

# Kaggle Competition Report: Language Identification via Text Classification

Abdellah Oumida, Elisa Faure, Idriss Mortadi, Marianne Brugidou

CentraleSupélec, France

{abdellah.oumida, elisa.faure, idriss.mortadi, marianne.brugidou}@student-cs.fr

## Abstract

This report outlines our approach for the Advanced NLP Class Kaggle Competition, which involves predicting the language of a given text using the ISO-639-3 standard. Our solution employs the `xlm-roberta-base` model with parameter-efficient fine-tuning (LoRA), complemented by data augmentation and a cosine annealing scheduler. This method achieved a leaderboard score of **0.87996**.

## 1 Introduction

Language identification is a crucial preprocessing step in many NLP applications. The Advanced NLP Class Kaggle Competition requires classifying a given text into one of 389 languages or dialects, which form a curated subset of the ISO-639-3 standard (SIL International, 2025). This high-granularity classification presents challenges due to the large label space and diverse linguistic features. Our approach leverages a pre-trained multilingual transformer model, adapted through Low-Rank Adaptation (LoRA) (Hu et al., 2022), to address these challenges efficiently.

## 2 Solution

Our solution consists of several key components:

### 2.1 Preprocessing

Our text preprocessing pipeline is designed to clean and normalize text data efficiently. We developed a custom dataset `class` to read CSV files, tokenize texts with the HuggingFace tokenizer, and apply data augmentation. Specifically, any text exceeding 128 tokens is truncated or randomly sliced (if AUGMENT is enabled) to improve generalization, especially for low-resource languages. Then we proceed to clean the dataset.

The first step involves script detection and filtering, where we use Unicode codepoint ranges to identify the script of each character in the

text. By leveraging a lookup table from "`unicode_ranges.csv`", we map Unicode ranges to specific language groups. To optimize performance, we employ a binary search ("bisect") to determine the script of each character and maintain a frequency count of detected scripts. Once the majority script is identified, the function "`filter_majority_script`" ensures text uniformity by retaining only characters that belong to the most frequently occurring script in the input text.

In addition to script filtering, we remove unnecessary elements such as URLs, tags, and hashtags. The function '`remove_links_and_tags`' eliminates links that start with '`http://`', '`https://`', or '`www.`', as well as tags that begin with '`@`' and hashtags that start with '`#`'. To enhance readability, multiple consecutive spaces are reduced to a single space.

By implementing these preprocessing steps, our approach ensures that the text is clean, consistent, and free from unnecessary, making it more suitable for training our models.

### 2.2 Training

In Kaggle's cloud environment, we have access to two NVIDIA Tesla T4 GPUs (NVIDIA Corporation, 2018). Each T4 GPU features 2,560 CUDA cores and 16 GB of GDDR6 memory. By leveraging Hugging Face's Accelerate library (Gugger et al., 2022), we can efficiently train large-batch models using these GPUs.

- **Model Architecture:** We build upon a fine tuned version of `xlm-roberta-base` we found on HuggingFace: `papluca/xlm-roberta-base-language-detection`<sup>1</sup>, an XLM-RoBERTa variant fine-tuned for language identification. It relies on the XLM-RoBERTa architecture (Conneau et al., 2019) with a classification head on top (i.e., a linear layer over the pooled output). This model can be used directly as a language

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<sup>1</sup>`papluca/xlm-roberta-base-language-detection`

detector for 20 languages, including Arabic, English, French, Hindi, and Chinese, among others. We integrate LoRA (Hu et al., 2022) via the PEFT framework (Mangrulkar et al., 2022), updating only the query and value modules in the transformer blocks. This parameter-efficient approach substantially reduces the number of trainable parameters, which is particularly beneficial given the large number of language classes.

