



# Breaking into Subtitling

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# Breaking into Subtitling



Overview of subtitling today

How to train yourself

Formatting rules

Practical tips

Where to find work

# Breaking into Subtitling



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# Overview of subtitling today

Moviola,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , beta, VHS, DVD, FTP

Cloud streaming platforms

New players

# Breaking into Subtitling



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# Breaking into Subtitling



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# How to train yourself

Ted Talks  
Open  
Translation  
Project

- OTPedia
- Amara
- OTP tutorials

# OTPedia

<https://translations.ted.com/Portal:Main>

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the OTPedia portal. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://translations.ted.com/Portal:Main>. The page features a red circular logo with the text "TED Translators" on the left. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links such as "Main page", "Main guide to resources", "Amara", "Translator Toolbox", "Find a Language Coordinator", "Find your Language group", "How to transcribe", "How to edit OTPedia", and "Recent changes". The main content area is titled "Portal:Main" and contains a "TED Translator Community" section with a welcome message and a list of resources. Below this are four columns: "Translation", "Transcription", "Language Coordinators", and "Amara", each with a list of links and an "edit" button.

← → ↻ 🏠 🔒 <https://translations.ted.com/Portal:Main> 🔍 Search

Log in Request account

Page Discussion Read View source View history Search TED Translators Wiki 🔍

## Portal:Main

### TED Translator Community edit

**Welcome to OTPedia, the TED Translators wiki!**

The goal of OTPedia is to help the volunteer translator and transcriber community share information, tips, tricks and lessons. This wiki is a community-created resource.

List of Language Coordinators • TED Translators on social media • TED Translators Stories • **TED Translator Resources: Main guide** • English Style Guide • Organize a TED Translators Workshop with the Workshop Kit🔗 • Organize a TEDx transcribeathon • Themed TEDx talk lists🔗 • Translator Cheat-sheet • How to give good feedback

### Translation edit

How to Tackle a Translation • How to Tackle a Review • How to Compress Subtitles • How to break lines • The translator's research toolbox • Guide to subtitling offline

### Transcription edit

How to Tackle a Transcript • How to transcribe TEDxTalks in 10 steps • Organize a TEDx transcribeathon • English Style Guide • How to get your talks translated

### Language Coordinators edit

- List of Language Coordinators
- Resources for Language Coordinators
- Apply to become a Language Coordinator🔗

### Amara edit

- Guide to Translating TEDTalks on Amara🔗
- All pages of the category "Amara"🔗

**Languages**

- Afrikaans
- العربية
- Armãneashe
- Asturianu
- Azerbaijanca
- Bahasa Indonesia
- Bahasa Melayu
- বাংলা
- Български
- Беларуская



# Amara

<https://www.ted.com/participate/translate/subtitling-resources>

The screenshot shows the Amara subtitling interface for the video "Why Are Life-Like Robots Creepy?". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Keyboard controls:** A sidebar on the left with buttons for "Play / Pause" (Tab), "Skip back" (Shift + Tab), "Start subtitle" (down arrow), and "End subtitle" (up arrow). It also includes a "Subtitling Guidelines" link.
- Video Player:** The central video player shows a man in a blue shirt. A subtitle box is overlaid on the video with the text "New line goes here!". The video progress bar shows 0:07 / 1:54.
- Task List:** A sidebar on the right with a checklist:
  1. Type what you hear ✓
  2. Translate title ✓
  3. Sync Timing  
All lines are completed.  
[Start reviewing](#)
  4. Review and complete
- Subtitle Editor:** The bottom section shows a timeline with subtitle lines. The "English" track (Version 5) has lines like "Some of the latest enhancements" (0:05.26) and "Atlas is remarkable because it's built to look and act like a person." (0:09.70). The "Editing Spanish..." track has lines like "Algunos de los últimos avances" (0:02.69) and "Atlas es notable porque está diseñado para parecerse y actuar como una persona." (0:09.70). A "New line goes here!" subtitle is being edited in the Spanish track at 0:06.71, with "Start now" and "End now" buttons.

