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Accessibility at Film Festivals: Guidelines for Inclusive Subtitling

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List of Acronyms

AD = Audio Description
ADA = Americans with Disabilities Act
AFM = Accessible FilmMaking
AR = Augmented reality
AS = Accessibility Studies
ASL = American Sign Language
AST = Audio Subtitling
AUSLAN = Australian Sign Language
AVA = AudioVisual Accessibility
AVT = AudioVisual Translation
AVTS = AudioVisual Translation Studies
BBC = British Broadcasting Company
BFI = British Film Institute
BITC = Burnt-In Time-Code
BSL = British Sign Language
CC = Closed Captions
CCIs = Cultural and Creative Industries
CDA = Critic Discourse Analysis
CGI = Computer-Generated Imagery
CPS = characters per second
CRPD = Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSRs = Culture-Specific References
CVAA = Communications and Video Accessibility Act
DCP = Digital Cinema Packaging
DVD = Digital Video Disc
DS = Deaf Studies
EST = English Subtitles
FIGS = France, Italy, Germany, Spain
FPS = frames per second
ICTs = Information and Communication Technologies
IoT = Internet of Things
IS = Inclusive Subtitles / Subtitling
LIS = Lingua dei Segni Italiana [Italian Sign Language]
LFF = London Film Festival
MA = Media Accessibility
MAS = Media Accessibility Studies
NAD = National Association of the Deaf
OTT = Over-the-top
RNID = Royal National Institute for Deaf people
SDH/SDHH/SDHoH = Subtitles for the Deaf and the Hard of hearing
SL = Source Language
SL_1 = Sign Language
SLI = Sign Language Interpreting
ST = Source Text

TCR = Time-Code Reader
TL = Target Language
TS = Translation Studies
TT = Target Text
UD = Universal Design
UDHR = Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN = United Nations
VCD = Video Compact Disc
VHS = Video Home System
VIPs = Visually Impaired Persons
VoD = Video on Demand
VR = Virtual Reality
WHO = World Health Organization
WPM = words per minute
XR = Extended Reality

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Abstract

In today's media-dominated world, the imperative for accessibility has never been greater, and ensuring that audiovisual experiences cater to individuals with sensory disabilities has become a pressing concern. One of the key initiatives in this endeavour is inclusive subtitling (IS), a practice rooted in the broader contexts of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH/CC), audiovisual translation studies (AVTS), media accessibility studies (MAS), and the evolving field of Deaf studies (DS). This study aims to offer a comprehensive exploration of how inclusive subtitling contributes to fostering accessible and inclusive audiovisual experiences, with a particular focus on its implications within the unique environment of film festivals. To gain a holistic perspective of inclusive subtitling, it is essential to examine its lineage in relation to analogous practices, which is the focus of the first chapter. Inclusive subtitling is an extension of SDH/CC, designed for individuals with hearing impairments, and SDH/CC, in turn, is a nuanced variation of traditional subtitling extensively explored within the realm of AVTS. To encapsulate the diverse techniques and modalities aimed at making audiovisual content universally accessible, the study recognises the term "Audiovisual Accessibility" (AVA). The second chapter explores the interconnection of accessibility studies (AS), AVTS, and MAS, highlighting their symbiotic relationship and their role in framing inclusive subtitles within these fields. These interconnections are pivotal in shaping a framework for the practice of inclusive subtitling, enabling a comprehensive examination of its applicability and research implications. The third chapter delves into Deaf studies and the evolution of Deafhood, which hinges on the history and culture of Deaf individuals. This chapter elucidates the distinction between ‘deafness’ as a medical construct and ‘Deafhood’ as a cultural identity, crucial to the understanding of audiovisual accessibility and its intersection with the Deaf community's perspectives. In the fourth chapter, the focus turns to the exploration of film festivals, with a specific emphasis on the crucial role of subtitles in enhancing accessibility, particularly when films are presented in their original languages. The chapter marks a critical point, highlighting the inherent connection between subtitles and the immersive nature of film festivals that aspire to promote inclusivity in the cinematic experience. The emphasis on inclusivity extends to the evolution of film festivals, giving rise to more advanced forms, including accessible film festivals and Deaf film festivals. At the core of the chapter is a thorough examination of the corpus, specifically, the SDH/CC of films spanning the editions from 2020 to 2023 of two highly significant film festivals, namely BFI Flare and the London Film Festival. The corpus serves as the foundation upon which my research unfolds, providing a nuanced understanding of the role subtitles play in film festival contexts. The main chapter, chapter five, thoroughly analyses the technical and linguistic aspects of inclusive subtitling, drawing insights from the Inclusive Subtitling Guidelines - a two version document devised by myself - and offering real-world applications supported by a case study at an Italian film festival and another case study of the short film *Pure*, with the relevant inclusive subtitles file annexed. In conclusion, the research sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of inclusive subtitling's role in ensuring accessible and inclusive audiovisual experiences, particularly within film festivals. It underscores the importance of accessibility in the world of audiovisual media and highlights the need for inclusive practices to cater to diverse audiences.

Introduction

In an age where audiovisual content holds a dominant position in communication and entertainment, the need for accessibility has never been more significant. Ensuring that audiovisual experiences are accessible for individuals with sensory disabilities is a growing concern.

One such endeavour that addresses this concern is the practice of inclusive subtitling, henceforth IS, a practice that is rooted in the broader contexts of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing (SDH/CC), audiovisual translation studies (AVTS), media accessibility studies (MAS), and the evolving field of Deaf studies (DS). Through the analysis of the technical, linguistic, and cultural aspects of IS, this research aims to offer a comprehensive exploration of how IS contribute to fostering accessible and inclusive audiovisual experiences, with a particular focus on its implications within film festival settings. Accessibility is a fundamental pillar of a diverse and inclusive society. It ensures that everyone, regardless of their (dis)abilities, can fully participate in all aspects of life. IS play a pivotal role in breaking down communication and linguistic barriers, and serve as a catalyst for cultural exchange, democratising access to diverse narratives and artistic expressions. Not only they enhance the viewing experience but also contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society where all voices can be heard, and all stories can be shared. Inclusion in the creative industries is not just a matter of social responsibility; it's an opportunity to enrich our collective cultural tapestry and foster a more interconnected, understanding, and empathetic world. Drawing from existing guidelines, this research has led to a set of entirely new and comprehensive guidelines for IS, marking a significant stride in innovation and originality. These guidelines are the product of a deep commitment to inclusivity, taking into account not only the technical aspects but also the nuanced needs of various audience groups. By going beyond the conventional standards, this approach pioneers fresh strategies for addressing the intricacies of accessibility, embracing emerging technologies, and tailoring solutions to an ever-diverse global audience.

To gain a holistic perspective of IS, it is important to examine its lineage in relation to analogous practices, which are explored in the **first chapter** of the research. IS, as a concept, is an extension of SDH/CC, a specialised form of subtitling designed for individuals with hearing impairments. SDH/CC, in turn, is a nuanced variation of traditional subtitling, a domain extensively explored within the realm of AVTS. The multifaceted nature of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing necessitates its consideration as a form of media accessibility, offering people with sensory disabilities, particularly Deaf individuals, access

to audiovisual content. However, within the landscape of academic discourse and professional practice, a reconsideration of terminologies has emerged. The conventional terms 'Audiovisual Translation' and 'Media Accessibility' might inadvertently limit the expansiveness of practices that aim to enhance access. A more inclusive terminology, 'Audiovisual Accessibility', henceforth AVA, is proposed here as a way to transcend disciplinary boundaries, as well as to encapsulate the diverse techniques and modalities that fall under the umbrella of making audiovisual content universally accessible.

In the **second chapter**, the interconnection between AS, AVTS, and MAS is explored with the scope of framing IS in a more appropriate and productive way within one or more of the abovementioned studies. Accessibility studies, henceforth AS, are closely linked to AVTS and MAS, and scholars have recently and successfully demonstrated how these three disciplines are intertwined, complementary, independent, yet inseparable. Although they retain their individual identities, their interactions are symbiotic, with each contributing unique perspectives to the broader goal of fostering accessibility within the realm of audiovisual media. These interconnections are pivotal in shaping a framework in which the practice of IS can be situated, allowing for a comprehensive examination of its applicability and research implications. As various terminology is used, sometimes meaning the same concept, this research follows a linear progression, outlining the journey from foundational concepts to the pinnacle of inclusion. This progression begins with 'Identity', signifying how individuals perceive and define themselves. 'Diversity' follows, emphasising the presence of a spectrum of identity traits. 'Representation' marks the showcasing of multiple perspectives, while 'Accessibility' denotes the creation of opportunities for people with impairments to access places, services, and events that were previously inaccessible. Finally, 'Inclusion' is achieved by centralising diverse perspectives within narratives, ensuring that stories resonate with a broad range of experiences.

The **third chapter** is devoted to Deaf studies and the evolution of 'Deafhood', which hinges on the history and culture of Deaf individuals. The historical trajectory of Deaf communities is characterised by significant events leading up to the Milan Convention in 1880 and its aftermath. This chapter elucidates the distinction between 'deafness' as a medical construct and 'Deafhood' as a cultural identity. The former tends to define deafness as a disability, while the latter encapsulates the state of being Deaf. This differentiation is critical for comprehending the nuances of audiovisual accessibility and how it intersects with the Deaf community's perspectives. The social and cultural aspects of Deafness contribute to the discourse surrounding IS. Acknowledging the heterogeneity within the d/Deaf community is pivotal, as individuals within this group possess diverse experiences and

identities. This section aims to establish connections between the social dimensions of Deaf culture, attitudes toward SDH/CC/IS practices, and the interactions between film, cinema audiences, and film festival attendees.

The **fourth chapter** explores the intricate interplay between film festivals and the practice of subtitling, emphasising the pivotal role of subtitles in fostering accessibility. It is divided into two main parts. The first part delves into film festivals, as organised events that hold economic, social, and political significance for the community and the host city, and into accessible film festivals as events that prioritise accessibility and inclusivity in the cinematic experience. These festivals actively dismantle barriers that hinder individuals with disabilities from engaging fully with films. By incorporating various accessibility features, accessible film festivals ensure that everyone, regardless of their sensory (dis)abilities, can actively participate and enjoy the cinematic journey. The second part delves into the corpus of this research, focusing on the SDH/CC of films from the editions spanning 2020 to 2023 of BFI Flare and the London Film Festival. Addressing a prominent gap in research, the present chapter underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of subtitling's intricacies within the unique context of film festivals. While scholarly attention has been directed towards subtitling for films and television, a significant void in grasping both the considerations and challenges specific to subtitling in the film festival environment still remains. The core objective of this research is to fill this gap by shedding light on unexplored territory, while providing insights into the practices of subtitling within the dynamic setting of film festivals.

The last and main chapter, **chapter five**, builds upon these foundations, offering a comprehensive exploration of IS and its implications for audiovisual accessibility within film festivals. The study analyses technical and linguistic aspects of IS, drawing insights from Inclusive Subtitling Guidelines and presenting real-world applications through two case studies. The first case study, conducted at an Italian film festival, illustrates the practical implementation of IS guidelines, providing valuable insights into the challenges and considerations associated with inclusive subtitling. The second case study, the IS of the short film *Pure*, explores the relationship between IS, subtitles, and captions. This discussion is exemplified in Appendix 3, that is, the IS file of the short film *Pure*. By intertwining theoretical discussions with practical examples, the two case studies enrich the experience of subtitling practices within film festivals, contributing to a broader exploration of audiovisual accessibility. This holistic approach aims to contribute valuable insights into the intricate world of audiovisual accessibility and the importance of inclusive practices for diverse audiences within film festivals.

In conclusion, the **Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines** serve as a comprehensive resource tailored for practitioners, offering a clear and detailed explanation of both the technical and linguistic aspects of IS, with a specific focus on their application in the context of film festivals. The final version, version 2.0, is divided into two distinct documents: the Compact Version (Appendix 1) spanning six pages, and the Extended Version (Appendix 2) spanning eleven pages. These documents are organised into nine main sections, accompanied by an introductory section and a miscellaneous section containing information, such as credits and proofreading guidelines. Each section covers various technical and/or linguistic aspects of IS, including synchrony, formatting, style, speaker identification, sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, music and songs, punctuation, and (inclusive) language. Appendix 3, featuring the IS file for the short film *Pure*, serves as a practical example showcasing the application of IS in real-world scenarios. This demonstration takes into account various elements, including the official translated subtitles and the additional caption, and adheres to the established norms and guidelines of IS.

