

# Use of Formal Ethical Reviews in NLP Literature

## Historical Trends and Current Practices

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 ACL 2021 Findings

# Ethics in NLP

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- NLP applications are ubiquitous
  - raises concerns on the ethical use of the technologies
- How do we take care of ethics of NLP research?
  - Personal morality
  - Ethics Committee at Conferences
  - Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Look at the trends of IRB approvals over years
- Search for IRB-related terms and manually check

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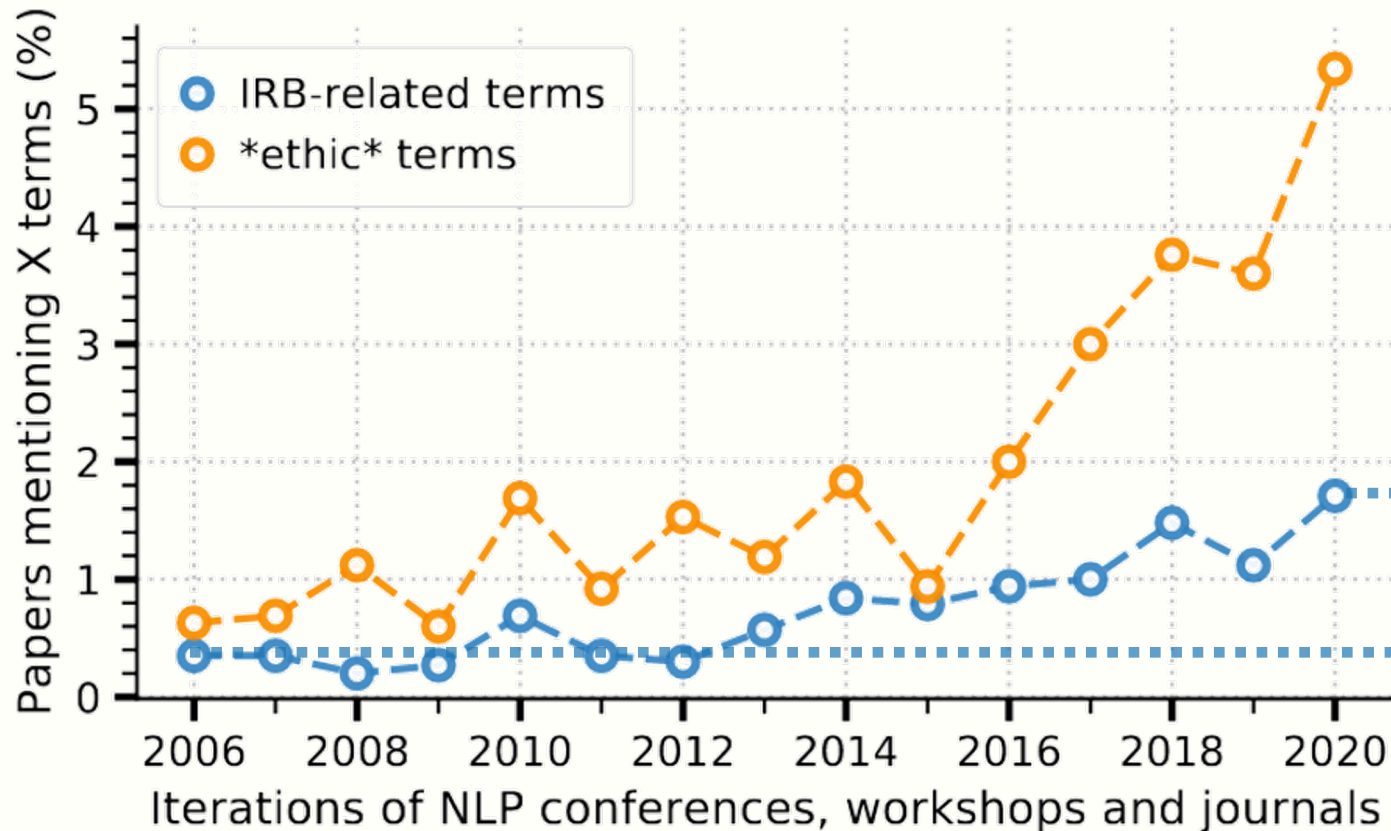
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# IRB Mentions



