

# Annotation guidelines for the debate.org dataset

**Goal:** Split debate posts into argumentative segments addressing different aspects of the topics.

Examples for aspects for selected topics are listed below.

## Examples for popular controversial topics and aspects

### **Gun control**

- self-defense, self-reliance
- guns don't kill people – people kill people
- rural life, farmers protecting themselves from wildlife
- second amendment
- shooting as sport

### **Legalizing abortion**

- Health and safety of women
- Body autonomy
- Gender equality
- Mental and physical consequences
- Misusage for eugenics
- Adoption as alternative
- Life begins at conception

### **School uniforms**

- Unity
- Cost
- Time saving
- Bullying
- Individuality

### **Other popular controversial topics**

- Climate change
- Gay marriage
- Student loan crisis
- Universal healthcare
- Euthanasia
- Marijuana legalization
- Israel

# Annotation Process

## Requirements

- GitHub: <https://github.com/anna---10/YEDDASeg.git>
- Requires Python 2.7 (e.g. open in virtual environment)
- Start YEDDA\_Annotator.py in a terminal

## How to use YEDDA annotator

- Add label: Place the cursor and press the key associated to the label you want to add
- Change label: Place the cursor within the existing label and press the key of the new label
- Remove label: Place cursor within an existing label and press Q

## Procedure

1. Start YEDDA annotator
2. Load document from your folder AnnotatorXY
  - Use test document in test folder first to get familiar with the annotation procedure
3. Add document label (see below for details)
4. Add segment labels if document quality is medium or high (see below for details)
5. Save the document
  - If the same document is loaded again, the previous annotation will disappear
  - Thus open every document only once if you want to keep the annotations

## 3. Add document labels

Categories: <low quality>, <medium quality>, and <high quality>.

To be placed at the very beginning of the document

- A. <low quality> documents are documents that are not to be considered in the training process because they are either nonsense
- *I'm a panda*
  - *Unicorns, Rainbows, Obama, and Randomness*
  - *It is probable that Adolf Hitler still lives*

or grammatically of very poor quality and thus not comprehensible

- *Exercising is not the thing recess is and how could it raise obesity kids can just sneak food outside and just eat it JAYQUAN i know a lot of people that do that and at recess kids don't usually don't run they just walk around and do nothing and that's just it and its stupid to just go outside and just because you don't go outside dose not mean that kids cant go outside at home you can not do certain stuff at school recess like bring your phone.*
- *First of all thier should be one way the human race should praise for or thier will think of themselves as kings so god is real on a level but he is a sprit...*

No segment labels will be considered in combination with this document label

- B. <high quality> documents show a well-structured argumentation and good grammar and spelling. Arguments are precise and supported by evidence. The text stands out by being good enough to be used in a school essay.

- C. Most documents however will match the <medium quality> document label and are identified by being neither of low quality nor of high quality. E.g. they do make some points, but claims are not always supported by evidence, grammar and spelling could be better, they wander off the subject too much, etc. (examples are given on the following pages)

#### 4. Add segment labels

Categories: <aspectXY>, <conclusion>, <outside of argumentation/ off-topic>

Are to be placed in front of the starting word of the segment

- A segment is based on sentences and thus must contain at least one sentence! All text must be labeled with a segment label (in between the aspect and conclusion labels must be outside labels)
- A. <aspectXY> labeled segments are mostly argumentative and can be distinguished from segments with other aspect labels by addressing a different aspect of the topic [4]. However, the same aspect label might be used for different segments addressing the same aspect.
  - If sensible, the segments should be chosen along line breaks and the pre-given structure (previous point) [1]
  - If there is something like "Point 1", "1)", "Argument A." used by the authors to structure the argumentation, include this within the <aspectXY> segment, don't label it as outside even if there is a little bit of outside talk like in this case:
    - *B. So what. The leaders in a Geniocracy would be incredibly selfish...*
    - Be consistent with this within a document
  - Also, if sensible, try to include transitional words like "First", "Second", "Next" within one segment as they indicate a start of a new point [3]
- B. The <conclusion> label is to be chosen for sentences concluding the whole document. Zero or one <conclusion> labels are allowed per document. Conclusions summarize the arguments and thus either appear at the beginning or the end of an argumentation.
  - *If humans can change their definition of marriage as they please and there is no reason NOT to change it, why should we keep our laws about marriage the same?*
  - *Every able-bodied citizen in the US should attain at least 1 year of military training before the age of 24.*
- C. The <outside of argumentation/ off-topic> label labels e.g. URLs, citations of the opponent, sentences addressing the opponent or the voters like
  - *I actually thought round 3 was the last round for some odd reason and treated it as such. I don't think there really is much to say here without bringing in new evidence so I'll just go over a few important points.*
  - *you still have not responded to my points about the poor earlier. food, health care, perhaps shelter. please refer to my analogies and points in my first post.*