Chapter 1 – Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility

In this chapter, attention is paid to the evolution of subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing as a modality of media accessibility, which in turn is a discipline within audiovisual translation, which in turn is a discipline within translation studies. The state of the art of this modality, of which inclusive subtitling is a variation, is presented in relation to countries, such as the UK and Italy. The existing guidelines, representing a stepping stone to the creation of inclusive subtitles guidelines, is here analysed.

1.1 Translation Studies

For a more satisfactory comprehension of Inclusive Subtitling as a process and a product, it is important to take a step back and analyse similar practices.

Inclusive subtitling represents a variation of Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of hearing, henceforth SDH, which, in turn, is a diversification from 'standard' subtitling, a modality of audiovisual translation that a number of scholars have studied and scrutinised from different perspectives. SDH, including Inclusive Subtitling, henceforth IS, as a variant of SDH, can be considered a modality within Media Accessibility, henceforth MA, as it provides the accessibility of audiovisual products addressed to people with sensory disabilities, in particular Deaf people, as shown in Figure 1.

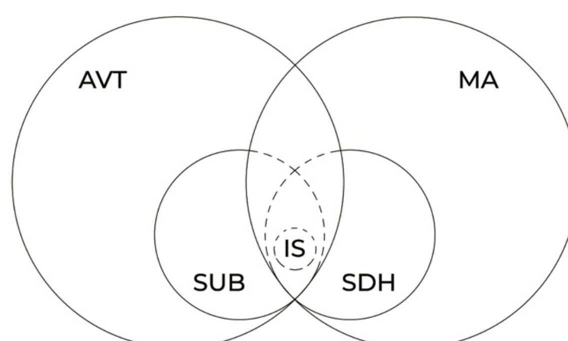

Figure 1. IS within AVT and MA.

From the point of view of the academic discipline, MA studies were born as a branch of the then more stable and established Audiovisual Translation Studies, henceforth AVTS which, amongst other definitions, can be broadly understood as the practice of translation of audiovisual materials. In turn, AVTS were born as part of the more encompassing

Translation Studies, henceforth TS, that is, the field of study and research embracing the theory and application of translation and interpreting to varieties of text types (Munday, 2008). It was thanks to the cultural turn of TS that the role of translation was recognised in the target culture. The cultural turn put forward by Bassnett and Lefevere (1990) attached great importance to the role of culture in translation, the social background, the subjectivity of translators, thus, enhancing a further and more comprehensive development of TS, while expanding its scope. Against this backdrop, AVT will grow and expand exponentially, while becoming an autonomous discipline in its own right. Nevertheless, before questioning the interdependence and independence of the theories, practices, and types, TS dominated the scenario for decades, being recognised as the umbrella term containing its sub-categories, as shown in Figure 2.

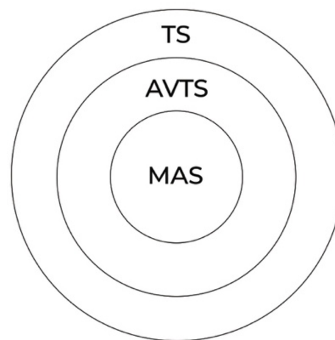

Figure 2. MAS within AVTS within TS.

In recent years, at the turn of the century, the paradigm has shifted and today the above-mentioned practices and studies are seen as independent, co-existing, and mature enough to stand on their own. This is due to many factors which include the exponential growth in academic publications and thematic conferences and events, as well as the larger interest from researchers and universities in the creation of a variety of courses at the level of undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and specialisation studies. Another important factor which has determined the advancements of the various disciplines is the intersectionality and interdisciplinarity of the studies and, with specific reference to IS (which owes a great deal from Deaf studies and Accessibility studies, just to mention but a few), it is possible to imagine a correlation between the above-mentioned practices and studies, as shown in Figure 3.

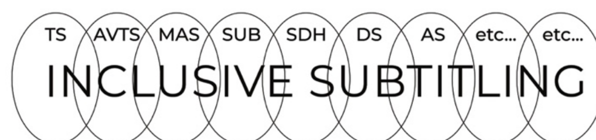

Figure 3. Intersectionality and interdisciplinarity of IS.

From whichever perspective these disciplines are seen, many scholars would agree that much is owed to TS scholars who investigated the transposition of words from one language to another and laid the foundation of more contemporary studies. Some of the concepts that are recurring in TS, AVTS, and MAS, are briefly explored below for the purpose of this research as they support some of the findings and structure of IS.

As a starting point, the process of translation in the most traditional sense of the term, *i.e.*, changing the words of an original written text (the source text or ST, written in the source language or SL) into another written text (the target text or TT, written in the target language or TL), is usually applied to two different written languages; whereas the translation of two different languages occurring at an oral level could be understood as interpreting. This first type of translation is only one of the categories of translation identified by Jakobson in his seminal paper *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*, where the scholar proposes the well-known tripartite model of communication in translation:

1. intralingual translation, or 'rewording' – an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language,
2. interlingual translation, or 'translation proper' – an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language,
3. intersemiotic translation, or 'transmutation' – an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems. (1959/2012: 127)

From this perspective, SDH in general, and IS in particular, can be understood as practices involving the three dimensions of intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translation. Over the years, the realms of TS, AVT and MA have assisted to an exponential

rise in the production of translation strategies and procedures employed as effective problem-solving tools. Scholars elaborate, revisit, and create translation strategies (*i.e.*, the overall orientation of the translator) and procedures of translation (*i.e.*, specific techniques or methods used by the translator at a certain point in a text). One of the most significant and linear model of strategies and procedures is the one put forward by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), whose analysis applied to French and English texts leads to two general translation strategies: direct translation and oblique translation. The two strategies comprise seven procedures of which direct translation covers three types: borrowing, calque, and literal translation. Other procedures, covered by oblique translation, are transposition (obligatory and optional), modulation (obligatory and optional), equivalence or idiomatic translation, and adaptation. Other procedures identified by the two scholars include: amplification, false friend, loss, gain, compensation, explicitation, and generalisation. This model of strategies laid the foundation for other scholars who explored the applications to culture issues and the rendering of cultural-specific references, or CSRs, in the passage from source to target languages and cultures (see Pedersen, 2005; Ranzato, 2016), especially in the context of translation strategies specifically used for AVT.

Foreignisation and domestication are the conceptual parameters used to describe AVT as a medium, oriented either towards the source text or the target text. In most cases, AVT implies localisation and localisation can involve domestication. This can be connected to the visibility or invisibility of the translator in AVT, a crucial topic in AVT, especially with regard to standard subtitles, fansubbing, and dubbing, which involve either foreignising or domesticating acts. The concept of the (in)visibility of the translator is traceable to Venuti who sees the possibility of a translated text to give the appearance that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the 'original' (2008). Therefore, the translated text could be understood as a text in which the translator's work is more or less visible depending on the absence or presence of linguistic and stylistic peculiarities. This concept is directly linked to two types of conceptual approaches to translation: domestication and foreignisation, where the former "entails translating in a transparent, fluent, 'invisible', style in order to minimise the foreignness of the TT" (Munday, 2016: 225) and the latter "seeks to 'send the reader abroad' by making the receiving culture aware of its linguistic and cultural differences inherent in the foreign text" (Munday, 2016: 226). The concepts of domestication and foreignisation are rooted in Schleiermacher's thoughts who, in fact, never saw domestication and foreignisation as mutually exclusive extremes, but instead as concepts that could coexist in the same text (Tee, 2015). In fact, today, the two terms are no longer seen as a

dichotomy, but rather as a ‘spectrum’ in which the translator’s choices render a text more or less domesticated or foreignised.

1.2 Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility

AVT can be defined as a type of specialised translation applied to the audio and/or visual elements of any media material (Orero, 2004). What makes audiovisual texts so distinct and different from written texts is their multimodality, in which sounds, images, speech, written text, and music coexist and contribute to providing meaning (Bogucki, 2020: 13). For many years, other terms have been used, among which Cinema Translation, Film Translation (Snell-Hornby, 1988), Constrained Translation (Titford, 1982; Mayoral, 1984/1993; Díaz Cintas, 1998), Film and TV Translation (Delabastita, 1989), Screen Translation (Mason, 1989), (Multi)Media Translation (Gambier & Gottlieb, 2001) and Multidimensional Translation, until scholars settled for the term Audiovisual Translation (Luyken, 1991, Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997).

Its roots go back to the very early years of cinema (late 1890s, early 1900s), when ‘film explainers’ were explaining what was happening on the screen and sometimes translating foreign films. This signifies that ‘film explaining’ may be considered one of the first forms of film translation too (O’Sullivan & Cornu, 2019). Then, with the advent of the talking films in the 1920s, various experimental forms of translation were introduced, among which, having intertitles similar to silent cards translated into the languages of the territories (Cornu, 2014: 27-28); or adding written texts in the form of titles projected onto a separate screen or directly superimposed onto the film (this became known as subtitling); or replacing the original dialogues with the lines in a language comprehensible to the target audience (precursor of what we now call dubbing); or having the same cast act in different language (early stages of multilingual films). With Hollywood being the major player in this industry, it is no surprise that English became the most represented cinematographic language in the world (Perego & Pacinotti, 2020: 38).

Following a diachronic order, the advent of silent cinema in the late 1890s, the talking films or talkies in the 1930s, the introduction of TV in the 1950s, the VHS in the 1970s, and its cousins, the DVD and the Blu-Ray (which has had a very short life span), and more recently the so-called VoD (Video on Demand) platforms and the OTT (Over-The-Top) media providers, and even more recently the abundance of consumption of social media, have all contributed to the development and advancement of the plurality of AVT and MA modalities, which will be explored briefly in the following section.

To this date, there seem to be a disagreement on the exact number of AVT modes or modalities, despite the vast amount of research conducted within the field (Cabrera & Bartolomé, 2005). Some scholars (Chaves, 2000; Luyken, 1991) would consider only five AVT modes, whereas others would list as many as ten AVT modes (Díaz Cintas, 2001; De Linde & Kay, 1999), or even thirteen AVT modes (Gambier, 2003). Some of the modalities coincide, some overlap, and some scholars use different terminology for the same or for similar mode, but it is true that new types are added or split over time (Chaume, 2004 in Cabrera & Bartolomé, 2005).

It is beyond the scope of this research to establish the exact number of modes or modalities within AVT, as this number is bound to change due to the different categorisations of modes, points of view, terminology, technological advancements, but also audiences' needs. Instead, the following chapter will give an overview of some of the modalities which are more relevant to the project and their connection with IS, understood as a variation of SDH/CC, which falls within the specialised field of MA, which sits within the umbrella term of AVT, which owes a great deal to TS (see Figure 3 above). The modalities briefly explored in the following chapters are grouped into two main categories, hypernyms if you will, that of Revoicing (Dubbing, Voice Over, Audio Description, Audio Subtitling, Sign Language Interpreting) and that of Rewriting (Surtitling, Live Subtitling, Subtitling, Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing). Apart from these two main categories, and closely linked to the realms of AVT and MA, are some practices, modalities, and concepts which do not necessarily fall into one of the two above-mentioned categories. They are, to different extents, related to or connected with, the idea of IS, and therefore they will be briefly explored. These are Game Localisation, Fansubbing (and Fandubbing), and Accessible Filmmaking.

1.3 Audiovisual Accessibility

Drawing on the following statement: "Accessibility is a form of translation and translation is a form of accessibility, uniting all population groups and ensuring that cultural events, in the broadest sense of the word, can be enjoyed by all" (Díaz Cintas, Orero & Remal, 2007: 13-14), it is possible to re-evaluate the terminology of these two disciplines.

AVT and MA have been seen as two distinct disciplines, sometimes converging, sometimes covering the same or similar aspects of a practice. However, following a few concepts well established in both fields, I will maintain that a more encompassing and unified term, Audiovisual Accessibility or AVA, should be used, as a term introduced in recent years by various scholars and stakeholders in reference to different aspects. The first part of the

statement “Accessibility is a form of translation and translation is a form of accessibility” is based on - or derived from - concepts, such as:

- “Linguistic Accessibility”. Dubbing and interlingual subtitling, but also written translations, are a form of accessibility because they allow audiences who "cannot, or cannot properly, access the audiovisual content in its original form" (Greco, 2016: 23). For example, a text written in Arabic is not accessible, *i.e.,* it is not comprehensible and enjoyable, for an Italian audience (who does not speak or understand Arabic). It could be argued that a film in Arabic watched by a hearing Italian audience (who does not speak or understand Arabic) is still somewhat enjoyable through the visual channel, through the actors’ actions but not through the actors’ dialogues. This enjoyment could be compared to an Arabic or an Italian audience appreciating a painting by which only the visual channel is stimulated.
- “Intralingual Translation is a form of translation”. Following Jakobson’s tripartite categorisation of translation (1959/2012: 127), a film with Italian dialogues and Italian (intralingual) subtitles is considered a form of intralingual and intersemiotic translation.

