Subtitling 3.0
shaping experiences, not just words

Enhanced Subtitling Guidelines

v2026/1, Oct 2026

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Introduction

This document presents research-informed, audience-centred guidelines for Enhanced Subtitling (EnSub) defined as:

> An audiovisual translation practice that consists of adding written text to an audiovisual product to create the conditions for a new audience to identify and interpret what is expressed visually and aurally in the source audiovisual product.

For further detail, we can expand the definition to include the following:

> The added text may be written in the same or a different language from the source dialogue and is positioned close to the natural areas of focus and direction of speaking for higher integration in the visual composition. It takes advantage of all the affordances made available by writing and the digital medium in which it appears (e.g. use of bold, italics, different colours and font sizes, effects like fading or blurring) to translate the dialogue of the speaker(s), discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), other verbal information that is contained in the soundtrack (songs, off-screen voices), as well as key information expressed visually or aurally and deemed inaccessible to an audience that may not share the necessary socio-cultural knowledge. Meaning expressed through other modes than dialogue may be integrated into the target text as an extratitle that may appear independently or simultaneously with dialogue subtitles.

In addition to professional guidelines, this document aims to include references to the research data on which it is based, so new versions are expected to be released regularly.
New versions can be found on the Project Subtitling 3.0 website – and will be announced via the Subtitling 3.0 LinkedIn account.
Full references of the publications mentioned in this document can be found in the Subtitling 3.0 Zotero library

We welcome feedback, suggestions for new studies to consider, and especially challenging cases that can help refine these guidelines. This is meant to be a community endeavour and your contribution will be fully acknowledged in the guidelines and project website. To send us your suggestions, please email Sara Ramos Pinto, s.ramospinto@leeds.ac.uk.

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Relevant terms and definitions

[in alphabetical order]

cps

This acronym refers to characters per second, the most common metric for measuring subtitle speed.

Extratitle

Timed text on screen used to aid the translation of meaning expressed visually or aurally and not via dialogue.

Focal point

A focal point is a specific area or element that captures viewers' attention because it stands out - through its size, colour, camera angle, characters' gaze, lighting, focus, or movement. Focal points are usually easy to identify because their whole purpose is to grab and guide where we look. It's also possible to have more than one focal point in the same scene. Research also tells us that viewers' attention tends to fall on faces - especially human faces - as we naturally look to them to interpret expressions. Colourful or moving objects also attract more attention than static, backgrounded elements.

Subtitle

Timed text on screen used to translate characters' dialogue.

Scene and scene change

A scene is a segment of film that usually takes place in a single time and place - with the exception of montage sequences - and often features the same characters. A scene change is sometimes also referred to as 'hard shot change '. In Enhanced subtitling, the scene is the main unit of meaning we consider.

Shot and shot change

A shot is an uninterrupted image in a single static or mobile frame. Shot change is sometimes also referred to as 'soft shot change' (to distinguish from 'hard shot change', see above) or "cut".

Vector of attention

Vector of attention refers to the directional forces that guide viewers' eyes from one focal point to another, and it is typical to distinguish between three types of vectors:

Index vectors. These are introduced by something in the shot that is clearly pointing in a direction, like a hand or a one-way sign.

Motion vectors. Introduced by the motion of visual objects, camera movement, characters' gaze or event editing.

Graphic vectors. These are introduced by stationary elements in the shot that have a directional quality - for example, a pier stretching out over the sea.

Guidelines

Duration

Text on screen (whether it is a subtitle, an extratitle, or any other on-screen text) should appear for a minimum of one second and a maximum of 7 seconds. Exceptions can be made for the minimum duration when absolutely needed, but no subtitle or extratitle should be on screen for less than 5/6 (five-sixths) of a second (e.g. 20 frames if the audiovisual text is shot at 24fps).

Relevant reading about subtitling duration:
Szarkowska and Bogucka (2019)

[Full references available in Subtitling 3.0 Zotero library]

Speed

Aim for a reading speed around 17 characters per second (cps), and never more than 20 cps.

Relevant reading about subtitling speed:
Burnham et al. (2008), Jia at al. (2026), Kruger et al. (2022), Liao et al. (2020), Ofcom (2024), Research Institute for Disabled Consumers, Szarkowska and Gerber-Morón (2018), Szarkowska and Bogucka (2019), Szarkowska et al. (2021), Szarkowska et al. (2024).

[Full references available in Subtitling 3.0 Zotero library]

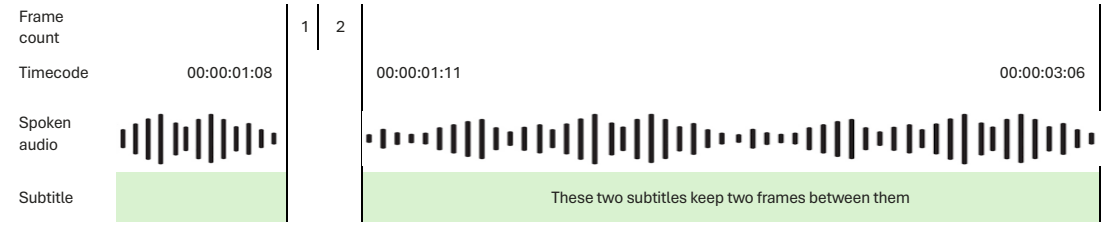
Timing

Timing is essential to meaning-making and editing, and not carefully considering subtitle timing in relation to spoken dialogue or film editing will compromise viewing and enjoyment, as viewers most often cite this in survey studies as a sign of low-quality subtitling.

