

CODEBOOK FOR DECODING DELIBERATION (V.13)

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RS – RESPONDS TO

To whom does the message respond? The purpose of this code is to provide a sense of who is responding to whom, and serves as a measure of the level of interactivity in a discussion.

In the example below, the first column is the message number in the sequence of messages. The second column is the name of the participant. Column three is the RS (responds to) category. The fourth column here is the actual message. For example, in line 213, darn is responding to cable chick in line 205, so the RS column received the line number of 205.

Line	Name	RS	Message
205	the_cable_chick	203	darn. contract from AT&T
213	darn2136	205	ars they going to let go of that broad band
217	the_cable_chick	213	darn; not to my knowledge. Broadband is their bread and butter

Continuations:

If a participant posts multiple messages back to back that seem to elaborate on the original message, then the “responds to” code is the most recent message from that person that started that series.

Line	Name	RS	Message
6	the_cable_chick	2	Groov.. that's my point!! Who ARE they calling?
9	the_cable_chick	6	81% of the American people think GW is doing a fantastic job... MY ASS
10	the_cable_chick	9	there is nothing that 81% of this country would ever agree on

If a participant responds to a message in a continuous chain, the RS code should refer to the most recent message in the series if the response refers to more than one message in the chain; otherwise, it should refer to the specific message in the chain the response seems most clearly to connect with.

A participant who posts the same line over and over again is treated as a continuation.

Blank Lines:

Unfortunately, when the discussion is saved all emoticons are erased. Blank lines—in which there is a name but no message—receive an “NA” code across the columns.

Part of conversation, but no clear connection to a particular prior utterance:

Sometimes an utterance relates to the conversation, but there is no clear message to which it's responding. For example, an exchange might occur on child support. Shay says that children have the right to be with their mothers, and Tauri says she agrees, but that it's unfair how much

fathers have to pay when the kids don't live with him. Driver responds with a message that says "parents should not fight over their kids." Driver's utterance is loosely connected to Shay and Tauri's comments, but there is no shared semantic to make it clear to whom Driver is responding. When this occurs, then the RT code should refer to the last message in the exchange to which Driver's message relates.

Voice

Voice chat—when a text message is responding to someone on voice, then the entire message is coded NA, because it's difficult to understand the meaning of the message given that we only have access to half the discussion.

Greetings or Comments on People Who Have Left

If a participant greets a person who has recently entered the chat, the RS code is "NA." Similarly, a participant who greets a person who has been in the discussion for awhile receives an "NA" code. Subsequent greetings receive RS codes. If a participant replies to multiple greeters at once, then the RS code should be to the last of the greeters. A message directed at someone who has left the channel gets an "NA" code.

Line	Name	RS	Message
1	Groover enters the room		
2	Sally	NA	Hey Groover
3	Groover	2	Hiya Sally
4	Tilli222	NA	Welcome Groover
5	Shwou444	NA	Groover!
6	Groover	5	Hey Tilli and Shwou

Ambiguity:

- When a person is named in an utterance, but that person does not have a line of text in the conversation (could be someone in voice chat or someone in the channel using more than one name) we code NA across the board.
- When an utterance is entirely ambiguous as to whom they are responding to and/or what the utterance means, then it can be coded NA across the board. These are especially likely to be nonverbal or especially short utterances where it is unclear at whom or with whom someone is, for example, laughing. This is also likely at the start of the coding sample when it's unclear the context of the conversation.

Number	Name	RS	Utterance
680	TawniVixen	677	Cable the world Hates YOU
681	moonbeam70435	NA	yes key i know
682	TawniVixen	680	they dont hate me
683	wywind1	674	ARM; DON'T BE A SORE LOOSER. YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE!!
684	doctor_on_board	NA	Wrong
685	the_cable_chick	677	at first; I didn't care
686	TawniVixen	NA	Hehehehehe

--In this example, it is entirely unclear to whom “doctor on board” is referring with his “wrong.” Doctor on board was not participating actively in any of the conversations, thus it is difficult to infer if he is reacting to TawniVixen or to wywind. Similarly, Tawnivixen, in 686, emotes, but to whom (herself? Wywind?) it is unclear.

