Original Content QA Lab: Subtitling Guidelines
PT-BR

Last Revision
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Reading Speed

17 characters per second for most programming.
13 characters per second for programming intended for children 6 and under.

Duration

Minimum duration for subtitles is 20 frames.*
Maximum duration for subtitles is 7 seconds.

*Reading speed should always be considered. Avoid reading-speed violations whenever possible.

Intervals

A minimum of 2-frame intervals should be used between continuous subtitles.

Character Limitations

42 characters per line.

Timing + Duration

Text should be timed closely to the beginning and end of audio when possible. However, it's acceptable for subtitles to stay on-screen for up to a second after audio ends to meet reading-speed requirements.

Avoid subtitles that:
• Are not in sync with the audio
• Start well in advance of the corresponding audio (approximately 7 frames or more)
• Stay on-screen for too long (more than a second after dialogue ends or more than 7 seconds total)
• Flash on-screen too briefly to read

Line Treatment

Subtitles should occupy 2 lines maximum.

Positioning

Standard positioning is center-justified, at the bottom of screen.

If subtitles obscure pertinent text that appears in the lower third of the screen, or if overlapping with lower-third text will cause subtitles to become illegible, then they should be moved to the top of the screen.

Titling procedure itself

The source text should be subtitled as faithfully as possible within the limits of reading speed, grammatical and stylistic rules of the particular language. Attention has to also be paid to the idioms and collocations that vary from language to language. (see also: Titling Dialogue)

Sentence organization

Under ideal circumstances the spoken utterances should correspond to a subtitled sentence. Nevertheless, the syntactical differences between languages often result in corrupted representation of speech; in such cases, it is preferable to reconstruct the sentence and change the order of the subtitles.

EXAMPLE:

EN: SUB 1: When running low on gas,
SUB 2: you better avoid traffic jams.

PT: SUB 1: Quando estiver com pouca gasolina,
SUB 2: melhor você evitar o trânsito.

THE ORDER OF SUBTITLES CHANGED:

PT: SUB 1: Melhor você evitar o trânsito
SUB 2: quando estiver com pouca gasolina.

Common alteration operations
Whilst the subtitle should faithfully render the source text, it does not mean that it has to follow it word by word. There are many situations where shortening or alteration is necessary.

- Active for passive constructions:
  "It is believed by many people." (30 characters) => "Many people believe." (20 characters).
- Positive for negative expressions:
  "We went to a place we hadn't been before." (41 characters) => "We went to a new place." (23 characters).
- Temporal Prepositional Phrases for temporal subordinate clauses:
  "I'll study when I finish watching this movie." (46 characters) => "I'll study after this movie." (28 characters).
- Modified nouns for the referring relative clauses:
  "What I'd like is a cup of coffee." (33 characters) => "I'd like a cup of coffee." (25 characters).
- Gapping for double verb insertion:
  "John would like to work in Germany and Bill would like to work in France." (73 characters) => "John would like to work in Germany and Bill in France." (54 characters).
- Straightforward question sentences for indicative pragmatic requests:
  "I would like to know if you are coming." (39 characters) => "Are you coming?" (15 characters).
- Straightforward imperative sentences for indicative pragmatic requests:
  "I would like you to give me my keys back." (41 characters) => "Give me my keys back." (21 characters).
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Word-level specific alterations
Some alteration operations are possible also on word-level, but as these translation solutions often belong to different registers of the vocabulary or deliver emotionally different information, more caution and respect to the context is needed:

- Univerbation:
  "filho mais novo" (15 characters) => "caçula" (6 characters)
- Hypernyms:
  "Fox Paulistinha" (15 characters) => "cão" (3 characters)
- Synonyms:
  "automóvel" (9 characters) => "carro" (5 characters)

"entretanto" (10 characters) => "mas" (3 characters)

Titling Dialogue

Dialogue should be subtitled as faithfully as possible within the limits of reading speed.

