

European Discourse Community

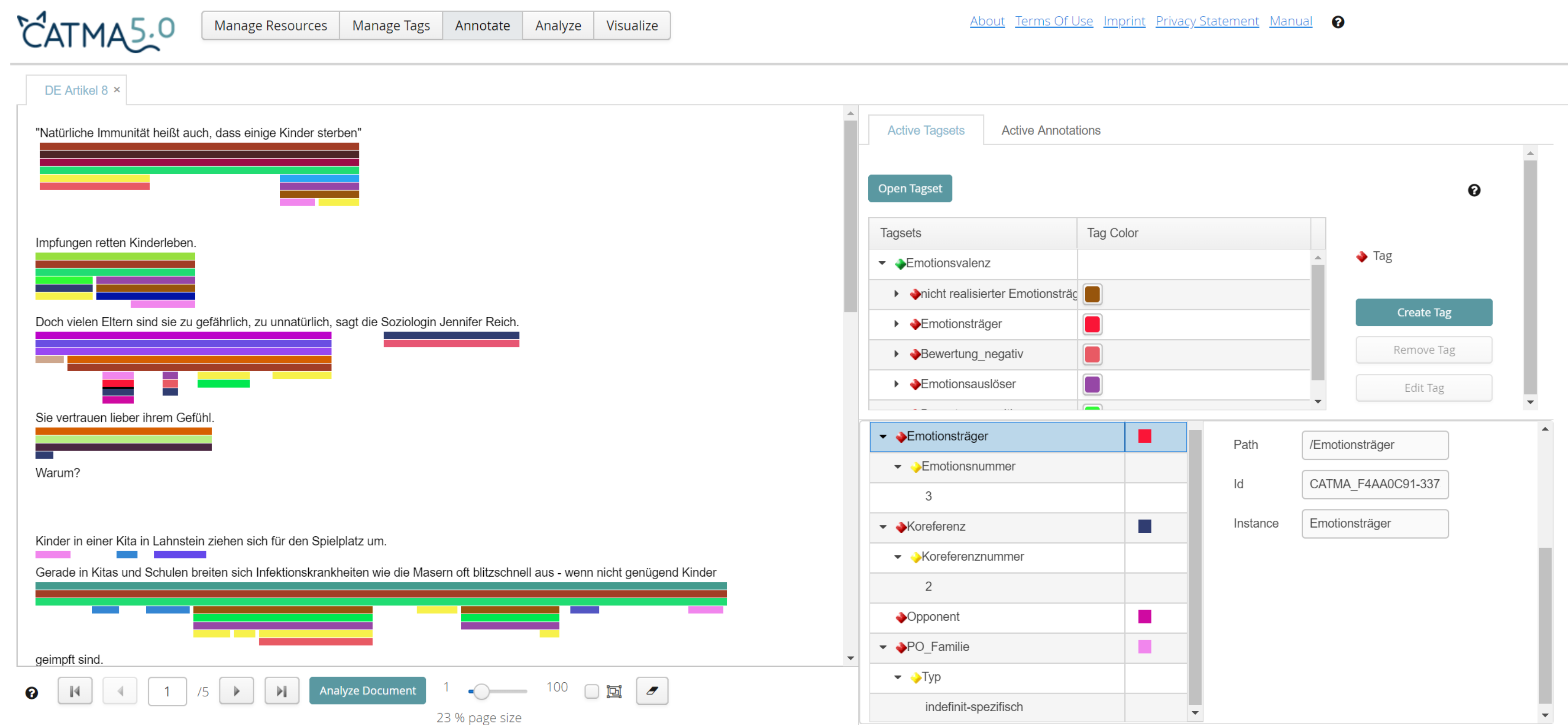
Language, emotion and argumentation

In Europe, people in different countries with various linguistic and cultural backgrounds simultaneously discuss a wide range of issues relevant to society (European integration, migration, balance between security and civil rights etc.).

In our project *European Discourse Community*, we elaborate a corpus-based, contrastive methodology which combines qualitative and quantitative methods as a basis for **multilingual discourse analysis**. The aim of our project is to develop a **gradually expandable platform providing methods for the contrastive analysis of cross-lingual discourses** and to test it on a specific discourse.

Our corpus consists of German, English, French and Italian newspaper articles focusing on the vaccine debate. We identify and analyse **relevant discourse parameters on an auto-semantic micro level and an interpretation-based macro level**.