Third Parties

On occasion, it is possible that a small group will have a conversation and something said in the conversation will prompt a discussant to urge another participant to join in the conversation.

Example:

No.	Name	RS	Utterance
604	wywind1	NA	... GOOD MORNING PALE
613	pale_rider_52	604	morning wywind
616	wywind1	613	STILL NO SOUND HERE!!
621	arpitt50	616	Thank God.....wywind doesn't have talk capabilities
626	wywind1	621	...ARM I'M GIVIN YOU UP FOR PALE!!
636	arpitt50	626	wywind.....did he tell you he had a bigger dick?
640	arpitt50	636	don't believe him
643	wywind1	640	ARM; HE DOESN'T LIE TO ME!!
657	arpitt50	NA	HA!.....wywind.....not to be a smart ass....is it possible that you have your sound muted?
663	wywind1	657	PALE TELL ARM TO GET OUT OF MY LIFE AND STAY OUT!!
670	pale_rider_52	663	grrrr.....get out arm!

In this exchange, wywind and armpit are having a playful exchange, and wywind calls in pale rider to mediate. Line 663 is in response to line 657, rather than to line 613, because wywind is reacting to armpit, by calling in pale rider to mediate.

IT – INTERACTIVITY

Does the utterance relate in some way to prior messages? This code is intended to note whether an utterance is in some way connected with prior utterances.

1 – Is related to prior messages in some way—even loosely.

0 – Not related to prior messages from others in any way—*includes first greetings and continuations.*

Note:

- If a new person enters the room and begins speaking, sometimes their statements might appear to be related to prior messages. If they are brand new to the room, though, it's not likely they actually know what the prior topic is, and so they should get a 0.

RT – RESPONSE TYPE

This code focuses on message type. The purpose of this code is to categorize message types into one of five “illocutionary” types.

Handling utterances with potentially multiple types:

When an utterance appears to have multiple types of illocutionary acts, then the type that has the majority of words of the message gets the code.

Handling continuations that are fragments from prior messages:

If a message is continued, and the second piece is a fragment that is unintelligible without the prior sentence, then carry the code from the prior utterance. Likewise, if the first piece of a message is a fragment, but becomes intelligible after reading the second utterance, then the first utterance receives the same code as the second utterance.

A – ASSERTIVE.

The *assertive point* consists in representing as actual a state of affairs. The words expressed are meant to represent the way things are in the world. The utterances are not necessarily true, but the speaker believes the utterance to be true.

Assertive verbs include: accuse, acknowledge, acquiesce, admit, advise, affirm, agree, alert, alarm, assent, assert, assure, attest, aver, avouch, blame, boast, calumniate, castigate, certify, claim, complain, concede, confess, conjecture, correct, criticize, declare, deny, denounce, describe, disagree, disclaim, dissent, divulgate, divulge, forecast, foretell, forewarn, inform, suggest, guess, hypothesize, inform, insinuate, insist, lament, maintain, negate, notify, object, postulate, praise, predict, prophesy, reassert, recognize, recant, remind, report, reprimand, retrodict, reveal, sustain, suggest, swear, state, tell, testify, vaticinate, warn.

Examples:

- *Statement:* These are utterances that have the force of a true statement (they don't have to be true. The speaker just has to appear to believe it's true). They can include "I think" or "I know." "George Bush is the president." "I think George Bush is a good President" or "George Bush has been a good president" or "I know Bush is great."
- *Third-Person Expressives:* Take the form of an expressive, but are of a third person who is not party to the conversation. "I congratulated him on his performance." "Bill Clinton is morally depraved."
- *Yes and no utterances:* Have yes or no in the utterance, either from answering a question from a prior utterance, or responding to a prior assertion. Can have further elaboration to support the assertion. Storm: "We need to take Hussein out!" Chsell: "Yes, we do." OR "Yes, we do. He was dangerous."
- *Agree and disagree utterances:* Actually say "agree" or "disagree" or imply agreement or disagreement in the utterance. They may then elaborate on why they agree or disagree. Storm: "Saudi Arabia did not harbor al Qauda." Chsell: "Not really, Storm. The Taliban were supported by the United States."
- *Affirmative non-yes answer and negative non-no utterances:* Answer a question from or respond to a prior utterance, but do not explicit say yes or no. "We needed to take Hussein out" to a question posed of the sort "Did we need to go into Iraq?" Can be as short as "okay."
- *Maybe/accept-part:* an utterance that signals partial acceptance of a prior message. "I agree with part of that. You can't be both against the war and support our troops" {where "you" is meant not directed at the speaker, but "you" as "one."}