Furthermore, the terms ‘Audiovisual Translation’ and ‘Media Accessibility’ perhaps carry repetitions of the same concepts within their labels. If the two terms were to be dissected, it could be argued that:

- ‘Audiovisual’ means any material that is audio and/or video. The key is in the “and/or” meaning that an audiovisual material is a combination of audio and video but also just audio or just video. However, the audiovisual nature is not related to the source text (the input) but to the target text (the output). In fact, the audio description of a painting (which is not an audiovisual product) is still considered a form of audiovisual accessibility.
- ‘Translation’, which carries a broad meaning, has been used since before the advent of any audiovisual material - before the 20th century - to indicate the transfer of words from one language to another. However, the focus has been historically on written languages (and their spoken form as it happens in interpreting) without considering that sign languages are fully-fledged languages, although they are visual/gestural and not written/aural.

- ‘Media’ is another term for ‘Audiovisual’ so much so that originally AVT was called Media Translation. It refers to the main means of (mass) communication, which implies that the status evolves with time (once, TV the quintessential form of entertainment and information for the masses, nowadays the Internet is the means of communication par excellence in all its forms).
- ‘Accessibility’ is a term that, when used correctly, refers to the provision of tools and services to people with disabilities, thus highlighting the positive effect of the practice rather than the negative reason why it is needed. With reference to people with disabilities, it is not possible to overcome all disabilities with one tool, as the various sub-groups or sub-categories of people with disabilities require specific interventions. For example, a person in a wheelchair, a blind person and a deaf person are all equally disable, but an elevator installed in a building is of no added value to a blind or a deaf person, but it is of vital importance for a person in a wheelchair. Similarly, a deaf and a blind person, both falling within the category of ‘people with sensory disabilities’, do not share the deprivation of the same sense. On the contrary, a blind person relies on their hearing and a blind person relies on their sight heavily for communication, information, entertainment, etc. In other words, an AD is of no use for a deaf person, and SDH are of no use for a blind person. Even deeper, two deaf people may rely on different communication systems, as sign language is not the preferred method of everyday communication amongst all deaf people.

In light of all this, perhaps the terms ‘Audiovisual Translation’ and ‘Media Accessibility’ should be abandoned in favour of more inclusive, and more encompassing terms, which allow more techniques and modalities to be added in the future, while overcoming the classification of the above-mentioned disciplines and their hierarchy. Therefore, the term ‘Audiovisual Accessibility’, or its acronym AVA, will be used in this paper when not referring to the history of AVT or MA, or when necessary.

AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

+

MEDIA **ACCESSIBILITY**

=

AUDIOVIOSUAL ACCESSIBILITY

Figure 4. ‘Audiovisual Accessibility’ term.

1.4 Modes and modalities

The first category of Revoicing comprises the modalities of Dubbing, Voice Over, Audio Description, Audio Subtitling and Sign Language Interpreting. Although they are not closely connected to IS, a brief overview of the modality is presented in order to provide a wider AVT and MA mediascape.

Dubbing is a process where the dialogues in the source language are replaced with the dialogues in the target language, trying to keep the synchronicity, the utterance, and the lip movement of the actors as faithful as possible to the original (Chiaro, 2009). Unlike subtitling which could be performed by a single professional, dubbing requires teamwork, as many are the professional figures involved, such as dialogue writers, dubbing assistants, dubbing directors, sound engineers to name just the most relevant ones (Chaume, 2020). Synchronisation is a key element and according to scholars who have studied this feature in depth, it is possible to distinguish three types of synchronisation: kinesic synchrony, which occurs between the translation and the screen actors' body movements and body language; isochrony, which occurs between the translated text utterances and pauses and the source text utterances and pauses; and lip-sync (also used in the industry as a more generic and encompassing term for the above-mentioned types), which occurs between the translation and the screen actors' articulatory movements (Chaume, 2020; Bosseaux, 2019). Dubbing is the preferred modality of audiovisual translation in some countries, such as, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain (also known as FIGS countries), but also Austria, Belgium, Slovakia, and Turkey in Europe; and Brazil, China, India, Japan, Korea, Peru in the rest of the world (Chaume, 2012).

Voice Over, once considered the 'ugly duckling' of audiovisual translation (Orero, 2006a), is a process in which the volume of the original audio track is turned down or completely eliminated and the recorded audio track is added over the original voice (Díaz Cintas, 2003). Similarly to, or inspired by, the classifications of dubbing, within voice-over it is possible to differentiate four types of synchrony (Orero, 2006b; Franco *et al.,* 2010): Voice-over isochrony, when the translated audio track usually begins some words after the original audio track and finishes some words before; literal synchrony, when the target audience can hear some words of the original audio track and can relate the translation to the original; kinetic synchrony, when the translated audio track is synchronised with the body language of the characters on screen; and action synchrony, when the translated audio track is synchronised with the images on screen. Voice-over is cheaper and faster to produce than dubbing, and it is more popular in certain Eastern European countries, like Poland, where

the term is used for non-fictional genres, as opposed to fiction films in which the term used is 'lecturing' (Bogucki, 2013). As the 'ugly duckling' of AVT, voice-over isn't the most researched topics within audiovisual translation studies, but research has increased in the last years (Matamala, 2019), also in relation to other AVT modalities, like audio description and audio subtitles (Szarkowska & Jankowska, 2015), and especially in relation to the translation of cultural references and linguistic features, the analysis of translation and synchronisation techniques, the manipulation of non-fictional content, and technology (Matamala, 2020).

Audio Description, often abbreviated with AD, is "a form of assistive audiovisual translation, or inclusion service, designed to make (audio)visual products available to blind and visually impaired persons (VIPs)" (Perego, 2019: 114); in other words, a service that makes (audio)visual content (such as a film, a TV programme, a museum exhibition, or a theatre performance) accessible to visually impaired persons (Mazur, 2020). Numerous are the guidelines available in each country varying in length, precision, theoretical orientation and, just like SDH guidelines (more on this later on in this chapter), they do not adhere to a uniform structure (Vercauteren, 2007) and, instead of providing solutions to specific problems, they tend to discourage bad practices (the don'ts rather than the dos). Perego (2019: 119) sums up the adjectives that describe the practice of audio description drawing inspiration from other scholars who used similar terms in their works: "meticulous" (see "detailed" for Remael and Vercauteren, 2011; and "accurate" for Ofcom, 2010), "concise" (see "succinct" for Snyder, 2007); "visually intense" (see "vivid" for Remael and Vercauteren, 2011 and Snyder, 2007); "usable" (see "simple" for Ofcom, 2010); and "clear" (see Taylor, 2015). Originated in the United States in the early 1980s, it travelled to the UK in the mid-1980s and, to this date, the UK is the world leader in AD provision offering regular AD services in numerous venues (Snyder, 2014). As far as research on AD is concerned, over the years, scholars have focussed on the concept of text-type before moving on to the debate of subjectivity *vs* objectivity which, in turn, has led to the exploration of reception studies applied to AD and, ultimately, to experimental studies for a bottom-up approach.

Audio Subtitling can be defined as a hybrid technique that draws characteristics from other AVT modalities such as dubbing, voice-over and subtitling (Braun & Orero, 2010). Specifically, it is an "aurally rendered and recorded version of subtitles of a film" (Reviers & Remael, 2015: 52). Audio Subtitling, or AST, is proven helpful in the delivery of multilingual films for a blind and visually impaired audience and its output is usually delivered either with a so-called 'dubbing effect' or with a 'voice-over effect' (Iturregui-Gallardo *et al.*, 2017; Iturregui-Gallardo & Matamala, 2020).

Sing Language Interpreting, as the term would suggest, is closely linked to Interpreting Studies but, as it serves the purpose of allowing access to signing Deaf persons, it can fall within the realm of Media Accessibility. In her recent publication, Tamayo (2022) proposes a rather accurate contemporary landscape of sign language (SL_1), sign language interpreting (SLI) and sign language translation (SLT) within the above-mentioned disciplines (TS, AVT, and MA) and she goes on highlighting how even renowned publications in the field fail to explore SLI in depth.

The second category in this dichotomy, that of Rewriting, is closed connected to different variations of subtitling. As these are the ones more specifically relevant for inclusive subtitles, they will be explored in depth in the following paragraphs. Below is a brief overview of the less mentioned (and coincidentally less researched) practices of subtitling, namely: Surtitling and Live Subtitling.

Surtitling is an "interlingual written transfer of the linguistic contents of a theatre play" (Carrillo Darancet, 2020: 174). From a technical and linguistic point of view, it is linked to (film) subtitling; on an artistic level, it is comparable to Live Subtitling, as the surtitles are cued live during the theatre or opera performances. Usually, the surtitler is present in the theatre during the performance, just like the cue-master is present during the cueing of subtitles at film festivals, and the processes of translation, adaptation and projection is usually performed by a single individual (Carrillo Darancet, 2014). Surtitling at the opera originated in Canada in the 1980s and, as Secara puts it, "the presence of captions on TV, at cinemas and online has also brought a certain pressure to offer them as a default in theatres as well" (2019: 131). Theatre and opera surtitling can be, and is, seen as a form of accessibility for patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing, which in turn opens a new discussion about the social implications of surtitles and their impact on opera and theatre houses which "benefit from an increased diversity in their audience" (2019: 136). From projecting the surtitles on a piece of fabric to new devices, such as projection screens, small screen on the back of the seats, LED screens, smart glasses, mobile devices applications (see Matamala & Orero, 2007; Oncins *et al.*, 2013), surtitling has been benefited from the development of technologies, just like the other AVT modalities.

Respeaking is a technique which allows a respeaker to produce subtitles by means of speech recognition, *i.e.*, by listening to the original sound and respeaking it to a speech recognition software, which in turn creates subtitles to be displayed on screen (Romero-Fresco, 2011; 2019a). Live subtitling is a modality achievable through different techniques more or less used throughout the years, such as (standard) keyboards, Velotype, stenography, and indeed respeaking (Lambourne, 2006) to the point that today respeaking

(also known as ‘real time voice writing’ in the US) is the preferred technique for live subtitling around the world (Romero-Fresco & Eugeni, 2020). This technique varies from country to country, but it usually involves a respeaker listening to the live event or performance, and dictating the utterances to a speech recognition software, like Dragon Naturally Speaking (still the most used amongst practitioners), adding punctuation marks and elements useful for a hearing-impaired audience, such as sound effects, speaker identification, etc. The software listens to the respeaker and creates subtitles which are then displayed on the screen with a reasonable delay - sometimes there is an editor correcting or adjusting the subtitles. With respect to the delay of live subtitles in the UK, Ofcom (2015) permits a delay which varies from 0 to 10 seconds depending on the technique used, where a median 6 seconds is considered acceptable by most broadcasters.

Some other less researched or explored AVT and MA modalities or techniques have over time benefited from a more substantial research on other modalities, and also from the increased attention to (linguistic and sensory) accessibility. For instance, in Game Localisation, accessibility has become a concern of the developers, translators and testers who work together to make small improvements in the game design and user interface to remove barriers for people who are hearing impaired or visually impaired (Bernal-Merion, 2020). Game localisation is not a mere translation of the text displayed in videogames, as today’s videogames include fully-fledged movies (known as cut-scenes) and creativity is not only welcomed but encouraged (O’Hagan & Mangiron, 2013).

Fansubbing, the activity of fans subtitling for fellow fans, originates in the 1980s with the subtitling of anime subculture (O’Hagan, 2009), and has now flourished following ‘the second wave’ in the new millennium (Massidda, 2019). Sometimes defined as a ‘abusive subtitling’ (Nornes, 2004/1999) because it disrupts the conventions and (some of) the norms of ‘standard’ subtitling, it has been appreciated more in traditionally dubbing countries as a faster and more faithful alternative to dubbing, but also in countries - like the US and China - where the more traditional forms of AVT, such as subtitling and dubbing, are not very common due to the dominant domestic production (Pedersen, 2019a). Very often associated with fansubbing is the practice of fandubbing which is the practice of “parodic and serious dubbing undertaken by fans, Internet users and digital influencers, be them professionals or amateurs” (Baños, 2020: 211).

