

# The Guideline Specialists Team's FIGNEWS Annotation Guideline

## The Objective of the Task:

In this shared task, an annotation guideline is set to detect the layers of bias within news articles in multiple languages.

## Description of the Task:

In this task, selected news is to be annotated using specific tags representing different categories to detect bias in the news. These categories are:

1. Unbiased
2. Biased against Palestine
3. Biased against Israel
4. Biased against both Palestine and Israel
5. Biased against others
6. Unclear
7. Not Applicable

## Category Guidelines:

Each of the seven categories that will be used has some criteria to be applicable to the news. We have set these criteria after using AntConc and LancsBox to see the frequency of some tokens and the likelihood of the collocation. Here are the guidelines for each category.

### 1. Unbiased

This category applies to news that uses words that state what happened concerning both sides with a minimum use of adjectives and emotional words in the news.

*Example:*

“Amid escalating tit-for-tat clashes between Israeli forces and Iran-backed Lebanese armed group Hezbollah, civilians are the silent sufferers who are paying a high price on **both sides** of the border. Thousands of civilians have been displaced from Lebanese border towns, with many forced to take shelter in schools which have been shut since the October 7 attack against Israel by Hamas. Watch this ground zero report.”

### 2. Biased against Palestine

This category applies to news containing different words and structures that were investigated by frequency of collocation.

***On the word level:***

**News containing these words are considered bias against Palestine:**

*Examples:*

“brutal”

“animal”

“Extremist(s)”

“Militant group

“Violated” or “violating” [...] + (truce) *(The brackets containing the three dots [...] means some text between the words given.)*

“accuses” (“accused”, “accusing” or “accusation of”) + (Palestinians)

“accuses” (“accused”, “accusing” or “accusation of”) + (Hamas)

“Islamist(s)

“attack”

“prisoner(s)”

“daughter(s)”

“family”

“families”

“mom”

“mother(s)”

“antisemitism”

“number-years-old”

“wife”

"المخربون"

"الإرهاب"

"إرهابية"

"وحشية"

"داعش"

"دواعش"

### ***On the structure level:***

**Using the passive voice** without mentioning the doer is biased against Gaza since it does not make Israel accountable.

Any verb that refers to killing, bombing or any form of destruction without mentioning Israel as a doer while it was its action is biased against Gaza.

*Example of verbs:*

“were killed” or “have been killed” (*with no mention of Israel strikes*)

**Use of nominalization** to hide Israel as a doer. Words of bombing and destroying without mentioning Israel.

*Examples of words:*

“bombardment”

“destruction”

### **Biased against Israel**

#### **Words of accusation of aggression and genocide**

*Examples:*

“accuses” (“accused”, “accusing” or “accusation of”) + Israel

“genocide”

“violate genocide convention”

“aggression”

“oppression”



“ethic”

“apartheid”

### **3. Biased against both Palestine and Israel**

**Sentences containing blame on both parties or accusing both of doing violence.**

*Example:*

“ Ground coverage of #ZeeNews LIVE from where Hamas rained bombs.  Israeli attack on Gaza University #ZeeLive #IsraelUnderAttack #IsraelWar #Israel #Hamas”

### **4. Biased against others**

**Using names of entities as parties to blame or accuse of violence or complicity with a party and words denoting rebellions and militias.**

*Examples:*

“Iran”

“Iranian”

“Tehran”

“Russia”

“Russian”

“Houthi”

“rebels”

“militia”

“Syria”

“Syrian”

“Lebanese

“support for Hamas”

“Biden administration”

“Hezbollah”

“UNRWA”

“South Africa”

## **5. Unclear**

When the context does not show any direct reference to any party of the war at hand with general statements that are not clearly pointing to incidents within this war.

*Example:*

“She is being prosecuted for advocating terrorism.”

A mix of several different news in the same place or news with so many hashtags that it is loaded with information that is not related.

