ETHIC

Evaluation Tool of Health Information for Consumers
Development, features and validation.

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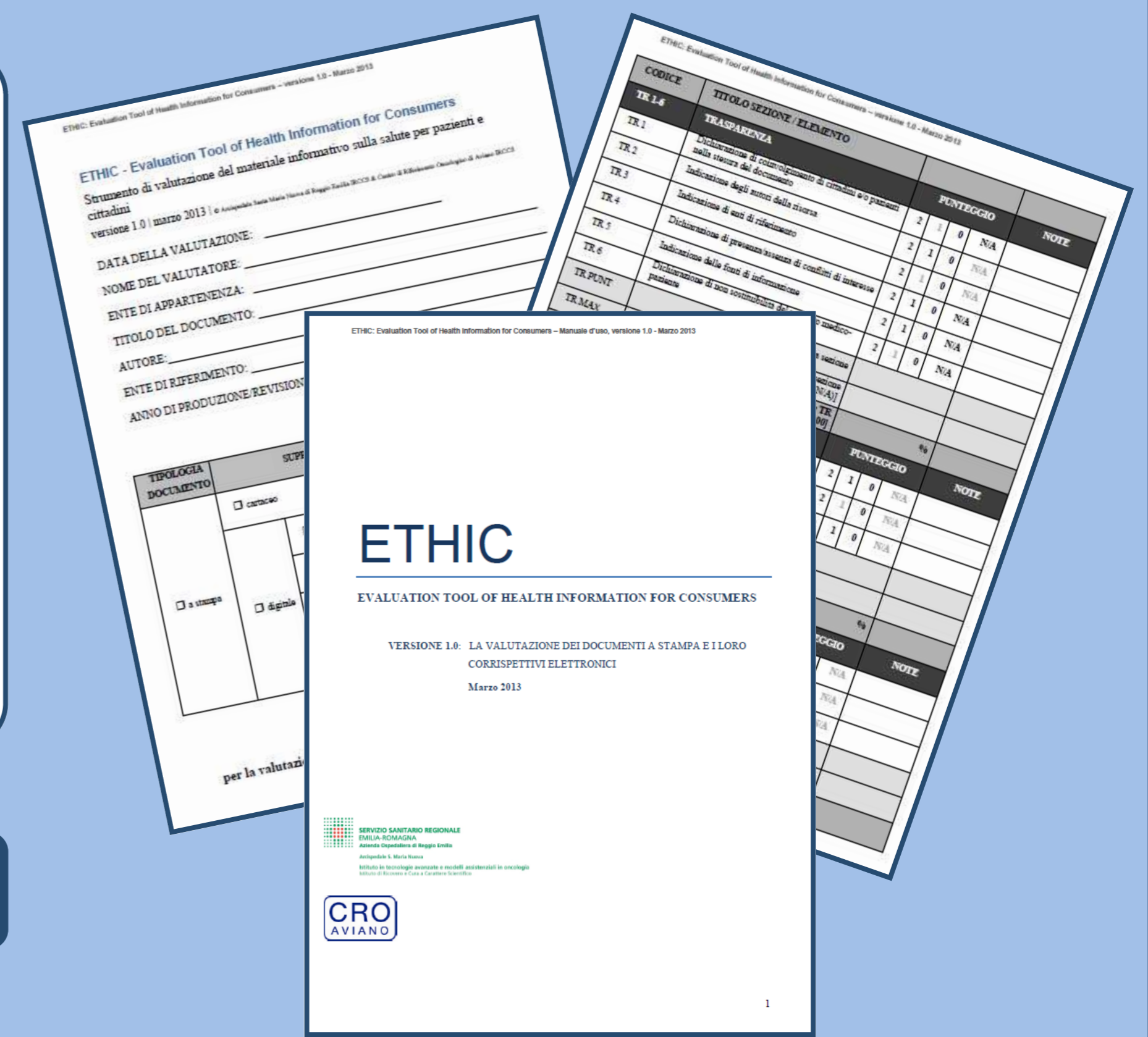
INTRO