Minimum gap between subtitle

Keep a minimum two-frame gap between subtitles to ensure viewers notice when a subtitle changes.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



Subtitles in-time

Subtitles should appear on screen (in-time) on the first frame of audio, or as close as possible, as it will be noticeable if they come in too early or too late.

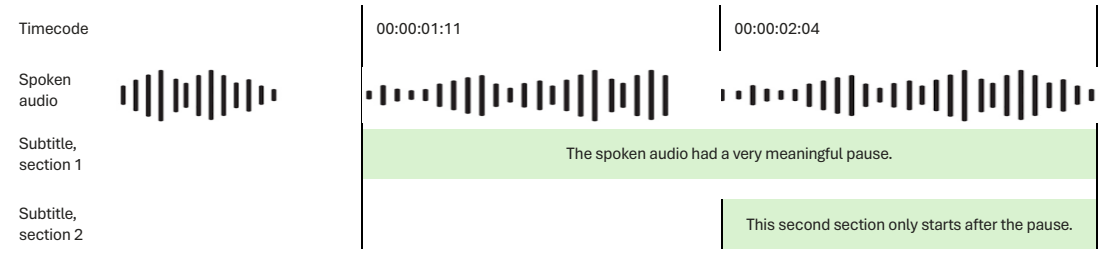
Example considering a 24-frame clip:



Subtitle in-time

Syncing the in-time with the spoken audio is especially important when the timing of what is said is key to the message. Common examples include irony, mimicking someone else's way of speaking, or telling a joke (as offering information too early may ruin the comedic moment). In these situations, however, splitting the text into separate subtitles often results in faster subtitles that may not meet either the maximum speed or the minimum duration rule. In those cases, you can time the subtitle as a whole, with different sections of that one subtitle appearing sequentially at different times and in sync with the spoken audio. This is only possible in software that allows more than one subtitle layer, because you time the first section to the full subtitle duration so it stays on screen while the following section(s) appear when they are said and stay until the out time. Each section has specific in-times, but all sections have the same out-time. This also means you don't need to use ellipses to indicate a pause.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



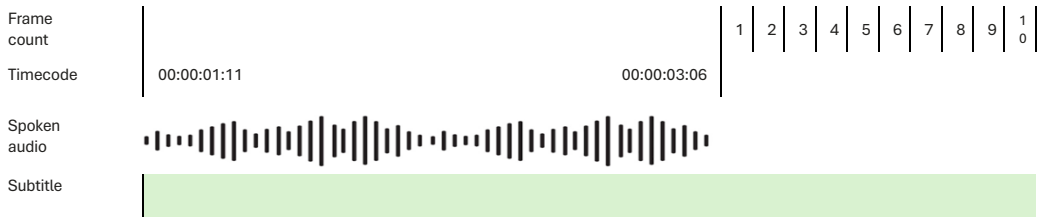
Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



Subtitles out-time

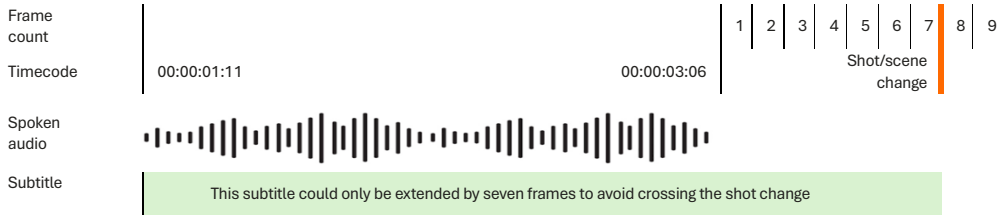
Subtitles should disappear from the screen (out-time) for at least 6 frames after the audio and not more than half a second, if followed by a silent moment. This allows for more relaxed reading and, although more research is needed, it is reasonable to assume viewers will not experience the subtitle as staying too long after speech ends if the extension does not go beyond half a second.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



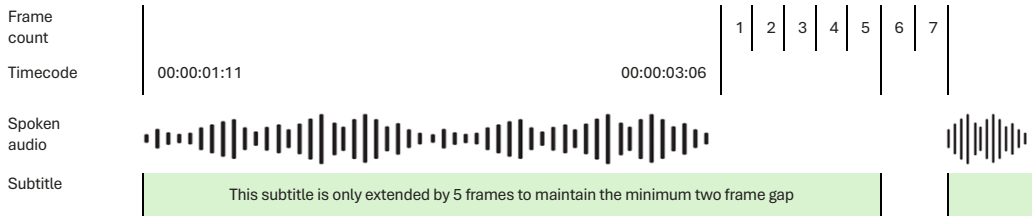
If extending the out-time up to half a second after the last frame of audio causes the subtitle to cross a shot change, the subtitle should not cross a shot change, and the out-time should be set to the last frame before the shot change.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



When not followed by a silent moment, i.e., if spoken audio continues and another subtitle needs to be added immediately after, the subtitle's out-time should allow a minimum two-frame gap and stay as close as possible to the last frame of audio.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