*Example:*

“Republic TV LIVE: Marath Quota Showdown | PM Modi addresses Para athletes | Latest News Iran | Iran Threats Israel | Jerusalem | Rockets Attack in Jerushelam | Gaza Ground Operation | Israel Iron Dome | Hamas Funding | Iran on Israel Palestine War | Lebanon Attack Israel | USA | Joe Biden | Protest in Pakistan for Palestine | Xi Jinping | China on Israel Palestine | Syrian Iran | Hamas Tunnel | IOC | World Cup 2023 | Cricket

in Olympic 2028 | Jews vs Arabs Israel Attack on Hezbollah | Gaza New Videos | Gaza Latest Video News | Israel Angry UN | East Jerusalem Firing | Iran on Gaza Conflict | Israel Embassy in China | Israel Consulate Stabbed in China | Israel Phosphorus Bomb | DAIF | Middle east on Palestine | Jordan Protests | Tiger 3 | Salahuddin | | Indian Muslims | PM Modi | Rahul Gandhi | Karnataka News | Share Market | World News | Russia Ukraine | Putin | Xi Jinping | ICC World Cup Live Match Karnataka BJP,IT raids,Bengaluru,BJP,state BJP,protest | joe biden in israel | biden in israel | biden at israel | biden security #israelpalestineconflict #israel #breakingnews #gaza #hamasattack #palestine #gazapatti #israel #israelpalestineconflict #netanyahu #hamasattack #hezbollah #lebanon #israelwestbank #israelwarnews #israelhamaswarnews #israelhamasrocketattack #englishnews #PMModi #Modi #ModiLive”

## 6. Not Applicable

This applies to news that does not state information that is relevant to Israel’s war on Gaza.

*Example:*

“Democratic Party icon Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib has been further exposed. No word from Joe Biden on whether he plans to call for her immediate ouster from Congress.”

## Outline the Process:

The annotation is done manually using the guideline set.

## Set Quality Standards:

**Define expectations for accuracy and consistency, along with quality check procedures.**

### 1. Define Expectations for Accuracy

- a) Content Accuracy: Ensure that the annotated bias reflects the actual presence or absence of bias in the news article. Annotators should be familiar with the definitions and examples of different types of biases either against Palestine or Israel.
- b) Language Proficiency: Annotators should be fluent in the language of the news articles they annotate to accurately understand and identify nuances that may indicate bias.
- c) Training: Attend comprehensive training, including examples of biased and unbiased articles, to ensure a shared understanding of what constitutes bias.

### 2. Define Expectations for Consistency

- a) Annotation Consistency: Annotators should apply the same criteria consistently across different articles and languages. Establish clear guidelines and examples to ensure uniformity in annotation.

b) Inter-Annotator Agreement: Calculate inter-annotator agreement scores regularly to measure the consistency among annotators. Use these scores to identify areas where clarification or additional training may be needed.

c) Regular Feedback: Encourage annotators to provide feedback on the guidelines and seek clarification on ambiguous instructions to maintain consistency.

### 3. Quality Check Procedures

a) Pilot Testing: Before full-scale annotation, conduct pilot tests with a small subset of articles to identify any issues with the guidelines and assess the annotation quality.

b) Quality Assurance: Implement a quality assurance process where a subset of annotated articles is reviewed by a senior annotator or supervisor to ensure accuracy and consistency.

c) Feedback Loop: Establish a feedback loop where annotators can report challenges, ambiguities, or discrepancies they encounter during the annotation process. Use this feedback to update and improve the guidelines as needed.

d) Regular Audits: Conduct regular audits of the annotated data to identify any systematic errors or biases in the annotations. Address these issues promptly to maintain the integrity of the dataset.

## **Handle Ambiguities:**

Provide guidance on ambiguous cases and a protocol for seeking clarification.

Examples of Ambiguous Cases:

### 1. Subtle Bias

*Sentence: "Recent clashes between Israel and Palestine have led to casualties on both sides."*

Guidance: This sentence appears neutral but may imply equivalence between the actions or responsibilities of both parties. Annotators should consider the context and underlying implications of such statements when determining bias.

### 2. Framing Bias

*Sentence: "Israel defends its borders against Palestinian attacks."*

Guidance: The use of the term "defends" can be perceived as framing Israel in a defensive or justified position. Annotators should be aware of framing biases that portray one side as the aggressor or victim unfairly.

### 3. Omission Bias

*Sentence: "Violence erupted in Jerusalem today."*

Guidance: This sentence lacks specific details about the parties involved or the context of the violence. Annotators should consider whether the omission of key information contributes to a biased portrayal of the conflict.

#### 4. Sensationalism

*Sentence: "Deadly clashes rock Jerusalem as tensions soar between Israel and Palestine."*

Guidance: Sensational language like "deadly clashes" and "tensions soar" can exaggerate the severity or intensity of the conflict, potentially influencing readers' perceptions. Annotators should identify and annotate sensationalist language that may contribute to bias.

