DaLAJ-GED a dataset for Grammatical Error Detection tasks on Swedish

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Abstract

DaLAJ-GED is a dataset for linguistic acceptability judgments for Swedish, covering five head classes: lexical, morphological, syntactical, orthographical and punctuation. DaLAJ-GED is an extension of DaLAJ.v1 dataset (Volodina et al., 2021a,b). Both DaLAJ datasets are based on the SweLL-gold corpus (Volodina et al., 2019) and its correction annotation categories.

DaLAJ-GED presented here contains 44,654 sentences, distributed (almost) equally between correct and incorrect ones and is primarily aimed at linguistic acceptability judgment task, but can also be used for other tasks related to grammatical error detection (GED) on a sentence level. DaLAJ-GED is included into the Swedish SuperLim 2.0 collection,¹ an extension of SuperLim (Adesam et al., 2020), a benchmark for Natural Language Understanding (NLU) tasks for Swedish.

This paper gives a concise overview of the dataset and presents a few benchmark results for the task of linguistic acceptability, i.e. binary classification of sentences as either correct or incorrect.

1 Introduction

The DaLAJ dataset has been inspired by the English CoLA dataset (Warstadt et al., 2019) and, like the CoLA dataset, is primarily aimed at linguistic acceptability judgments as a way to check the ability of models to distinguish correct language from incorrect. Other members of the CoLA-family are represented by, among others,

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RuCoLA for Russian (Mikhailov et al., 2022), No-CoLA for Norwegian (Samuel and Jentoft, 2023), ItaCoLA for Italian (Trotta et al., 2021), CLiMP for Chinese (Xiang et al., 2021) and a few others. Unlike most of the CoLA datasets that contain artificially constructed incorrect sentences, DaLAJ is based on originally written learner essays and learner errors in SweLL-gold corpus (Volodina et al., 2019). The DaLAJ approach as a way to create datasets for linguistic acceptability judgments has been introduced in Volodina et al. (2021a). A follow-up on this approach is presented in Samuel and Jentoft (2023) for Norwegian based on the ASK corpus (Tenfjord et al., 2006).

The Swedish DaLAJ – Dataset for Linguistic Acceptability Judgments – is a part of SuperLim, the Swedish equivalent of the English SuperGLUE (Wang et al., 2019) benchmark for NLU tasks.

2 Dataset description

The DaLAJ-GED dataset contains 44,654 sentences, of which 22,539 are incorrect sentences from the SweLL-gold corpus (Volodina et al., 2019) and 22,115 are correct ones from both SweLL-gold and Coctaill (Volodina et al., 2014) corpora (Table 1).

| Split | Correct sent | Incorr. sent | Total sent | Total tokens |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Train | 17,472 | 18,109 | 35,581 | 603,625 |
| Dev | 2,424 | 2,278 | 4,702 | 77,251 |
| Test | 2,219 | 2,152 | 4,371 | 72,349 |
| Total | 22,115 | 22,539 | 44,654 | 753,225 |

Table 1: Sentence and token counts in DaLAJ-GED

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¹https://spraakbanken.gu.se/resurser/superlim

| ; 🔿 🔒 https://huggingface.co/datase | ts/sbx/superl | im-2/viewe | r/dalaj-ged/test | 110% 🖒 | \bigtriangledown |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Dataset Preview API | | | | | |
| Subset | | Split | | | |
| dalaj-ged | ~ | test | | | ~ |
| sentence (string) | label (c label) | lass | meta (dict) | | |
| "Är de verkligen viktigaste i livet?" | 1 (inco | rrect) | <pre>{ "error_span": { 16 }, "confusion_ "incorrect_span": "det" }, "error_l "education_level" "l1": "Polska", " "Dalaj.v.2 Swe</pre> | pair": { "", "corr abel": "M' : "Fortsät data_sourc | <pre>cection": ', 'tning", ce":</pre> |

Figure 1: Sample of a DaLAJ-GED sentence in the Huggingface repository for SuperLim. Literal translation: 'Are they really most important [thing] in the life?'. Expected: *Är de verkligen det viktigaste i livet?* 'Are they really **the** most important [thing] in life?'

| Column | Explanation/values | Example | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Sentence | | Är de verkligen viktigaste i livet? | |
| Label | correct or incorrect | incorrect | |
| Error span: start | character index, as counted from 0 in the sentence | 16 | |
| Error span: stop | character index, as counted from 0 in the sen- tence; half-open range | 16 (in this case, the range [16, 16] denotes an empty string) | |
| Confusion pair: incorrect span | string representing the error token(s) or empty | | |
| Confusion pair: correction | string representing the correct version | det | |
| Error label | one or more error labels describing the same er- ror segment. Values: Punctuation, Orthography, Lexical, Morphology, Syntax) | М | |
| Education level | Nybörjare, Fortsättning, Avancerad ('Beginner', 'Intermediate', 'Advanced') | Fortsättning | |
| L1 | mother tongue(s), full names in Swedish | Polska('Polish') | |
| Data source | DaLAJ/SweLL or Coctaill | DaLAJ/SweLL gold | |