- **Data Processing:** We set the maximum sequence length to 128 tokens. Random slicing is applied for texts exceeding 128 tokens to diversify the training examples.
- **Training:** We train for 6 epochs with a learning rate of  $4e-5$  and weight decay of 0.01. Large batch sizes (320 samples per device) ensure stable gradient estimates. We use the AdamW optimizer with a learning rate scheduler that employs cosine annealing with warm restarts, where  $T_0 = 5$ ,  $T_{\text{mult}} = 2$ , and  $\eta_{\text{min}} = 1e-6$ . We log training metrics every 100 steps.
- **LoRA parameters:** We use LoRA (Low-Rank Adaptation) for efficient fine-tuning. Key parameters include:
  - **Rank (r):** 8, rank of LoRA update matrices.
  - **Scaling Factor (lora\_alpha):** 32, scales LoRA updates.
  - **Dropout (lora\_dropout):** 0.1, prevents overfitting.
  - **Target Modules:** "query" and "value".

### 3 Results and Analysis

Metric	Precision	Recall	F1-score
Macro Average	0.88	0.88	0.88
Weighted Average	0.88	0.87	0.87

Table 1: Evaluation metrics on the validation set.

We evaluated our model on a held-out validation set, achieving an overall accuracy of 0.88. Table 1 shows the macro and weighted average metrics, both indicating strong performance across classes. However, a detailed classification report revealed that while certain languages (e.g., abk, ace, ach) reached near-perfect scores, others (e.g., acm, afb) performed less, suggesting a need for further optimization for low-resource or highly similar dialects.

The rest of the f1-scores are displayed in the appendix figure 3. The distribution of f1-scores across labels shows that the model performs well on most languages, with a few exceptions. The model struggles with rare languages, which are underrepresented in the training data. This issue could be addressed by augmenting the training data or using ensemble methods to improve generalization.



Figure 1: Validation loss over training steps.

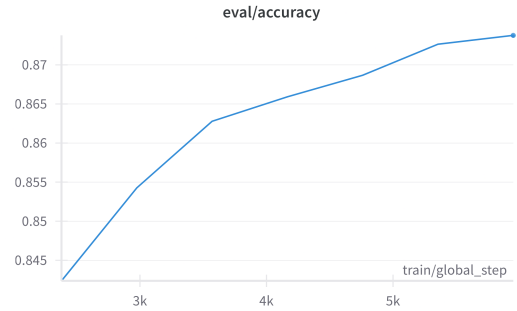


Figure 2: Validation accuracy over training steps.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the validation loss and accuracy trends across epochs. The validation loss decreases steadily down to 0.15, while the accuracy improves up to 0.87, indicating consistent learning progress. These curves suggest that the chosen hyperparameters and learning rate schedule allowed for stable training without noticeable overfitting.

### Limitations

We initially tried full fine-tuning but were constrained by resources. Using LoRA improved efficiency but had trade-offs. The fixed sequence length may impact longer inputs. Evaluation was on a single model and data split. Ensemble methods and more hyperparameter tuning could enhance performance, especially for underrepresented languages.

## References

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- NVIDIA Corporation. 2018. [Nvidia tesla t4 tensor core datasheet](#). Accessed: 2025-03-07.
- SIL International. 2025. [ISO 639-3 Macrolanguage Mappings](#). Accessed: 2025-02-25.