In the last years, issues like Patient Information and Health Literacy have become increasingly important. Good information is a fundamental component of the therapeutic process and Health Information issues are of strategic importance especially in social and cultural contexts characterized by low literacy levels of the population, as the Italian one.
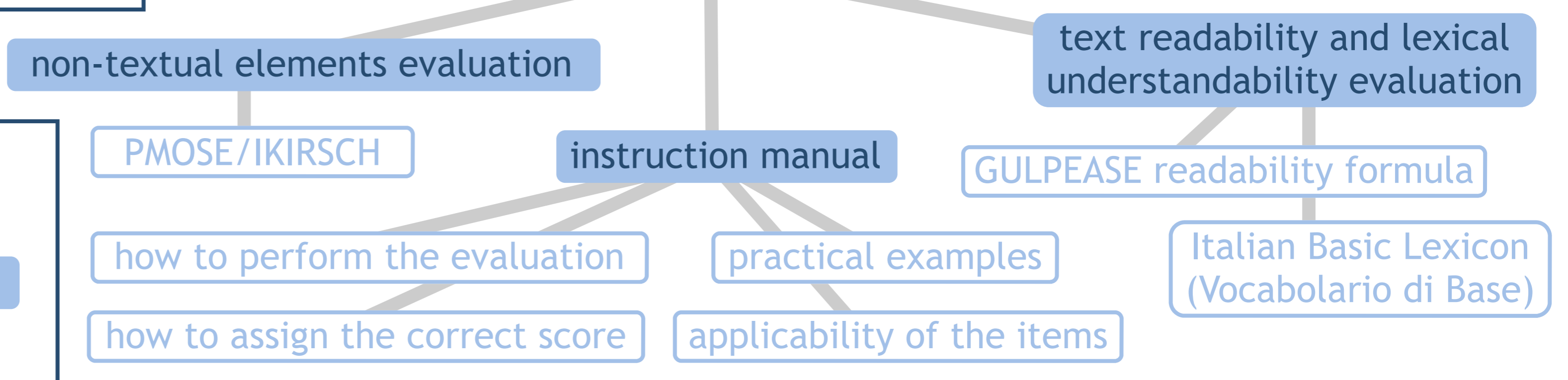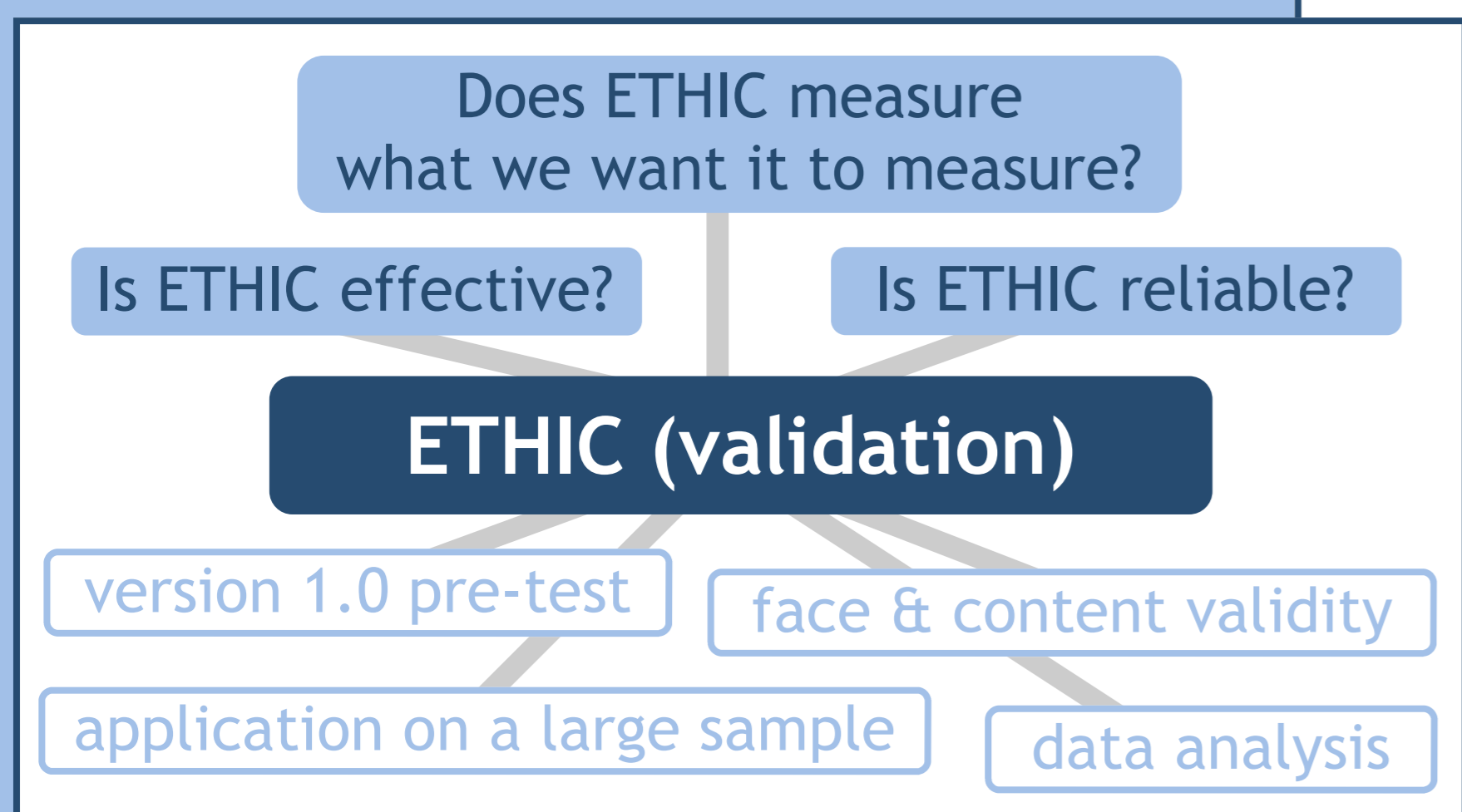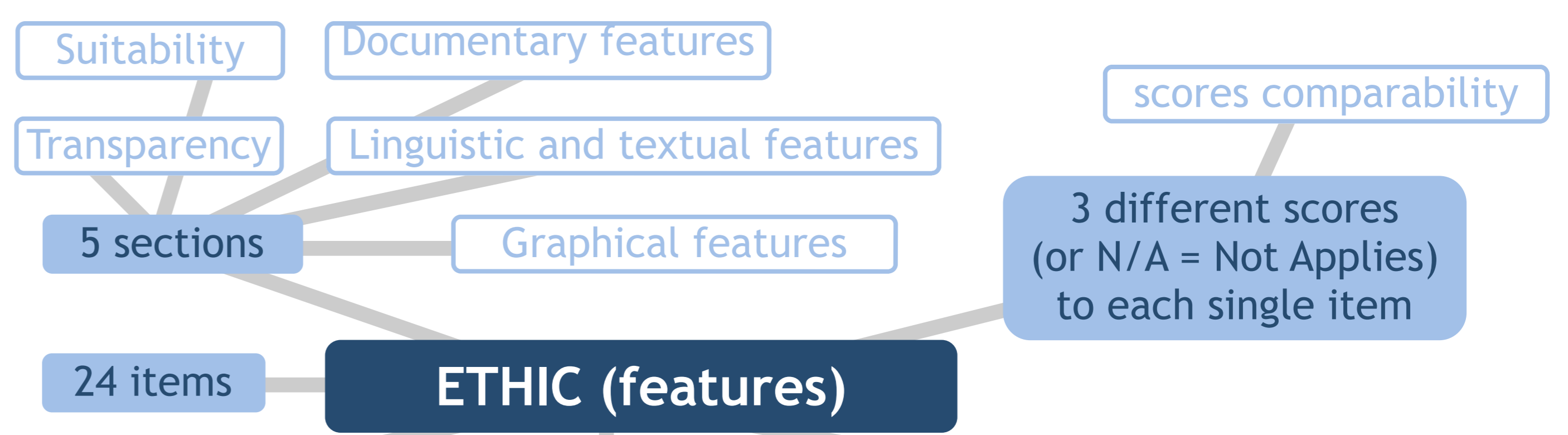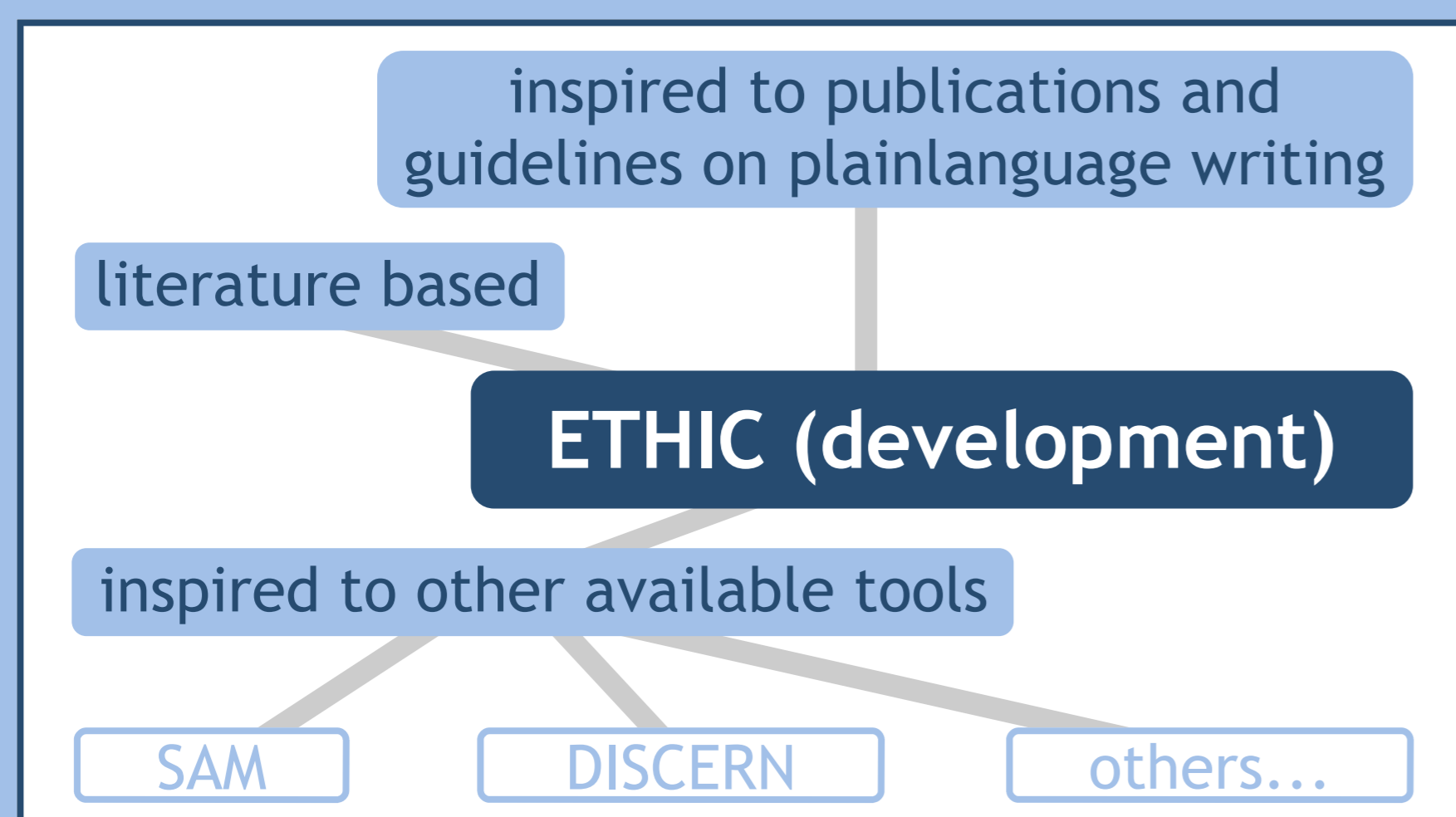
AIM