# Tutorials

<https://www.ted.com/participate/translate/subtitling-resources>

How to sign up

User roles and workflow

How to find videos to subtitle

How to translate

Subtitle length and reading speed

How to transcribe

How to review

How to tackle reading speed issues

How to edit titles and descriptions

# Tutorial 1



# Tutorial 2



**User roles and workflow**

# Tutorial 3



# Tutorial 4



# Tutorial 5



**Subtitle length and  
reading speed**

# Tutorial 6





# Tutorial 7

DAIGY  
IS A DUCK  
EXPERT



5:07

**How to review**

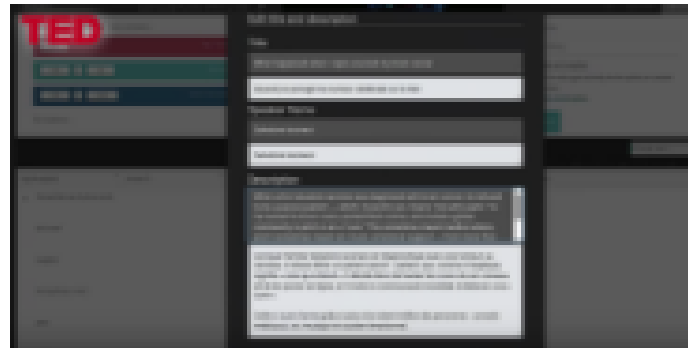
# Tutorial 8



4:45

**How to tackle reading-speed issues**

# Tutorial 9



**How to edit titles and descriptions**

# Recap: How to train yourself

Ted Talks  
Open  
Translation  
Project

- OTPedia
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- OTP tutorials

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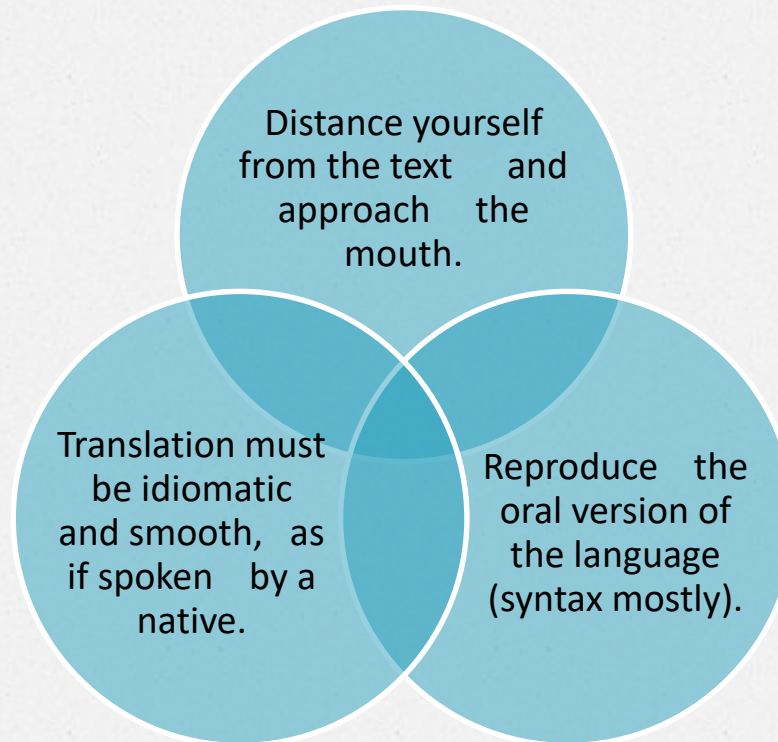
Where to find work