- When reading speed is exceeded, dialogue should be truncated without sacrificing or altering its intended meaning.
- Non-essential dialogue should generally be truncated first (verbal hedgers such as "Well," or "You know," for example).
- Conversely, subtitles should not add or rewrite dialogue for clarity.
- Do not title stand-alone utterances/exclamations such as oh, whoa, or wow. These can be titled when part of a larger sentence.

Dual Speakers

Use a hyphen to indicate two speakers in the same subtitle. No space should appear between hyphens and dialogue.

EXAMPLE:

-Eu acho que deveríamos votar.
-De novo? Nós acabamos de fazer isso.

Continuity

Do not use ellipses when an ongoing sentence is split between two or more continuous subtitles. Commas should be used as usual when appropriate.

CORRECT:

SUB 1: Eu deixaria você vir com a gente,
SUB 2: mas acho que
mamãe e papai não aprovariam.

INCORRECT:

SUB 1: Eu deixaria você vir com a gente…
SUB 2: …mas acho que
mamãe e papai não aprovariam.

Use an ellipsis at the end of the sentence when an ongoing dialogue is interrupted by an on-screen subtitle.

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: O coração dela parou de bater…
SUB 2: DOUTOR
SUB 1… por um minuto.

Use an ellipsis to indicate:
• Dialogue that trails off
• Dialogue that begins mid-sentence
• A significant pause (one second or more)
• If dialogue continues in the next subtitle after a significant pause, ellipses should be used at both the end of the first subtitle and at the beginning of the second subtitle.

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: Jura que você comeu…
SUB 2: …realmente aquilo tudo?

On-screen Text

Should translate all plot-pertinent on-screen text.
Also, always include on-screen text if the English subtitles contain it.
This includes narrative text (text that is part of principal photography) and burn-in text (text that has been added in post-production).

On-screen text subtitles should always use upper case.
On-screen text and dialogue should never be in the same subtitle.

Glossaries

Keep a glossary of recurring terms and names to ensure consistency across episodes and seasons.

Glossaries should also include templates for recurring opening- and end-credits sequences when necessary.

Spelling & Research

Spelling:
Refer to the Priberam Dictionary and Academia Brasileira de Letras as primary sources for spelling. https://www.priberam.pt/dlpo/brasil and http://www.academia.org.br/abl/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?tpl=home

Titles and names:
When confirming the names of songs, albums, cast & crew, movies/TV shows, or apps, please remain consistent with how they appear in Apple Music and iTunes.

Main titles should not be translated unless an approved translation is provided by Apple.

Episode titles should not be subtitled if they do not appear on screen. If they appear on-screen, request/use an Apple-approved translation.

Slang:
Slang spellings should be confirmed with reputable sources whenever possible. Such as www.dicionarioinformal.com.br/

Acronyms:
Acronyms should be written without periods **EXAMPLE**: FBI, CIA, UNESCO

Abbreviations:
Abbreviations should be used in accordance to http://academia.org.br/nossa-lingua/reducoes

Second person singular:
Both *você* and *tu* are acceptable as long as the sentence is grammatically correct*.*

Language style:
Both educated norm and colloquial style can be used according to the content of the show/movie/program.

Character names and nicknames:
Character names should not be translated unless specified by Apple.
Nicknames should only be translated if their meaning in Portuguese is essential to the story.
Historical/mythical character names should be translated **EXAMPLE**: Papai Noel, Coelho da Páscoa.

Brand names:
We should not mention brand names, unless it is essential for the meaning of the sentence.
EXAMPLE: Nós criamos um aplicativo para a geração Snapchat.

If a brand is unknown in our region and there is a risk of the viewer missing the meaning of the context because of it, translate from the generic term (e.g. if Clorox isn't known in Brazil, translate from the word "bleach" instead: "cloro").

Expletives

Match the audio. Do not censor at will. If the expletive is audible, title the word.

If the expletive is bleeped, muted, or censored in any way, title the first letter of the word and represent the rest of the word with asterisks.

EXAMPLE:
Eu sei que você me adora e que me acha f***.

Foreign Dialogue

Foreign dialogue should only be translated if it is plot-pertinent and meant to be understood by the viewer.