Timing and shot/scene changes

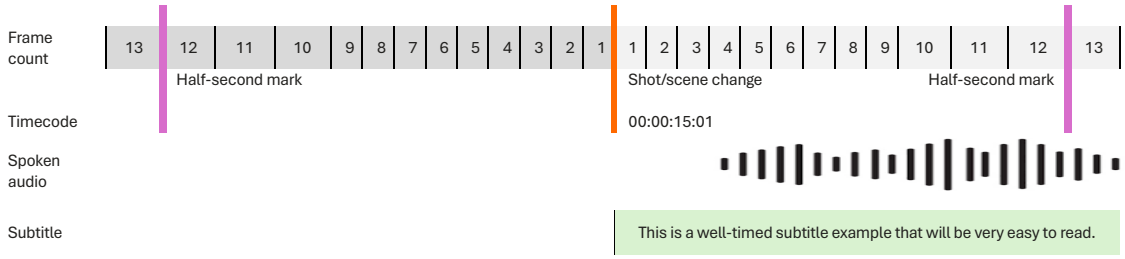
Exceptions to the parameters above are normally motivated by shot/scene changes, under the assumption that a subtitle over a shot/scene change may cause a flicking effect, increase cognitive load, and/or lead viewers to re-focus on or re-read the subtitle. Existing research does not yet allow us to

confidently confirm or refute any of these assumptions; however, EnSub guidelines recommend, whenever possible, avoiding subtitles and extratitles over shot changes to adhere to the Continuity Editing Rules, promote subtitle integration and limit interference with the editing. This means that:

- **Subtitles may go over a shot/scene change when impossible to avoid**, given that keeping reading speed below 20cps should be prioritised.

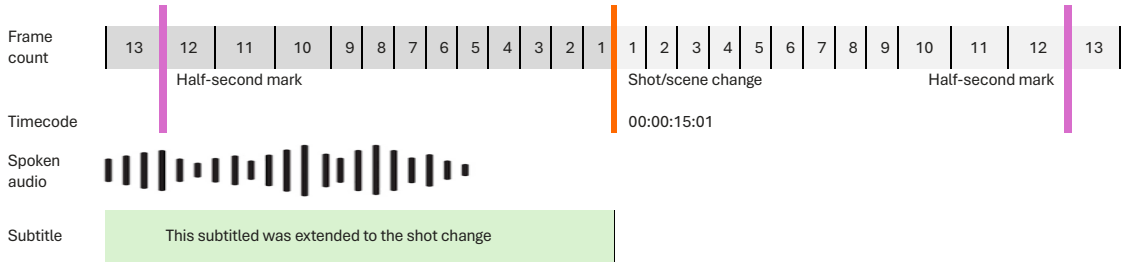
- **If the spoken audio starts within half a second after the shot change**, it is reasonable to assume that the flicking effect may occur. To avoid this, follow standard industry parameters. If the spoken audio starts within half a second after the shot change, start the subtitle in the first frame after the shot change.

  Example considering a 24-frame clip:



- **If the spoken audio ends within half a second before the shot change**, extend the subtitle to the last frame before the shot change.

  Example considering a 24-frame clip:

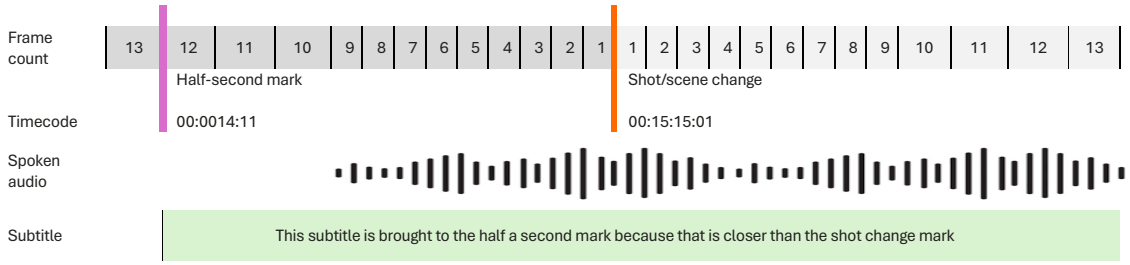


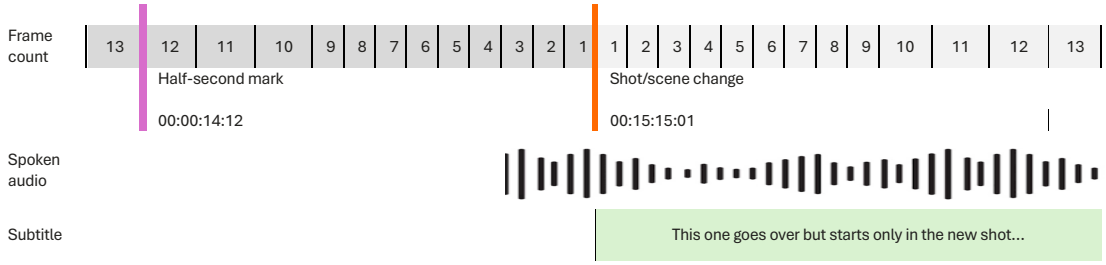
Timing when spoken audio crosses a shot/scene change

Sometimes the spoken audio starts before and ends after a shot/scene change. In these cases, we try to use two subtitles that break at the shot change. That said, if breaking the subtitle at the shot/scene change results in two subtitles below the one-second minimum duration, it may not be possible to avoid crossing the shot change. This means that:

- **If the spoken audio starts within half a second before the shot change and crosses the shot change**, the subtitle should either start at the half-second mark before the shot change or at the first frame of the new shot, whichever is closest.