# Differences

**Translating  
text is  
very  
different  
from  
translating  
subtitles**

- Natural speech
- Limited by time and space
- Context is king

# Natural speech



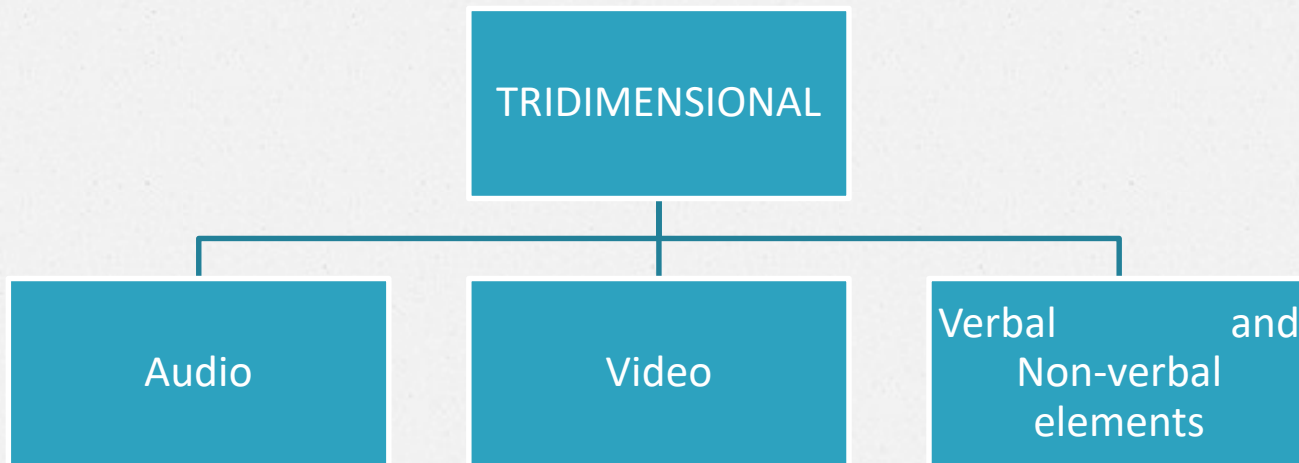


# Limited by time and space

Speech is compressed, so you will have to use analysis and synthesis.

Speech is adapted.

# Context is king



# Recap: Differences

**Translating  
text is  
very  
different  
from  
translating  
subtitles**

- Natural speech
- Limited by time and space
- Context is king

# Formatting rules

Duration

Maximum row count

Maximum row width

Maximum subtitle length

Maximum reading speed

Distribution of text

# FORMATTING RULES

## Duration

1-7 seconds

# FORMATTING RULES

Maximum row count

2

# FORMATTING RULES

Maximum row length

42 characters

# FORMATTING RULES

Maximum subtitle length

84 characters



# FORMATTING RULES

## Maximum reading speed

17 characters per second



Read the subtitle

Ready?