- *Collaborative completion*: when two people finish each other's or help each other with their statement.
- *Rhetorical question*: A rhetorical question is generally understood as affirming or denying a point strongly by asking it as a question. Kinds of rhetorical questions include: a) asking questions to chide, to express grief, or to inveigh ("Do you live in a cave?"); b) to ask and then immediately answer one's own question ("Why do I hate the Brits so much? 4 o'clock tea"); c) asking the opinion or judgment of the listeners such that it is implied that listeners share a common interest with the speaker ("Now, you decide: Given the attacks Bush has received, doesn't he deserve to be angry?" "Speaking of international issues. Has anyone else noticed all the fighting in the Middle East that's gonna get us involved somehow?"); d) confirming or reinforcing one's own argument ("so, don't you see that I'm right?" "but it's now winter, right?"); e) debating with oneself such that it expresses doubt over some matter or expresses concern over the right perspective ("Should we be concerned about our lack of oil reserves?"); f) attempting to ignite passion in listeners through a question ("Can we stand by and let Hussein attack us? Shouldn't we attack before being attacked?"); g) asking a question to prove a point. [definition comes from *silva rhetoricae*]
- *Quotation*: An utterance that is a quotation from another source. "Bob: I did not have sexual relations with that woman."
- *Hyperlinks*: When a participant places a hyperlink in a conversation without any contextualization, it's an assertive.
- *Statements of Hypothetical Future Actions*: When a participant states that maybe, in the future, they will do some action or hold some belief, it's an assertive, rather than a commissive.
- *Elaborations on Meaning*: "What I meant to say, is that I'm unhappy with our relations with China" (when the prior message from the same person was "We're screwing things up with China.")
- *Demonstratives*: a.k.a "Role play as argument." Unlike performatives, demonstratives (which take the form of performatives) serve to demonstrate an argument: "The Government does as business tells us. Bend over. Yes business. What ever you demand Master." "Jaye walks into the voting booth to vote against her interests."
- *Puns and jokes (opinion)*: Puns and jokes offered in the service of an argument.
- *Metatalk*: Talk about the talk. "What I've been trying to tell you. . ." "My point, which I just said, is . . ."

E - EXPRESSIVE

The *expressive point* consists of expressing a psychological state of the speaker about a state of affairs. With expressives there is no direction of fit. Expressives generally are something given by a speaker to a hearer; they place some value (positive or negative) on what a speaker is doing or saying (approval, sanctioning, encouragement, removal of blame).

Expressive verbs include: acclaim, agree, apologize, applaud, approve, blame, boast, boo, brag, challenge, cheer, complain, compliment, condole, congratulate, deplore, disapprove, extol, greet, grieve, hate, lament, laud, love, mourn, plaudit, plead, please, praise, protest, rejoice, reprove, thank, and welcome

Examples:

