La comunicazione dell'incertezza nel British Medical Journal

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SUMMARY

We describe a historical corpus evaluating uncertainty markers through a random sample of articles published in the British Medical Journal (from 1840 to 2007). Randomization was stratified from four distinct time periods, namely 1840-1880, 1881-1920, 1921-1960, and 1961-2007. Each full-text article was tagged by a group of analysts associated with a physician. We describe extensive data on the distribution of each linguistic marker. Contrary to our initial hypothesis, the rates of uncertainty markers have remained surprisingly stable over the period studied in this project, except for the modal verbs in the simple present, which occur with a minor frequency in the first time period compared to the other three.