We annotate in CATMA. The **micro level surface parameters** cover amongst others the lexis of discourse-relevant areas and fields, locations, and discourse roles of the actors involved. They form the basis of our **macro level target parameters**: argumentation structure, emotion, and main points of controversy. The following scheme shows how we model these parameters:



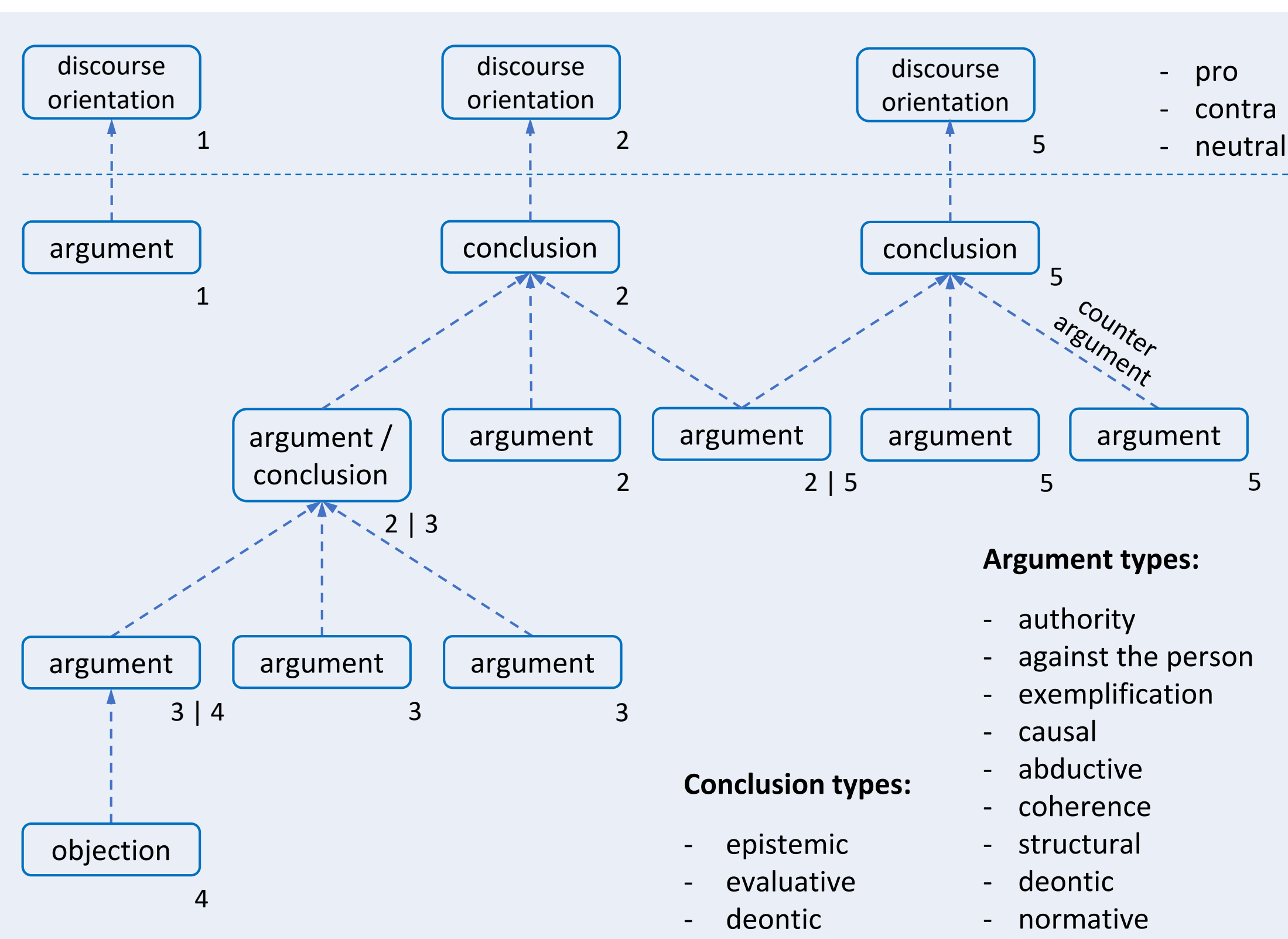
Emotion

step	linguistic surface	present	annotation tag	annotation segment
1	cause of emotion	yes	cause of emotion	cause of emotion
2	emotion-descriptive lexis	yes	emotion (lexical)	emotion lexis
		no	emotion (implicit)	cause of emotion
3	experiencer	yes	experiencer	experiencer
4	relational emotion	yes	evaluation positive/negative	object of emotion
5	secondary cause of emotion	yes	evaluation positive/negative	secondary cause of emotion

Emotion types:

- love, affection
- joy
- positive surprise
- positive
- aversion, dislike
- anger
- fear
- sadness
- negative surprise
- negative

Argumentation



Points of controversy (extract)

n°	Guiding concept A	Guiding concept B
1	The government should impose mandatory vaccination	The government shouldn't interfere with the decision for or against vaccination
2	Diseases like smallpox were eradicated thanks to vaccination coverage	These diseases were eradicated thanks to better living conditions
3	Vaccines are safe	Vaccines can be contaminated
4	Vaccination opponents spread lies	Vaccination opponents tell the truth
5	There is no alternative to vaccines	There are alternatives to vaccines (e.g. diet, avoiding electrosmog)
6	The consequences of not vaccinating are more harmful than the consequences of vaccinating	The consequences of vaccinating are more harmful than the consequences of not vaccinating

In order to answer specific questions, we correlate single target parameters with particular surface parameters. Correlations are then evaluated for each language individually as well as across languages and shed light on the **principal convergences and divergences between the different languages and cultures analysed**.