Accessible Filmmaking, or AFM, can be defined as “the consideration of translation and/or accessibility during the production of audiovisual media in order to provide access to content for people who cannot access or who have difficulty accessing it in its original form” (Romero-Fresco, 2019b: 5-6). This proposal to integrate translation and accessibility in the

filmmaking process originates from the undeniable fact that MA and AVT are generally considered an afterthought in the production system of audiovisual material (Romero-Fresco, 2020). From its first academic publication (see Romero-Fresco, 2013), AFM is a now prolific topic in AVT/MA conferences, articles, university courses and research projects, (chapters of) books, etc. and has strengthened the connection between TS, AVTS, MAS and Film Studies.

1.5 State of the art

Historically, in the first half of the 21st century, there was distinction between the so-called 'dubbing countries' and the 'subtitling countries', at least in Europe. The 'dubbing countries' are identified with those countries where dubbing is the preferred AVT modality by their people and where such modality has grown exponentially thanks to the cross-fertilisation of practices, academic resources, and audience's responses. Such countries, usually identified with the acronym FIGS, are France, Germany, Spain, and Italy. Looking back at the history of these countries, it is possible to trace a common denominator, that of a strong dictatorship wishing to preserve the language spoken in the country (respectively French, German, Spanish, and Italian) and refusing to succumb to the English dominance of Hollywood. On the other hand, subtitling is the preferred AVT modality in the so-called 'subtitling countries' such as Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Sweden. Factors contributing to the preference of subtitling over dubbing can be found in the proficiency of English of their speakers, especially in northern European countries. However, it is a fact that 'developing' countries have always preferred subtitling over dubbing because it has always been, and still is, cheaper to achieve. This traditional division (see Díaz Cintas, 1999; Gambier, 1994, 2008; Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998; Luyken, 1990) is now blurring as countries have adopted a more dynamic approach towards AVT (and MA), but also, the advancements of technology and the sociological and ethnographical changes occurring in societies are calling for a more open approach towards this classification.

Looking at other countries in Europe, it is interesting to consider two cases: Poland and the UK. In Poland, Voice Over and, in particular Lektor - a usually male voice-over performer providing the translation of all characters' dialogue, spoken over the film's soundtrack (Sepielak & Matamala, 2014; Woźniak, 2012) - was traditionally the preferred AVT modality. Over time, audience preferences have shifted towards subtitling when it comes to cinema translation and, according to Szarkowska, "the audiovisual landscape in

Poland is undergoing considerable changes owing to rapid technological advances" (2009: 199).

Another example is the UK which, as an English-speaking country, has never taken part in the historic debate concerning dubbing *vs* subtitling, since there has never been any specific need to translate or adapt the predominant majority of films coming from Hollywood. However, the neglected mode of dubbing into English has been taken into account recently, as more and more foreign films have been introduced to the English audience. In fact, the demand for dubbing in English has grown exponentially across the globe and the phenomenon of English dubbing has become a recent research topic among scholars (see Díaz Cintas & Hayes, 2023).

Needless to say, that the impact of technology in the evolution of AVT modalities and practices from the practitioners' and stakeholders' points of view has been enormous, as well as its impact on the consumer's habits when it comes to audiovisual materials. With the advent of VoD and OTT platforms, consumption of film, series, and videos has skyrocketed, and whilst older generations are somewhat faithful to more established means of communication, such as TV, and to a less extent radio, younger generations are avidly consuming hours and hours of audiovisual contents and the limitations of certain AVT modalities have become more pressing as the production of the materials is also a fast-paced business. In other words, nowadays we are producing more and more AVT content. This content needs to be translated, adapted, and made accessible to heterogenous audiences around the globe. These audiences are consuming AVT products at an unprecedented rate which, in turn, demands for more content to be created. This virtuous circle is the essence of AVT and MA and the cross-fertilisation between the academia - where concepts and practices are investigated - and the industry - where the content is made and produced - is of paramount important, now more than ever.

Current trends in AVT and MA fields are closely connected to what's often referred to as the 'cloud-turn'. This shift involves leveraging cloud-based technology to enhance various processes, such as translation, adaptation, and recording (*e.g.*, dubbing and voice-over). These cloud-based tools make these processes faster, more cost-effective, foster collaboration, and ultimately result in higher quantity and improved quality of AVT and MA practices. Another significant trend is the strong emphasis on catering to the needs of users rather than merely focusing on the source texts, as highlighted by Perego and Pacinotti (2020).

1.6 Subtitling

Subtitling, is a practice that consists in presenting a written text, generally positioned at the bottom of the screen, with the aim of telling the original dialogue of the speakers (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007). Scholars have come up with different definitions of the notion of subtitles, from the most generic accounts to the more specific practices of subtitling. Drawing upon Díaz Cintas and Remael's taxonomy (2021), which facilitates a deeper understanding of the nature and societal significance of subtitles, as well as provides a comprehensive overview of subtitling practices, subtitles can be conceived and organised according to the following six criteria:

1. Linguistic
2. Time available for preparation
3. Display mode
4. Technical parameters
5. Methods of projection
6. Medium of distribution

1) From a **linguistic** point of view, subtitles can be classified as intralingual and interlingual subtitles. On the one hand, intralingual subtitles involve a shift from the oral to the written communicative dimension and, since there is no 'translation proper' process involved, they have often been identified as types of non-translation. They are usually associated with subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, but they also cover a didactic purpose addressed to students, migrants and children who are learning a first language or a foreign language. Furthermore, intralingual subtitles are employed for speakers with strong, local accents, or whose language use is subject to lexical variations from the 'standard' or commonly understandable. They are also used for songs and musicals, in the form of karaoke or sing along. On the other hand, interlingual subtitles imply the translation from a source language to a target language, in the case of monolingual subtitles. However, they can also be bilingual, traditionally used in countries where two official languages coexist, such as Belgium, Finland, Jordan, or Israel. Interlingual subtitles are a common practice at international film festivals, where two sets of subtitles in two different languages coexist, usually English for the international audience (film directors, producers, distributors, etc.) and the language of the host country, *e.g.*, French in Cannes, Italian in Venice, etc. (Díaz Cintas & Remael 2021; Uzzo, 2020). Finally, interlingual subtitles can also be multilingual, where three or more languages appear simultaneously on screen.

2) In relation to the **time available for preparation**, subtitles can be classified into pre-prepared or offline, and live or online. Pre-prepared or offline subtitles are the most common types in the film industry, where subtitlers are given enough time for the synchronisation and the translation of dialogues. Whereas live or online subtitles are achieved through a series of approaches, such as stenographers, Velotype keyboards and, more commonly, by means of respeaking. The combination of the two types originates semi-live subtitles, which are typically used for heavily scripted live programmes like news bulletins (EBU, 2004). Depending on the percentage of lexical density, subtitles can be further categorised into edited, mostly used in pre-prepared interlingual subtitles and verbatim, *i.e.*, a full and literal transcription, mostly used in intralingual subtitles.

3) Regarding the **display mode**, subtitles can appear as blocks or pop-ups, which represent the standard in pre-prepared subtitles, or as roll-ups, that is, what is mostly used in live subtitling, although viewers find them harder to follow because of the constant flow of text.

4) With respect to the **technical parameters**, subtitles can be open (burnt-in), which means that they cannot be activated or deactivated by viewers, or the post-production team, unless another copy is made, or closed, which means that they can be turned on and off by the viewers. In this perspective, forced narrative subtitles belong to the first category and are present in the original audiovisual products.

5) When it comes to the **method of projection**, it is possible to see a development following the advancements of subtitling technology. Today, electronic subtitling is the most frequently used method of projection, as subtitles are superimposed on the screen instead of being hardcoded onto the film, a method commonly known as laser subtitling, which inevitably hinders a copy of the film. Electronic subtitling is commonly used in film festivals, on television and in DVDs. Newer technologies allow for subtitles to be displayed in 3D, in 360° videos, in virtual and augmented reality, and research on the effects of these new environments is slowly catching the attention of scholars.

6) Lastly, the **medium for the distribution** of audiovisual products may affect the way in which subtitles are produced. Hence, it is important to distinguish between cinema, video, VHS, DVD, VCD, Blu-ray, TV, and the Internet. Therefore, it is not unusual to find different sets of subtitles for the same programme for commercial and copyright reasons, but also for aesthetic and technical reasons.

Two concepts recurring in all forms of subtitles, including inclusive subtitles, are the so-called spatial and temporal features, which are usually referred to as ‘constraints’. As stated by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007: 40; 2021: 93) “the best subtitles are those that

viewers do not notice”, although viewers must be able to see and read them in order to understand the plot, therefore it could be argued that “subtitles should not perturb, in any way, the individual’s reading experience” (Szarkowska *et al.*, 2021: 666). This is achievable through a series of spatial and temporal features that are common to most forms of subtitles in different countries. Such features regard the following items:

- Maximum number of lines
- Position on screen
- Alignment and Justification
- Font type, size, and colour
- Maximum number of characters per line
- Display Rate
- Synchronisation and Spotting
- Timecodes
- Minimum Duration
- Maximum Duration
- Gap between subtitles
- (Behaviour around) shot-changes

These elements are to be intended as rules, norms, and recommendations approved by the industry and scholars have been questioning the same norms over the decades in which (interlingual) subtitling has been an object of study. They draw conclusions from three of the most relevant manuals written in the past 25 years or so, namely *Subtitling* by Ivarsson and Carroll (1998), *Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling* (2007) and *Subtitling: Concepts and Practices* (2021) both by Díaz Cintas and Remael.

With respect to the **number of lines**, in order to minimise the pollution of the original photography as much as possible, the maximum number should be set to two, although some companies and countries allow three, and even four, a practice that is gradually disappearing. If the text is short enough to fit in a single line, it is preferable to arrange it in this manner to minimise interference with the images. This one-liner can be placed either at the top or bottom line. Generally, positioning it at the bottom line is favoured due to its less obstructive nature. However, placing it at the top line is also preferred, especially in contexts with large screens like cinemas, as it is easier for the eye to spot.

These one-liners or two-liners should be placed at the **bottom of the screen** within the so-called safe area (the visible area of the video screen where the text will not be cut

regardless of the method of projection or the medium of distribution), unless they obstruct important actions of the film or clash with on-screen text, *i.e.*, graphics with text appearing on screen. They should be centre-aligned and centre-justified.

The **font** used for subtitles should be as legible as possible, therefore neutral fonts without serifs, like Arial, Verdana or Helvetica are preferred (at least for Western languages) and the size should be appropriately calculated depending on the dimension of the device. The colour should be white, or occasionally yellow for black and white movies for better contrast, although other colours can used for different purposes, such as for speaker identifications in SDH.

The maximum **number of characters** per line depends on many factors, including the difference between traditional monospaced fonts like Courier and Consolas, used in SDH for TV, and proportional lettering or variable-width fonts, like the above-mentioned. Therefore, the number fluctuates between 35 for teletext for TV and 42 for VoD, like Netflix for example, who developed their own proprietary typeface, known as Netflix Sans (Brewer, 2018).

As far as the **temporal dimension** is concerned, a key concept in subtitling is that of frame rate, *i.e.*, the frequency at which frames in a television, film, or video sequence are displayed, measured in fps (frames per second). In cinema, the **frame rate** is 24 fps, and in other media, including TV, it is 25 fps or 30 fps depending on the region. For high-definition broadcasting, the number of frames doubles to 50 fps or 60 fps respectively. The synchronisation, also known as timing, cueing, or spotting, of subtitles, determines the in-time, the out-time, and therefore the duration of the subtitles in a production. A TCR (Time-Code Reader) assigns an eight-digit figure to each and every frame of the audiovisual product indicating hours, minutes, seconds, and frames (free software sometimes work with milliseconds instead of frames). The **minimum duration** of a subtitle should be 1 second, although some companies allow as low as 20 frames, whereas the **maximum duration** should be no more than six seconds for a full two-liner, although some companies are decreasing this limit to 5 seconds (7 seconds is also accepted in certain circumstances or by some companies). These numbers are based on early studies which led to the so-called 'six-second rule' (d'Ydewalle *et al*., 1987) based on the concept that an average viewer can comfortably read up to 72 characters (*i.e.*, 36 characters per line plus one character used for the coding of colours for speaker identification) in six seconds.

