



Translating Video Projects



First, let's get our terminology straight—it's confusing for many people!

Dubbing: Substitution of existing dialog or narration by a new recording in another language. If the audio track for dialog isn't available separately from the music or sound effects, we can either retain the original soundtrack at a lower volume, or reconstruct the music back-ground (which requires additional time).

Voice-Over ("VO"): Narration by an unseen speaker. This is simpler to replace than on-camera dialog, especially if the project is in its original, editable form (narration on a separate track).

Subtitles: Onscreen text in an alternate language, as a visible part of the video image itself that cannot be turned off (except on DVDs).

Captions: Also known as "closed captioning"—and confusingly, as "subtitles" in some European countries. Specialized equipment is used to embed caption text in the unseen lines of a video signal, that is only visible on televisions supporting this feature (enabled in their setup menu). Many new televisions display caption text while audio is muted, for example. Tip: for North American video (NTSC standard; see next column), captions can be provided in two languages. A single VHS tape (in NTSC format) can therefore include the original English audio, plus captions in two other languages.

BetaCam, D2, D1, 3/4 or U-matic, 1-inch: Professional formats for video master tapes, as opposed to consumer VHS videotapes. For best results, a copy of the original video master should be obtained in one of these formats.

NTSC, PAL, and SECAM: The three main video standards in use around the world. They're mutually incompatible! Video tapes recorded in one standard cannot be played back on televisions, VCRs or cameras designed for another, and must be converted and copied in order to be viewable. NTSC is used in North America, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and parts of South America; PAL is used in Western Europe (except France), some South American countries, eastern/southern Africa, the Middle East, Australia and Asia; SECAM is used in France, many French ex-colonies in Africa, and most ex-Soviet bloc countries in Eastern Europe. Not only are video tape formats incompatible, but so are DVDs!

Computer Video Files: Videotape compatibility issues can be avoided with video on CD-ROM or the web. The most common video file formats are MPEG, QuickTime and AVI.

ASIST provides language services for video and multimedia projects in any language, including voice talent and session coordination. Be sure to consult with us during planning phases of the project. We will be glad to assist you on a technical level, to determine the most effective approach for your video communications.

Famous Quotes

"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."

– Carl W. Buechner

"After all, when you come right down to it, how many people speak the same language even when they speak the same language?"

– Russell Hoban

"The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns—as it were—instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink."

– George Orwell

"I am about to, or I am going to, die. Either expression is used."

– Dominique Bouhours, *grammarian (his last words)*



We always look forward to hearing from you. This is the eighth issue of our current newsletter. To e-mail comments or suggestions for future issues, click: marketing@ASISTtranslations.com