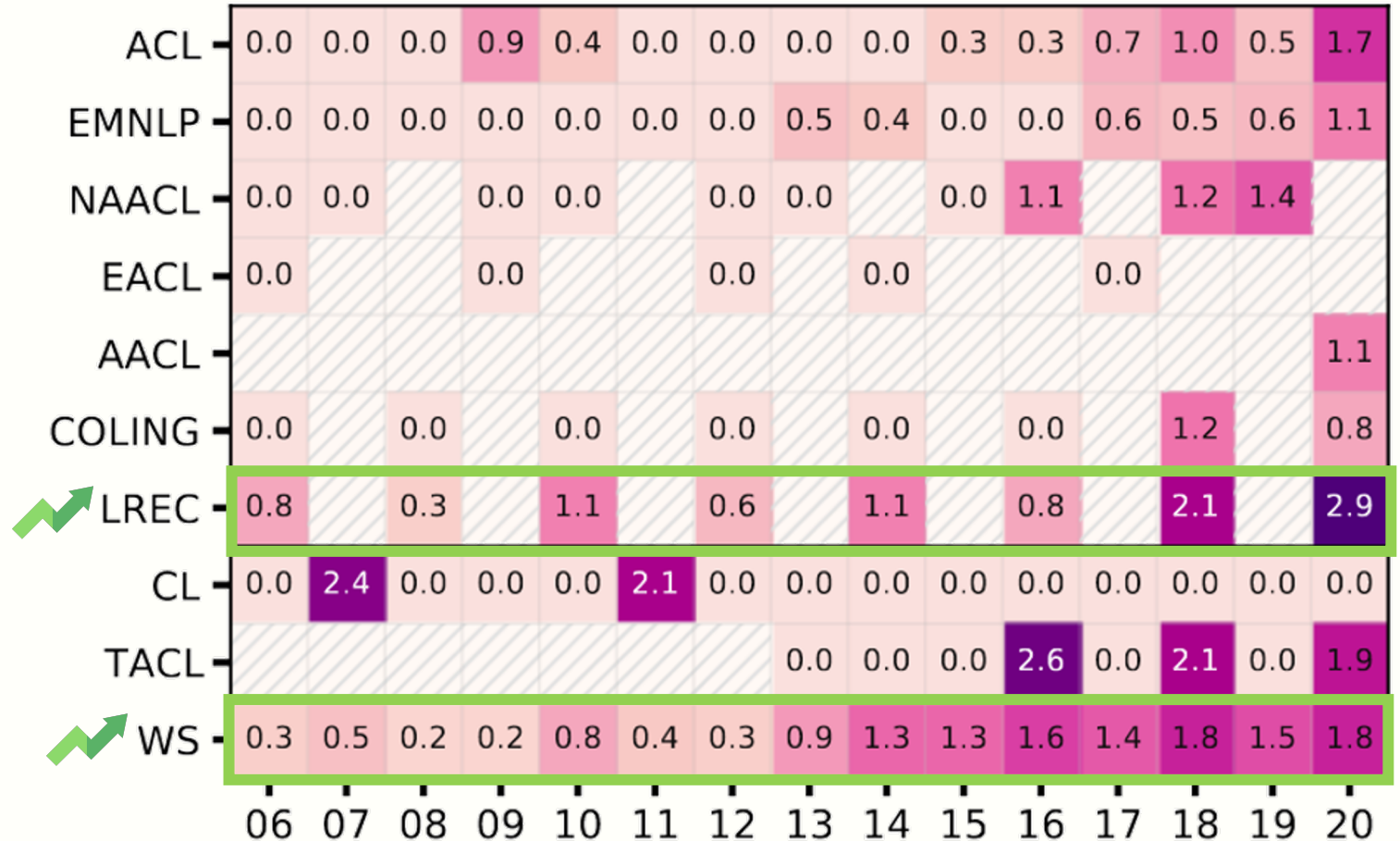
- Many papers are now discussing ethics of their research (>5%).
- Mention of IRB-related terms are miniscule.