Table 2: DaLAJ-GED columns using the example from Figure 1

Each learner-written sentence is associated with the writer's mother tongue(s) and information about the level of the course at which the essay was written. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the number of fully correct sentences in the learner essays is lower than the number of sentences that contain some mistake. To compensate for this imbalance, we added correct sentences from the Coc-



Figure 2: A mock-up translation of an original SweLL-gold sentence. Note the one-to-many (1-to-5) relation between the number of sentences in the original (the top row) and the number of sentences in the target version (the second row). Label P-Sent indicates a punctuation correction leading to a sentence split or merge.

taill corpus of coursebooks aimed at second language learners of Swedish (Volodina et al., 2014), keeping the same distribution over beginnerintermediate-advanced levels as among the incorrect sentences. For that, CEFR labels (CoE, 2001) used in Coctaill, have been grouped into (approximate) levels:

- beginner: A1-A2 levels;
- intermediate: B1-B2 levels;
- advanced: C1 level (C2 missing in Coctaill).

This version of DaLAJ is an official improved variant of the previously tested experimental version presented in Klezl et al. (2022).

DaLAJ-GED is distributed as part of Superlim 2.0^2 in a jsonl format (primarily), but is also available in tab-separated tsv format. See Figure 1 and Table 2 for a description of items / columns in the jsonl / tsv representations. The example sentence $\ddot{A}r$ de verkligen viktigaste i livet? can be literally translated as 'Are they really most important [thing] in life?' and is missing an obligarory definite article (determiner) det. A correct Swedish counterpart would be $\ddot{A}r$ de verkligen det viktigaste i livet? 'Are they really the most important [thing] in life?'). The incorrect token is thus an empty string (i.e. the correct token det is omitted).

2.1 Source corpora

The **SweLL-gold corpus** (Volodina et al., 2019), used as a source of incorrect sentences, is an errorannotated corpus of learner Swedish. It contains

²https://github.com/spraakbanken/SuperLim-2

| Current | | Replacement suggestion |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| A-,B-,C-,D- | geoplats | Fafjällen, Undberget, Baraön, Lokomitt |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | hemland | Brasil, Spanien, Irak, Kina |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | institution | Volvodrömmen, Linsbiblioteket, Forkecentralen, Bungavård |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | land | Danmark, Mongoliet, Sudan, Peru |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | plats | Burocentrum, Andeplats, Storetorg, Bungafors |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | skola | Buroskola, Andeskola, Storeskola, Bungahjulet |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | region | Sydlunda, Undered, Hanskim, Bungalarna |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | stad | Oslo, Paris, Bagdad, Caracas |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | svensk-stad | Sydden, Norrebock, Rosaborg, Ögglestad |
| A-,B-,C-,D- | linjen | buss |

Table 3: Pseudonymized strings and suggestion for their replacement

502 essays written by adult learners of Swedish at different levels of proficiency (beginner, intermediate, advanced) and representing 81 unique mother tongues in 117 unique combinations of 1-4 languages. The essays represent different topics and genres, some examples being "Describe your lodging", "My first love", "Discuss marriage and other lifestyles", book and film reviews, etc.³ All essays have been first pseudonymized, then rewritten to represent correct language (i.e normalized) and finally differences between the original and normalized versions were annotated with correction labels (aka error labels).

The **COCTAILL corpus** (Volodina et al., 2014), used as a source of correct sentences for DaLAJ-GED, is a corpus of textbooks used for teaching Swedish to adult second language learners. Each chapter in each textbook is annotated with CEFR labels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1). The labels are projected to all texts used in each particular chapter, and subsequently to all sentences used in those texts. Texts represent various topics and various genres, including narratives, dialogues, fact texts, instructions, etc.

2.2 Preparation steps

For DaLAJ, only 1-to-1 mappings between original and corrected sentences in SweLL-gold (Volodina et al., 2019) have been used, i.e. where segmentation at the sentence level was unambiguos. Cases like the one mocked in Figure 2 were excluded from DaLAJ. Sentences containing labels X (unintelligible string) and Unid (unidentified type of correction) were also excluded. Note that the sentences are presented in random order to prevent the possibility to restore original essays – which is a prerequisite for sharing the dataset openly.