mere definitions like

  - *gentrification-the change in the character of a traditionally working-class area following an influx of new middle-class residents.*

or segments describing the background or stating an opinion but not being argumentative like

  - *With all the major shootings that have taken place recently, in the US and abroad, there has been an increased call for gun control in the United States. I assert that this is not only unconstitutional, but also would do little to nothing to combat mass gun violence.*

and statements not making a point towards the topic [2].

## Annotation examples

### Example [1]:

Segments chosen along the document structure.

YEDDA-V1.0 Annotator

File: C:/Users/AnnaS/OneDrive/Masterarbeit2020/YEDASeg-master/dataset\_annotation\_v3/14.txt

<<<medium quality>>>

<https://www.debate.org/debates/Every-able-bodied-citizen-in-the-US-should-attain-at-least-1-year-of-military-training-by-age-24./1/>

**TITLE: Every able-bodied citizen in the US should attain at least 1 year of military training by age 24.**

**CATEGORY: Politics**

<<<aspect1>>>

**P1) There are many benefits to a year of mandatory military training and service. First, US citizens would gain a mental and physical health boost from the motivation and rigors of military training. Second, US citizens would gain a healthy respect for discipline, and an understanding of group work, which could help boost our economy due to a motivated population.**

<<<outside of argumentation>>>

[https://www.cypanthers.org... ..](https://www.cypanthers.org...)

<<<aspect2>>>

**P2) Having your population well-trained for combat is certainly a benefit within itself. If ever threatened, the US would have well over 50 million trained, battle-ready soldiers at any given moment, ready to respond to any threats. This would give the US political leverage during international deliberations.**

<<<outside of argumentation>>>

[http://www.studymode.com... ..](http://www.studymode.com...)

## Example [2]:

The following text is neither nonsense nor written poorly but it just makes one point which can be considered towards the topic. Thus, the document is labeled as <medium quality> and most of the text as <outside of argumentation>.

74 YEDDA-V1.0 Annotator

File: C:/Users/AnnaS/OneDrive/Masterarbeit2020/YEDDAseg/data/799.txt

<<<medium quality>>>

<https://www.debate.org/debates/Would-the-Gulf-States-Work-More-Efficiently-as-a-Separate-Nation/1/>

**TITLE: Would the Gulf States Work More Efficiently as a Separate Nation**

**CATEGORY: Politics**

<<<outside of argumentation>>>

With recent developments, such as the oil spill, it's a wonder there hasn't been one word about the gulf states(Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida) from succeeding from the U.S.. Texas even has the legal right to do so. It's obvious that the rest of the nation has anything but completely forgotten the spill. It was not even mentioned in President Obama's State of the Union. It is clearly evident that the oil is not gone. When you make something smaller and disperse it over a larger area it does not go away. Hence the term "dispersant". The oil is now at a molecular level working it's way up the food chain and most locals have stopped eating fish caught in our area. Meanwhile the process of snatching a claim from BPs iron clasp has made it impossible for many people to get a fraction of what they are owed. To top it off the U.S. government decided to hand it's air tanker contracts to a company well known for fraud instead of sending it to the hard working and honest Northrop-Grumman facilities in Alabama, a state which most northerners few as primitive and mostly agricultural. Alabama in fact has well balanced agricultural and industrial settings. Don't get me started on how idiotic Obama's response was either. Instead of consulting any of the gulf states he decided to put a huge halt on off shore drilling which is a major workforce for the coast.