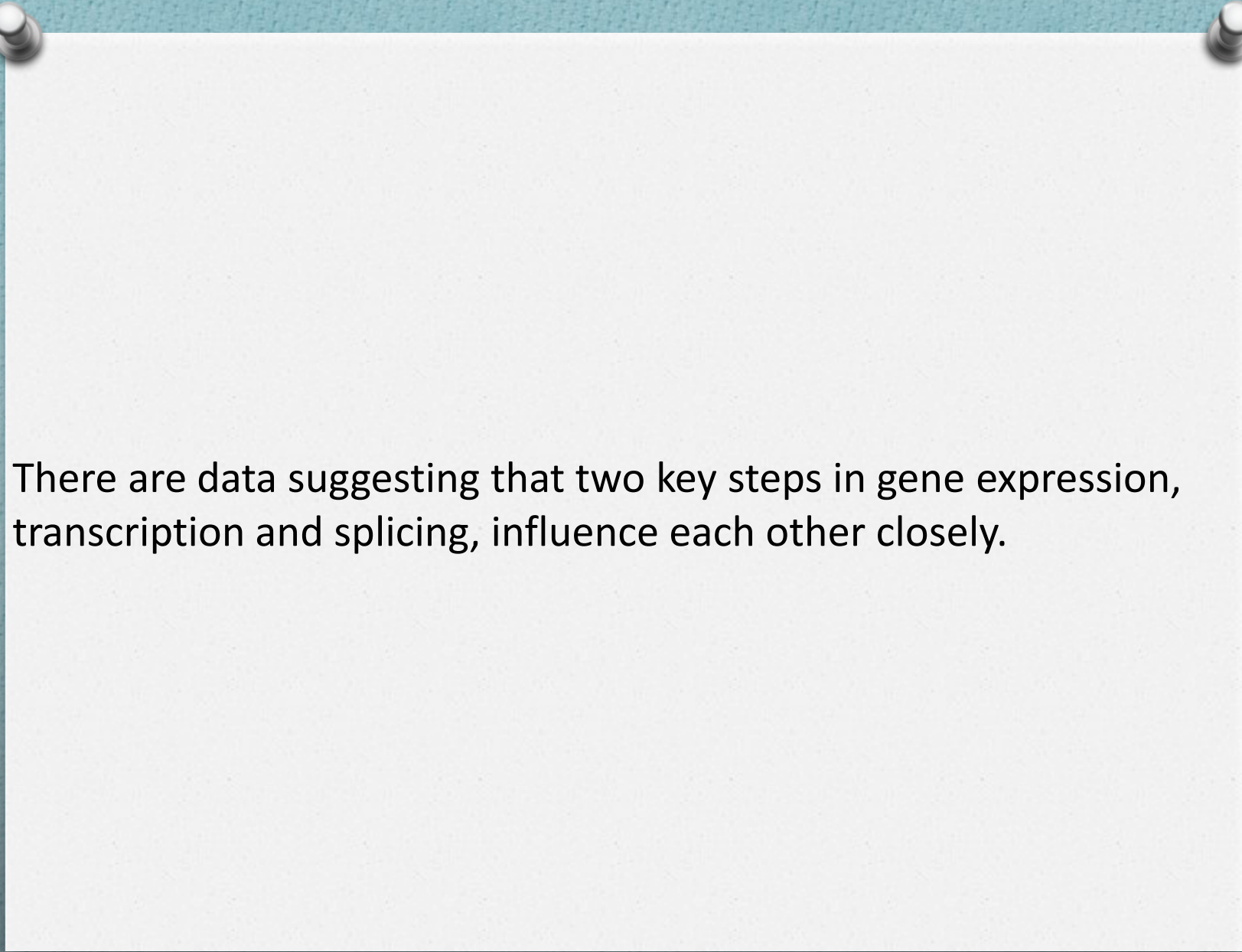
Three



Two



One



There are data suggesting that two key steps in gene expression, transcription and splicing, influence each other closely.



Could you read that?



Let's try again!





Read the subtitle

Ready?