If a subtitle of 72 characters, including spaces and punctuation, remains on screen for six seconds, its display rate will be 12 cps (characters per second) which equals to 150 wpm (words per minute, based on the assumption that a word equals 5 characters on

average). This conversion between cps and wpm is based on the average number of characters per word which varies depending on the language, for example this number is 5 in English and 6 in German, therefore cps is a more accurate unit of measure for display rate. Subtitling **display rate** (Pedersen, 2011) can therefore be defined as the relationship that exists between the quantity of text contained in a subtitle and the time it remains on screen. It is a more accurate term for what is often referred to as 'reading speed' which, as the name suggests, is the rate at which viewers read the subtitles. To find the correct and ultimate answer to the proper subtitling display rate is somewhat utopic, as utopic is the idea of 'an average viewer'. However, conventionally, 12 cps or 150 wpm was the standard for television up until the advent of DVD which raised the rate at 15 cps or 180 wpm. With the advent of OTT media services, which allow viewers to pause and rewind audiovisual content, and the increased allowance of characters per line, nowadays a display rate of 17 cps or 200 wpm is considered acceptable for programmes for adults (whereas for children the recommendation is 13 cps or 160 wpm). Lastly, a small pause between two consecutive subtitles, *i.e.*, a **gap between subtitles**, should be left empty. It should be of 2 frames in order to allow enough time for the human eye to process the change from one subtitle to the other, but this is not always the case, as it happens with consecutive or back-to-back subtitles needed, for example, in SDH for television displayed in the teletext mode.

Also crucial is the behaviour of subtitles around **shot-changes**, with the golden rule of not having the same subtitle over a shot-change and definitely not hanging over the following scene, and with the ultimate guidance of using the subtitler's best judgement for complex sequences.

In order to improve legibility - how easy it is to read a text on screen - and readability - how easy a viewer can recognise the components of a text - certain rules, norms, and guidelines ought to be applied to subtitling. However, a fixed and globally accepted set of subtitling guidelines is yet to be written, and both scholars and industry players somehow abandoned this idea realising that each country and their linguistic variants (European Spanish *vs* Latin American Spanish, for instance) may wish to draw customised set of guidelines incorporating the cultural and linguistic idiosyncrasies and grammar.

With that in mind, punctuation is a pivotal part of languages and therefore of subtitles, and the following are to be understood as some of the most common practical uses of punctuation in subtitles, in English:

- Comma (,): used to divide a sentence into sections, in lists, with vocatives, and it is avoided at the end of a subtitle as a subtitle is considered a syntactic unit on its own.

- Full stop (.): used at the end of a subtitle to indicate that the sentence has ended and that the following subtitles is part of a new syntactic unit.
- Colon (:): introduces a list, an enumeration, an explanation, or a quote (direct speech in which case it is followed by a space, a quotation mark, and an uppercase letter).
- Semi colon (;): is very rarely used in subtitling.
- Parentheses ( ): are hardly used in subtitling as they usually provide supplementary information which can be conveyed in other ways.
- Exclamation marks (!) and question marks (?): express a variety of feelings, irony, commands, etc., but they should be used sparingly.
- Hyphen (-): is used in dialogue subtitles when two (and no more than two) speakers appear within the same subtitle, each occupying one line. They can be assigned one per speaker or only in the second line, *i.e.,* for the second speaker. One hyphen can also indicate stuttering, and two hyphens can indicate the abrupt interruption of a sentence.
- Triple dots (…): used in the past for sentences divided into multiple subtitles (although this practice is now considered a waste of space) are now used to indicate prosodic features of the speech, like pauses and hesitations.
- Quotation marks (“ ”): usually used to indicate direct speech and exact quotations or texts read out loud.

More punctuation conventions and signs will be explored with reference to subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing in a similar fashion, and the use of more unconventional signs will be explored further and adapted in Chapter 5.3.4 with regard to the punctuation of inclusive subtitles.

Other conventions commonly used in subtitling are uppercase letters and italics. Uppercase letters are usually employed for on-screen text if the text is short (a NO SMOKING sign, for example) and they are never accompanied by punctuation. Italics is a valid alternative to many of the above-mentioned cases as it saves space, and the message is conveyed without resorting to extra characters like punctuation. It is used in different ways by different companies and different countries for off screen or off camera dialogues, emphasis, voices heard from an electronic device, internal voices, titles, songs, etc.

In the practice of subtitling, segmentation means dividing the dialogues into subtitles following the rhythm of the speech and syntactic rules, whilst we refer to line breaks as the distribution of a sentences over two lines within the same subtitles. Such distribution should

always take into account the lexical semantics and syntax. Therefore, separating article and noun, noun and adjective, subject and verb, etc. should be avoided.

As already mentioned, subtitling is one of the main modalities of AVT, which has been studied by many scholars who have tackled different aspects of the practice itself from different viewpoints, exploiting the intersectionality of the practice. With reference to marked speech and language variation, some scholars have focussed their attention on the style and register of subtitles, dialects, sociolects and slang, swearwords and taboo words, accents, and pronunciations; some other scholars have focussed their attention on the translation of songs, and the translation of cultural references and humour, and again censorship and authorship in subtitling have been object of many studies. This shows that the modality of subtitling is a rich playground for both theoretical and practical research and that such research can tackle various aspects of the practice itself which, as already stated, encompasses types or variations, including SDH and IS.

1.7 Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing

SDH, often used in an intralinguistic context, is a more complex variant of standard subtitling, in which the time and space constraints are adapted to the needs of deaf audiences. Its purpose is to allow deaf and hard of hearing people to access the audiovisual material. SDH tell, not only the dialogues, but also the information related to sounds, noises, music, and intonation of the voice. 'Subtitles for the deaf and the hard of hearing' is the term generally used in Europe, whereas in the US, Canada, and Australia the term adopted is 'Closed Captioning' (Neves, 2008). Over the decades, the expression, or the label to refer to this practice has been tweaked, not to be adapted to the evolution of the practice itself, but to reflect a more inclusive and politically correct term or label for the same practice. Therefore, the term has taken many forms including:

- Subtitling/Subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing
- Subtitling/Subtitles for d/Deaf and hard of hearing
- Subtitling/Subtitles for the Deaf and hard of hearing
- Subtitling/Subtitles for the Deaf and the hard of hearing
- Subtitling/Subtitles for Deaf and hard of hearing audiences
- Subtitling/Subtitles for Deaf and hard of hearing people
- Subtitling/Subtitles for Deaf and hard of hearing viewers
- Subtitling/Subtitles for people who are deaf or hard of hearing

It is also common to see the words ‘Hard of Hearing’ (with uppercase H) and the word ‘hard-of-hearing’ hyphened. Moreover, the acronyms related to the practice itself have followed these tweaks becoming ‘SDH’, ‘SDHH’, ‘SDHoH’. Debating on the correct and appropriate terminology may appear time-consuming and not particularly productive, although terms and labels carry important meanings, especially if related to people who have a disability.

As previously mentioned, SDH are as old as having intertitles between scenes with the written dialogues of the actors. In the late 1940s the first attempts of SDH appeared on screen, nevertheless the history of SDH is closely linked to the history of television and in particular to the introduction of the teletext, a system that allows written information to be displayed on television, a system that was originally invented to display a whole range of features and information which is now mostly used for SDH on television. It has taken different names according to the broadcaster and the country and, in a way, it laid the foundation of SDH as it provided a vast number of people, including people who are deaf or hard of hearing, with subtitles directly in their homes. On the other hand, as many teletext systems were developed in the 1970s and 1980s, the research at that time greatly influenced the norms, which, just like the system itself, hasn’t changed much since. Later on, SDH appeared also in DVDs, but the vast majority of SDH was intralingual (English into English), following the anglo-centric hegemony of English-speaking Hollywood. With the advent of VoD and OTT platforms, users were, and still are, given the choice of an intralingual subtitle track for hearing-impaired audiences under the label of CC (Closed Captions) following an etymologically correct label because:

a) they are indeed closed, in the sense that users can activate and deactivate them as they please,
b) and they are captions, in the sense that the vast majority of OTT platforms are based in, or originate from, the US, where this label refers to intralingual subtitles for hearing-impaired audiences.

‘Subtitling for the deaf and the hard of hearing’ is the preferred and standard terms used in academia to refer to both practices (Neves, 2019) although this may be due to the fact that the vast majority of research and studies on the subject is carried out by scholars in Europe.

I maintain that SDH is a variant of subtitles suitable for hearing-impaired audience more appropriate to TV through the teletext system. Its characteristics are: speaker

identification through colour, condensed text, intralingual mostly, technically more limited. On the other hand, CC are suitable for online content, be it YouTube, streaming platforms, VoD, and OTT platforms, as their technical limitations are less demanding. Its characteristics are: verbatim text, mostly intralingual but also interlingual, speaker identification through name tags, abundance of sound effects, music and songs indications.

Both SDH and CC, unlike standard interlingual subtitling, share some characteristics which help the hearing-impaired audiences understand and appreciate more any audiovisual material. Such characteristics are:

- Speaker identification
- Description of sound
- Para-linguistic elements
- Description of music and song

and their output depends greatly on the country, medium or even the broadcaster or company.

With relation to **speaker identification**, or speaker ID, the three most common techniques are: 1) name tags, 2) different colours and 3) speaker-dependent placement. Name tags are mainly used in CC and consist in the insertion of the name of speaker, when it is not clearly visible who is speaking, before the text they utter; they can be all in uppercase, and/or between square brackets, and/or within round parentheses; they can be followed by a colon to indicate the beginning of the sentence. Name tags can be proper names of the characters, if known, or generic description of the character, such as [male] if the character is a man as opposed to a woman in the same scene, or [woman 2] to distinguish a second unnamed woman appearing in the story different from the previously mentioned one, or [patrons] if referred to more than one character belonging to the same group in the scene, for example patrons in a cinema theatre, all uttering the same sentence; and so and so forth. Different colours are also used as a form of speaker identification and they are either attributed to the same character throughout the film, or they change from scene to scene, or they indicate different elements of SDH (such as on-screen, off-screen, sound effects, etc.). Usually there is a hierarchy of colours in which more standard colours like white or yellow are associated with the main character and other colours, like cyan, magenta, and green are allocated to other characters. Another way to indicate the speaker is to place the relevant subtitle as close as possible to the area of the screen that the speaker occupies; the most simple way to do so is to position the subtitle at the bottom of the screen

either to the left, the centre, or the right, but if the technology allows it, they can also be placed closer to the speaker, right below their mouth or around the torso area, to better indicate who is speaking.

Besides the speaker identification, another crucial element of SDH and CC is the **description of sound**, or sound effects, either diegetic, *i.e.*, sound within the film, such as a gunfire in an action scene or a door creaking in a horror film; or non-diegetic, *i.e.*, sound effects added in the post-production stage (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). The translation of sounds into text is somewhat challenging as subtitlers or captioners should provide an objective description in just a few words, but SDH "is not an objective science" (Zdenek, 2015: 4), therefore guidelines usually refrain from providing clear instructions, but rather they suggest good or bad practices based on research and experience. Sound effects can be displayed in many ways, including describing the sound within square brackets or round parentheses, or assigning a specific colour combination to distinguish it from dialogue subtitles. More creative and experimental ways to describe sound effects include the use of onomatopoeias, or miniature pictures with the object producing the sound (*e.g.,* a picture of a telephone to describe the sound produced by the telephone ringing), or emoticons.

Para-linguistic elements usually refer to speech sounds and can indicate different information, such as accents of certain characters if relevant to the plot or to the definition of the characters themselves, manners of speaking, emphasis, and intonation of the voices if relevant to the plot (*e.g.*, when a character is shouting orders in standard subtitling, a single exclamation mark would suffice, whereas in SDH and CC a para-linguistic element is usually added). They usually take the form of text written between round parentheses or sometimes within square brackets, just like name tags.

Lastly, the **description of music and lyrics** can be achieved by adding a sign, usually a musical note (♪ or ♫ in CC) or a hashtag (# in SDH) in the subtitle(s). They can be placed at the beginning only, or repeated for each subtitle with songs or lyrics, or at the beginning and at the end of the song, or a combination of the above. Also, if copyrights have been cleared, the title of the song and the performer may appear on screen as subtitles. Once again, if the music is added in post-production and it serve the purpose of suggesting certain feelings in the viewers, for example a romantic music in a romantic film or a scary music in a horror movie, objectivity and common sense are key in order to avoid spoon-feeding feelings to the hearing-impaired audiences, thus avoiding subtitles that read [emotional music].

Similarly to standard subtitling, SDH and CC share the same or similar features with the specificity of being addressed to a different audiences, that is deaf / Deaf / hard of hearing people.

With that in mind, it is possible to revisit the previously mentioned features applied to standard subtitling and analyse how they can be adapted (if at all) to the different audiences. But first it is important to remember the taxonomy or classification proposed by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2021).

