Engineer Advisory

Built a cross-language figure check

Built a cross-language content check that fails when a translation drops a figure the English states, and when a language uses notation it does not use — finding two Danish descriptions missing a metric and sixteen Ukrainian spans quoting in the English style.

August 2026

a check that fails when a translation drops a figure

Situation. The most damaging kind of translation error in a CV is not an awkward phrase. It is a number that disappears. An English sentence claiming a fifty-fold improvement, translated into a sentence that says “significantly”, is a claim quietly withdrawn in one market and kept in another — and no spell check, grammar check or human reading of the target language alone will ever notice, because the translated sentence is perfectly good prose.

Task. A check was needed that reads the languages against each other rather than each one on its own, on the two things that must survive translation: the figures, and the notation each language uses to write them.

Action. The figure check extracts every number, percentage, multiplier and unit from the English string and requires each one to appear in every translation of that string, with the multiplier forms mapped per language rather than matched literally — the English fifty-times form corresponds to a specific Danish phrasing and a specific Ukrainian phrasing, and the check knows the mapping instead of demanding the digits alone. The notation check is the mirror of it: each language has conventions it must use and conventions it must not, including decimal separators, thousands grouping and quotation marks. Ukrainian quotes with guillemets; English double quotes in a Ukrainian sentence are as wrong as a missing figure, and far easier to introduce by copying. The first full run found two Danish descriptions where a metric present in English had been dropped, and sixteen Ukrainian spans quoting in the English style.

Result. Eighteen real defects closed and the class closed with them, since every future translation is compared to its English source before it can be committed. What the check cannot do is judge meaning: it proves the number survived and the punctuation is native, and a translation that keeps every figure while getting the claim backwards passes it cleanly.

Bring this experience to your project

Use “Built a cross-language figure check” as a starting point for a similar challenge in your organisation. The services behind this work are available for your project. Handovers, runbooks and manuals that let your own staff operate the system without ringing whoever built it.

Explore our services Get in touch →

Look behind the result

Read the situation, decisions and result in this example. We can discuss which parts transfer to your constraints and which need another approach. Built a cross-language figure check — a check that fails when a translation drops a figure

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Do your translations still state the same numbers?

Talk through your project with the engineer responsible for delivery. We agree the scope, price basis and handover in writing before work begins.

Role context: Database Engineer. It draws on Data Governance, Automation & CI/CD, Testing & QA, Python, Internationalization and Documentation. And while you are here, we are rather good at Internationalization & Localization, Data Governance & Quality and Technical Documentation.

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One piece of **a longer record** — and it is all on this site.

Every entry is written the same way: the situation, the task, what we did and what changed.

See the whole record

Define the improvement you need

Bring the decision, the people affected and the options already considered. We can make the tradeoffs explicit and leave a documented recommendation.

See what it costs Get in touch →

Do your translations still state the same numbers?

Ask about the decisions behind “Built a cross-language figure check”. You will speak with the people who can explain the work and assess your own project.

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Contact card

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