Non-essential foreign dialogue should not be titled if it stands alone. If non-essential foreign dialogue is part of a larger English sentence, then it can be titled.

EXAMPLE:
Eu estou dando *arrivederci* para os doces por um tempo.

Italics

Italics should be used for:
- Voice-over dialogue (examples: narration or a character's internal thoughts)
- Dialogue from an entirely different location (such as pre-lap dialogue from the next scene)
- Dialogue transmitted over phone, radio, TV, or other electronic device
- Song lyrics
- Foreign language
- Titles of books, albums and movies. (Song titles should appear in quotation marks.)
- Genus and species names (examples: E. coli, Triceratops)

NOTE: If italics usage based on a character being out-of-scene is deemed disruptive to the viewer because, for example, the font switches back and forth between italics and normal so frequently, the subtitling vendor may choose to have italics only used for the 'God-voice' / never seen narrator as a more elegant solution. (e.g. no italics over B-roll footage).

Numerals

x one to ten should be spelled out.
Numbers 11 and up should be represented numerically.
Numbers up 999 requires periods: 1.000

Exceptions:
Addresses should always be written numerically: 5 Primrose Lane
Numbers that begin a sentence should generally be spelled out.
Dates should always be written numerically: 9 de agosto
System of measurements should be converted to metric system and abbreviated: km, cm, kg, Cº.

If the time is spoken in dialogue it should be spelled out unless there was no space for it.

EXAMPLE 1:
Eu encontro com você às 8 e meia da noite.

If the time is not spoken in dialogue, the number should be written without it.

EXAMPLE 2:
Eu encontro com você às 8h30.

Centuries should be written using the Roman Numerals system.

Currency

 Foreign currencies shouldn't be converted to Brazilian currency (Real).
If a unit of currency is spoken in dialogue it should be spelled out unless there was no space for it.

EXAMPLE 1:
Eu venderia o app por 99 centavos ou por 1 dólar e 29 centavos

If a unit of currency is not spoken in dialogue, the number should be written without it.

EXAMPLE 2:
Isso vai te custar 129 ou 199, dependendo do modelo.

Punctuation

Follow standard official rules.

Some notes:

- Quotation marks should be used for dialogue and written text that is quoted, recited from memory, or read.

EXAMPLE: Lembra do dia que vimos "A Conspiração da Aranha"?

- Question marks and exclamation points should be placed outside of the quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material. Periods and commas are always placed inside of the quotation marks.

EXAMPLE: Como fazemos para assistir "Quem Vai Ficar Com Mary?"

- If quoted text continues over several subtitles, quotation marks should only be used at the very beginning and very end of the quote. (Not at the beginning of each subtitle within the quote.)

SUB 1: "Com a chegada do verão
SUB 2: a família de Anitta
SUB 3: mudou-se para a Europa"

- Use single quotes for a quote within a quote.

EXAMPLE: . "Eu ouvi quando ele disse 'boa noite'."

- Colons can be used when appropriate. Semicolons should not be used.

Songs

Song lyrics can only be titled if they are actuated on-screen, plot-pertinent and made-up, and they must be translated. Plot-pertinent doesn't simply mean thematically relevant—it means that the lyrics convey information that is necessary for a viewer's understanding of the plot. A subtitle file that is not English SDH or CC should never include transcribed lyrics, basically. Songs in which the lyrics have been altered or parodied for comedic effect can generally be titled.

No end punctuation should be used when titling lyrics, except for question marks or exclamation points when appropriate.

Commas should be used as usual within lyrics, but not at the end of a line.

The first letter in each line should be capitalized.

CORRECT:

> *You thought I took a spill*
> *But I didn't*

INCORRECT:

> *You thought I took a spill,*
> *but I didn't*

There is a bit more leniency with casual/slang spelling in song lyrics than in spoken dialogue. For example, dropping the "g" from "ing" words—as in ridin'—is acceptable when the audio calls for it.

Songs in which the lyrics have been altered or parodied for comedic effect can generally be titled.

Translation Credits

There should not be a subtitle for a translation/translator credit.