- *Expressions of praise or blame*: “Cat22, that’s a brilliant observation.” “Trucker, it’s your fault we got onto this subject.”
- *Expressions of approval or disapproval of a listener*: an utterance that expresses the speaker’s approval, praise, or *condemnation of someone* with whom they are speaking or of some experience in general (**but not of another person who is NOT part of the discussion: see assertives**). “Sally, I think your ideas are crazy.” “Now, you’re being vulgar, Shar” “You’re confused.” “You are contributing to the problem.”
- *Psychological Statements*: Statements of love and hate (I love GW; I hate the war) are expressions of psychological states. Statements of “just kidding” or “just playing” are also psychological statements.
- *Relational Statements*: Statements that express the speaker’s perspective on the state of the relationship with the hearer. “I’m not upset with you.” “I think you’re a good guy.”
- *Swearing*: Swearing outside of the context of an argument (i.e. stand alone swearing) is an expressive.
- *Reputation Statements*: Some statements service the reputation of the speaker or defend the reputation of the speaker to the hearer. Often one will see such defensive gestures in the context of “I know” statements. Unlike “I know” agreement statements (see the AG code), “I know” defensive reputation statements function, like in the following cases. Candy asks: “How cold is it in Canada?” A few participants respond telling her that Canada is big; a few make jokes about it. She retorts, “I know Canada is big.” Although, on the face of it, it’s an agreement statement, its function is as a defensive gesture. A second example: Canaman tells Demo that Canada is in NAFTA after a heated argument about trade between the United States and Canada. Demo replies “I know Canada is in NAFTA.” Again, it’s a defensive gesture, rather than a signal of agreement.
- *Exclamations*: utterances that are generally one word statements of surprise/disbelief (Wow, 42!, REALLY?!?! Yikes!) are statements that express the psychological state of the speaker.
- *Personal attacks*: Utterances that attack another participant (rather than another participant’s ideas) are personal attacks. “You’re an idiot.” “That’s not true, you moron.”
- *Apologies*: “I’m sorry if that offends you.” “I’m sorry, but terrorism is wrong in any situation.”
- *Response acknowledgement*: sometimes there are utterances that just confirm hearing another speaker. “Cat22, we hear you.” “ok.” “K”
- *Correction*: an utterance that corrects a prior utterance from the same person, specifically typographical errors.
- *Thanking*: an utterance that expresses thanks. Generally has “thank” as a verb.
- *Opening and Closings (conventional)*: standard greetings and farewells. “Hi everyone.” “How are you today?” “See you all later. “bye.”

D - DIRECTIVE

The *directive point* consists in making an attempt to get the hearer to do something. This category is quite similar to the commissive category. The key difference is that instead of an utterance that commits the speaker, it’s an utterance that attempts to get the hearer to do something. These attempts can be quite mild (such as yes or no questions) or quite intense, such as an action-directive. The utterance attempts to get the world to be like the words.

Directive verbs include: adjure, advise, alarm, alert, allow, appeal, ask, authorize, beg, beseech, caution, challenge, charge, claim, command, commission, conjure, consent, convene, convoke, dare, demand, dictate, direct, discourage, encourage, enjoin, entreat, exorcise, forbid, implore, imprecate, inquire, insist, intercede, interdict, interrogate, instruct, invite, invoke, order, permit, petition, pray, prescribe, prohibit, propose, proscribe, question, recommend, request, require, solicit, suggest, supplicate, tell, urge, and warn.

Examples:

- All *questions* fall into this category, such as:
 - *Yes and no questions*: Utterances that as a closed-ended yes/no question. “Do you agree that Bush should not have gone to Iraq?”
 - *Wh - questions*: Utterances that ask who, what, where, when, or why questions. “Why do you support the Republicans?” “Who is Pakistan’s Prime Minister?” “When is the Republican convention?”
- *Open-question*: Utterances that ask a question of a speaker.
- *Summative/reformulate*: Utterances that summarize prior utterances. “So, we’re all in agreement here.” “You mean to say that the Democrats lost in 2000.”
- *Action-directive*: A forceful utterance that declares the speaker will do something. “Stop being an idiot!” “Let’s move to private chat.” “Stop picking on Sally.”
- *Attention getting*: An utterance designed to get the attention of another participant. The utterance is likely to be just a name: “Peachy.” “Debbie.”

C - COMMISSIVE

The *commissive point* consists in committing the speaker to a future course of action. The utterance attempts to get the world to be like the words at some future moment.

Commissive verbs include: abide, accept, acquiesce, agree, assure, avow, bet, bid, certify, commit, consent, contract, counter-offer, covenant, dedicate, engage, guarantee, hypothecate, offer, pledge, promise, rebid, refuse, reject, renounce, subscribe, swear, tender, threaten, undertake, vow, wager.