To generate several one-error DaLAJ sentences from multi-error original SweLL sentences, we started from the normalized/corrected sentences and projected one error from the original sentences at a time. This means that every incorrect sentence taken from SweLL occurs as many times in DaLAJ as the number of errors it contains. Sometimes, the same token/segment could be described by a cluster of error tags, which were then projected as a group to the single error segment, e.g. Jag i Stockholm borr ('I in Stockholm leave'), where leave (correct version 'live') is both misspelled (label O) and has word order problem with the placement of a finite verb (label S-FinV). All resulting incorrect sentences therefore have exactly one error segment with one or more labels describing that error segment. As such, DaLAJ sentences are neither original, nor artificial, and are best described as hybrid ones.

In a post-processing step, we paid special attention to a class of errors called *consistency corrections* in the SweLL-gold annotation (label: C). This label was assigned when a correction was a follow-up of another correction. For example, when a sentence-initial mistake *I slutligen* 'In finally' is corrected to *Slutligen* 'Finally', the capitalization of *Slutligen* is in a sense a consequence of the correction of the erroneous preposition, and therefore it is marked as a consistency correction. In out-of-context sentences the C category is not self-explanatory. Therefore, we excluded in a few

³A summary of corpus characteristics is provided in the metadata file: https://spraakbanken.github.io/swell-release-v1/Metadata-SweLL

cases such sentences and replaced the C label with a label that describes the error more precisely in others. In case of *slutligen* \rightarrow *Slutligen*, this is the label O-Cap (orthographical correction of capitalization).

Due to anonymization of the learner essays in SweLL, the dataset contains pseudonyms of the form *D-stad* 'D-city', *A-linje* 'A-line', etc. We suspect them to be disruptive for automatic tools. Before using the dataset for training and testing, we suggest, therefore, replacing those pseudonyms with more realistic-looking (sometimes nonsense) names like the ones suggested in Table 3.

The incorrect DaLAJ sentences are split into training, development and test sets, the proportion being approximately 80:10:10 of the whole number of sentences. The development and test sets were manually proofread to ensure the quality.

Finally, the incorrect sentences were complemented with correct ones from the COCTAILL corpus.

3 Tasks

DaLAJ-GED is prepared for several *sentence-level tasks*:

Linguistic Acceptability Judgments is the primary task (and the only official SuperLim task). Given a sentence, detect whether it contains any errors (incorrect) or not (correct), i.e. the task is to perform binary classification on a sentence level.

Grammatical Error Detection (GED) Given a sentence, detect which token(s) need to be corrected, and provide their start-and-end indices, e.g., the omission of det with indices [16-16) in the example in Table 2.

Multi-Class GED Given a sentence, classify what types of errors need to be corrected, by head classes (punctuation, orthography, lexical, morphology, syntax [POLMS]), e.g. $[16, 16) \rightarrow M$ (Morphological error).

Grammatical Error Correction (GEC) Given the incorrect sentence, rewrite it to obtain a correct version, e.g.

Är de verkligen viktigaste i livet? → Är de verkligen **det** viktigaste i livet?

4 Acceptability judgments – official SuperLim benchmark

The SuperLim benchmark contains various datasets to evaluate the capability of language models. In this paper we present results for the task of acceptability judgments on the DaLAJ-GED dataset that were produced in the context of the SuperLim projekt.

Table 4 shows the results of the initial baseline models on DaLAJ-GED for the task of linguistic acceptability judgments. The horizontal line separates transformer models (Vaswani et al., 2017; Acheampong et al., 2021) from the more traditional machine learning systems and random baselines.

SuperLim by default uses Krippendorff's α coefficient (Krippendorff, 2004) as its metric for summarizing system performance on the different tasks. Krippendorff's α is a measure of agreement where 1 indicates a perfect score and 0 indicates that the system's predictions are at chance level. Clearly negative scores indicate systematic mispredictions. Krippendorff's α is given in Table 4 together with the standard accuracy metric for reasons of familiarity.

Part of the SuperLim benchmark is a leaderboard website,⁴ which makes it possible to compare models and opens for an asynchronous competition focused on Swedish. The results for the baseline models presented here applied to a range of SuperLim tasks are included on this leaderboard. The website also contains a more detailed explanation for the choice of Krippendorff's α .

