



# Original Content QA Lab: Subtitling Guidelines

## EL-GR

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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 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 "Λοιπόν," or "Ξέρεις," for example).
- Conversely, subtitles should not add or rewrite dialogue for clarity.
- Do not title stand-alone utterances/exclamations such as αχ, ουάου, πω. 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:

-Νομίζω οτι πρέπει να ψηφίσουμε.  
-Πάλι; Μόλις ψηφίσαμε.

## 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: Θα σου έλεγα να έρθεις μαζί μας,

SUB 2: αλλά δε νομίζω ότι  
η Μαμά και ο Μπαμπάς θα εγκρίνουν.

### **INCORRECT:**

SUB 1: Θα σου έλεγα να έρθεις μαζί μας...

SUB 2: ...αλλά δε νομίζω ότι  
η Μαμά και ο Μπαμπάς θα εγκρίνουν.

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: Περίμενε, το έφαγες...  
SUB 2: ...κυριολεκτικά ολόκληρο;

Use the em-dash (—) to indicate an abrupt interruption between speakers in dialogue.

### **EXAMPLE:**

-Νομίζω ότι ξέχασες να κλείσεις—  
-Το έκλεισα!

## On-screen Text

Provide subtitles for all plot-pertinent on-screen text. This includes narrative text (text that is part of principal photography) and burn-in text (text that has been added in post-production).

Subtitles for on-screen text should always be in upper case.

For geographic locations (city/country names etc.), if the translation exists it should be used. If not, they should be transliterated.

### EXAMPLE 1:

ΛΟΝΔΙΝΟ, ΗΝΩΜΕΝΟ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟ

### EXAMPLE 2:

ΛΟΣ ΑΝΤΖΕΛΕΣ, ΚΑΛΙΦΟΡΝΙΑ

### EXAMPLE 3:

ΓΚΟΥΪΝΕΘ ΠΑΛΤΡΟΥ - ΗΘΟΠΟΙΟΣ/ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΑΣ

If the dialogue is interrupted by an on-screen text subtitle, use ellipses to indicate the interruption.

### EXAMPLE 4:

SUB 1: Ο Κάιγκο από μικρός...

SUB 2: ΜΠΕΡΓΚΕΝ, ΣΟΥΗΔΙΑ

SUB 3: ...έπαιζε πιάνο.

**Note:** onscreen text and dialogue should be on different subtitles.

## 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 <http://lexilogia.gr>, <http://neurolingo.gr> and <https://translatum.gr> as the primary sources for spelling.

### 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.
- Translate brand names into a more generic term if the brand is unknown in Greek and the viewer would miss out on the meaning in context (e.g. "Αζαξ" for "Windex").

### Slang:

Slang spellings should be confirmed with reputable sources whenever possible. Use <https://www.slang.gr/> as reference if needed.

### Misspellings:

Deliberate misspellings and mispronunciations should not be reproduced in the translation unless plot pertinent.

## Non-translatable terms

Words that are widely used in English without being translated to Greek, such as "email", "blog" etc., can stay in English if no better translation is available. In addition, some of these words can also be transliterated, depending on the context and how natural it seems when written.

## 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:

Είμαι και γ\*\*\*!

## 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:

Λέω *arrivederci* στα γλυκά για ένα διάστημα.

## 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 (e.g.: "*E. κόλι*", "*Τρικεράτωψ*")



## Numerals

Numbers one to ten should be spelled out. Numbers 11 and up should be represented numerically.

Exceptions:

- Addresses should always be written numerically: e.g. "Καλλιπόλεως 9"
- Phone numbers should always be written numerically.
- Numbers that begin a sentence should generally be spelled out.

Numbers 1.000 and up should be written with a period.

For ordinal numbers, suffixes must be used, with no gap between the number and the suffix: 1ος – 1η – 1ο.

To express decades, use the phrase "δεκαετία του", followed by the apostrophe and the number

**EXAMPLE:**

Γεννήθηκα τη δεκαετία του '80.

Date must be expressed in the Greek format (DD/MM/YY, DD/MM/YYYY). Spell out the month if the month is spoken in dialogue.

**EXAMPLE:**

3 ΜΑΪΟΥ 2016

For clock time, use the format [hh:mm], e.g. "10:30"

If the context allows you (e.g. it does not refer to a flight departure or a military schedule), the 12-hour system should be used (e.g. "10:30 π.μ." or "10:30 μ.μ.")

Measurements such as weight, temperature and distance should be converted to the metric system (m, km, kg, °C etc.).

## Currency

If a unit of currency is spoken in dialogue it should be spelled out or represented with the appropriate symbol.

### EXAMPLE 1:

Θα πουλούσα την εφαρμογή για 99 σεντς ή 1,29\$.

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

### EXAMPLE 2:

Θα σου κοστίσει 129 ή 199  
ανάλογα με το μοντέλο.

**Note:** Currency should never be converted.

## Punctuation & Accents

Follow standard official rules.

Some notes:

- Quotation marks should be used for dialogue and written text that is quoted, recited from memory, or read.
- Question marks (note that in Greek, the question mark symbol is ";") 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.
- 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.)
- Use single quotes for a quote within a quote.
- Colons can be used when appropriate. Upper stops (the Greek semicolon - “•”) should not be used.
- Accents should be used as usual. Capital letters require an accent only if they are the first letter of a word (e.g. "Έρωτας", but not "Αγάπη").

## Songs

Song lyrics should generally not be titled unless they are actuated on-screen and plot-pertinent. 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.

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:**

*Νόμιζες οτι έπεσα  
Αλλά έκανες λάθος*

### **INCORRECT:**

*Νόμιζες οτι έπεσα,  
αλλά έκανες λάθος*

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

## Abbreviations & Acronyms

### Dates & Time:

a.m. - π.μ. / το πρωί

p.m. - μ.μ. / το απόγευμα / το βράδυ

BC - π.Χ.

AD - μ.Χ.

### Titles:

Mr / Mr. - κύριος / κος / κ.

Mrs / Mrs. - κυρία / κα

Miss - δεσποινίς / δις

Dr / Dr. - δρ / Δρ

### Miscellaneous:

etc. - κλπ. / κ.λ.π.

i.e. - δηλαδή / δηλ.

e.g. - π.χ.

The symbol "&" can be used only if it is part of a foreign brand name (e.g. "P&G", "Johnson & Johnson"). If not, translate it as "και".

If there are no space or time limitations, the full word should be used instead of the abbreviated form.

When an abbreviated word – ending in a dot – happens to be the very last word of the subtitle, only one dot should be used. Commas, question marks and exclamation marks can succeed the full stop.

Acronyms should be written without periods between letters (e.g. "ΗΠΑ", "BBC", "CIA")

Names of organizations and companies, such as "FBI", "CIA", "MTV", "ESPN" etc should not be translated.

Slang acronyms such as "LOL", "BRB" etc. should be translated, e.g. "LOL" - "Αστείο!" or "Χαχα!".

## Character Names

Proper names and nicknames should be transliterated. Only translate them if they convey a specific meaning relevant to viewers.

Use phonological rather than the graphological transliteration:

e.g. "Elliott" - "Έλιοτ" and not "Έλλιοτ", "Cathy" - "Κάθι" and not "Κάθυ"

Apply localized spelling conventions for IP-protected names and terms (e.g. "Μίκυ Μάους" for "Mickey Mouse").

Translate historical/mythical character names (e.g. "Medusa" - "Μέδουσα", "Jesus" - "Ιησούς" etc.)

## Translation Credits

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