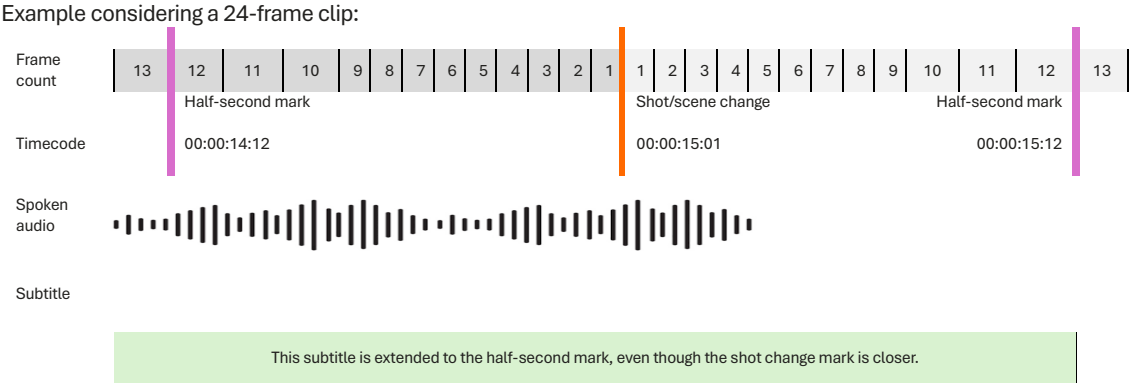
Example considering a 24-frame clip:





- **If the spoken audio ends within half a second after the shot change**, extend the subtitle to at least the half-second mark.

Example considering a 24-frame clip:



Relevant reading about timing:
The research around this issue is not yet Krejtz et al. (2013), Deryagin (2024), Kruger et al (2015)

[Full references available in Subtitling 3.0 Zotero library]

Character limit

The character limit is dictated by display technology, and the maximum is 42 characters per line for most Latin alphabet languages.

Number of lines

There is no limit to the number of lines in the subtitle or extratitle. The main guiding principle is visual integration, which means text on screen can be presented in more than two lines to avoid poor contrast or to better frame the text within an existing framing line. The speed parameter should always be kept which means that

Examples from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023) of subtitles with more than two lines

In this case, a two-line subtitle would go over the lines introduced by the window frame, so a three-line subtitle was introduced.



In this case, the four-line subtitle fits nicely within the natural lines introduced by the fireplace and chimney in the background and avoids the areas of bad contrast introduced by the white wall.



Line breaks

When the text needs to be broken into more than one line, please consider that breaking units of meaning or syntactic components makes the text more difficult to read.
For Indo-European languages such as English, this means that, for example, the line break:

- should be made after punctuation marks, before conjunctions, before prepositions
- should not separate a noun from an article or an adjective, the verb from its subject, a prepositional verb from its preposition, a verb from an auxiliary, reflexive pronoun or negation, a first from the last name.

Relevant reading about line breaks:
Gerber-Morón and Szarkowska (2018)

[Full references available in Subtitling 3.0 Zotero library]

Position and direction

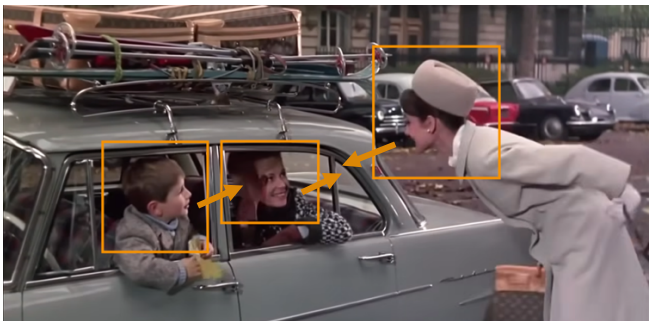
Subtitle position is dictated by three main aims: first, maintain similar viewing patterns to those we can reasonably expect when watching without subtitles; second, reduce time spent focusing on subtitles; and third, better integrate subtitles into the product's visual composition.
To achieve this:

(1) Identify the focal point(s) and vector(s) of attention in the shot. A shot can have more than one focal point and vectors of attention in different directions.

Examples from *Charade* (Donen 1963):







(2) Place the subtitle close to the focal point it relates to most directly and in the direction of the existing vector of attention identified in the shot.

Example from *Charade* (Donen 1963):



If, as a result of (2), the subtitle is placed in a low-contrast area, change the subtitle colour (see ‘Colour’ section).