## Appendix: Scores for each label

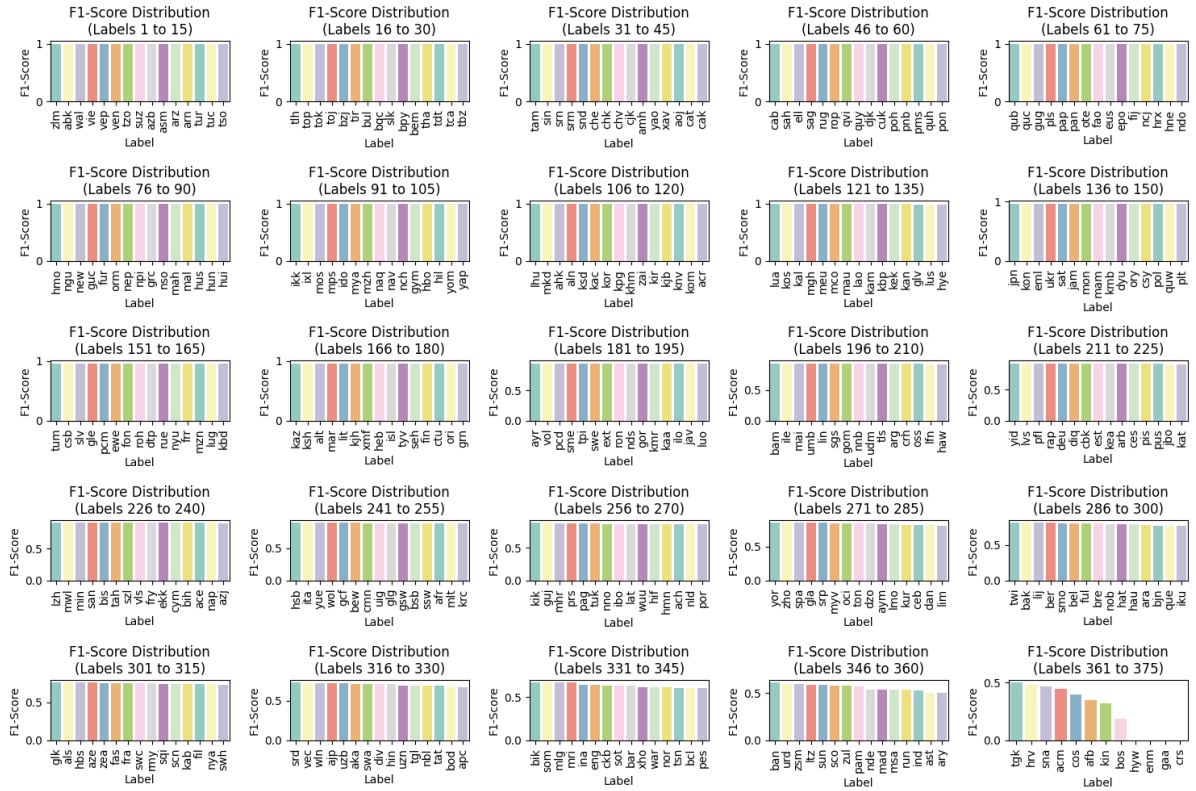


Figure 3: F1-Score Distribution, Sorted by F1-Score (12 Rare labels were not evaluated).