From a linguistic point of view, the vast majority of SDH and CC is intralingual, but it can also be interlingual (Neves, 2009; Szarkowska, 2013), and in countries where dubbing is the preferred method of language transfer, SDH is usually obtained through the transcription of the dubbed dialogues, or translated directly from the original dialogues (Szarkowska, 2020).

With respect to the time available for preparation, SDH and CC can be pre-recorded, semi-live or live. Pre-recorded SDH or CC are more common in films and series, whereas semi-live and live are used in news programmes and live shows. Live SDH are usually achieved through stenocaptioning in the US, and through respeaking in Europe, and they are more prone to errors due to their live nature.

Regarding the display mode, "the major divide, technically speaking, is between 'pop on' or 'block subtitles' and 'scrolling' subtitles" (Remael, 2007: 29) with 'pop on' being preferred for pre-recorded SDH and CC for films and series and 'scrolling' subtitles being preferred for live SDH in news programmes and live shows.

Regarding the technical parameters, just like standard subtitles, SDH or CC *can* be either open (*i.e.,* burnt-in onto the video) or closed (*i.e.,* they *can* be activated or deactivated by the users) (my emphasis). However, *can* only means that it is technically possible to do so. The previous distinction between SDH (for TV) and CC (for OTT and the Internet) proves to be of relevance at this point, as it allows a clearer distinction between the two, and it introduces a third option. Both SDH for TV and CC for OTT are closed, in the sense that the user can activate or deactivate them as they please using the TV remote control or adjusting the settings in the case of OTT, VoD platforms, the Internet, etc. They are not open in the sense that they are not burnt-in onto the video because the video is a in a digital form and not in a physical form, or better yet, the materials accessible to the user (the video, the SDH/CC track in the source language, the SDH/CC track in other languages) are offered as 'layers', with the video being the main layer, and the SDH/CC being other layers being overlaid (placed over). In the case of CC for OTT, VoD, the CC files are uploaded directly to the related webpage or application; and in the case of SDH for TV, the system that allows

viewers to turn SDH on and off is the teletext system: a system specifically designed for TV in the early 1970s which offers a range of text-based information, typically news, weather and TV schedules, through a series of 'pages'. Nowadays, this type of information is available virtually anywhere else for the convenience of consumers, therefore the teletext system is mainly used for displaying SDH. Lastly, much like standard subtitling, SDH and/or CC can be found in many mediums of distributions, such as, cinema, video, VHS, DVD, VCD, Blu-ray, TV, and the Internet.

When analysing SDH and CC from different perspectives, a few factors should be taken into account.

1. First of all, SDH and CC, are historically considered an "intralingual written renders of the screen dialogues and accounts of other aural components (sound effects and music) in audiovisual material" (Neves, 2019: 83). In other words, they were considered transcriptions of dialogues with the added bonus of description of sound effects and music, which are beneficial to a small portion of the population which happens to have a hearing impairment.
2. Secondly, but closed related to the first point, the two major countries who developed the practice have been the US and the UK: both English-speaking countries who benefited for decades of their privileged position of not having to translate or localise audiovisual material into their own language as the vast majority originated from Hollywood.
3. Thirdly, as Remael points out, "in Europe, the first experiments with SDH on television largely coincided with the introduction of teletext" (2007: 23). This also meant that, whilst the technology may have been similar, each country developed their own norms and guidelines for the specific needs of their own language, and within the same country, the different broadcasters developed internal norms and guidelines for their specific needs, with the national public broadcaster usually being the leader in research and developments.
4. Lastly, the developments and advancements of SDH and CC are somewhat dictated by legal and social aspects. From a social viewpoint, SDH and CC (aim to) cater to a portion of the population 'that has a variable degree of hearing impairment' (my emphasis), which means that their needs are studied, analysed, and met with the intent of overcoming their 'variable degree of hearing impairment' for a full enjoyment of a film or a series and for the full access to information. This view goes hand in hand with a legal standpoint, according to which this small portion of the population has

equal rights in accessing information and entertainment. In other words: a small portion of the population has some degree of hearing impairment, therefore they are unable to, or partially able to, access information and entertainment; the law, at different government levels, protects the rights of this portion of the population and mandates broadcasters and the audiovisual industry to provide accessibility services to this portion of the population, setting up minimum requirements - quantity - and promoting standards - quality.

Quantity and quality are two key aspects of SDH and CC as, in a more global and less Western-centric view, this portion of the population happens to exist in all countries of the world, and each country of the world has different minimum requirements of audiovisual material being subtitled or captioned (if at all) and applies different standards to the quality of such products. In a more direct and thought-provoking viewpoint, whilst countries like the US and the UK have a decades-long history of providing SDH and CC, and are focusing their efforts in improving the standards and the quality of the services, other countries are still dealing with minimum requirements of subtitled and captioned programmes on TV, and when it comes to 'places of culture', such as cinemas, film festivals, theatres, operas, galleries, exhibitions, museums, etc., the situation is far more grim, and greater efforts must be ensured to achieve that tipping point where quantity is no longer an issue and the debate on quality becomes a conversation on how to make something great even better.

1.7.1 Linguistic and technical features of SDH/CC

Going back to the distinguishing features of any type of subtitling, namely: Text Adaptation, Maximum number of lines, Position on screen, Alignment and Justification, Font type, size, and colour, Maximum number of characters per line, Display Rate, Synchronisation and Spotting, Timecodes, Minimum Duration, Maximum Duration, Gap between subtitles, (Behaviour around) shot-changes, and with specific reference to SDH and CC, not all the above-mentioned features require further analysis. However, a few hot topic tackled by various scholars, as well as broadcasters and stakeholders, but also Deaf organisations and hearing-impaired audiences, are still up for debate. In particular:

- Text adaptation
- Display rate (or reading speed)
- Maximum number of lines
- Position on screen

- Font (type, size, and colour)

With reference to **text adaptation**, the debate focuses on whether subtitles and captions should be verbatim, standard, or edited. In order to measure empirically whether one method is better than another, experiments involving eye tracking have been carried out by scholars by examining four parameters, namely: the proportion of dwell time spent on caption reading relative to scene viewing, the fixation count, the deflections from image to subtitles and captions, the overall comprehension (for a comprehensive overview, see Szarkowska *et al*, 2011). The debate is not only scientific and technical, but also political with different groups involved in the decision, or at least in the conversation, as highlighted by Romero-Fresco (2009) and Neves (2007) who identify up to three stakeholders: Deaf organisations and hard of hearing viewers demanding equal access to dialogues (*i.e.*, verbatim subtitles and captions) to avoid any form of censorship; broadcasters and OTT platforms supporting verbatim subtitles mainly for financial reasons (*i.e.*, it is less time-consuming and therefore cheaper to transcribe the dialogues word for word as opposed to edit the text); and researchers, many of whom, advocate for edited subtitles and captions based on the fact that verbatim subtitles and captions call for higher reading speeds making the process of reading the text hard or at times impossible, thus hindering comprehension.

The topic of **reading speed** is a very important topic when it comes to an audience that, in general terms, has different reading skills within the same group, and these skills are different from the majority of the population. Early studies on the reading abilities of deaf and hard of hearing people somewhat contradicted themselves (see de Linde & Kay, 1999; Conrad, 1977) or are considered less relevant 20-30-40 years later. It should be noted that finding the perfect display rate is a colossal challenge that academics and stakeholders have tried to overcome for years, especially with specific audiences such as hearing-impaired people and children. For example, Romero-Fresco (2015), with reference to SDH, talks about 'viewing speed' rather than reading speed, as in audiovisual products the combination of text (subtitles) and images is of pivotal importance, and more time spent on reading subtitles means less time spent on watching images. Different countries have come up with different solutions on the topic based on national studies carried out with deaf and hard of hearing viewers. On a more global scale, the tendency is to reduce the reading speed of SDH and CC taking into account that written languages are not, or may not be, the mother tongue of the target audience, as it is the case in signing deaf people, although some VoD and OTT platforms, such as Netflix, allow higher reading speed for CC than for 'standard' interlingual subtitles.

In relation to the space allocated for text - in the form of subtitles or captions - and images, and how these two elements compete and co-exist at the same time, an important notion to be considered is that of the **maximum number of characters per line**, and the maximum number of lines per subtitles. Such delicate balance must take into consideration the space available for the display of subtitles or captions, professionally known as 'safe area', the "visible area of the video screen where the text will not be cut regardless of the over-scan (margin of the video image that is normally not visible)" (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 94). To avoid the unnecessary cluttering of the screen, and to allow enough space for the images and the actions of the audiovisual product, which are usually occurring at the centre of the screen, subtitles should be of no more than two lines. However, it is not uncommon, or even better it *was* not uncommon, to see subtitles occupying three and sometimes even four lines. Partially, this is also connected to the maximum number of characters per line as, for example, the teletext systems allow fewer characters within the same line as they are mono-spaced; on the other hand, in CC, as the added information related to speaker identification is conveyed in the form of tags preceding the text, this added information occupies characters which would be otherwise used for dialogues, thus, the need for a third, or even a fourth, line of caption. In doing so, inevitably the subtitles or captions occupy more space on the screen taken away from images and actions, and thus rendering the subtitles the opposite of 'uncluttering', 'unnoticeable', and 'subtle'.

In relation to the **position of the subtitles or captions on screen**, speaker-dependant placement is a technique that "moves the subtitles or captions in different parts of the screen, depending on the location of the characters in the frame" (Szarkowska, 2020: 254). Such technique, although still seen in older audiovisual productions, is becoming more and more obsolete, perhaps due to the fact that viewers have to allow extra time shortly after the appearance of the subtitle or caption to locate it within the screen, as opposed to expect the appearance of the subsequent subtitle in the same position within the screen, usually at the bottom centre or bottom left. This technique was used more in the past, and the reasoning behind was to allow the deaf viewers to visually associate the dialogue with the character speaking, or the sound with its source, thus following a sensical intention with poor results.

Similarly to standard subtitling, in CC, *i.e.,* in subtitles for a hearing-impaired audience available online, it is possible to set **font type,** size and colour in order to suit individual needs and/or preferences. The viewer is given the opportunity to customise the subtitles by choosing the font, making the test bigger or smaller, and selecting the preferred foreground and/or background colour (if any) of subtitles. In other words, and to provide a visual aid,

the same subtitle can be seen as per Figure 5 or as per Figure 6 depending on the level of customisation.

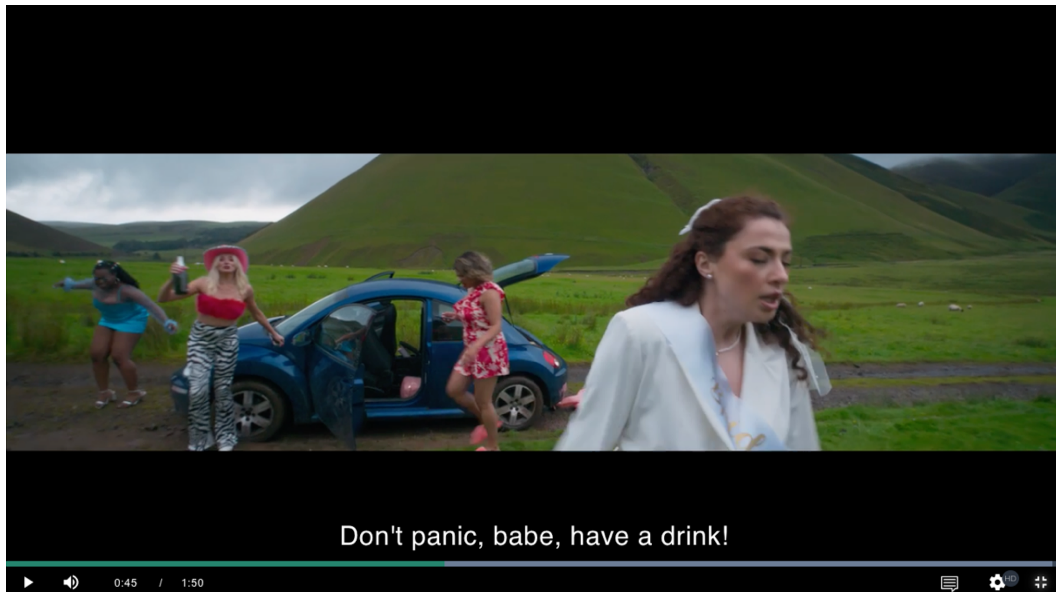

Figure 5. Arial, 100%, White on Black subtitle.

Figure 6. Comics sans, 400%, Red on Magenta subtitle.

