



Original Content QA Lab: Subtitling Guidelines

PL-PL

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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. If a line break is necessary, each line must be broken so that they are of similar character lengths and it makes sense grammatically.

CORRECT:

Nie pobierasz prowizji
od pierwszej transakcji?

INCORRECT:

Każdy chce,
żeby jego praca miała wyższy cel,

INCORRECT:

którzy ślęczą
na 3rd Street Promenade czy w metrze.

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 "So," or "You know...", for example).

- Conversely, subtitles should not add or rewrite dialogue for clarity.
- Do not title stand-alone utterances/exclamations such as "Ah", "Oh", or "Wow". These can be titled when part of a larger sentence
- Keep the subtitles as concise and unambiguous as possible by using proper syntax and avoiding straight translations.

SUGGESTED:

Czy pomożecie nam ratować ludzkie życie?

INCORRECT:

Kto nam pomoże ewentualnie ratować życie?

Dual Speakers

Use a hyphen to indicate two speakers in the same subtitle. There should be a space between the hyphen and the dialogue.

EXAMPLE:

- Dzięki.
- To my dziękujemy!

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: Ich cel to wzmocnienie firmy,

SUB 2: zanim zwrócą się do inwestorów.

INCORRECT:

SUB 1: Trudno to przeczytać,
ale wygląda na to, że...

SUB 2: ...w pierwszym miesiącu jest 75 artystów.

Use an ellipsis to indicate:

- Dialogue that trails off
- Dialogue that begins mid-sentence
- A significant pause (one second or more)

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: - Chyba cię uratowałem przed...

SUB 2: - Dziękuję, Gary.

On-screen Text

Subtitle streams should include 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 should generally match the case of the on-screen text.
Use ellipsis in cases where the dialogue gets interrupted by a burn-in.

EXAMPLE:

SUB 1: A cały rynek to dwa i pół miliona osób, jeśli liczyć ESL...

Burn-in: ESL: ANGIELSKI JAKO DRUGI JĘZYK

SUB 2: ...i nie obejmuje nauczycieli.

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

Main and Episode Titles

The main title should not be subtitled unless an Apple approved translation exists.

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

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 Słownik języka polskiego PWN as the primary source for grammar and spelling. <https://sjp.pwn.pl>

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.

Acronyms, names of movies, books, etc. should be translated when they have official Polish equivalents.

Example:

EN-EN: IRS

PL-PL: Urząd Skarbowy

Character and brand names:

For character names that have a well-established equivalent in Polish language, use the localized name.

Example:

EN-EN: Athena

PL-PL: Atena

Consider using local equivalents or generic terms if it is unlikely that the audience is familiar with the brand.

Example:

EN-EN: She was trying to scrub everything off with Clorox.

PL-PL: Próbowła wszystko domyć domestosem.

EN-EN: Let's go to Farmer's Market.

PL-PL: Chodź ze mną na bazarek.

Nicknames can be translated if they are plot-pertinent.

Slang:

Slang spellings should be confirmed with reputable sources whenever possible.

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:

To jest k***** dobre!

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 Polish sentence, then it can be titled.

EXAMPLE:

Od jutra słodyczom mówię *arrivederci*.

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*)

Numerals

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

Numbers between 1000 and 9999 do not require a comma. Numbers 10,000 and up should be written with a comma.

EXAMPLES:

15 tys.

10 mln

20 km

Exceptions:

- Addresses should always be written numerically: 5 Primrose Lane
- Numbers that begin a sentence should generally be spelled out.

Currency & Units of Measure

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

10 EUR
15 PLN
25 USD

EXAMPLE 1:

Mogę sprzedawać aplikację po 99 centów, albo 1.29 USD

Units of measure should be converted to the metric system and rounded to max one decimal. Fahrenheit should be converted to Celsius.

EXAMPLES:

10 miles - 16 km
30 inches - 76 cm
100 ounces - 2,8 kg
50 fluid ounces - 1,5 liter / 1,5 l
70°F - 21°C / 21 stopni

Hours should be written in a 24 hour format. Either periods or colons can be used to separate hours and minutes, as long as it kept consistent.

10:00 am - 10.00 / godz. 10:00
7:15 pm - 19.15 / godz. 19:15

Dates are written in format (D)D.MM.YY (with periods, not slash).

EXAMPLES:

12.07.14
1.03.2019
14 marca 1986 r.

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.
- 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 **outside** 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 «» quotes for a quote within a quote.
- Colons can be used when appropriate. Semicolons should not be used.

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:

*By się pozbyć złych humorów
Robię zupę z muchomorów*

INCORRECT:

*Wsiąść do pociągu,
byle jakiego.*

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.