



# Subtitling Style Guide

## Chinese, Simplified (ZH-SIM)



Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Please ensure that you always consult the latest Style Guide, by visiting the certification website on <https://avtpro.oona.net>

### Technical dimension

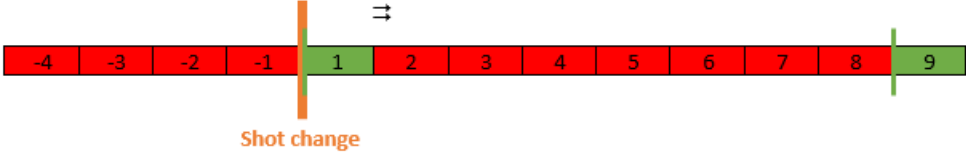
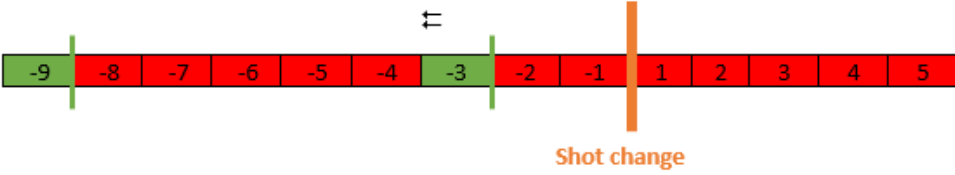
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## Technical dimension

<b>T1.</b>	<p><b>Video framerate</b></p> <p>T1.1 All videos run at 25 frames per second (fps).</p>
<b>T2.</b>	<p><b>Line limitations</b></p> <p>T2.1 16 characters per line (cpl). T2.2 Maximum of 2 lines.</p>
<b>T3.</b>	<p><b>Text formatting</b></p> <p>T3.1 Font type: SimHei. T3.2 Font size: point 35. T3.3 Font colour: white</p>
<b>T4.</b>	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>T4.1 Do not use subtitle background.</p>
<b>T5.</b>	<p><b>Positioning</b></p> <p>T5.1 Horizontal: center-aligned. T5.2 Vertical: bottom of the screen. T5.3 Subtitles should be moved to the top of the screen to avoid overlap with onscreen text or other important information contained in the images. T1.1 In long opening credit sequences, avoid switching forth and back between bottom- and top-positioned subtitles and stick to the same position throughout the sequence as much as possible. In these cases, it is recommended to keep all subtitles aligned at the top.</p>
<b>T6.</b>	<p><b>Maximum display rate</b></p> <p>T6.1 9 characters per second (cps). T6.2 The absolute maximum you are allowed to go is 11.0 cps, but only in a limited number of cases (see T6.3). T6.3 If need be, up to a maximum of 10% of the subtitles in any given file can be over the reading-speed limit, that is, between 9.1 and 11.0, but remember that no display rate should be above 11.1 cps.</p>
<b>T7.</b>	<p><b>Minimum subtitle duration</b></p> <p>T7.1 The minimum duration of a subtitle on screen is 1 second. T7.2 In exceptional cases only, e.g., for only one word, the minimum duration can be 20 frames.</p>
<b>T8.</b>	<p><b>Maximum subtitle duration</b></p> <p>T8.1 The maximum duration of a subtitle on screen is 6 seconds. T8.2 In exceptional cases only, e.g., for song lyrics, the maximum duration can be exceeded up to 7 seconds.</p>
<b>T9.</b>	<p><b>Minimum gap between subtitles</b></p> <p>T9.1 Leave a minimum gap of 2 frames between subtitles.</p>
<b>T10.</b>	<p><b>Timing (see T12 Chaining subtitles)</b></p> <p>T10.1 Subtitles should be timed to audio (within 3 frames). T10.2 If extra time is needed for the reading speed, the out-time can be extended by a maximum of 12 frames after the end of audio.</p>

