

Representation of the ADHD in the DSM-V. A study of the psychiatric specialized genre

Keywords: Professional psychiatric discourse, ADHD, DSM

This study is part of a broader research about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) representation in medical, educational and laypeople communities. While the media has historically portrayed ADHD as a myth or benign condition (Barkley et al. 2002), ADHD is one of the most commonly diagnosed disorders in childhood with potential lifelong effects (Kutcher et al., 2004:12).

The presentation considers how ADHD is represented in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V). The influence of the DSM in behavioural traits conceptualization has been evidenced in studies of psychiatric textual productions (Ravotas & Berkenkotter, 1998).

The analysis brings together the SFL transitivity framework (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) and the Appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005). The data was manually annotated, and different samples of the corpus were coded independently by another researcher to ensure interrater reliability.

Inattention is mainly represented through Mental and Relational processes, and it triggers negative Judgements of Capacity. Hyperactivity-Impulsivity is portrayed with Material, Verbal and Behavioural processes, and it triggers negative Judgements of Propriety and Capacity. ADHD-pathologic behaviour is characterised by a high presence of modality (usuality and probability), graduation resources, explicit and implicit comparisons, and it constitutes extreme cases of graded categories. The analysis highlights the importance of evaluation in psychiatric understanding and suggests psychopathology is ultimately grounded upon Judgements of Normality.

References

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