#### 5. Opinions Presented as Facts

*Sentence: "Israel's aggressive actions are a major obstacle to peace."*

Guidance: Statements that present opinions as facts can introduce bias. Annotators should identify and annotate such statements, distinguishing between factual reporting and editorializing or opinionated language.

### ***Protocol for Handling Ambiguous Cases:***

#### 1. Context Analysis

Encourage annotators to consider the broader context, tone, and framing of the article when evaluating ambiguous sentences. Understanding the historical and political background of the conflict can help clarify the intent behind potentially biased language.

#### 2. Collaborative Discussion

Establish a collaborative environment where annotators can discuss ambiguous cases with colleagues or supervisors. Sharing perspectives and insights can help resolve uncertainties and promote consistent annotation practices.

#### 3. Refer to Guidelines

Remind annotators to refer back to the annotation guidelines and decision trees provided in the guideline document. These resources should offer clear criteria and examples to guide their decisions on ambiguous cases.

Document Queries and Decisions: Maintain a record of all queries raised by annotators regarding ambiguous cases and the decisions made to resolve them. This documentation will be valuable for training and quality assurance purposes.

Expert Review: For particularly challenging or contentious cases, consider involving domain experts or senior annotators to review and provide guidance. Their expertise can help ensure accurate and nuanced annotations.

### **Ensure Consistency:**

Implement measures for annotator consistency and recommend calibration sessions.

### 1. Implement Measures for Annotator Consistency

a) Clear Annotation Guidelines: Provide annotators with detailed and comprehensive annotation guidelines that clearly define the criteria for identifying different types of bias related to the Palestine-Israel conflict. Include examples, decision trees, and FAQs to assist annotators in understanding and applying the guidelines consistently.

b) Training Sessions: Conduct initial training sessions to familiarize annotators with the guidelines, examples, and tools they will use for annotation. Regular refresher training can also be beneficial to reinforce consistent annotation practices.

c) Annotation Review: Implement a peer-review system where annotations are periodically reviewed by other annotators or supervisors to identify inconsistencies and provide feedback for improvement.

d) Inter-Annotator Agreement (IAA): annotators to consider the broader context, tone, and framing of the article when evaluating ambiguous sentences. Understanding the historical and political background of the conflict can help clarify the intent behind potentially biased language.

Calculate IAA scores regularly to measure the level of agreement among annotators. Low IAA scores may indicate inconsistencies in the annotation process and can be used to identify areas that require further clarification or training.

### 2. Recommend Calibration Sessions

a) Purpose of Calibration: Explain the importance of calibration sessions in aligning annotators' understanding and application of the annotation guidelines. Calibration sessions help reduce variability among annotators and enhance the reliability of the annotated dataset.

b) Frequency of Calibration: Recommend scheduling calibration sessions regularly, especially when introducing new annotators to the project or updating the annotation guidelines. Additionally, consider conducting calibration sessions before major annotation tasks to ensure consistent interpretations and practices.

c) Format of Calibration Sessions: Calibration sessions can be conducted through group discussions, workshops, or one-on-one meetings. Use real-world examples and case studies to simulate the annotation process and discuss potential ambiguities, helping annotators practice and align their judgments.



d) Documentation and Feedback: Document the outcomes of calibration sessions, including common challenges, discussions, and decisions made during the session. Provide feedback to annotators on areas of improvement and distribute updated guidelines or clarifications as needed.

e) Ongoing Support: Encourage annotators to reach out with questions or uncertainties even after calibration sessions. Maintain an open channel of communication to address concerns promptly and ensure continuous alignment with the annotation guidelines.

### **Ethical Considerations:**

The annotation depended on measuring the frequency of some words and finding the collocates using relevant application to ensure unbiased annotation practices. The google sheet are not share with anyone outside the annotator and the scholars whose email are in the guideline of the shared task to ensure sensitive data are kept secure.

### **Training and Support:**

An online discussion of the categories was done with hands on training on some examples. Then the annotators were asked to annotate some randomly selected examples from the news at hand in order to see how valid is the guideline in the annotation process. These examples were on a shared google document in order to mutually see the work and the comments. They were asked to send their comments via email if there were many issues to discuss.

### **Review and Update:**

A review of the guideline is to be reviewed and updated according to the comments and new insights. This is done after every batch is finished. A copy of the updated guideline is shared with the new points highlighted.

### **Feedback Mechanism:**

Comments on some cases are to be shared in a google sheet.