Examples:

- *Offers*: commit the speaker to doing something for the hearer. “Let me look up on the CNN website what it says on Iraq.” “I can find the source of that fact, if you want me to.”
- *Options*: express a speaker’s options in doing something in the future. “I need to log off now, since my system is buggy.”
- *Commits*: commits the speaker to some course of action in the future. “I’ll chat with you all later.”

P – DECLARATIVE / PERFORMATIVE

The *declarative point* consists in performing an action which brings into existence a state of affairs by representing oneself as performing that action. This type of utterance is similar to the commissive in that it attempts to make the world match the words, but it does so presently, rather than committing the speaker to some future action. This category includes utterances unique to online environments in which people role-play and describe hypothetical actions they are engaged in.

Declarative verbs include: abbreviate, abdicate, abjure, abolish, abrogate, absolve, accord, adjourn, adjudge, adjudicate, acquit, annul, appoint, approve, authorize, baptize,

bequeath, bestow, bless, call, cancel, capitulate, cede, clear, close, condemn, confer, confirm, consecrate, convene, convoke, curse, damn, declare, decree, dedicate, define, denounce, deny, disapprove, disavow, disclaim, disculpate, disinherit, disown, dissolve, enact, establish, excommunicate, exonerate, forgive, grant, homologate, install, institute, inaugurate, legislate, license, name, nominate, open, pardon, promulgate, ratify, renounce, resign, repudiate, retract, revoke, repeal, rescind, retract, rule, sanction, sentence, stipulate, surrender, suspend, sustain, terminate, veto, vote, yield.

- *Declaration*: “This conversation is over.” Nomar says, “It’s Nomar!”
- *Role-play*: Can either be pretend actions between discussants or can be pretend interactions with a third party. “Let’s dance.” “I give you a big kiss!”
- *Word play*: Plays on words are counted as performatives (Giftmas: “chargemas;” “spendmas.”)
- *Nonverbals*: The nonverbal category online is a type of illocutionary act, since the nonverbals, such as laughter must be uttered to be experienced. LOL, ROTFL, etc.; smiley faces, frowny faces, etc.; Words that stand in for some action Hugs, smile, grin “hugs sally,” kiss
- *Action*: Some participants have figured out a way to perform an action in Yahoo!’s chat, similar to actions in MUDs or MOOs. A participant can type *sits and everyone will see “Sally sits.” In Yahoo, such actions appear not in the Message column, but in the name column. Watch for those! Example: "many_loves_cars gives susan a big wet one."
- *Performatives with Expressives*: If an utterance is solely performative (LOL; “takes a twirl around the room” etc.), then the utterance receives the P code. If an utterance also includes an expressive component ("tahnsks steve hugssssssssssssssss," “applauds the music...thankyou"), then it receives the E code
- *Spelled out words over multiple lines*: it’s rare, but possible that someone would spell out something for effect over multiple lines, such as their name. In these cases, give each line a P.
- *Puns and jokes (non-opinion)*: Puns and jokes **not** offered in the service of an argument.

RA – REASONED ARGUMENT

This code focuses on categorizing the types of arguments participants provide. Do they offer an opinion, a reason for that opinion, or a fact that is not offered in the service of an opinion?

An *opinion* is understood here as an expression of the individual’s belief about how the world is. Opinions are expressed judgments the speaker has made on a person, an event, a social problem, a state of affairs, a crisis, values, and the like.

A *reason* is understood here as explanation for why the speaker holds the opinion expressed or types of expression that are meant to appeal to reason.

It should be noted that reasons do not have to be “good” reasons, they do not have to be factual reasons, but they must be some elaboration of the opinion in a way that either explains why they hold the opinion that they do or appeals to the logic of listeners.

Types of reasoning:

- Phrases: “If, then,” “because,” “therefore,” “so,” “since,” “until”
- Reasoning: logical syllogisms, comparisons, analogies, metaphors, generalizations, indicators of a condition (i.e. signs), causality, consequences, examples, definitions, identifying contradictions, contraries/comparisons

A *fact* is a statement that a condition has, does, or will exist. “Facts” stand alone and do not have an opinion statement directly connected to them *in the same utterance*. Facts are about people, events, or things, but that are not about the speaker: “I am from Montreal” is not a fact. If an utterance is “the United States uses 15% of the world’s oil” the statement is offered not as an opinion but as a fact. If the utterance is “I think the U.S. uses 15% of the world’s oil,” then it’s offered as an opinion. Some statements may border on fact, such as ““The airline industry makes up a good percentage of the economy,” but they are not facts. The statement does not offer a concrete piece of information that can be verified. Because the utterance does not offer specifically what the percentage is, it’s not a fact. Statements that offer assessments of “good” or “bad” are not facts: “That’s a good dog.”

