Language Volunteer Guide
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How You Can Make an Impact</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style Guidelines</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captioning</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Started with Dotsub</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captioning</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction
How You Can Make an Impact

Captioning, translating and reviewing video is an extremely important part of the Global Lives Project. We depend 100% on volunteers to make this possible and thus far more than 600 language volunteers have helped with this process!

Join others in sharing your linguistic skills with our community. Your contribution offers the world access into a language, culture and reality that might otherwise remain remote and inaccessible.

This guide explains how to get started captioning Global Lives’ videos and also how to translate and review them.

Getting Started

The first step is to fill out an application form. We require your contact details and information about your language skills. From there, our translation coordinator will be in touch and will guide you through the subtitling process.

Volunteer Application Form
Find the form at www.globallives.org/translate.
Style Guidelines
Style Guidelines

We have compiled some guidelines that we hope will answer any questions and make it easier to contribute. Since many people may be collaborating on a video project simultaneously, these will help to maintain consistency.

Respect the style, tone and richness of language of the original speakers as much as possible. Be cognizant of the fact that language may reflect the individual’s socioeconomic background, level of education, and even a subculture. Be true to the speaker and caption and translate as accurately as possible, even if you consider some of the language to be personally offensive. Your job is not to act as a filter or make judgements, but to reflect the true meaning and intent of the speaker.
Captioning

Subtitle presentation rate (words per minute)
This indicates how much time a viewer will see written text on the screen. Experienced subtitling companies recommend subtitle presentation rates of 110 to 140 words per minute. That means that, in general, you should leave viewers about three seconds to read a full line of text, and five to six seconds for two lines.

Line Breaks
To insert a manual line break use the shortcut SHIFT + RETURN. Subtitle lines should end at natural linguistic breaks. Do not break a title or a person’s name.

Timing
No subtitle should be on the screen for less than three seconds, unless the speech is just a filler or an acknowledgement (for example “uh-huh”, “okay”, “er”, “um”). The subtitle should appear on the screen the entire time that a person is speaking. “Leading” and “lagging” occur when subtitles precede speech, or linger after the speech has stopped. Avoid excessive leading and lagging, and attempt to synchronize the subtitles to change at natural pauses in speech, or changes of scene.

Subtitle size
Subtitles should not take up too much of the screen space. They should be no longer than two lines. If they are, you need to change the times, making sure each subtitle is no less than three seconds.

Speakers
Use Em dashes ( — ) to signify the speaker when people speak simultaneously. To type an em dash in a Windows program, type two hyphens ( -- ) between two words, and press space after the second word. On a Mac, use option+shift with the hyphen key. No dashes are needed when there is just one speaker.

You only need a dash when the speaker changes. If there are multiple sentences said by the same speaker you don’t need a dash in between sentences. When a new speaker begins, use a dash space then start the new sentence ( — new speaker sentence here.)

Example:
— What did you do last night? — I was working really late. I had so many customers last night. — Yeah, it was crowded downtown last night.
Captioning (continued)

Sounds
We do not do closed captioning, unless there is a sound coming from off camera that influences the behavior of the subject that the average listener can’t make out.

Only caption sounds that are culturally important, e.g., [call to prayer] would be captioned, but the sound of a hair dryer would not.

Music/singing
Insert a Dotsub music note before and after text.

Spelling
It is critical to spell names and places correctly and to be consistent with these. Since there may be more than one acceptable way to transliterate names, be sure to check with the coordinator before starting.

Capitalization
Be sure to begin every sentence with a capital letter. Follow the capitalization rules of the language being transcribed with regard to the naming of people, places and things.

Punctuation
Make sure every sentence ends with a period, a question mark or an exclamation point. Use only one exclamation point (!)—not !!!, for example.

Style
It is best to preserve the style, language variants, tone, and dialect of the original speakers. However, you may have to make some judgement calls on this because the subtitles need to be comprehensible to viewers. We recommend making contact with your coordinator to discuss how best to handle the speech variations consistently and uniformly.