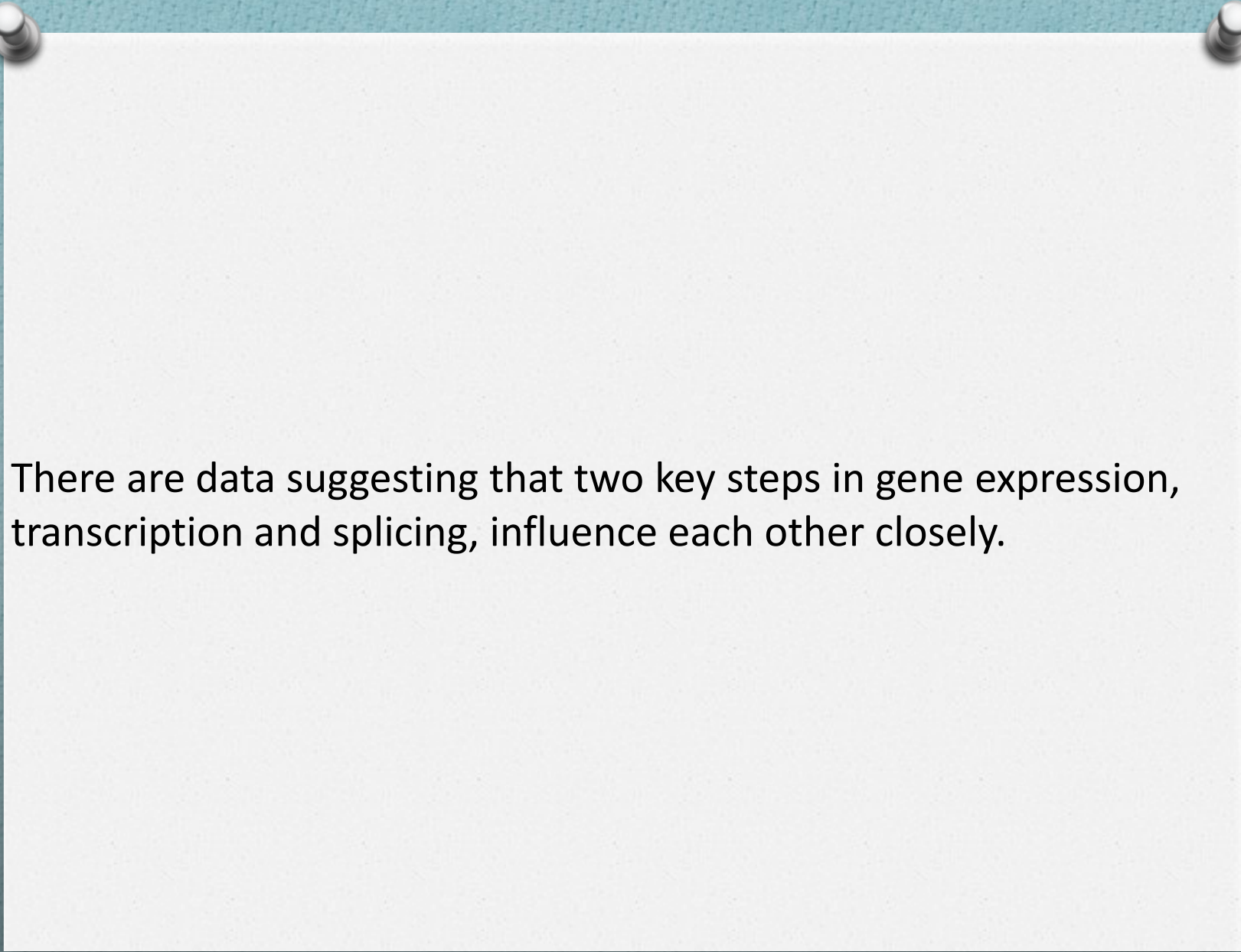
Three



Two



One



There are data suggesting that two key steps in gene expression, transcription and splicing, influence each other closely.



Could you read that?

# FORMATTING RULES

## Distribution of text

Keep the text on one line

Don't break linguistic units

# FORMATTING RULES

## Distribution of text

But don't stop in the forest,  
and don't talk to strangers.



# FORMATTING RULES

## Distribution of text

But don't stop in  
the forest, and don't talk to strangers.

# FORMATTING RULES

## Distribution of text

But don't stop in the forest, and don't talk to  
strangers.

# Recap: Formatting rules

Duration 1-7 seconds

Maximum row count 2 rows

Maximum row width 42 characters

Maximum subtitle length 84 characters

Maximum reading speed 17 characters per second

Maximum reading speed children 13 characters per second

Distribution of text Don't break linguistic units

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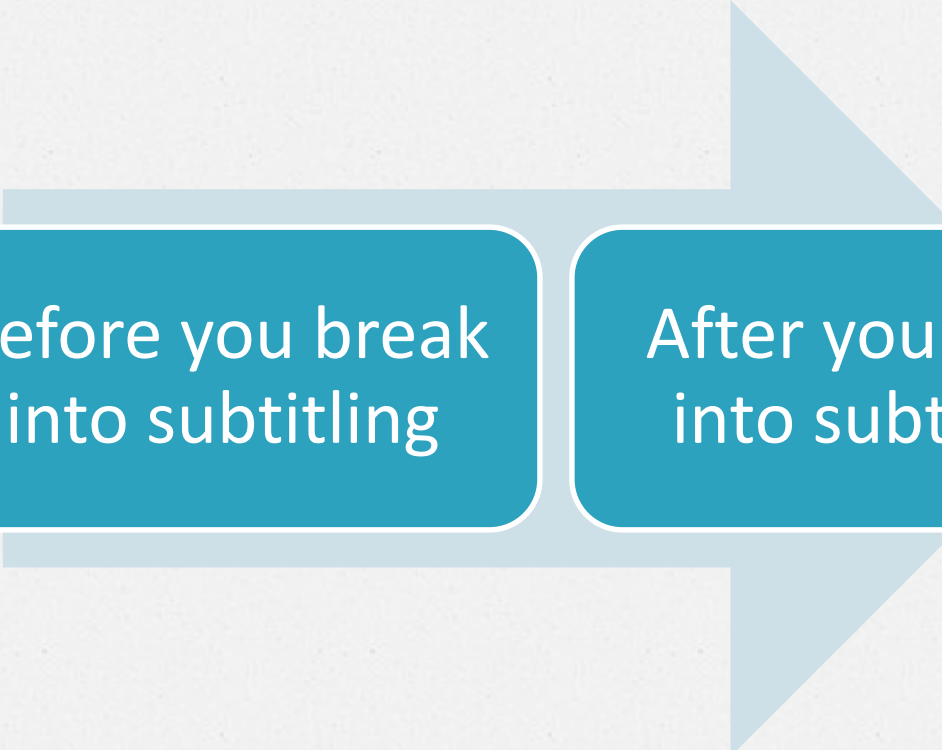
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# Practical Tips