A stated fact may, in fact, be wrong, but it is offered as a verifiable truth by the speaker. Note that facts offered in the service of an opinion are coded as reasoned argument (2). What is being accounted for with this code are facts offered up by a speaker that appear *not* to be in the service of an argument.

Types of facts: statistics, examples, testimony, and factoids are all “facts” in that they can be verified.

3 – A message that expresses a fact will receive a 3.

2 - A message that expresses an opinion plus a reason for that opinion or that expresses a reason with an implied opinion will receive a 2.

1 - A message that expresses an opinion, but does not express a reason will receive a 1.

0 - A message that is other receives a 0. For example, someone excusing themselves from the discussion, a message stating a fact about themselves.

Notes:

- Expressives, directives, commissives, and performatives never receive a reasoned argument code.
- *Preferences*: If a message expresses an individual’s preference, taste, or dislike it is not an opinion and does not get a code.
- *Continuations*: If a message continues an immediately prior message, then the argument for the first line should be coded in isolation, but the second (and third and fourth) should consider the reasoned argument in its totality. Some continuations may not continue the argument, but introduce a new topic or line of argument. When that occurs, each message should be coded in isolation. In other words, if the first message in the series offers an opinion, then it would be coded 1. If the second message is a reason for the opinion, then it would be coded a 2.
- *Meta-talk*: Talk about the talk, that is messages that either state what the speaker means by what he or she is saying, or messages that state what the argument is really about are not opinion statements, and should not get a reasoned argument code. For example,

CanadaMan and Demo have a heated argument about trade in Canada. Roman jumps in and reflects on Demo's argument, characterizing the argument as being about tariffs. Demo replies, saying that he's not arguing about tariffs but about trade quotas and import quotas. Both Roman's statements and Demo's statements are meta-talk. Depending on how the meta-talk is phrased, it might be a RT code of "A." If that is the case, they do not receive an RA code, because they do not provide an argument in the strict sense.

- *Reasons for Declaratives:* Declarative statements do not receive reasoned argument codes, except if a speaker breaks the declarative into two utterances. If the first utterance is a declarative, and the second utterance is a reason for the declarative, the second utterance receives a 1 code (for opinion). For example, Pete declares: "eat snow" and then in the next utterance "it's good for you. The first utterance "eat snow" gets the "D" declarative code without a reasoned argument code. The second utterance "it's good for you" gets an "A" for assertion with a reasoned argument code of 1.
- *Multiple Opinions:* Participants may provide multiple opinions in the same utterance. Those only get coded as 1.
- *Corrections on Facts:* If one participant offers a fact, but another participant believes some of the information is wrong, the correction is coded as a fact. For example, if a participant says, "The U.S. uses 10% of the world's oil," that would be coded as a fact. If another participant says, "No, it's 15%," that would also be coded as a fact.
- *Fact statements that become opinions:* It is possible for an initial utterance to be a fact, but for further utterances in response challenge the fact as such. For example Demo challenges Roman in a conversation about trade in Canada to define an import quota. Roman responds "an import quota is a ceiling on goods imported." This response would not be coded as a reason plus evidence. Demo doesn't drop the conversation, though. Instead, he retorts "well, that's one way of saying it" and then continues in the next utterance "but a ceiling in economic terms would indicate an increase in the price level." The retort, 'well, that's one way of saying it' would be coded as an opinion, and the continuation about the increase in price level would also be coded as opinion plus reason.
- *Attitudes:* Statements about attitudes are an opinion ("I have no qualms about labeling people"). Statements, such as "Arkansas has the worst highways in the U.S.," are an opinion. Statements, such as "That damn town of Fayetteville has cameras on its traffic lights," are not an opinion. Although there's a valenced statement of "damn town," the subject is about Fayetteville's cameras, which is a statement of fact, rather than of belief.
- *Puns and jokes:* Puns and jokes can count as opinion if the force of the message expresses an opinion.