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



If, as a result of (2), the subtitle is placed over another focal point in that shot, prioritise placing it close to the focal area instead of in the same direction as the vector of attention. Use common sense to decide which location interferes less with the shot’s visual composition.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):

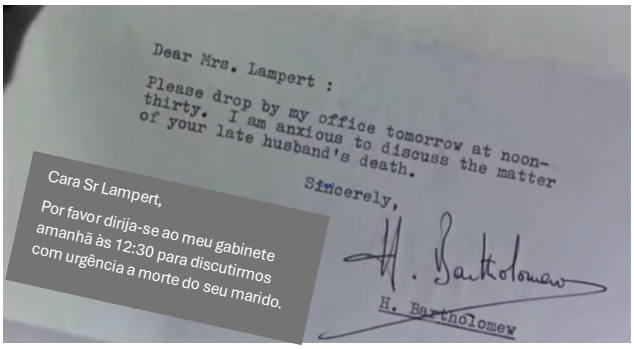


When characters move within the shot, the subtitle may start in an ideal position but end in a less desirable place. When this happens, prioritise where you would ideally want it to finish, and use common sense to assess the result. This is a cost-effective option that addresses the issue in most cases, but in cases in which it does not, other possible solutions are:

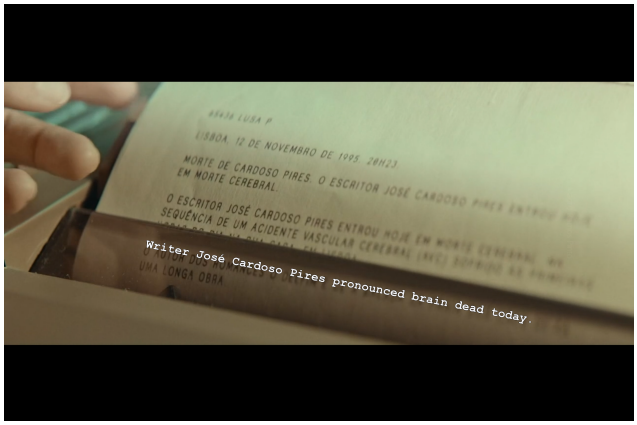
- **Placing the subtitle elsewhere near the focal poi**nt, deprioritising direction based on the attention vector. This is also a cost-effective solution.
- **Adding the subtitle with a movement effect to follow the focal point**. This solution achieves the highest visual integration, but it is also the most time-consuming and least cost-effective solution.
- **Placing the subtitle at the bottom of the shot**. This is the least ideal, but it is also a very cost-effective solution.

If translating text already on screen, position the subtitles as close as possible to the on-screen text and orient them in the same direction if possible.

Example from *Charade* (Donen 1963):



Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



If the speaker is off camera, place the subtitle on the side and in the direction where the spoken audio comes from.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



When spoken audio comes from an object (e.g. a phone), treat the object like you would a talking head and position the subtitle close to the object (the focus area in this case) close to the object (preferably below).

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



Colour

The default colour for subtitles is white, but consider that there are different shades of white, and subtitles are often unnecessarily bright. Use common sense to choose a shade of white that maintains good legibility and looks more integrated into the image.
Subtitles must maintain strong contrast with the background to ensure legibility. If the background is light and compromises contrast with the white text, change the subtitle colour to a darker shade. To ensure the subtitle's visual integration, use a darker colour that already exists in the shot. Avoid using a background box.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



You can also change the colour because the situation calls for it.

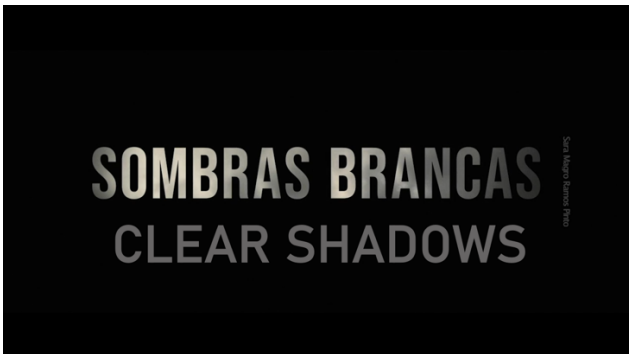
Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):
In this case, the camera zooms in on the painting, and a voice is heard, making it seem like the painting is speaking. The subtitle colour was changed to one of the tones in the painting.



Audiovisual product title

Add the translation of the title (often discussed with or given to you by the production or distribution company) unless no change is required in the target language. The target text title should resemble the source title as much as possible in font type, colour, and size. That said, to ensure viewers can easily distinguish the source from the target text title, you may need to use a lighter/darker shade or a smaller font size than the source title.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



Other on-screen text

Subtitle all plot-pertinent and otherwise relevant on-screen text that is not covered in dialogue and/or redundant in the target language. This includes:

- Production-related text such as “Based on True Events”, “In Loving Memory of Jane”, etc.
- Street and building signage
- Letters or text messages being read by a character
- Writings on walls
- Lower thirds, i.e. graphic overlays placed in the bottom portion of a video frame to display names, titles, locations, social media handles, etc
- etc.

Position the translation of the on-screen text as specified in the section ‘Position and direction’.
Consider carefully the type of font, colour and size used as specified in the section ‘Font colour and style’.

