociolinguistic study of the influence of Catalan on Spanish in a Valencian district. It is titled Estudio sociolinguístico del distrito de Campanar (Valencia). Análisis de algunos fenómenos de interferencia y convergencia gramaticales en una comunidad de habla bilingüe (1991).
- ⁷ The following abbreviations have been used: Instit.: Institution; J. A.: Journal articles; B. C.: Book chapter; B.: Books; P.: Proceedings; D.T.: Theses; UJI: Jaime I University; UJA: University of Jaén; UV: University of Valencia; Next IBS: Next International Business School; UGR: University of Granada.
- ⁸ "No data" means that the journal is registered in the MIAR database, but there is no data for that particular year. "No record" means that it does not appear in that database.
- ⁹ The total number of articles is 65, but 64 have been analyzed because one of the articles could not be retrieved and the type of research and technique used could not be determined.
- ¹⁰ The "Descriptive articles" category was created to collect those items that could not be framed within the discourse analysis technique.