No.	Name	RA	Message
1502	hardrain44	0	i am white upper middle calss
1504	Sowhatsyerpoint	1	ok hard, but most of white america isn't papered either
1505	Halifaxicon	1	many americans are arrogant ignorant gun-toting freaks
1506	hardrain44	1	I am different than a typical Pashtun
No.	Name	RA	Message
01	the_cable_chick	1	Groov.. that's my point!! Who ARE they calling?
03	tally91luk	1	cable... thats right.
04	the_cable_chick	2	81% of the American people think GW is doing a fantastic job...

			MY ASS
05	the cable chick	2	there is nothing that 81% of this country would ever agree on
06	Groovicles	2	haha, yeah, i guess all of my friends and relatives and relations are part of the 19%

AG – AGREEMENT/DISAGREEMENT

The disagreement code marks whether a message is in agreement or disagreement *with prior arguments to which it's responding*. There is not an overarching pro/con framework in Yahoo!'s political chat. Thus, it is quite difficult to identify whether a position is in agreement or disagreement with the larger argument. Instead, agreement or disagreement is measured in relationship to the immediately prior argument to which it responds.

1 - A message that is in explicit agreement with the argument would receive a 1. Such messages *must* include explicit words of agreement, such as “I agree,” “you are right,” “that’s correct” “yes” (when “yes” is a sign of agreement and not a yes/no response to a question), and “damn straight” also fit into this category. Such messages would repeat or reinforce, or give further reasons that continue a prior message.

0 - A message that does not appear to be in agreement or disagreement would receive a 0, or may be implicitly in agreement or disagreement, but there is no clear linguistic cue of agreement. This code will be applied to statements of facts and answers to questions (unless the answer implicitly or explicitly suggests agreement). This includes tangential responses to prior messages, or responses that may build on a prior message without any hint of agreement.

-1 - A message that is in explicit disagreement would receive a -1. Such messages *must* contain explicit phrases of disagreement, such as, “you’re wrong,” “I disagree,” “that’s not right,” “but,” “that’s not right/correct,” and “no.” Such messages may also offer counter information to a prior message.

Notes:

- Expressives, directives, commissives, and performatives never receive an agreement code. Responses to directives, cannot be disagreed with. They can be refused, but not disagreed with, so they get 0 codes. Expressives give or take something from the hearer, as a result, the force of the message cannot be agreed or disagreed with. Expressives also express a psychological state (“I love” or “I hate” or “I have no problem with you”), which cannot be disagreed with from the perspective of argument.
- “I know” may signal agreement; it depends on the context. If the context of the conversation has been one in which the interlocutors have been agreeing with each other, then the “I know” may signal agreement. For example, Sambe says, “I am so afraid of another terrorist attack.” Lial replies with, “I know.” This is a signal of agreement.
- The agreement code can only be assigned to an utterance *if* the prior utterance expresses an opinion.
- If there is an agreement/disagreement code, then there must be a reasoned argument code of 1, 2, or 3.
- Continuation messages may continue the agreement or disagreement sentiments, but continuations receive a 0 code. However, if the line of argument changes, then the agreement code should change to reflect any apparent change in the level of agreement.
- *Irony*, that is, messages that on the face of it read as positive but are meant as a kind of attack are coded as 0. It’s not always clear that the author intends irony, so to be safe, it is

neither agreement or disagreement. For example: Demos: “Europeans are disgusting. They truly are animalistic in every aspect.” Nomar: “and what’s with HIGH tea??” OR: Demo: “The Brits deserve every slight; every flagrant insult ever directed at them.” Marc: “cheers, Demo.”