In documentaries, on-screen text often means lower thirds. In these situations, adding a translation next to the existing text may result in too much text on screen. Consider covering the existing text with a box in an existing background colour, with blurred edges, and overlapping the translated text.
If the lower third overlaps with spoken audio, make sure:

- The subtitle does not clash with the translated text on screen

  If placing the subtitle close to the focus area and in the same direction as the vector of attention causes it to clash with the lower third text, place the subtitle elsewhere, still close to the focus area, OR cover the existing text, add the subtitle in the ideal place, and place the translation of the lower third somewhere else that also makes sense

- That viewers have enough time to read all the text on screen

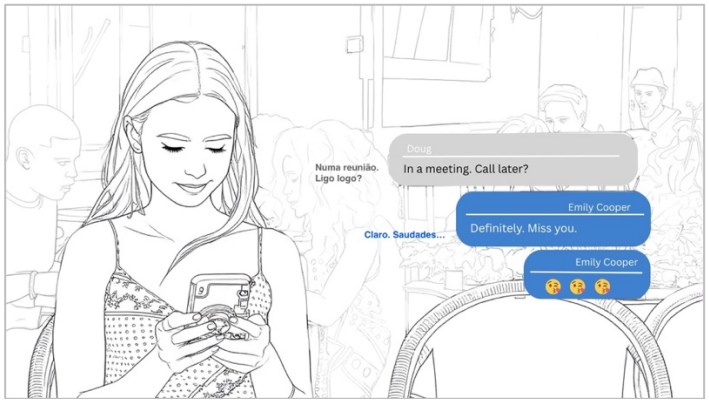
  Consider leaving the lower-third translation until the end of the shot so viewers can refer back to it between subtitles.

In fictional audiovisual products, the approach to on-screen text may differ. On-screen text, such as restaurant names, signs, or letters, is a diegetic element, i.e., part of the film world, so covering and replacing it with its translation may confuse viewers, as they may not suspend their disbelief that far; for example, if the action is in Nigeria, they may be confused to find a street sign with text in Japanese. Prefer adding the translation next to the existing on-screen text, ensuring it is distinctive enough that viewers can distinguish the source text from its translation.

Example from *Charade* (Donen 1963):



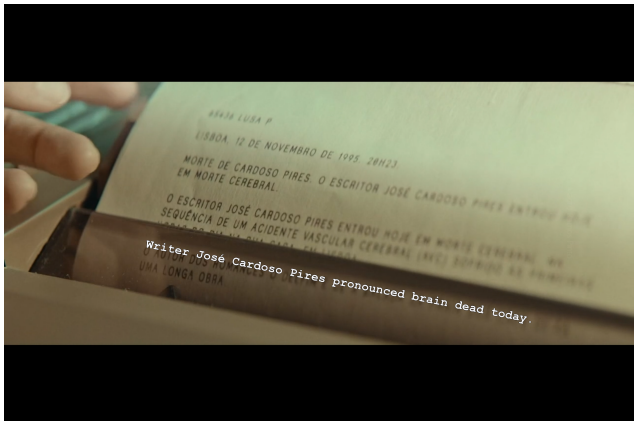
Reconstructed example from *Emily in Paris* (Star 2020-2026)



Font colour and style

Non-serif fonts are preferred for legibility. However, this should be balanced with the style used in the film. Identify the font style used for the film title, as it will give you a good indication of the mood the director wants to set. Also consider exceptions when subtitling information shown in objects such as letters, typewriters, money, or signs. In those situations, use a font closest to the one already in use.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



Movement

The most cost-effective practice is to use stationary subtitles (i.e., those that remain in the same place within a shot/scene). For better integration into the visual composition, or to keep the subtitle in its ideal position throughout the scene (see section 'Position and direction'), you may find that the best solution is to add a movement effect to the subtitle so it accompanies the speaking character. This is possible with a subtitling tool such as Aegisub, but given the time and cost involved, you may want to discuss this with your client before implementing it.

Use of style effects

You can use a wide range of effects; however, what's available will depend on the subtitling or video editing software you use. Effects can be a powerful tool for expressing and integrating subtitles; however,

subtitlers should be careful not to let subtitles become a character in the film, unless this has been discussed with the production team and is what they request.

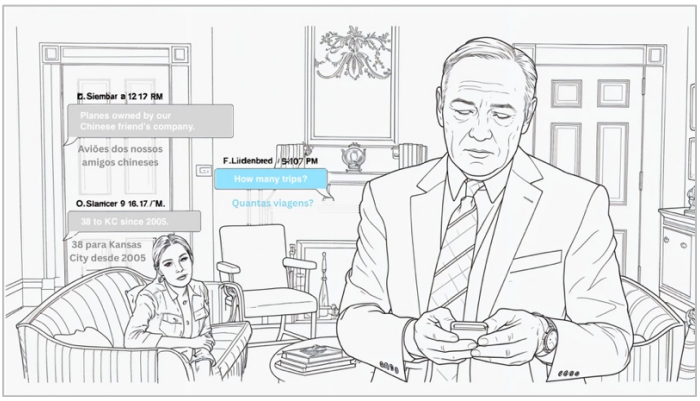
Using style effects to follow the manner in which something is said:

- Use fading if the spoken audio also fades away.
- Use slight blurring if one cannot hear what is being said very well. In this situation, consider legibility issues, so use only light blurring.
- When a particular word or expression is emphasised, present that word/expression in *italic*.
- When a particular word or expression was said louder, present that word/expression in a larger font.
- Use a cadenced appearance of letters or words to follow the rhythm in which the information is being offered (see section 'Timing').

