Yamen Ajjour

Birth	28.08.1989 in Krakow
Mail	yajjour@hotmail.com
Languages	English, German, Arabic
Nationality	German, Syrian
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Web	Linkedin Blog Github

EDUCATION

PhD in Computer Science 2017 - 2023
Bauhaus University Weimar
Grade: Magna cum Laude
Thesis: Addressing Controversial Topics in Search Engines

Master of Science in Computer Science and Media 2014 - 2016
Bauhaus University Weimar
Grade: 1.44
Thesis: Mining Relevant Arguments at Web Scale

Bachelor of Science in Informatics Engineering 2006 - 2012
Aleppo University
Grade: 79.45 from 100
Final Project: Developing Web-based Business Process Management System

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Outstanding Reviewer Award at EACL 2023	2023
Best Paper Award at the 42nd German Conference on Artificial Intelligence	2019
DAAD Scholarship for Master Study	2014 - 2016
Türkiye Scholarship for Master Study	2013 - 2014

WORK EXPERIENCE

Postdoctoral Researcher 1.2023 - now
Leibniz University Hannover

- Exploring examples sampling strategies for few-shot stance classification. Fine-tuning Alpaca using LoRa on seven stance classification datasets.
- Building an instruction fine-tuning dataset to analyze the generalizability of instructions fine-tuned model over tasks.
- Using causal knowledge graphs to generate factual text and comparing it to RAG.
- Teaching NLP programming labs and tutorials. Example algorithms: Byte-pair encoding, SVM, RNNs.
- Co-organizing the ArgMining 2024 workshop and an internal research symposium.

Research Assistant 11.2021 - 12.2022
Leipzig University

- Developing recall-oriented machine learning models to extract arguments from a large web crawl

Research Assistant 10.2019 - 11.2021
Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg

- Developing question classifiers using transformers and using them to analyze Yandex! logs.

- Organization of shared tasks: touché, same side stance classification, frame identification
- Developing a stance classifier using BERT and Keras and integrating it in an argument search engine.
- Managing and analyzing high scale textual datasets.
- Supervision of internship projects with industry (e.g., Relaxdays).

Research Assistant 01.2017 - 10.2019
Bauhaus University Weimar

- Developing and maintaining an argument search engine (www.args.me), including developing neural networks and CRF models to mine arguments in natural language.
- Crowd sourcing question datasets on Amazon Mechanical Turk and Toloka.
- Supervision of labs, projects, seminars, and theses.

Student Assistant 04.2015 - 12.2016
Bauhaus University Weimar

- Developing a search engine for Wikipedia.
- Developing a crowd sourcing interface for offensive language detection.

C++ Developer 11.2012 - 09.2013
IDscan Limited LTD

- Developing algorithms in OpenCV to detect blurry images.
- Developing computer vision algorithms to recognize personal documents in photos using OpenCV.
- Creating wrappers for C++ libraries in C#, Java, and Python.

Odoo ERP Developer 08.2011 - 08.2012
Taiba Soft

- Customizing and maintaining an ERP System for a hospital based on OpenERP.
- Customizing a PyQt-based client for the ERP System.

SKILLS

Programming Languages	Python, C++, Java, Bash, SQL, LaTeX
Libraries	PyTorch, Pandas, sickit-learn, NumPy, vLLM, Hugging Face, SciPy, Matplotlib, Spacy, Lucene, Outlines, Optuna, Accelerate
Software	Github, Gitlab, Docker, PySpark, Hadoop, Amazon Mechnical Turk, AWS, SLURM

TALKS

Argumentation Technology 2022
SCADS AI Summer School

Instructions Fine-tuning with Alpaca 2024
PyData Meetup

PUBLICATIONS

[1] Yamen Ajjour, Henning Wachsmuth, Dora Kiesel, Patrick Riehmann, Fan Fan, Giuliano Castiglia, Rosemary Adejoh, Bernd Froehlich, and Benno Stein. Visualization of the topic space of argument search results in args.me. In *Proceedings of the 2018 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP 2018) - System Demonstrations*. Association for Computational Linguistics, November 2018.

[2] Dora Kiesel, Patrick Riehmann, Fan Fan, Yamen Ajjour, Henning Wachsmuth, Benno Stein, and Bernd Froehlich. Improving barycentric embeddings of topics spaces. In *Proceedings VIS 2018*. IEEE, November 2018.