- Factual corrections that one participant makes of another’s utterances are coded as 0, unless there is an argument about a fact.
- Sometimes “no” and “yes” do not signal what they appear to. Sometimes the “no” or “yes” is a lead in to building on prior arguments (coded as 1) or is disagreeing with prior arguments (-1). Here’s an example: Ana types: “demo...quebec is filled with french lol..after quebec (heading westwards) u dont get many frenchmen u freak.” Demo replies: “no; you get a bunch of survivalist chemically dependent factory workers.” His statement says, no, you’re right, you don’t find Frenchmen, you find factory workers. The “no” is not so much a signal of disagreement, but is a lead in to building on Ana’s point.

PA – PERSONAL ATTACK

Personal attack, often called “flaming,” is ad hominem attack, where the individual rather than the argument is attacked.

1 - A message in a thread that attacks the individual rather than an argument receives a code of 1. Messages include calling other participants names, such as “you’re a dickhead.”

0 – If the message does not contain any personal attack, then it’s coded as 0.

Notes:

- Messages do not necessarily need to include swear words, but they must be an attack on the person, rather than a statement of disapproval. “You’re an idiot,” or “I hate arguing with dumbasses like you” is personal attack. Some messages are messages that blame or express disapproval of a speaker, but don’t move to the level of personal attack, for example, “Pele, don’t bother talking to me, you’re ignored” or “you sound like a bleeding heart liberal to me.”
- A “1” in the PA code entails that the RT code will be an “E.”
- Sometimes attacks will be made on groups of people or countries (e.g. “Brits are pansies; Mexicans are lazy.”). Some of the people in the conversation may be part of that group. Thus, such statements may appear as an attack on the individual; however, such attacks on groups will not be considered personal attacks *unless the speaker makes the connection explicit* (“you Mexicans are lazy”; “You Americans are ignorant”). For example, Canadaman and Demo argue about trade policy in Canada. At some point Demo begins attacking Canada for having French speakers and declaring Canadians to be “pathetic.” This attack is not explicitly directed at Canadaman, and so therefore should not be coded as personal attack.

Although it’s unclear to whom this message is directed, it’s an example of personal attack:

oopsifarted199: with ur help asshole

oopsifarted199: ur the dick

This might look like personal attack, but it's not:
 titaniumcomb: the bible says.....fuck the bible

SO - SOURCING

Sourcing is when *in expressing an opinion or providing evidence for an argument*, a message includes or makes reference to a source or as a *preface or basis for a question*. A source can be the media, an expert as indicated by the message, a website, a book, a tv show, the news, another person who is not in the discussion, personal experience. If a person is the subject of the discussion, he or she cannot be the source.

1 - A message in a thread that provides a source receives a code of 1.
 0 - Otherwise it receives a code of 0.

Here's a clear example of a sourced message:

the_cable_chick: "More than one million Iraqis have died- 500,000 of them children-as a direct consequence of economic sanctions... As many as 12% of the children surveyed in Baghdad are wasted, 28% stunted and 29% underweight." -- UN FAO, December 1995.

This message looks like it has a source, but there's none indicated, so it receives a 0:
 TawniVixen: Tally But the brits are saying they wont back us if we go after Saddaam

An example of a personal source:

P777: my g/fs mom makes more than her dad. She makes like 55000, and he 45000.

Another example of an unnamed source:

Hunter: I have heard that men and women make the same amount in the medical field.

An example of a person being *a subject, but not a source*:

Secret: john ashcroft is going to start strip searching everyone who wants to ride on a plane.

An example of a source being a subject, but not used in an argument:

Petttel: Have you read the article in Wired about PDAs?

An example of a source in a question:

Gesta: I heard an interview with some mullah the other day. He really hated the US; and when asked why; he said "They're so arrorgant". Can you really actually HATE someone for being arrogant?

CONTINUATIONS

One of the complicating factors in the coding is the 'continuation,' which occurs when a person continues their train of thought over multiple messages, rather than typing one long message to enter into the channel.

To track continuations, the RS code is the prior message in the chain. The AG code likely will carry over from the prior message unless there's a change, such as an opinion is expressed in the first message and the second message is the reason for the opinion (first message would receive a 1 code, and the second a 2 code). The RT code also likely will carry over from the prior message.

All other codes will be assigned on the current message, and not necessarily carry over from the prior message.

FORM TRUMPS FORCE

When in doubt, the form of the message trumps the force of the message.