Using style effects to follow the style of how text was presented on screen via objects in the film world:

This would mean presenting additional text in a similar font colour and presentation style as the text in the source film, without overlapping it to replace it. For example, dubbed versions of animation have sometimes replaced information. In subtitling, however, with both source speech and subtitles present, it would likely be confusing to see characters speaking in English and then, for example, send a mobile text in Danish. More testing is needed, but EnSub guidelines suggest preferring to add a translation close to the on-screen text.

Reconstructed example from *House of Cards* (Willimon 2013-2018)



Using style effects to follow the style of text presented on screen that is not part of the film world:

While this is less common, it is increasingly frequent to find on-screen text that is not part of the film world (the characters are 'not aware of it'). Recent examples include *Clickbait* (2021), *Kneecap* (2024) and *The Gentlemen* (2024-2026). When space allows, add the translation as you would for text messages (see section above). When there is no space, consider talking with your client about replacing the text instead; or, if you are not covering important information, consider replacing the text with a semi-faded box and adding the new text with a similar effect to how the source text was presented.

Extratitles

Extratitles are an important and distinctive feature of EnSub. Going back to the definition of subtitling underlying EnSub, we aim to create the conditions for a new audience to identify and interpret what is expressed visually and aurally in the source audiovisual product. We achieve this by adding text on screen via subtitles, by taking advantage of all the affordances that written text on screen allow us (e.g. colour, font size, direction, italics, strategic timing), but also by strategically adding other titles – extratitles – on screen to support viewers' identification and interpretation of visual/aural elements and, especially, their narrative purpose. It is important not to think of extratitles as a direct translation of visual/aural elements into words. They are also not a description or explanation of such elements – in fact, it is important to reflect carefully if our extratitle is explaining the film (which is not the purpose of EnSub). The purpose is to provide just enough information to support viewers going over a level of unfamiliarity with a visual/aural element to the point that they cannot understand what it is or make meaning of it.

For example, in the film *Kautokeino Rebellion* (Gaup 2008), the production team used a well-known technique of adding the name of the place in the middle of the screen to show viewers where the action is taking place. Research shows, however, that it works only when viewers know the place in question. The more unfamiliar the place and the word, the harder it is for viewers to make sense of the word, understand it refers to a place, or even notice it on screen. We can add an extratitle to use a common translation technique of explicitation. We can integrate it in the visual composition by presenting it similarly to the text already on screen (e.g. same font, colour, mode of presentation). This will help viewers interpret the intended meaning and avoid confusion from not knowing where the characters are.

Reconstructed example from *Kautokeino Rebellion* (Gaup 2008)
An extratitle was added, presenting the text in block letters as the text already on screen, in white and with the same fading effect.



But meaning coming from non-verbal visual elements can be equally challenging. Clothes, for example, often help us situate characters in time or signal the level of (un)formality in a situation, but viewers can infer that meaning only if they recognise the clothes and can associate the intended socio-cultural meaning. In situations like this, the aim is not to add an extratitle explaining the clothes, but to add enough information to support viewers in inferring the meaning those clothes are participating in.
For example, in the film *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023), halfway through the film, we find the main character in a situation where a censorship officer tells him the changes he needs to make to his book. The scene is in a different moment in time than the previous scene, and upon analysing all its verbal and non-verbal elements, we can conclude that it is important to understand the following:

(a) the scene is in the 1950's
(b) that the older man is a censorship officer and holds all the power in this relationship
(c) that the younger man is scared and does not hold any power

When preparing the English subtitles for this film and taking into account a European audience in film festivals, our analysis concluded that:

- **The only elements participating in (a) are the clothes and the room's furniture**. This means that if viewers are not able to identify the clothes as typical of 1950s fashion, viewers will not be able to infer in which decade the action is taking place, that this scene is a different decade from the previous one and that the younger character in the scene is the main character of the film when he was younger. We concluded that while some of the European film festival viewers could recognise the clothes and their meaning, a considerable part of the audience needed further assistance.
- **The only elements indicating that the older man is a censorship officer are his attitude, the type of room, and his reference to annotating the book in blue** (Portuguese censors would annotate in blue what needed to be deleted from what they were reviewing). If viewers are not familiar with Portuguese history and this specific detail, it is reasonable to assume that they will miss it and find it hard to identify the older character as a censorship officer. This not only means they might not understand/misunderstand this scene, but it also means they might not understand/misunderstand another scene later in the film and miss a key aspect of this main character's life, i.e., the fact that he was censored as a writer by the Portuguese dictatorship. We concluded that most European film festival viewers would need help inferring this meaning.
- **The power relationship between the characters (B and C) is supported by the spoken dialogue as well as their body movements and facial expressions**. Subtitles help viewers access the information in the spoken dialogue, and it is reasonable to assume their body movements and facial expressions would be understood without further assistance.