However, unlike standard subtitling, the use of different colours applied to selected subtitles' foreground and/or background throughout the file, carries a different meaning, that of Speaker Identification (a technique that enables to understand who is speaking when it's not clear). This practice is more used in SDH in TV through the teletext systems which allow a set number of colours to be displayed correctly on TV. The different associations between

colours and characters, or between colours and sound effects, vary from country to country, and from broadcaster to broadcaster.

As previously mentioned, each country and even each broadcaster and stakeholder has adopted different norms and has developed different guidelines which do not necessarily apply elsewhere. The following sections will look at certain countries which are more relevant for this project, offering a brief overview of the history of SDH or CC in said country, a mention on the local Deaf community, a list of local legislations and a general consideration about the accessibility mediascape of said country. Firstly, the UK as a leading country in this field and the place of the film festivals under scrutiny in this project; then, the US, as another English-speaking country at the forefront of the developments of CC and place of origin of many OTT platforms; then, Italy, as the country of various studies and applications of inclusive subtitles carried out by the author.

1.7.2 In the UK

As previously mentioned, the UK is a leading country in Europe when it comes to its accessibility mediascape. From TV to cinemas, from theatres to museums, from local organisations to national legislations, the UK has always been ahead of the game in making (audiovisual) content accessible to people with sensory disabilities. Paired with good infrastructures for people with disabilities, and jointly with a sensibility for diversity and inclusion, the UK is a good place to start a conversation about audiovisual accessibility.

One of the first attempts of SDH in the UK dates back to 1949, where a film was screened with subtitles in a London cinema thanks to J. Arthur Rank, who developed a method to insert pieces of glass with etched words in and out of a projector (Neves, 2005). Then, in 1972 the BBC (British Broadcasting Company) announced its Ceefax teletext service with the introduction of SDH in 1979 (Robson, 2004; Remael, 2007). In 2008, the BBC have managed to subtitle 100% of their programmes (Romero-Fresco, 2015) and the other main channels were not short of that. These (extra)ordinary results are being monitored and reported by the Ofcom (Office of Communications), the government-approved regulatory authority for the broadcasting in the UK whose aim, amongst other things, is to “make sure a range of companies provide quality television and radio programmes that appeal to diverse audiences” (Ofcom, n.d.).

When it comes to cinemas, the situation in the UK is not as bright as it might seem, with a staggering percentage of cinemas being not accessible. According to Your Local Cinema (Your Local Cinema, n.d.), a non-profit social enterprise,

> around 99% of UK cinema screenings are NOT accessible to film fans with hearing loss. Of the 1% or so that ARE accessible, via English-language captions, many are provided at inconvenient, unsociable times. Only a handful (less than a half-percent of that 1%) are provided on Fri/Sat evenings - the most popular cinema-going times. Around 60% are screened mid-week, and almost 75% are screened before 6pm (Yourlocalcinema, n.d.).

The few screenings accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing are indeed scheduled at very inconvenient and unsocial times, and many organisations, associations and groups of cinema fans have been reporting this dreadful situation, including the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, or RNID (RNID, n.d.), formerly known as Action on Hearing Loss. One of the recurring arguments put forward by these associations is the enforcement of the Equality Act of 2010 which, amongst other provisions for people of diverse backgrounds and characteristics, and with particular reference to this subject, imposes a duty to make "reasonable adjustments" (Equality Act, 2010). Another often cited regulation pertaining specifically to audiovisual accessibility is the Audiovisual Media Service Regulations (2009/2014).

Places of culture, such as, museums and galleries have implemented services, such as subtitles and sign languages tours or video-tours to make their exhibitions accessible to visitors who are hearing-impaired. On the other hand, cultural events, such as theatre performances, opera houses, film festivals and public events are still following a pattern similar to UK cinemas, where only a few performances are accessible to hearing-impaired audiences through subtitles and/or BSL (British Sign Language) interpreters, perpetuating an unsocial attitude towards arts in general.

1.7.3 In the US

Another English-speaking country, the US, has also been at the forefront of subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, which in this section only, will be referred to as Closed Captions or CC.

The first captions in the US appeared in 1947 by Emerson Romero, a Deaf person himself, who developed a system to insert frames with only text between the scenes, similarly to intertitles (Neves, 2005), and in 1972 the first captioned TV broadcast on PBS was *The French Chef* with Julia Child (Szarkowska, 2020).

At the 1978 *Symposium on Research and Utilization of Educational Media for Teaching the Deaf*, in Lincoln, Nebraska, Sillman presented a paper describing the so-called 'Line 21 System' to remark what follows:

> Although the television picture is constructed of 525 lines, the first 21 lines (called, collectively, the "vertical interval") in each image field are blank to allow for necessary transmitter and receiver picture synchronizing functions to take place. Some of these blank lines can be used to transmit data in many forms, including captions. Because these lines normally do not appear on the home television screen, the coded information contained on them can only be seen when converted to "visible" images by some decoding device. Because PBS [Public Broadcasting Service] has selected Line 21 for caption data transmission, the last line before the start of the regular transmitted picture, the PBS closed-captioning system has come to be known as the "Line 21 System." (1978: online)

It could be argued that, in the US the system allowing captions to be displayed on TV is called 'Line-21 system' which can be compared to the teletext system used by TV broadcasters in Europe. In its conclusions, he envisioned that combination of closed-captioned transmission system, programming, and a home decoder would be made available by the fall of 1979. He then states: "Let us hope that this will signal the end of the exclusion of the hearing-impaired from this significant part of our social and cultural life." (Sillman, 1978: online).

He also acknowledges a collaboration with the Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C. to test this new technology. The same institution, now called Gallaudet University (Gallaudet University, n.d.), is to these days a beacon of civilisation, integration, and accessibility for the American Deaf community, as the world leader in liberal education and career development for deaf and hard of hearing students. It has been the *alma mater* of many American Deaf artists, professionals and activists and it actively encourages a bilingual learning modality (ASL - American Sign Language - and English).

At an associational level, the National Association of the Deaf, or NAD (NAD, n.d.), is the nation's premier civil rights organisation *of, by,* and *for* (my emphasis) deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the US.

From a legislation perspective, one of the most influential laws is the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA (1990) and its final rule (2016), titled 'Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations-Movie Theaters; Movie Captioning and Audio Description'. Another law pertaining to audiovisual accessibility and the provision of CC is the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, or CVAA (2010).

1.7.4 In Italy

In Italy, RAI was the first broadcaster to show a programme with SDH in May 1986 (Hitchcock's *Rear Window*) (De Seriis, 2006) and it has been since the main provider of accessibility services on national television.

RAI, the public broadcaster in Italy, has developed their own teletext system, called Televideo, and has been using it since the 1980s to transmit SDH for the Italian audience. Although technology hasn't changed in the past 40 years, experience and methodology has, with RAI reporting to spend 15-20 hours to subtitles a 60-minute programme in 1986 as opposed to half that time in 2016 (RAI, 2020). The minimum amount of hours to be subtitled, along with other standards and requirements on public television is regulated by the *Contratto di servizio* [Service Contract] (RAI, n.d.) which is renewed every five years. A new department within RAI, called *Direzione Pubblica Utilità* [Public Utility] oversees and develops projects and the accessibility services of audiovisual products for all RAI programming. These include SDH, services in LIS (Italian Sign Language), AD, available to users on TV and on RaiPlay, RAI web platform (RaiPlay, n.d.). It also looks after Rai Easy Web (Rai Easy Web, n.d.), the RAI Accessibility site for sensory disabilities. On this website, it is possible to find direct access to audio described, subtitled, and signed on-demand programming available on RAI platforms, as well as content specifically designed or selected for audiences with visual or hearing impairments, such as multimedia works, e-books and audio-video games. Their accessibility efforts are also expanding and diversifying with initiatives, such as the *Sanremo Accessibile* [Accessible Sanremo Song Contest] with the provision of SDH, AD, SL interpreting and SL performers; Audiovideogames (accessible videogames); and the *Accessibilità Audiovisiva Integrata* [Integrated Audiovisual Accessibility] project for Italian L2 learners, through a multi-competence glottodidactic approach.

On the other hand, private broadcaster Mediaset has stopped the teletext transmission, called Mediavideo, in 2022, as it was considered obsolete. However, SDH have been moved to a different system, more similar to CC, which can be activated by a single button of the remote control, without having to go through the pages of the Mediavideo. The SDH maintain some of the characteristics especially from a graphic and visual viewpoint (coloured speaker ID, spaced font, etc.) perhaps to avoid the drastic switch to a different representation of subtitles. This piece of news has been positively welcomed by the Italian Deaf community (ENS, 2022), also because it increases the volume of subtitled programmes, it streamlines the activation of SDH for an easier use, and, since the SDH are created based on the Italian dubbing of the programme (in the case of foreign content), this in turn allows people with residual hearing to read and listen the same dialogues at the same time. This practice is particularly interesting and useful for people who are hard of hearing and wish to watch a foreign film with the 'illusion' of listening what the characters are actually saying.

If the television ecosystem is somewhat increasing the volume, improving the quality, and diversifying their offer, the landscape of accessible cinemas is far from satisfactory with a minimum number of accessible screenings across Italy usually scheduled at inconvenient and unsocial times - which is a common trait reported by Deaf people and organisations through Europe. The lack of accessible cinemas has led various groups and organisations to become more active (and activists) in demanding equal access to the cinematographic heritage and in joining the so-called *Manifesto per l'accessibilità e la fruizione in autonomia del patrimonio culturale cinematografico* [Manifesto for the accessibility and independent enjoyment of film heritage] (+Cultura Accessibile - Cinemanchìo, 2019) promoting more accessible screenings at more convenient and sociable times.

There are laws in place in the country to promote, and enforce, certain standards of accessibility, in particular the so-called *Disciplina del cinema e dell'audiovisivo* [Cinema and audiovisual law] (2016) which states that all productions who sought financial aid from the government must produce subtitles (for the deaf and hard of hearing) and AD. As Italy is part of the EU, another important directive is Directive 2019/882, better known as the European Accessibility Act, whose aim is to increase "the availability of accessible products and services in the internal market" (2009: 70) and to improve "the accessibility of relevant information" (2009: 70). This directive also has the scope of "harmonising accessibility requirements" (2009: 76) within Member States.

1.7.5 Existing guidelines

Through the analysis of both subjective (preferences) and objective (comprehension and perception) data, it is possible to see "a disparity […] between what viewers think about subtitles [for the deaf and the hard of hearing] and how they understand and process them, which then begs the question of whether guidelines should follow what is best for the viewers of what the viewers think is best for them" (Romero-Fresco, 2015: 14).

In fact, guidelines are an extremely important tool, "used to instruct newcomers to the profession, as reference works for practitioners and also as standards for quality control, in that the quality of AVT [and MA] output is often measured against the norms set out in the guidelines" (Pedersen, 2020: 419).

Guidelines, in most forms of AVT and MA, are the expression - the written form - of norms, which can be explicit or implicit; but they can also be prescriptive, when they are given by some authorities, or descriptive, when they develop out of best practice; they can be easily modified over time, especially within the industry, or less easily modified if they are of prescriptive nature, or if based on national law or standards.

As Pedersen (2020: 419) puts it, “guidelines can be defined as the document that sets out the norms that govern the behaviour of practitioners in a community, be it a country, a company, or those working for a certain commissioner or client.” He carries on defining the various terminology used based on potency, drawing from the works of Toury (1995) and Hermans (1999), as sometimes, and in different contests, the following terms are used interchangeably. Therefore, based on potency, according to Pedersen (2020), it is possible to distinguish between:

- Rules: very strong norms which can’t be easily broken without repercussions, such as grammar rules, or number of lines of a subtitle.
- Norms: or norms proper and correct, which can be broken at the discretion of the practitioner bearing in mind the possible consequences, and they may include instructions on synchronisation or what to describe in AD, which can be found in guidelines.
- Conventions: weaker norms which are not necessarily found in guidelines but constitute the unwritten rules of a certain company or country.
- Regularities: pattern of behaviour that may not be shared by all practitioners. And are usually included in guidelines.

In light of this, Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines are designed to be clear and precise, to provide plenty of examples, and to account for any possible combination of textuality both visual and aural. They are structured in a way that it is easy to consult them on a daily basis but, at the same time, they provide enough research background behind a certain aspect or feature to allow the practitioner to use their own judgement when it comes to conventions or regularities.