Before you break  
into subtitling

After you break  
into subtitling

Before  
you  
break  
into  
subtitling

- **Introduction**
  - Email
  - CV
  - Samples
- **Test**

# E-mail Subject line

Best quality

I would like to introduce myself

Looking for work

Fast and reliable translator

The best translator in the world



# E-mail Subject line

Best quality

I would like to introduce myself

Looking for work

Fast and reliable translator

The best translator in the world

**English-LAS – 20 years' experience in subtitling**

# E-mail Greeting

Dear

Dear ,

Dear sir,

Dear sir or madam,

To whom it might concern,

Nothing

# E-mail Greeting

Dear

Dear ,

Dear sir,

Dear sir or madam,

To whom it might concern,

Nothing

Good morning, Good afternoon,

# E-mail Body

## QUICK FACTS:

Translator, reviewer and trainer

ATA certified

Language combination: English to Latin American Spanish

Native language: Spanish (and near native in English)

Conference speaker (speeches related to translation)

Years' experience as a translator: 30

Years' experience in subtitling: 30

Live in territory

E-mail

Pump up your CV!

Get certified

Be a speaker

Publish articles

# E-mail CV attached

CV.doc

CV\_2017.doc

CVEnglish.doc

Resume.doc

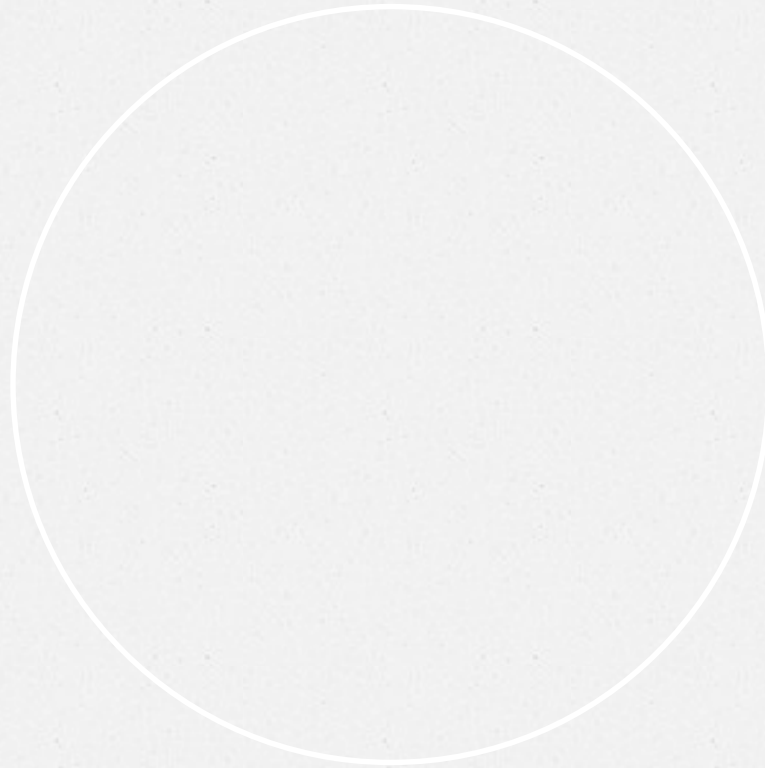
ResumeEnglish.com

MFA\_2018\_CV.com

E-mail  
CV attached

Deborah Wexler EN-LAS CV.doc