<<<aspect1>>>

The United States may have finally gotten to big and divided to function as a whole.

Similar situation for the following example: No point is made towards the topic and thus there is only one segment labeled as <outside of argumentation>.

74 YEDDA-V1.0 Annotator

File: C:/Users/AnnaS/OneDrive/Masterarbeit2020/YEDDAseg-master/dataset\_annotation\_v3/3.txt

<<<medium quality>>>

<https://www.debate.org/debates/Should-certain-foods-be-restricted-from-SNAP/1/>

**TITLE: Should certain foods be restricted from SNAP?**

**CATEGORY: Politics**

<<<outside of argumentation>>>

Very sorry about this, I thought I had more time on my hands to join this type of thing but I really just kind of don't... I have a lot of assignments and essays in school as the semester comes to a close, so great job, I forfeit. Congrats on winning! You're actually a really good debater and you made some really good points :)

### Example [3]

“Next, I ask a simple question.” could be considered outside the argumentation but is chosen to be inside to include the transitional word “Next” which indicates that a new point is made.

74 YEEDA-V1.0 Annotator

File: C:/Users/AnnaS/OneDrive/Masterarbeit2020/YEEDASeg-master/dataset\_annotation\_v3/13.txt

<<<<medium quality>>>>

<https://www.debate.org/debates/Gay-marriage-should-be-legal-in-every-state./1/>

**TITLE: Gay marriage should be legal in every state.**

**CATEGORY: Society**

<<<<outside of argumentation>>>>

Thank you for accepting. I hope we can have a good debate.

<<<<aspect1>>>>

First, I want to start off with what I think to be the definition of marriage: two people who love each other joined to live together until death or until one wants a divorce. There isn't anything biological about marriage. Marriage is something humans created, rather than gender, which was created for us, inside of us. Humans created marriage and therefore, I think, have the right to change the definition as they wish, should they feel that that change is justified.

<<<<aspect2>>>>

Next, I ask a simple question. Why shouldn't gay marriage be legal? There are obviously people who would benefit from gay marriage being legal. Who exactly would it hurt? There are many people who don't want gay marriage to be equal, but would it hurt them? Would gay marriage make their lives worse?

<<<<outside of argumentation>>>>

This may seem like a short starting argument, but it's all I need right now.

<<<<conclusion>>>>

If humans can change their definition of marriage as they please and there is no reason NOT to change it, why should we keep our laws about marriage the same?

## Example [4]

Text without line breaks and only a few transitional word is segmented by aspects.

74 YEDDA-V1.0 Annotator

File: C:/Users/AnnaS/OneDrive/Masterarbeit2020/YEEDASeg-master/dataset\_annotation\_v3/23.txt

<<<medium quality>>>

<https://www.debate.org/debates/Lower-The-Drinking-Age/1/>

**TITLE: Lower The Drinking Age**

**CATEGORY: Society**

Aspect1: Drunk driving

Aspect2: Alcoholism/ addiction

Aspect3: Peer pressure

<<<outside of argumentation>>>

Yes I do agree that drinking is conveyed as "fun" through the media, but in all of these commercials they have adults portraying the "fun" that could come.

<<<aspect1>>>

Drunk driving incidents are happening now, with younger adults and adults that are over the age of twenty-one as well.

<<<aspect2>>>

Also considering the fact yes eighteen year old teens can become addicted to alcohol but it has been shown you can still get addicted to alcohol at any age; it will slowly develop at any age, alcoholism has no age limit, it's a disease.

<<<aspect3>>>

We keep looking at teenagers that they have all this peer pressure but yes okay peer pressure is said to affect teens, but peer pressure can still happen when your older! At any age you can egg a person on to drink another beer, or go to a certain place, hang out till a certain time.

<<<conclusion>>>

So my final point is peer pressure as well as becoming addicted to alcohol, is not defined by any age. Lowering the drinking age makes teenagers think about their next step; we have them thinking about their future, showing something that can risk it as well as damage them might make them think a little harder - especially when they have the right to make their own decisions.