1.2% ↑



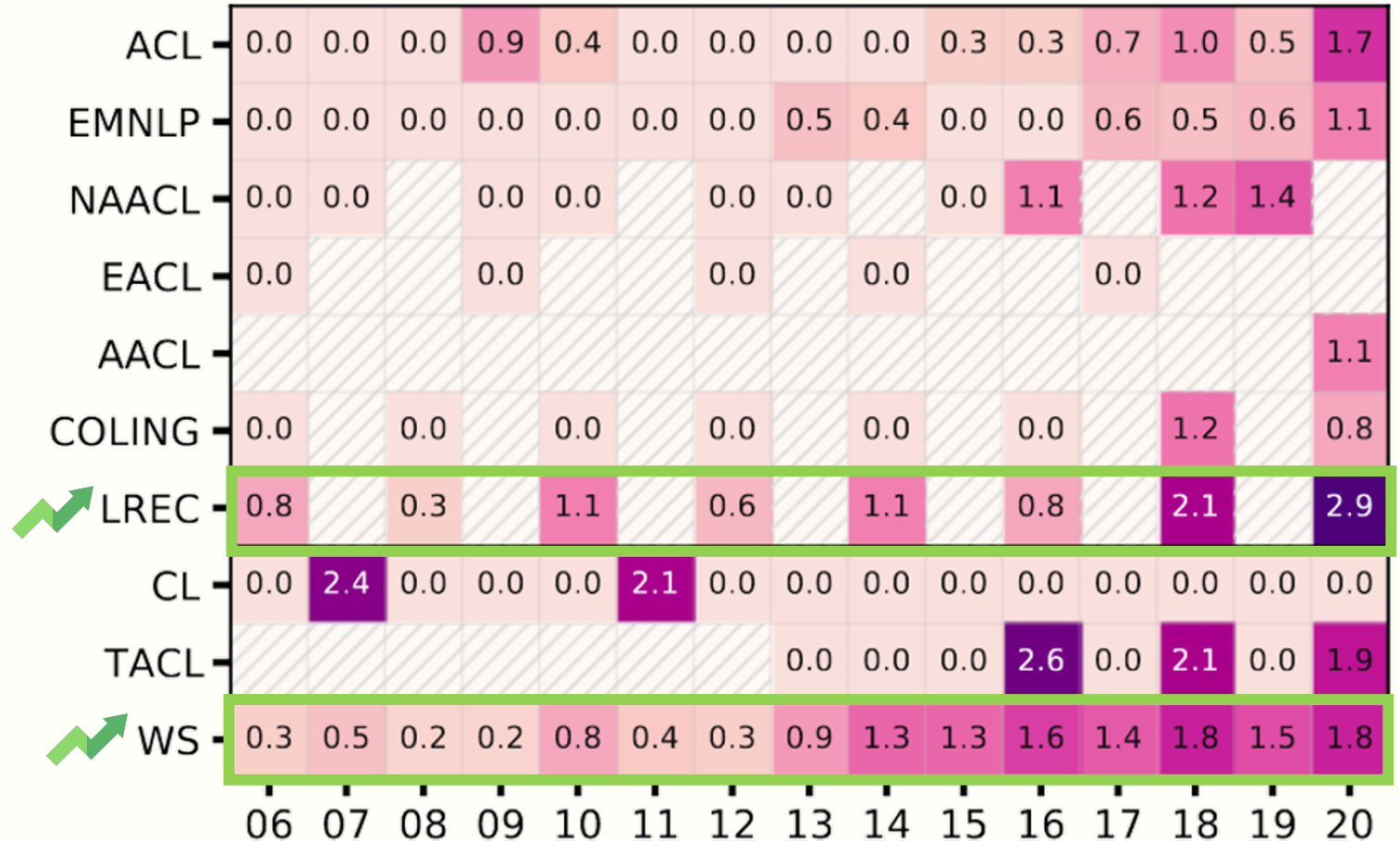
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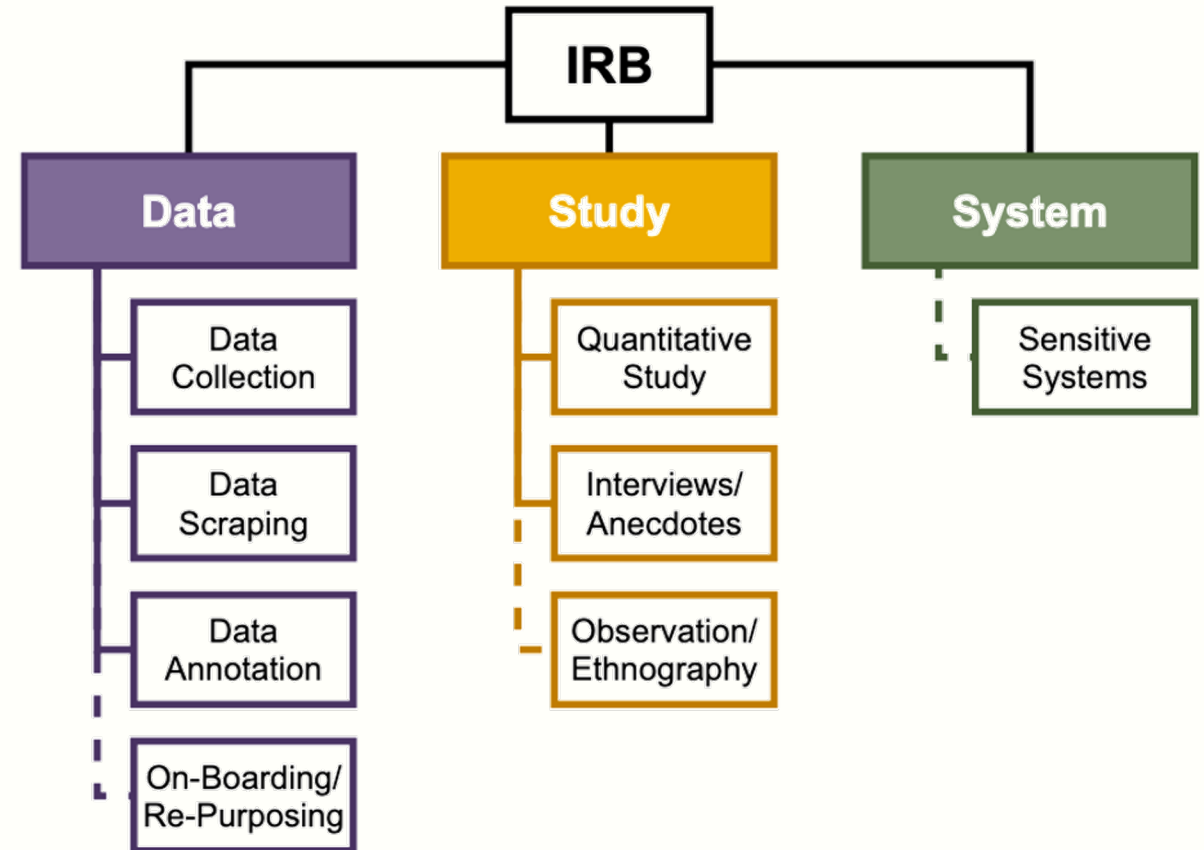