<p><b>T11. Spotting around shot changes</b></p>	<p>T11.1 Where dialogue starts on the shot change, or within 8 frames past the shot change, set the in-time to coincide with the shot change:</p>  <p>T11.2 If the out-time is within 8 frames before the shot change, extend the out-time so that the subtitle leaves the screen two frames before the actual shot change:</p> 
<p><b>T12. Chaining subtitles</b></p>	<p>T12.1 In the case of consecutive subtitles, any gaps of 3 to 11 frames inclusive must be closed to 2 frames (chained subtitles). That is, the gap can be either 2 or a minimum of 12 frames.</p>

## Linguistic dimension

<p><b>L1. Line treatment</b></p>	<p>L1.1 Text should normally be kept to one line unless it exceeds the character limitation.</p> <p>L1.2 Line breaks, within and across subtitles, should be syntactically segmented, keeping linguistic units together.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="424 1323 1374 1435"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="424 1323 900 1361">Incorrect</th> <th data-bbox="900 1323 1374 1361">Correct</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="424 1361 900 1435">中央编译局首次 发布的30条术语</td> <td data-bbox="900 1361 1374 1435">中央编译局 首次发布的30条术语</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>L1.3 In some cases, to enhance readability, it may be justified to use two lines even if the text is shorter than 16 characters. For instance, to break up syntactical units when a subtitle consists of two or more phrases, to highlight rhyming patterns (e.g., poetry and songs):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">人间四月芳菲尽 山寺桃花始盛开</p> <p>Or to mimic the line break of onscreen text for better viewer experience:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(拉斯维加斯 直走)</p> <p>L1.4 Avoid having long sentences run over more than 3 or 4 subtitles. If possible, try to merge subtitles together, or break the sentence into several, shorter units:</p>	Incorrect	Correct	中央编译局首次 发布的30条术语	中央编译局 首次发布的30条术语
Incorrect	Correct				
中央编译局首次 发布的30条术语	中央编译局 首次发布的30条术语				

		<p>I was born in a quaint suburban community nestled between rolling hills and filled with the scent of freshly cut grass and the sound of birds singing.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Incorrect</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Correct</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>我出生在连绵群山之间</td> <td>我出生在一个古朴的郊区社区</td> </tr> <tr> <td>充满新鲜草地的气息</td> <td>那里群山环绕</td> </tr> <tr> <td>和鸟儿的鸣唱的</td> <td>充满了新鲜草地的气息</td> </tr> <tr> <td>一个古朴的郊区社区</td> <td>和鸟儿的鸣唱</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>Correct</b>	我出生在连绵群山之间	我出生在一个古朴的郊区社区	充满新鲜草地的气息	那里群山环绕	和鸟儿的鸣唱的	充满了新鲜草地的气息	一个古朴的郊区社区	和鸟儿的鸣唱
<b>Incorrect</b>	<b>Correct</b>											
我出生在连绵群山之间	我出生在一个古朴的郊区社区											
充满新鲜草地的气息	那里群山环绕											
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一个古朴的郊区社区	和鸟儿的鸣唱											
<b>L2.</b>	<b>Names</b>											
	L2.1	<p>Use a full-width interpoint (·) to divide transliterated given names and family names, except in the case of Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese names or names of well-known people/characters with a well-established Chinese translation:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Charles Dickens</td> <td>查尔斯·狄更斯</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Momoe Yamaguchi</td> <td>山口百惠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Song Joong-ki</td> <td>宋仲基</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ho Chi Minh</td> <td>胡志明</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John King Fairbank</td> <td>费正清</td> </tr> </table>	Charles Dickens	查尔斯·狄更斯	Momoe Yamaguchi	山口百惠	Song Joong-ki	宋仲基	Ho Chi Minh	胡志明	John King Fairbank	费正清
Charles Dickens	查尔斯·狄更斯											
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John King Fairbank	费正清											
<b>L3.</b>	<b>Symbols</b>											
	L3.1	<p>Avoid using symbols:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1314公里 not 1314 km</p>										
<b>L4.</b>	<b>Dual speakers</b>											
	L4.1	<p>Use a hyphen without a space to indicate two speakers in one subtitle, with a maximum of one speaker per line:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-最近好吗? -挺好的</p>										
	L4.2	<p>Always use the shorter hyphen (-), as opposed to the en- and em-dashes (*- and *-).</p>										
<b>L5.</b>	<b>Italics</b>											
	L5.1	<p>No italics should be used for simplified Chinese.</p>										
<b>L6.</b>	<b>Numbers</b>											
	L6.1	<p>From 0 to 10, numbers should be written in Chinese, unless there are space or time limitations, in which figures can be used:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">—    =    ≡</p>										
	L6.2	<p>From 11 and above, numbers should be written numerically:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">13    239    3762</p>										
	L6.3	<p>Combine numbers with Chinese characters to take up less space:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11亿 500万</p>										