Each transformer model was fine-tuned as demonstrated in Devlin et al. (2019) on the training split with a binary classification learning objective, using Huggingface with early stopping and a coarse-grained hyperparameter tuning with respect to the development split. The hyperparameter space was inspired by RoBERTa (Liu et al., 2019), see Table 5, with the remaining hyperparameters left as the Huggingface default values. The results indicate that larger models typically perform better and that Swedish pre-trained models perform better than multilingual variants. Moreover, the transformer models significantly outperform traditional systems. A comparison of the α and Accuracy metrics shows that they mostly demonstrate the same picture here, albeit on a different scale. However, for the two worst perform-

⁴www.example.org (to be supplied)

| Model | α | Acc |
|--|--------|-------|
| KBLab/megatron-bert-large-swedish-cased-165k | 0.753 | 0.877 |
| KBLab/bert-base-swedish-cased-new | 0.753 | 0.876 |
| AI-Nordics/bert-large-swedish-cased | 0.745 | 0.872 |
| KB/bert-base-swedish-cased | 0.740 | 0.870 |
| xlm-roberta-large | 0.738 | 0.869 |
| KBLab/megatron-bert-base-swedish-cased-600k | 0.718 | 0.860 |
| xlm-roberta-base | 0.701 | 0.851 |
| NbAiLab/nb-bert-base | 0.644 | 0.822 |
| SVM | 0.518 | 0.758 |
| Decision Tree | 0.269 | 0.636 |
| Random | 0.007 | 0.503 |
| Random Forest | -0.312 | 0.498 |
| Majority label (incorrect) | -0.340 | 0.492 |

Table 4: SuperLim results for a selection of models on DaLAJ-GED task, reported in Krippendorff's alpha coefficient (Superlim's default measure) and accuracy.

| Hyperparameter | Value(s | |
|----------------|--------------------------|--|
| Learning Rate | {1e-5, 2e-5, 3e-5, 4e-5} | |
| Batch Size | {16, 32} | |
| Warmup Ratio | 0.06 | |
| Weight Decay | 0.1 | |
| Max Epochs | 10 | |

Table 5: Hyperparameter configuration for fine-tuningtransformer models

ing systems, we see very low α -scores, whereas Accuracy hovers around the .5 mark. This is because these models grossly overpredict one of the labels, a characteristic that is punished by α .

The results suggest that the dataset is of a size and quality that is sufficient for neural models. An interesting further comparison could be with human baselines, which is a potential future step.

Replicability Each pre-trained language model is publicly available on Huggingface, with the model names as presented here. The traditional baselines are implemented using the scikit-learn Python library (Pedregosa et al., 2011). Full source code and instructions for reproducing the results are made publicly available on GitHub.⁵

Pre-trained language models Below we provide additional details and references to a few of the most prominent language models in the results. In the official SuperLim benchmark, the best-performing model in terms of the average score is KBLab/megatron-bert-large-swedishcased-165k.⁶ This 340M parameter model is trained and published by KBLab⁷ and was trained for 165K steps using a batch size of 8K. It was trained on about 70GB of textual data, consisting mostly of OSCAR (Suárez et al., 2019; Ortiz Suárez et al., 2020) and Swedish newspapers curated by the National Library of Sweden.

The second best model, AI-Nordics/bert-largeswedish-cased⁸ is of the same size and trained for 600K steps with a batch size of 512. The training data is composed of various sources of internet data and sums to about 85GB.

Among the smaller pre-trained language models, KB/bert-base-swedish-cased⁹ (Malmsten et al., 2020) is the greatest performing model, trained on 15-20GB text from a mix of data deposited at the National Library of Sweden and internet data. The model's pre-training consisted of two steps as presented in the original BERT article. First, it was trained 1M steps with a sequence length of 128 and batch size of 512, and then 100K steps with a sequence length of 512 and batch size of 128.

⁶https://huggingface.co/KBLab/megatron-bert-largeswedish-cased-165k

⁷https://huggingface.co/KBLab

⁸https://huggingface.co/AI-Nordics/bert-large-swedishcased ⁹https://huggingface.co/KB/bert-base-swedish-cased

⁵https://github.com/JoeyOhman/SuperLim-2-Testing

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5 Concluding remarks

The contributions of the DaLAJ-GED are twofold. First, efforts like DaLAJ, SuperLim and similar stimulate development of models and approaches to languages other than English, correcting the existing dominance of English in the NLP field (Søgaard, 2022). We expect an increased interest to Swedish NLP following the release of DaLAJ-GED and other SuperLim datasets. The dataset can also be used by researchers who do not have any specific interest in Swedish, but need a highquality benchmark in order to evaluate transfer learning from another language (e.g. English).

Second, DaLAJ-GED supports the area of automatic method development for Swedish learner language, since it offers not only the data for testing models' general ability to differentiate between correct and incorrect language, but – additionally – offers tasks within second language learning domain for sentence-level grammatical error detection (GED), error classification and error correction (GEC).

DaLAJ-GED complements two other recently released SweLL-gold derivative datasets relevant for second language domain, namely, Swedish MultiGED dataset for error detection on a token level¹⁰ (Volodina et al., 2023) and Swedish Mu-ClaGED dataset for error classification on a token level (Moner and Volodina, 2022). Next steps would be to prepare datasets for feedback generation and for error correction in a larger context than a single sentence as well as in authentic context.

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¹⁰https://github.com/spraakbanken/multiged-2023

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