[3] Henning Wachsmuth, Martin Potthast, Khalid Al-Khatib, Yamen Ajjour, Jana Puschmann, Jiani Qu, Jonas Dorsch, Viorel Morari, Janek Bevendorff, and Benno Stein. Building an Argument Search Engine for the Web. In *Proceedings of the Fourth Workshop on Argument Mining (ArgMining 2017)*, pages 49–59, September 2017.

[4] Yamen Ajjour, Wei-Fan Chen, Johannes Kiesel, Henning Wachsmuth, and Benno Stein. Unit Segmentation of Argumentative Texts. In *Proceedings of the Fourth Workshop on Argument Mining (ArgMining 2017)*, pages 118–128, September 2017.

[5] Henning Wachsmuth, Benno Stein, and Yamen Ajjour. "PageRank" for Argument Relevance. In *Proceedings of the 15th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL 2017)*, pages 1116–1126, April 2017.

[6] Yamen Ajjour, Milad Alshomary, Henning Wachsmuth, and Benno Stein. Modeling Frames in Argumentation. In *2019 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing and 9th Internationl Joint Conference on Natural Language Processing (EMNLP 2019)*. ACL, November 2019.

[7] Yamen Ajjour, Henning Wachsmuth, Johannes Kiesel, Martin Potthast, Matthias Hagen, and Benno Stein. Data Acquisition for Argument Search: The args.me corpus. In *42nd German Conference on Artifical Intelligence (KI 2019)*. Springer, September 2019.

[8] Jan Heinrich Reimer, Thi Kim Hanh Luu, Max Henze, and Yamen Ajjour. Modern Talking in Key Point Analysis: Key Point Matching using Pretrained Encoders. In *8th Workshop on Argument Mining (ArgMining 2021) at EMNLP*. Association for Computational Linguistics, November 2021.

[9] Alexander Bondarenko, Yamen Ajjour, Valentin Dittmar, Niklas Homann, Pavel Braslavski, and Matthias Hagen. Towards Understanding and Answering Comparative Questions. In *15th ACM International Conference on Web Search and Data Mining (WSDM 2022)*. ACM, February 2022.

[10] Yamen Ajjour, Pavel Braslavski, Alexander Bondarenko, and Benno Stein. Identifying Argumentative Questions in Web Search Logs. In *45th International ACM Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval (SIGIR 2022)*. ACM, July 2022.

[11] Yamen Ajjour, Johannes Kiesel, Benno Stein, and Martin Potthast. Topic Ontologies for Arguments. In *17th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL 2023)*. Association for Computational Linguistics, May 2023.

[12] Yamen Ajjour. *Addressing Controversial Topics in Search Engines*. PhD thesis, Bauhaus University, Weimar, Germany, 2023.

[13] Yamen Ajjour and Henning Wachsmuth. Exploring Priming Strategies for Few Shot Stance Classification. In *ArgMining 2025, ACL 2025*. Association for Computational Linguistics, 2025.

[14] Yamen Ajjour and Henning Wachsmuth. ArgBench: Benchmarking LLMs on Computational Argumentation Tasks. In *AAR 2025,* ***Under Review***. Association for Computational Linguistics, December 2025.

SUPERVISION AND TEACHING

Projects

Adressvalidierung und Korrektur	2020
The Argument Search Engine	SS2018
Interactive Argument Search	WS2018
Argument Search Engine - Voice-based Argument Search	WS2019
Mining Arguments in Parliamentary Debates	SS2019

Bachelor Theses

Integrating Counterarguments into args.me	2019
Conversational Information Retrieval for Instructional Content	2018
Measuring and Modeling Bias in Search Engines	2020
Generating Factual Arguments by Fine-Tuning LLMs on Causal Knowledge Graphs	2024

Master Theses

Mining Arguments from Experts	2020
Analyzing the Impact of Context on Downstream Argument Assessment Tasks	2023
Personalized Label Explanation Generation	2024

Labs

Computational Reasoning	WS2017, SS2020, SS2023, SS2024
Web Technologien	SS2017, SS2018
Introduction to Machine Learning	WS2019
Web Suche und Information Retrieval	WS2020, WS2021
Natural Language Processing	SS2020, SS2021, WS2024
Language Technologies	WS2023

REVIEWING

AAAI, ACL, EMNLP, COLING, EACL, NAACL, CIKIM, ArgMining, COMMA

CHAIR

ArgMining 2024, ARR 2025, EMNLP Demo Track 2025