Example:
Zhanna, the 5-year old on-screen participant of the Kazakhstan shoot, does not speak Russian and Kazakh with perfect grammar. Jamila, the on-screen participant of the Lebanon shoot, is a refugee and speaks with an accent. In both cases, while it would look strange if the subtitles were in perfect grammar, they needed to be understandable by viewers.

Sometimes the conversations are not audible or intelligible, especially if people are speaking in a low voice, there is background noise, or many speakers are talking at once. In these cases, you should try your best to make out the audio. If it is a major part, make a note of the timecode and let your coordinator know.
Translation

If you did not caption the video you are working on, we recommend you talk to the coordinator first. Additionally, it will be helpful for you to read the Captioning section of the Style Guide.

Translating takes great skill. It is not sufficient to be bilingual. Much care and effort must be taken not to turn the sentences into a word-for-word rendering of the original. It is equally as tricky not to go to the other extreme and take liberties in interpreting what the speaker means to say. Do your best to preserve the original intent and meaning of the speaker.

These guidelines are for translations into English.

Spelling
Use American spelling, not British/Australian. For example, “organize” is preferred over “organise”; “behavior” over “behaviour”.

For words that have a variety of acceptable spellings (i.e., “OK”, “ok”, “okay”), discuss with the coordinator or other contributors, which spelling you will use consistently across the project. In the case of this example, the word “okay,” the lowercase, “ok” will be used in all translations.

It is critical to spell names and places correctly and to be consistent with these. Since there may be more than one acceptable way to transliterate names, be sure to check with the coordinator before starting.

Style
It is best to preserve the style, language variants, tone, and dialect of the original speakers. However, you may have to make some judgement calls on whether to correct the grammar of the speaker because the subtitles need to be comprehensible to the viewers.

Accuracy
After you have completed the translations, watch the translation on the player at least once to check that the context of the translation is correct.
Review

It is important that a native English speaker review and proofread the translations for accuracy. Every single clip needs to be reviewed. Check spelling, capitalization and punctuation, and also that the subtitles are in sync with the visuals.

Completion

Be sure to check that the translations have been completed 100%. If not, contact your coordinator.

Punctuation

Make sure every sentence ends with a period, a question mark or an exclamation point. Use only one exclamation point (!)—not !!!, for example.

Use Em dashes (—) to signify the speaker when people speak simultaneously. To type an em dash in a Windows program, type two hyphens (--) between two words, and press space after the second word. On a Mac, use option+shift with the hyphen key. No dashes are needed when there is just one speaker.

You only need a dash when the speaker changes. If there are multiple sentences said by the same speaker you don’t need a dash in between sentences. When a new speaker begins, use a dash space then start the new sentence.

Example:
— What did you do last night? —I was working really late. I had so many customers last night. —Yeah, it was crowded downtown last night.

Capitalization

Be sure to begin every sentence with a capital letter. Follow the capitalization rules of the language being transcribed with regard to the naming of people, places and things.

Style

Make sure the English reads well and reflects the background of the speaker. If it does not, consult with your coordinator.

Accuracy

Make sure the translation corresponds accurately to the original intent of the speaker. This is best done with the transcription and translation side by side. In a rush situation, translators may be tempted to use online machine translation tools, which might make the translations sound unnatural.
Getting Started with Dotsub
Getting Started with Dotsub

Dotsub is the website application we use to subtitle our videos. These instructions will guide you through the process of transcribing and translating using this tool.

Registration
Visit [www.Dotsub.com](http://www.Dotsub.com) to create a free account.

Sign In

Tutorials
Visit [www.Dotsub.com/tutorials](http://www.Dotsub.com/tutorials) for tips on using the website. Be sure check out their tutorial videos linked at the bottom of each section.
Captioning

1. After being assigned a video to caption by your Global Lives Coordinator, you will receive an email from Dotsub containing the link to your assigned video.

2. Click on the “Caption Video” link. This should take you to your assigned video ready to be captioned.

3. Press play and start listening to the clip. Caption what the on-screen participant says in approximately 3 second segments. For example: 00:00- 00:03, 00:03- 00:06... and so on.

