

Annotation Manual: Taxonomy of Rejection

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You are asked to annotate speech acts of rejection in dialogue excerpts extracted from the AMI Meeting Corpus, the ICSI Meeting Corpus and the Switchboard corpus. The excerpts you are given contain an utterance that was previously annotated as being a rejection speech act, an utterance (or a few utterances) annotated as what this utterance was responding to, and some context. The rejecting utterance you need to annotate is highlighted in boldface with green background. The earlier utterance to which this utterance responds is highlighted in italics with yellow background.

Rejecting speech acts can reject different contents (e.g. something that was asserted, something that was implicated) and do so by different linguistic means (e.g. using polarity particles, uttering a contradictory claim, implicating a contradictory claim).

We ask you to annotate the rejecting utterance along *two dimensions*, explained below.

- First, *what* it is rejecting: one of *content*, *implicature*, *precondition* and *partial*.
- Second, *how* this rejection is expressed/achieved: one of *contradiction*, *conventional implicature*, *conversational implicature*, *expression of disbelief* and *irony*.

In case an utterance is ambiguous between multiple options or does not fit any category, select *multiple / other* and leave a comment.

What

Content

Select *Content* in the “what” column if the rejecting utterance rejects something that is explicitly asserted. In the following example, *A* asserts that *they can't make a docking station* and *D* rejects this content.

- (1) A: No , we we we can't make a docking station anyway .
D: That's not true .
what: content, how: contradiction.

Implicature

Select *Implicature* in the “what” column if the rejecting utterance rejects something that is *not* explicitly asserted, but conveyed by implicature. In the following example, *A* does not assert that *rubber is too soft*, but *B* takes *A* to implicate this and rejects it.

- (2) A: Rubber is kind of soft.
B: Yeah, but not too soft we have decided.
what: implicature, how: contradiction.

This category *includes rejections of conventional implicatures* and in particular *rejections of rhetorical questions* like in the following example, where *C* conveys *nobody is gonna buy a remote just for the TV unless they've lost theirs* in a rhetorical questions.

- (3) C: I was like who's gonna buy a remote just for the TV unless they've lost theirs .
A: Fashionable chic people will .
what: implicature, how: contradiction.

Precondition

Select *Precondition* in the “what” column if the rejecting utterance rejects something that is *not* explicitly asserted, but a requirement for *A*’s contribution to be possible.. In the following example, *A* does not assert that *they have not redesigned the product*, but *B* recongises this to be a precondition of *A*’s contribution and rejects it.

(4) A: So I don’t think we need to redesign the p the product .

D: Uh that’s what we’ve just done .

what: precondition, how: contradiction.

(5) A: but we did we didn’t get that .

C: You don’t know that .

what: precondition, how: contradiction.

How

Please note that the usage of a polarity particle like *no* is not by itself indicative of any single category; polarity particles may be used to achieve different *hows*.

Contradiction

Select *Contradiction* in the “how” column if the rejecting utterance expresses a content that cannot be true at the same time as what it rejects. There are two principal options.

(i) By making a claim that is incompatible with what is rejected.

(6) C: And they’re double curved .

A: Single-curved .

what: content, how: contradiction.

(7) D: Yeah , but TVs aren't capable of sending .

C: Yes they are .

what: content, how: contradiction.

(ii) by asserting the falsity of what is rejected.

(8) A: No , we we we can't make a docking station anyway .

D: That's not true .

what: content, how: contradiction.

Conventional implicature

Select *Conventional Imp.* in the "how" column if the rejecting utterance conventionally, but not literally, expresses that the speaker disagrees with what is rejected.

(9) A: Fashionable chic people will .

C: You're kidding .

what: content, how: conventional imp.

Conversational implicature

Select *Conversational Imp.* in the "how" column if the rejecting utterance conversationally, but not literally or conventionally, expresses that the speaker disagrees with what is rejected.

(10) C: This is a very interesting design .

D: It's just the same as normal .

what: content, how: conversational imp.

This category includes utterances that point out *counterevidence* to what is rejected, i.e. information that does not entail its falsity outright, but entail that it is unlikely.

(11) B: We don't have the slogan though .

A: slogan is quite obvious .

what: content, how: conversational imp.

A special kind of counterevidence are unwelcome consequences of a proposed course of action.

(12) C: Here one , at the middle , and at the bottom .

A: Mm . I think then we we're really losing ease of use .

what: content, how: conversational imp.

Finally, this category also includes utterances that express a *negative sentiment*.

(13) D: but not important is the channel selection ,

A: That's a little weird .

what: content, how: conversational imp.

Expression of Disbelief

Select *Expr. of Disbelief* in the "how" column if the rejecting utterance expresses (i) that the speaker does not believe what is rejected; or (ii) that the speaker is not (yet) able to add what is rejected to their beliefs.

(14) B: We could draw animals on the board again .

A: Mm uh no .

A: I don't think so .

what: content, how: disbelief.

The description (ii) includes *why*-questions, like the following.

(15) A: Yeah , or just different colours would be uh I don't know if people also wanna spend more money on fronts for their uh remote control .

B: Why not ?

what: implicature, how: disbelief.

Irony

Select *Irony* in the “how” column if the rejecting utterance has to be read as ironic to be a rejection.

(16) C: We can uh do a touch-pad on our remote .

D: Yeah right.

what: content, how: irony.

Remarks and Borderline Cases

- Annotate evaluative content (i.e. rejections like “no, this is good” or “no, this is bad”) as rejecting by conversational implicature.
- Interpret non-factive propositional attitude predicates (e.g. “I believe that p”, “I claim that p”) as implicating that p. Factive attitude predicates (e.g. “I know that p”), presuppose that p.
- Annotate utterances that mark a previous utterance as being not relevant (e.g. “this wasn’t the question”) as rejecting a precondition (the precondition of being on topic).
- The previous point may differ from utterances like “this doesn’t matter”, as saying that something does not matter may mean that some argument (for a previous claim) is unconvincing (but something unconvincing may still be relevant).
- Annotate utterances like “I don’t know” generally as rejecting by Expression of Disbelief. (If you think this heuristic is wrong in a particular case, leave a comment).
- Annotate utterances like “This is unclear” as rejecting by implicature. (If you think this heuristic is wrong in a particular case, leave a comment).

- When the displayed context is insufficient to arrive at a clear interpretation, do not try to guess the most likely interpretation, but annotate as `other/other` and write “insufficient context” as a comment.