	<p>L6.4 For days of the week, use Chinese characters:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">星期六</p> <p>L6.5 Do not start a subtitle with an Arabic number. If necessary, flesh out the number:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">有15人参与</p> <p>L6.6 Use Arabic numerals for apartment numbers, street numbers, phone numbers, measurements, chapter numbers, page numbers, addresses, time, flight numbers, and dates:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">他住在世纪大道200号</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我搭乘的是东航334航班</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我的电话号码是6525-8858</p>
<b>L7.</b>	<p><b>Time</b></p> <p>L7.1 Use a colon with times:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">19:35      02:45</p> <p>L7.2 Use the 24-hour format to indicate the time rather than "am" and "pm".</p> <p>L7.3 For rounded times, use Chinese characters:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">五点</p>
<b>L8.</b>	<p><b>Dates</b></p> <p>L8.1 Dates must be expressed with numerals, in the following format:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1996年7月21日</p>
<b>L9.</b>	<p><b>Currency and measurements</b></p> <p>L9.1 Do not convert currency unless required by the context.</p> <p>L9.2 Convert measurements to the metric system, unless leaving the original units is required by the context/images, or there are instructions to keep the original units:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">千米      摄氏度      千克</p>
<b>L10.</b>	<p><b>Punctuation</b></p> <p>L10.1 All punctuation signs used in simplified Chinese subtitles should be double-byte, except where single-byte colons are used to indicate time.</p> <p>L10.2 Do not use commas or periods. Use one single space instead, but only where necessary.</p> <p>L10.3 Use enumeration commas for lists:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">一、二、三 开始</p>

	<p>L10.4 Use question marks to indicate questions and exclamation marks to stress the tone. Do not combine question and exclamation marks or double question/exclamation marks (? !, ! ?, ?? or ! !).</p> <p>L10.5 Use double-byte ellipsis dots by pressing Shift+6 and then delete one set of three dots:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">这个嘛...我不知道</p>
<p><b>L11.</b></p>	<p><b>Quotation marks</b></p> <p>L11.1 Use full width quotation marks: “ ”</p> <p>L11.2 Direct speech is introduced by a full width colon, followed by double quotation marks:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我说：“你别走啊”</p> <p>L11.3 Use double quotation marks without spaces for regular citations, making sure that the punctuation comes after the quotation when only a part of a sentence is in quotes:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">他刚才说“不行”！</p> <p>L11.4 If a quote carries over more than one subtitle, quotation marks should be used only at the start and at the end of the quote:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“原谅我的懦弱 我的不辞而别 祝你幸福”</p> <p>L11.5 Book chapters, articles and song titles should be wrapped in title marks:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">《飘》</p> <p>L11.6 Use double quotation marks without spaces for agrammatical phrases, neologisms, made-up expressions, and speech impediments or disorderly speech, if relevant for the plot, and when someone is imitating another person or placing special emphasis on a particular word or phrase.</p> <p>L11.7 Use double quotation marks without spaces when a character reads out or quotes someone else.</p> <p>L11.8 Use double quotation marks without spaces when employing metalinguistic references:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">她刚刚给我说“嘘”</p> <p>L11.9 When using quotation marks within other quotation marks, use single quotation marks ( ‘ ’ ) within double quotation marks ( “ ” ):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">他告诉你：“老师说让你‘放学别走’”</p>