E-mail  
Sample attached





E-mail  
Sample attached



**DON'T**

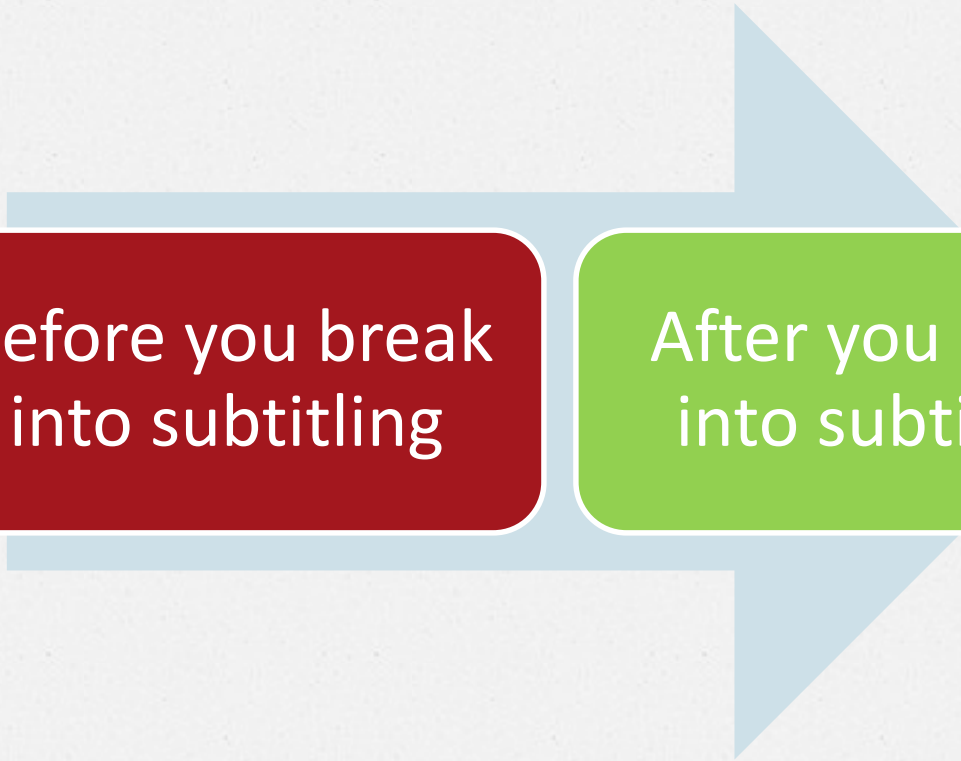
Before  
you  
break  
into  
subtitling

- **Introduction**
  - Email
  - CV
  - Samples
- **Test**

Test

Follow all  
instructions

# Practical Tips



Before you break  
into subtitling

After you break  
into subtitling

After  
you  
break  
into  
subtitling

- **Learn the secrets of the scheduling department**

# Scheduling wish list

Is responsive

Follows instructions

Reads e-mails fully

Is organized

Says yes

Doesn't complain excessively

Is polite

Doesn't argue

# Scheduling wish list

Is a team player

Respects the “email reading time”

Meets deadlines

Goes the extra mile

Asks for feedback or final files

Takes feedback seriously

Says thank you

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Captions, Inc.

deborah\_wexler@captionsinc.com

BTI Studios

enquiries@btistudios.com

Deluxe - Sfera Studios (apply button)

www.sferastudios.com

Hippeis

resume@hippeismedia.com

Hiventy

florence.parik@hiventy.com

Oxobox (Spanish and Brazilian Port.)

info@oxobox.tv

SDI Media

subwithsdi@sdimedia.com

Visual Data Media

languageresources@visualdatamedia.com

VSI

www.vsi.tv (maybe info@vsi.tv)

Zoo Digital (site map, translators)

www.zoodigital.com

Nordisk Undertext

<https://nu.plint.com/user-application#>



**THE END**



QUESTIONS?