



LEAD ME Winter Training School Madrid 2021

**Media Accessibility Training: Sign Language and Subtitling
for the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing
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Contents

- What **subtitles** are and should be
- Essential **conventions**
- Potential changes

Producing subtitles

- **Condensation** of the original message
- Linguistics and audiovisual translation
- **Intralinguistic and interlinguistic** transformations

Other media

- The case of **cinema** and **television**
- Subtitle layout and synchrony
- Proficient editing → better user experience

Our case studies

- Selection of a few final products
- **Critical analysis** and practical applications
- Summary of findings

How to proceed

- General description of the video game
- Observations on the clips and screenshots
- **Error detection** and suggestions for improvement

Case study one

Back to the Future: The Game (Telltale Games, 2010)

- Genre: Graphic adventure
- Source of the cutscenes: Gamer's Little Playground

Case study one: preliminaries

- (1) Subtitle position
- (2) **Pop-on** or **roll-up**?
- (3) Synchronisation

Case study one: criticism

- Poor synchrony
- Distracting roll-up presentation
- **Superimposition** of text and image

LINK

Case study two

Catherine (Atlus, 2011)

- Genre: Adventure game
- Source of the cutscenes: UPlayNetwork

Case study two: preliminaries (i)

- (1) **Paralinguistic** elements
- (2) Cultural differences → Localisation
- (3) Idiosyncratic closed captions [CC]

Case study two: preliminaries (ii)

- (1) **Actions** taking place in the centre
- (2) The question of **shot changes**
- (3) Quick exchanges and various speakers

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Case study two: criticism

- **Shot changes** as the syntax of images
- The importance of **utterance identification**
- **Line length** should be kept in check

Differences

- (1) Siren
- (2) Breaking news
- (3) **Ambient noise** and speaker identification

Case study three

Deadpool (High Moon Studios, 2013)

- Genre: Beat 'em up
- Source of the cutscenes: Red's 3rd Dimension Gaming

Case study three: analysis

- (1) SDH only halfway
- (2) Absence of mood indicators
- (3) **Accents** → from sound back to text

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Case study three: criticism

- (1) Wrong line divisions
- (2) Excessive length
- (3) **Low readability**

Case study four

Alien: Isolation (Creative Assembly, 2014)

- Genre: Survival horror
- Source of the cutscenes: Gamer's Little Playground

Case study four: preliminaries

- (1) **Line length**
- (2) Size and colour
- (3) Speed and synchrony

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Case study four: criticism

- **Unreadable** font
- Excessive amount of text
- Literal transcript

Case study five

Castlevania: Lords of Shadow 2 (Mercury Steam, 2014)

- Genre: Action adventure
- Source of the cutscenes: IZUNIY

LINK

Case study five: criticism

- (1) Wrong line divisions
- (2) Unresolved question of **accent**
- (3) **Non-SDH** → Traditional subtitle

Case study six

Halo 5 (343 Industries, 2015)

- Genre: First person shooter
- Source of the cutscenes: IZUNIY

LINK

Case study six: criticism

- Needs condensation
- **Inadequate subtitle layout**
- Missing SDH nuances

How to cope

- (1) Sound landscape → Enriched text
- (2) **Controller vibration**
- (3) Redefine the concept of SDH in video games

Guidelines

General level

Degree of **faithfulness**: subtitles vs. transcripts

Subtitle **typology**: traditional vs. SDH

Normativity: idiosyncratic vs. conventional

Relationship between sound and text

- Dialogue, music and soundtrack
- Tagging or speaker **identification**
- Text on screen or in-game instructions
- Paralinguistic elements and **onomatopoeia**
- Didascalic **mood** indicators

Purely textual level

Sequencing; maximum number of lines per subtitle;
line divisions; shot changes; **speed** measured in CPS;
orthography and typography; capitalisation; **emphasis**;
use of **italics**.

Final questions

- (1) Where do the inconsistencies lie?
- (2) Do norms restrict creative freedom and originality?

More info:

Costal, T. (2020). *Why is that creature grunting? The use of SDH subtitles in video games from an accessibility perspective. Audiovisual Translation in Applied Linguistics. Educational perspectives.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

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