Some **concrete questions** we want to answer in our pilot study:

- Are emotions mainly expressed implicitly or explicitly?
- Can a lexis of rationality or a lexis of emotionality be attributed to specific actors?
- Which linguistic elements are used to constitute, structure and communicate knowledge?

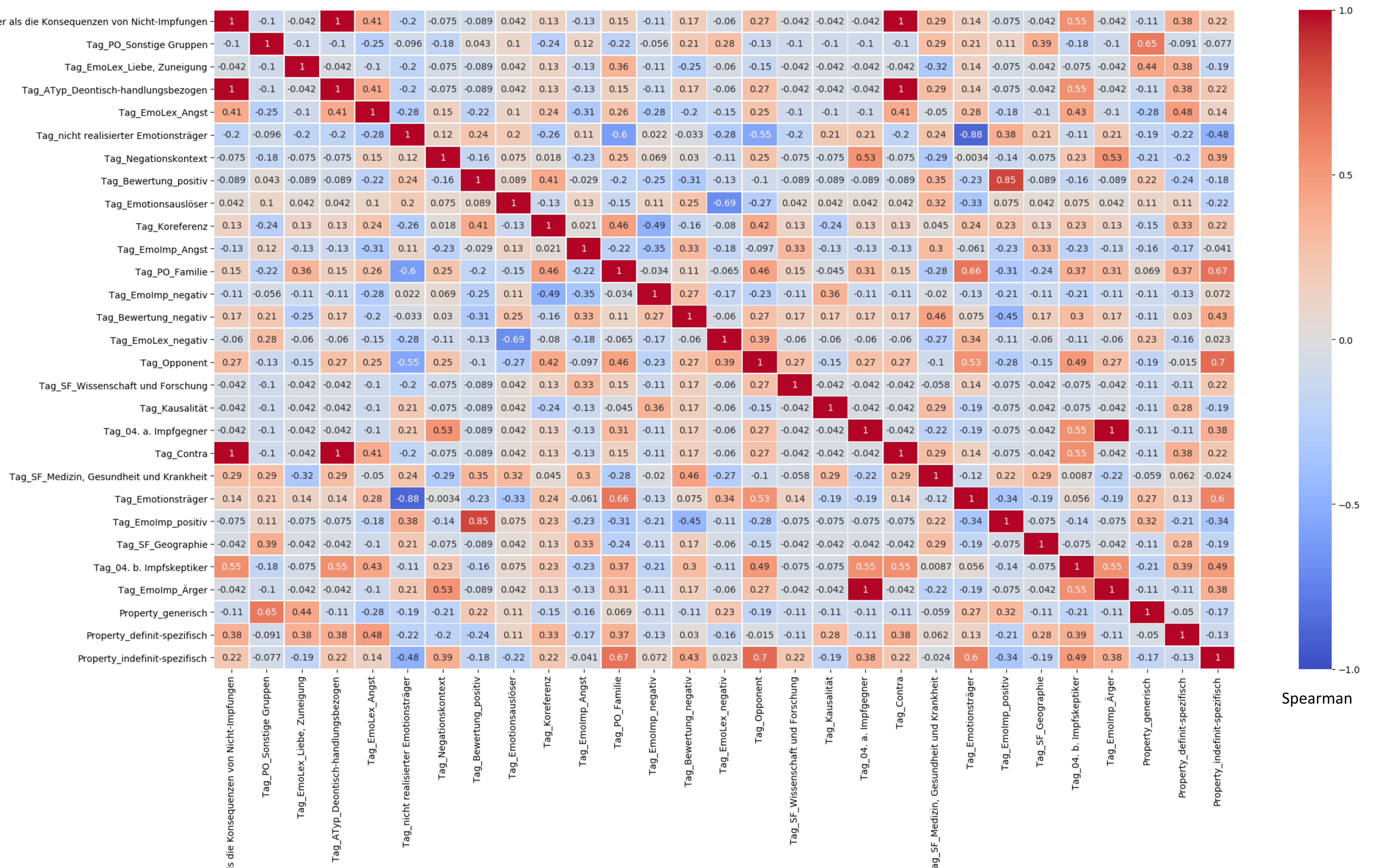


Fig.: The correlation matrix shows correlations of all annotations related to the target parameter *emotion* for a single text.



Source: www.live-karikaturen.ch

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