<p><b>L12.</b></p>	<p><b>Continuity</b></p> <p>L12.1 Do not use ellipsis (… ) when an ongoing sentence is split between two or more consecutive subtitles:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我不知道 你有几个手机</p>
<p><b>L13.</b></p>	<p><b>Continuity (interruptions)</b></p> <p>L13.1 Use an ellipsis (… ) to indicate abrupt interruptions:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">可是我…</p> <p>L13.2 Use ellipsis to indicate a pause in the delivery of the original, an intentional or accidental suspension of a part of the sentence, or an abrupt interruption:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我其实想说…你忘了关灯</p> <p>L13.3 Use ellipsis, without a space, to indicate that a subtitle is starting mid-sentence, e.g., when a character turns on the radio:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">…我也不知道</p> <p>L13.4 The ellipsis can be used when an utterance is interrupted by another character or by a forced narrative:</p> <p>Example 1:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我们还是… 还是什么？ …还是走吧</p> <p>Example 2:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">我的客户在加州有一栋别墅… -在哪里？ -…想要出售</p>
<p><b>L14.</b></p>	<p><b>Profanity and taboo language</b></p> <p>L14.1 The original content’s dialogue must never be censored in the translated version. Expletives should be rendered as faithfully as possible, without using dialects or words that would otherwise introduce a level of obscenity not implied in the original dialogue.</p>
<p><b>L15.</b></p>	<p><b>Titles</b></p> <p>L15.1 Titles of published works, existing movies and TV shows: if available, use official or well-known translations. If none are available, provide your own translation.</p>
<p><b>L16.</b></p>	<p><b>Songs</b></p> <p>L16.1 Song lyrics are only subtitled if they are relevant for the plot or part of the film (e.g., a character performs a song).</p>



	<p>L16.2 If coinciding with dialogue, whatever is more plot-pertinent should be subtitled.</p> <p>L16.3 Follow regular Chinese punctuation rules. Use exclamation and question marks as and when appropriate.</p>				
<b>L17. Text on screen</b>	<p>L17.1 Text on screen should be translated when it is relevant and not redundant, and does not coincide with dialogue.</p> <p>L17.2 If there is simultaneous, plot-pertinent speech, and no time to accommodate both spoken and written text, subtitling the dialogue should be given priority.</p> <p>L17.3 Text on screen should be enclosed in full-width brackets:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(燃料不足) (2024年1月 巴西)</p>				
<b>L18. Repetitions</b>	<p>L18.1 Do not translate words or phrases that are repeated more than once by the same speaker, unless the context uses repetition for emphasis or comedic effect.</p> <p>L18.2 If the repeated word or phrase is said twice in a row, time subtitle to the audio, but translate only once.</p> <p>L18.3 Where the words or phrases are repeated emphatically, it is permissible to write the repeated word twice and place a comma or an ellipsis between them to indicate repetition:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">No, no, no, no, no! You can't do that!</td> <td style="padding: 5px; text-align: center;">不不不！不能这样！</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Go, go, go, go, go.</td> <td style="padding: 5px; text-align: center;">去...快去</td> </tr> </table>	No, no, no, no, no! You can't do that!	不不不！不能这样！	Go, go, go, go, go.	去...快去
No, no, no, no, no! You can't do that!	不不不！不能这样！				
Go, go, go, go, go.	去...快去				
<b>L19. Foreign Dialogue</b>	<p>L19.1 Foreign dialogue that is meant to be understood by the viewer of the original production should be translated or transliterated when no accurate translation is available.</p> <p>L19.2 Foreign dialogue that is not meant to be understood by the viewer of the original production should not be translated or transliterated.</p> <p>L19.3 Sometimes, it is necessary to transliterate a foreign word, in which case, double quotes should be used to offset the word:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">-How do you say "goodbye" in Spanish? -Adiós.</td> <td style="padding: 5px; text-align: center;">-西班牙语“再见”怎么说？ -“阿迪奥斯”</td> </tr> </table>	-How do you say "goodbye" in Spanish? -Adiós.	-西班牙语“再见”怎么说？ -“阿迪奥斯”		
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