An extratitle was added, including the date – 1952 – and identification of the space in which we found the characters – the censorship office. By directly telling the viewer the year, the clothes and furniture were assumed to be from that decade, supporting a realistic portrayal of the epoch. By adding the reference to 'censorship office', we have indirectly identified the older man as the censor and kept the connection between blue annotation and censorship without explaining the scene or adding too much text on screen. Research shows that without this extratitle, the older man in this scene would be interpreted as an editor advising a writer what not to do by the majority of the viewers.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



The addition of the extratitle is governed by the key principle of providing just enough information for viewers to interpret the scene and infer the expected overall meaning. The focus is on the scene's overall meaning and the narrative purpose of the verbal, visual, and aural elements, rather than a one-to-one translation or explanation that would be lengthy and imposing on the screen.
When deciding when an extratitle is needed and what to include, it is thus essential to:

a. analyse the situation and the key meanings being expressed
b. identify the verbal, visual and aural elements participating in the construction of those meanings
c. assess the target audience's familiarity with such elements and their (in)ability to infer the expected meaning
d. provide the information necessary in the subtitle (if space allows) or extratitle to create the conditions for viewers to interpret the verbal, visual, or aural elements as expected.

Keep extratitles to a minimum because they can unduly interfere with the scene's visual composition and, more importantly, because they require viewers to read more text on screen. **Aim to present all extratitles in the same area throughout the film** and to **include extratitles only when no subtitle is on screen**.
If these parameters cannot be met, consider the following:

- Use a different colour to distinguish them as extratitles if extratitles cannot always be presented in the same area,
- If an extratitle needs to be included at the same time as subtitles, keep the extratitle on screen throughout the shot while subtitles appear. This lets viewers return to the extratitle multiple times if needed.

Two or more speakers in one subtitle

When two or more characters speak in the same scene, the preferred option is to put their speech in separate subtitles and position them close to the speaking character.

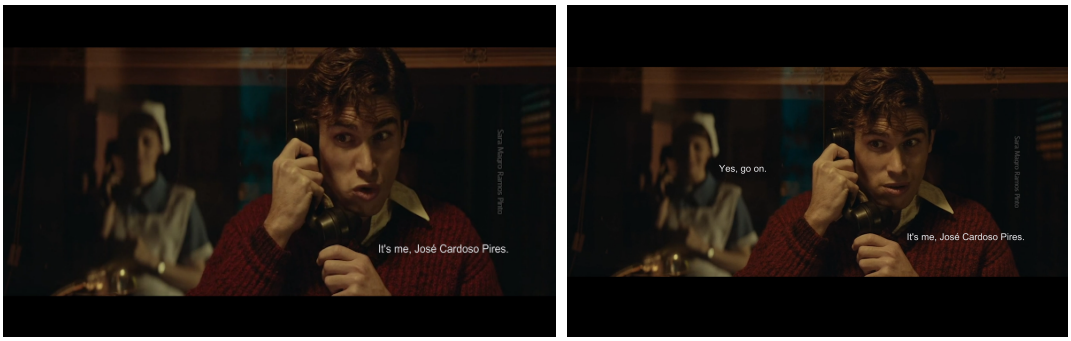
Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



The first subtitle should appear when the first character speaks, and the second subtitle should appear when the second character speaks. If this results in subtitles that do not meet the speed or minimum duration requirement, you should treat them as if they were two lines of one single subtitle and time them accordingly, meaning that:

- The in-time is set in relation to when the first speaker starts speaking
- The out-time is set up to half a second after the second speaker finishes speaking
- The first subtitle appears when the first speaker speaks and stays on screen until the set out-time
- The second subtitle appears when the second speaker starts speaking and stays on screen until the set out-time.
- The subtitles appear at different times but disappear at the same time.

Example from *Clear Shadows* (Vendrell 2023):



If you can't add subtitles next to different speakers, present them together in a single subtitle, as is standard in subtitling, using a hyphen without a space to distinguish the speakers. Still consider making the lines appear at different times, as explained above.

Dialogue in a different language or dialect

Translate dialogue in a language different from the target language unless the audience is not expected to understand what is being spoken. Research shows that viewers are often not able to notice if speakers are speaking different language(s), which can result in not understanding other important aspects, given that the use of different languages is often used not only to achieve a more realistic portrayal of a certain character/group, but also to signal difference, socio-cultural or economic status, humour, etc.
If only one character speaks a different language and space and time allow, identify the language in which the character is speaking in the first line of the subtitle. If more than one character speaks a different language(s), consider adding an extratitle with that information. Carefully consider the narrative purpose of a character speaking in a different language, as that will help you decide what information to include and how to present it.

Reconstructed example from *Kautokeino Rebellion* (Gaup 2008)
In this case, it is important to signal that the characters inside the room are speaking a different language from the one at the door, because in the next shot the character at the door shows he didn't understand what they said. This is an important way to show how distant the two communities in the film are from each other.



Continuity

Use ellipses if the dialogue trails off or is suddenly interrupted
Do not use ellipses to indicate that a sentence continues over the next subtitle.
Use ellipses at the start of the subtitle to indicate that the speaker started mid-sentence.

Lyrics

If the lyrics of a song are plot-pertinent, use italics to indicate that the subtitle relates to that and not a character. Consider using a different colour and positioning the text indented to the left at the bottom left corner (or indented to the right if translating in script to be read right to left), or elsewhere where it doesn't overlap important visual information and integrates better into the visual composition.