ETHIC (Evaluation Tool of Health Information for Consumers) is an instrument designed and developed for the quality assessment of health information materials from a linguistic, textual and documentary point of view.

The aim of this project is to provide bio-medical librarians and health information professionals with a tool that could be helpful in:

- directing consumers toward the best information available;
- supporting healthcare professionals in developing health information materials.

METHODS

- inspired to publications and guidelines on plainlanguage writing
- literature based

ETHIC (development)

- inspired to other available tools
  - SAM
  - DISCERN
  - others...

- Suitability
- Transparency
- Documentary features
- Linguistic and textual features
- 5 sections
- Graphical features
- 24 items

ETHIC (features)

- scores comparability
- 3 different scores (or N/A = Not Applies) to each single item
- text readability and lexical understandability evaluation
- non-textual elements evaluation
  - PMOSE/IKIRSCH
- instruction manual
  - how to perform the evaluation
  - how to assign the correct score
  - practical examples
  - applicability of the items
- GULPEASE readabiliy formula
- Italian Basic Lexicon (Vocabolario di Base)

- Does ETHIC measure what we want it to measure?
- Is ETHIC effective?
- Is ETHIC reliable?

ETHIC (validation)

- version 1.0 pre-test
- face & content validity
- application on a large sample
- data analysis

DISCUSSION

ETHIC could represent an effective tool for bio-medical librarians and health information professionals:

- to assess the quality of information materials to be made available to consumers;
- to support healthcare professionals in drawing up health information materials of increasing quality, suitable and comprehensible for patients and consumers in general;
- to contribute in facilitating knowledge creation;
- to enhance their professionals skills.

CONCLUSIONS

The validation procedure is of primary importance to confirm the accuracy of development process and tool itself.

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