4. After you finish every line of captioning, press enter and your work will be saved.

5. When you finish captioning the whole segment, please watch the segment from beginning to end at least one time to double check that the audio and captions match. If there are any mistakes, please press the pencil icon to correct them.

6. After all corrections have been checked again, please email your Global Lives Coordinator. Once he/she approves your captions, you will be able to move onto the (much quicker) translations.

---

Fig. 3: An email like the one above will be sent to you by Dotsub

Fig. 4: The video page you will be directed to from your email
Captioning — Tips and Tricks

- Be sure to read the Captioning Style Guidelines before starting a project.

- When you want to finish captioning for the day and to log off Dotsub, just press Menu and Sign Out on the top right hand side of your screen. Don’t worry, your work will be saved automatically.

- Please DO NOT press “Mark captions as complete”. If you press this, you will not be able to continue transcribing or editing. The clip will be locked and it will take some effort for us to re-open it.

Fig. 5: Close up of the Caption text box

Fig. 6: You can also access your captioning projects by selecting My Videos in the Menu
Translation

1. After being assigned a video to translate by your Global Lives Coordinator, you will receive an email from Dotsub containing the link to your assigned video.

2. Click on the “Translate Video” link. This should take you to your assigned video ready to be translated.

3. The dialogue is organized by time-coded segments. Each segment has 2 lines associated with it: one line for the original transcription/source language for the dialogue, and one for you to enter your translation under the transcribed segment.

   You can change the default source language if needed in the Source Language menu above the video.

4. Each time you write your translation in a segment line, simply press the Enter key and it will be saved automatically.

5. Once you have completed and checked your translation, please notify your Global Lives Coordinator by email.

Fig. 7: An email similar to the one above will be sent to you by Dotsub

Fig. 8: The Dotsub Source Language Menu, located above the video player
Translation — Tips and Tricks

- Be sure to read the Translation Style Guidelines before starting a project.
- Do not press Escape or it will make you lose the translation for that segment.
- You do not have to translate the entire dialogue for 1 video at once. You can leave the page at any time and all 'entered' translation will be saved and waiting for you when you come back. There’s no need to save your work as it will save automatically.
- You can see your translations in context in the video by pressing the Play button in the video player, or if you want to see it on a bigger screen, press Back to Video and select your language in the video player in the next page.
- Try to keep the length of the translation as close as possible to the length of the source language.

Fig. 9: Close up of the Translation text box

Fig. 10: You can also access your translation projects by selecting My Videos in the Menu.
Frequently Asked Questions
Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be a translator or captioner?
Our goal is to provide the highest quality subtitles possible for our potential audience. We are looking for people with native or near-native listening and writing skills to caption, word-for-word, the dialogues in the native language of the videos. Since we translate all videos to English, we seek persons with excellent local bilingual skills.

What should I do if I do not understand the audio?
Sometimes the conversations are not audible or intelligible, especially if people are speaking in a low voice, there is background noise, or many speakers are talking at once. In these cases, you should try your best to caption the audio. If it is a major part, make a note of the timecode and let your coordinator know.

Do I translate the subtitles directly from the audio?
No, not exactly. First, you will need to caption the audio, which means creating the subtitles in the original language of the video. This means listening to the audio and making a written copy of all the exact words. After this is completed, you will then translate the written conversations from the original language into English or, in some cases, another language.

How much time does it take to caption or translate the audio?
Each person will work at their own pace, and much depends on the segment you work on since some feature more conversation than others. One 15 minute audio segment might take several hours to caption, because you will likely need to replay the segments many times in order to capture the complete conversations. It might take another couple of hours to translate the captions, because you will want to review the words with the images.

How long do I have to translate the video?
Our deadlines are somewhat flexible because we understand that our volunteers have work, study or family commitments. Please work with your translation coordinator to work out deadlines. Your translation coordinator will check back with you regularly.

Do I get paid for my submissions?
All Global Lives work is done on a voluntary, unpaid basis. All volunteers who contribute their time and talent will be given credit on our website. We are also happy to serve as references or provide written letters for translators who contribute significantly to Global Lives.