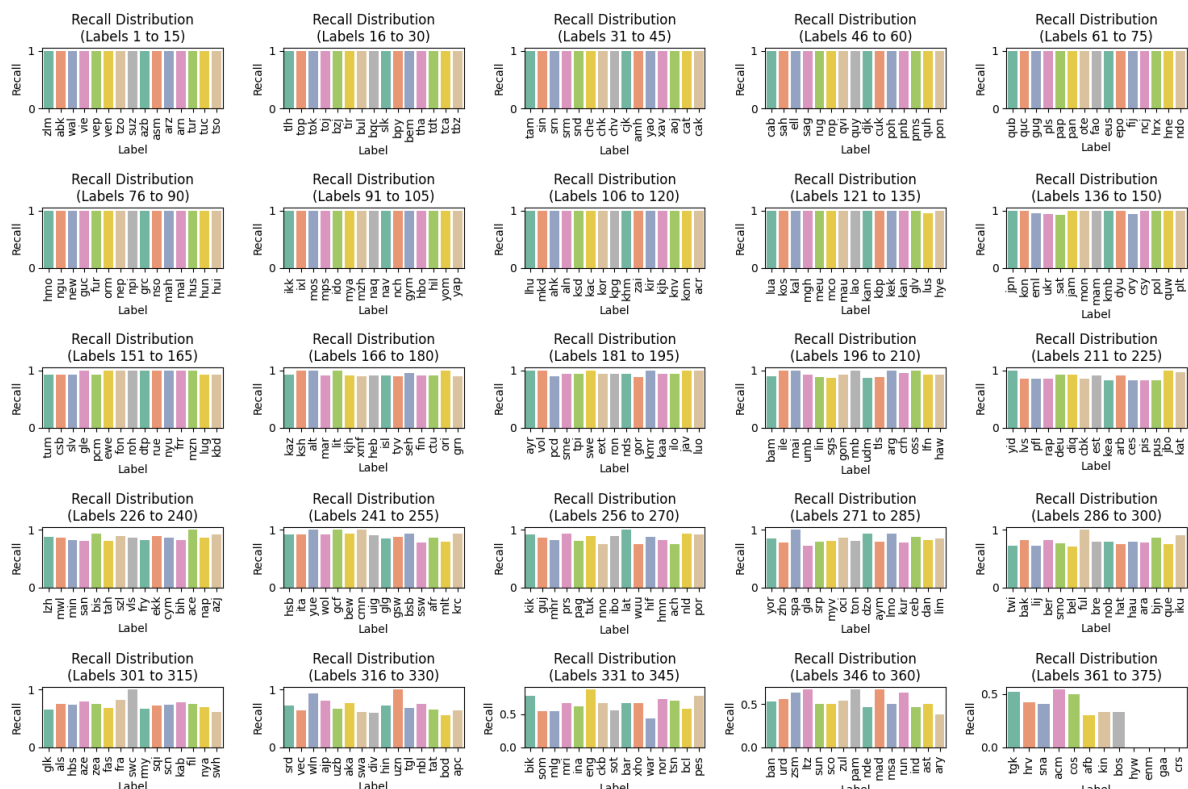


Figure 4: Recall Distribution

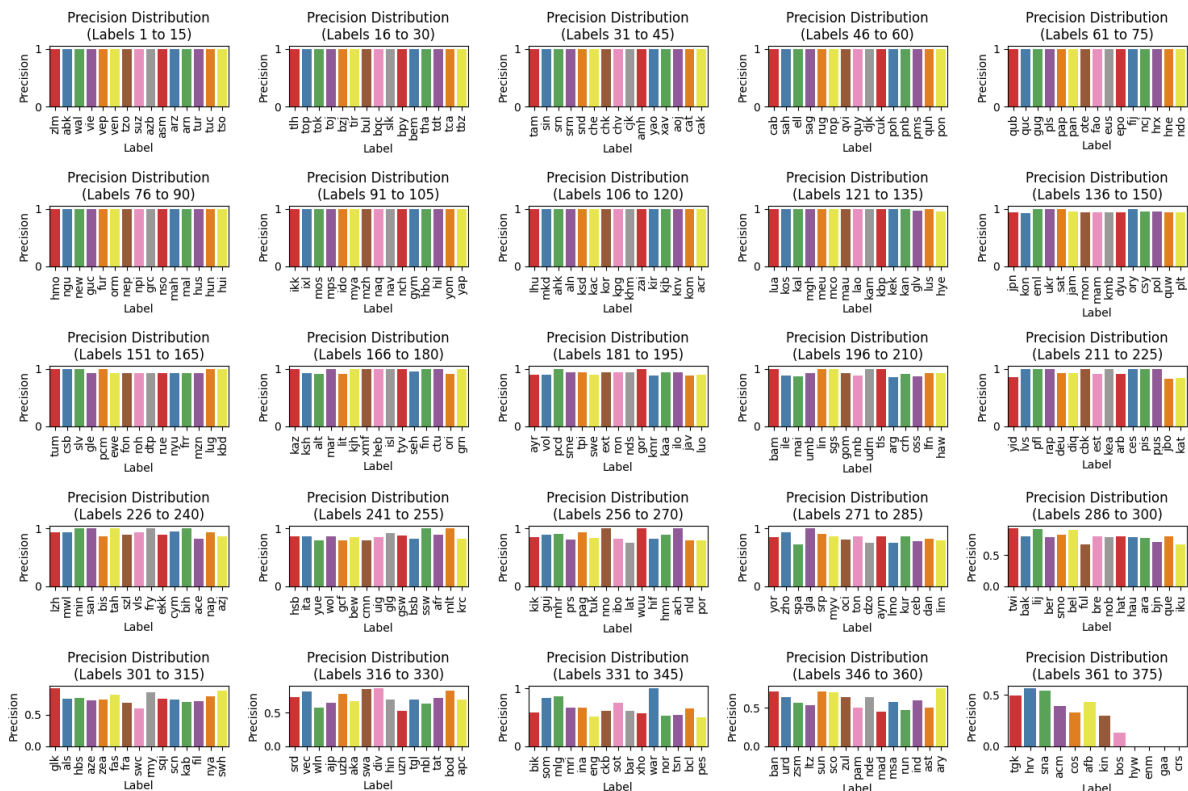


Figure 5: Precision Distribution