# Types of IRB Mentions

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Statistics on *aspects*

- Collection: 41.3% (24)
- Annotation: 34% (20)
- Scraping: 13% (7)
- User Studies: 20% (12)
- Data Repurposing: 1 paper
- Sensitive System: 1 paper





# Geography and Affiliation

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	Total Papers	Percent Papers
<b>Countries</b>		
USA	47/5368	0.88%
Canada	5/358	1.40%
Germany	5/850	0.59%
UK	5/1088	0.46%
Netherlands	3/226	1.33%
Sweden	2/100	2.00%
South Korea	2/151	1.32%
China	2/2350	0.09%

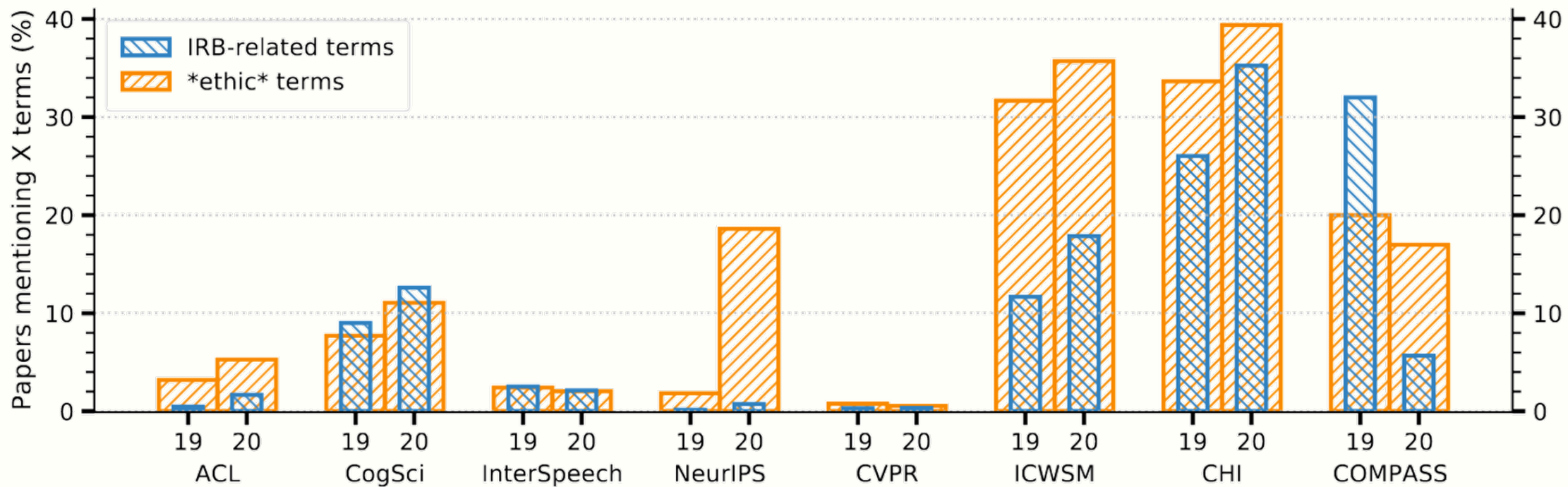
	Total Papers	Percent Papers
<b>Affiliation Types</b>		
University	52/7730	0.67%
Industry	1/841	0.12%
National Lab	1/182	0.55%
Joint/Collaboration	11/2651	0.41%

WEIRD countries and universities take (or report) the most approval.

WEIRD = Western, Educated Industrialized, Rich, Democratic.

# In Related Conferences

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