The "Public Health Communication: analysis of coherence indicators in institutional and non-institutional texts"

The project focuses on public medical communications directed to citizens in institutional and not-institutional contexts, e.g. through newspapers.

In particular, the focus is on argumentative texts and strategies used to increase credibility and quality of information. The analysis of these strategies is based on selected Credibility Coalition's content indicators (e.g., Logical Fallacies, Inferences).

These indicators can be linked to specific linguistic features: we investigate the role of discourse connectives and markers, since they are widely considered the most reliable signals of coherence relations. Yet, some of these signals express more than one relation, working as hypernyms of other specific signals. This allows for more interpretations, increasing the risk of misunderstanding the text.

The concrete analysis involves two corpora -representatives of selected texts- and computational methods and tools to annotate and analyze them.
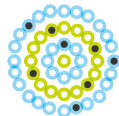
The project

a) on a theoretical level, aims to describe the linguistic strategies that typically contribute to the credibility of argumentative texts, along with their functions;

b) on the practical level, it aims to develop a set of guidelines for drafting health-related texts in order to increase their accessibility and efficacy.

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