With particular reference to SDH and CC, as each country has developed over the years (or decades) national guidelines describing the norms adopted by a certain broadcaster, within the realm of AVT or MA - be it agencies, audiovisual content providers, broadcasters, etc. - it is more likely to find specific guidelines for certain modes, modalities, language pair, which are perhaps too many to mention in this project. In light of the above, Inclusive Subtitling Guidelines are intended as a descriptive document containing the best practice of both SDH and CC from countries, such as the UK, the US, and Italy, with specific application for international film festivals, but applicable to other cultural events (Uzzo, 2023). Alongside a shorter and easy-to-consult set of guidelines, a longer, more in-depth

set of guidelines is provided, in order to offer a comprehensive insight on certain aspects of this form of subtitling (see Appendices 1 and 2).

Chapter 2 - Accessibility Studies

AS are closely linked to AVTS and MAS, and scholars have recently and successfully demonstrated how these three disciplines are intertwined, complementary, independent, yet inseparable (see chapter I). In this section, the relationship between AS and Audiovisual Accessibility Studies is explored to provide a general framework in which IS can be placed in terms of applicability and research. As put forward by Díaz Cintas, Orero and Remael, "Accessibility is a form of translation and translation is a form of accessibility" (2007: 13-14). This definition of accessibility and its relation to translation has been used or interpreted by scholars in recent years to clarify and strengthen the relationships between AVTS, MAS and AS.

The concept of media accessibility, which can be intended as access to the media, *i.e.*, digital, web and broadcast content that can be used, read, or seen by people with disabilities, especially by those who are blind or deaf, is usually closely connected with the diffusion of AVT. MA was considered a branch of AVT but in recent years this research area has attracted the attention of scholars and researchers, claiming its independence as a discipline on its own. One of its function is to study how linguistic and sensory barriers can be broken down to make audiovisual material accessible (Baños, 2017). In the example of a film, AD allows visually impaired people to 'see' what is happening on the screen, while SDH allows hearing impaired people to 'hear' dialogues and sounds. Nevertheless, the above definition and description of MA and its applications can be understood as only one of the numerous definitions and applications of accessibility (in general) and MA (in particular), as today's perception and perspective on MA is more inclusive, encompassing, and wide.

This is also thanks to the work of scholars who did not necessarily carry out research on MA from a translation or AVT perspective, but instead observed and analysed MA from a more theoretical and philosophical perspective. Such perspectives have been influenced by various studies, including studies on human rights and disability rights. According to Greco (2016) the last century has witnessed an intensification on the debate about human rights, both from a scholarly and from a mainstream framework. Human rights are claims concerning the standards of quality of life an individual is entitled to for the sole reason of being human (Fagan, 2009), and they are universal in the sense that they apply to all human beings regardless of cultural and social differences. Some of the milestones in the progress of human rights can be found in the birth of the Leagues of Nations, and then the United Nations (UN) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Within human rights,

disability rights have gained a central position in the last decades, with the approval of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Accessibility, in the broadest definition possible, has slowly entered a variety of very different fields becoming one of the most fruitful concepts and creating radical changes in the foundations of many fields which in turn contributed to the constitution of the wider field of AS (Greco, 2018; Jankowska, 2020; Romero-Fresco, 2017).

2.1 Definition, concepts, and history

AS can be defined as the interdisciplinary field concerned with the critical investigation of access problems as well as access processes and phenomena, and the design, implementation, and evaluation of accessibility-based and accessibility-oriented methodologies (Greco, 2018; 2019; 2020). This interdisciplinary field is formed by the intersection of various disciplines whose theories and practices tackle the topic of accessibility, such as, but not limited to, AVT, assistive technologies, Universal Design (UD), but also audience development, tourism management and services, media technologies, etc. (Greco, 2016).

The potential influence of inclusive design principles on upcoming devices, particularly in the realm of technology for individuals with disabilities, has the capacity to integrate inclusive viewpoints into broader societal development. Within this framework, individuals with disabilities are, or will become, an essential component. The objective here is to generate products and services geared toward enhancing accessibility, fostering independence, and encouraging active participation within communities.

Within accessibility it is possible to find a wide range of topics such as acceptability, adaptability, availability, flexibility, personalisation, and usability (Greco, 2018). A notable example of these advancements can be seen in the proliferation of the Internet of Things (IoT) for people with disabilities. IoT devices possess the capability to be tailored to individual needs of people with physical disabilities, mobility limitations, sensory disabilities, communication disorders, cognitive disabilities, etc. (See Woon *et al.*, 2019).

It is beyond the scope of this project to legitimise AS as a scholarly discipline, as plenty of literature and research has been advanced by scholars in recent years. One in particular, Greco, claims that “AS has been, de facto, a field for some time, and it is now a central topic in scholarly debate” (2019: 22) and he provides a visual aid to help the reader understand how AS was formed and what it has become: an autonomous discipline, comprising its own specific topics, models and methods (Greco, 2019), as shown in Figure 7.

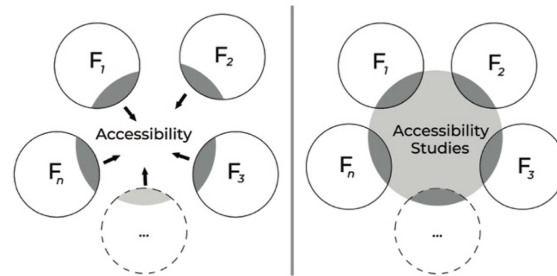

Figure 7: The Formation Process of Accessibility Studies according to Greco.

Instead, what will be discussed in the following paragraphs is the key concept of accessibility, its meanings, its applications, and how it affects MA, of which IS fall under as a practice and modality.

The debate on accessibility can be tracked back to the debate on human dignity, autonomy and participation that occurred at the beginning of the 20th century. Accessibility can take the form of fundamental material or immaterial goods, and guaranteeing the existence of said goods is a condition for human dignity, but not the only one, as the possibility to have actual access to said goods must also be in place (Francioni, 2007), as well as the possibility that "everyone has an adequate quantity and quality of that object [of a human right], given their particular natural and social circumstances" (Buitenweg, 2007: 269). Therefore, "access does not merely mean for an individual to have a good at their disposal or to have the possibility to reach it. Having access also means being able to use, interact with, and enjoy that good" (Greco, 2018: 208).

This accessibility revolution can be understood as a combination, or one of the consequences, of other revolutions that took place in recent years: the cultural revolution produced by human rights which puts access as a requirement for all in order to reach, or to obtain, human dignity; and the information revolution, as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have changed the way we access information and communication today, redefining the more traditional framing of digital divide into social inequalities, *i.e.*, those who have access and those who don't.

As the interest of providing access to information and communication has become more and more important, international bodies, such as the UN, the World Health Organization (WHO), the EU, etc., have implemented a series of policies and documents to

ensure that such access is included in their agenda. One of these documents is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) proclaimed in 1948 as "a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations" (United Nations, 1948) . This document sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected. However, as rightfully noticed by Greco (2018: 207), "in the UDHR only two rights are explicitly formulated in terms of access. Since then, the use of the formula 'the right to access to x' instead of 'the right to x' has been steadily increasing in international texts and human rights treaties".

As a subdomain of AS, MA is concerned with accessibility, and sees AVT in terms of access problems, including some of the more obvious accessibility problems which may relate to translation, but mainly focuses on providing access to audiovisual media content for people who cannot, or cannot properly, access that content in its original form, thanks to a series of practices, services, technologies and instruments (Szarkowska *et al.*, 2013). Most of these practices and instruments, particularly SDH and AD, derive from, or involve, AVT, as AVT is the field where MA has been developing as a research discipline (Díaz Cintas, 2005; Greco, 2016).

"MA has the potential to impact on a number of human rights for all individuals" (Greco, 2016: 24), as it (positively) impacts the everyday life of many groups or communities, including people with sensory disability, elderly, migrants, and linguistic minorities, by granting access to culture, information, and communication. These user groups, hitherto completely or partially excluded from the use of audiovisual material, now have the opportunity to take full advantage of these materials. Furthermore, the applications are not limited to the audiovisual field, but also to other areas (theatre, events, performances, museums, etc.).

In many areas, accessibility has seen in recent years some changes or shifts, defined by Greco (2018: 211) as a three-fold shift, or the three shifts of accessibility, namely:

1. "a shift from particularist accounts to a universalist account of access;
2. a shift from a maker-centred to a user-centred approach;
3. a shift from reactive to proactive approaches."

The first shift entails a change of perspective in terms of 'who is accessing' or 'to whom accessibility services are addressed', in the sense that, while the initial focus was on specific groups, usually persons with disabilities, now the focus and the applications of accessibility are wider. For example, a ramp can be installed in a building to grant access to people in wheelchairs, but said ramp is also useful for elderly people, people with

pushchairs, people with shopping trolley carts, people who are temporarily unable to climb stairs, etc. In other words, access is not considered exclusively specific for certain groups, but it reaches a universal scope. The term 'universal' is nowadays widely used to indicate a type of access that is more encompassing. Stephanidis (2009) talks about 'universal access' and goes on saying that "accessibility can no longer be considered as a specific problem of people with disabilities [but of] society at large" (Stephanidis & Emiliani, 1999: 22). Going back to the correlation between AS, AVT, and MA, at the beginning, MA was considered to be a field trying to overcome barriers faced by people with sensory disabilities by providing services, such as SDH and AD. Over time, however, scholars realised that the barriers faced by users are not only sensorial, but also linguistic - a film in Arabic is as inaccessible to someone who doesn't know Arabic as it is to a person who is deaf. Hence, the need to broaden the access services to whomever cannot, or cannot completely, access them in their original form (Greco, 2016).

The second shift entails a change of perspective in terms of 'who is at the centre' and 'who is deciding, making, creating this access', in the sense that for years there was a 'maker's knowledge tradition' attitude (Pérez-Ramos, 1988) by which the knowledge of the makers was the only one that mattered, thus disregarding the knowledge of users and other stakeholders, which is now considered as important as that of the makers. Involving makers and other stakeholders in the design process, ideally from the very beginning, is proven to be a successful way to make artefacts fully accessible. This new perspective is entirely opposite to the general and more widespread attitude that makers know best and therefore they know what the users want or need. In the example of a ramp, an able-bodied architect or engineer could design a ramp with a high slope making impossible for a person in a wheelchair to use it, or they could install the ramp in a place where another ramp is needed, or they could decide to replace the stairs with a ramp, etc. In AVT and MA, a great tool for testing and designing practices and modalities are reception studies, making them pivotal in the field thanks to accessibility, as predicted by Gambier (2006).

The third shift entails a change of perspective in terms of 'when to build access features' or 'when to seek users experience and expertise', in the sense that, usually accessibility features are considered an afterthought of many processes in various areas of society. However, if we were to proactively adopt or implement access features, as opposed to react once the artefacts are created, this would improve the success of said access features. As pointed out by Salmen (2000: 231), "if accessibility is only remembered as an afterthought, or late in the planning/design process, it always becomes less effective for the user, more difficult for the designer/contractor, and more costly for the owner". This in turn

involves a bigger participation and collaboration between users, makers and stakeholders and their roles are somewhat blurred and overlapping (in a positive way). This shifts entails "a purposeful effort to build access features into a product as early as possible (*e.g.*, from its conception to design and release)" (Emiliani, 2009: 5), but it doesn't necessarily mean to transfer the access processes before - rather than after - a product has been made or a service has been provided. In the example of the ramp, while tearing down all buildings who do not have a ramp is pointless, said buildings, which already exist, can benefit from access features installed afterwards; while new buildings can benefit from a universal design, by which ramps are already part of the original design and are seamlessly (hopefully) integrated in all aspects of the building (architecture, engineering, design, etc.).

In AVT and MA, accessibility features is still considered an afterthought and usually never integrated from the get-go of an audiovisual product. In the case of a Hollywood film, where blockbusters can cost as much as hundreds of millions of dollars, accessibility features, including subtitling, SDH, AD and dubbing are not an integral part of the pre-production or the production process. In fact, in strict film terms, they are not even considered in the post-production process, which generally comprises editing, music and effects, Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI), etc. They are usually considered part of another process all together, which is that of localisation and distribution, that is making the film available - or accessible - to other markets and audiences. Such attitudes are slowly shifting in recent years by considering a wider and more diverse group of end users, who are at the centre of the discussion and the creation of access features and practices and respond proactively to create something accessible together.

2.2 Criteria and future perspectives

By taking into consideration and applying the three principles or shifts of accessibility, it is possible to reframe certain processes linked to accessibility as a whole, and AVT and MA in particular, with a positive knock-on effect on SDH and IS. If practices and instruments of accessibility are considered, not only for people with sensory disabilities, but for all, then a modalities such as (intra- or interlingual) subtitling can therefore have a positive impact on elderly people, people with temporary or permanent hearing difficulties, people who are otherwise engaged in other activities, people who consume audiovisual material in loud spaces, and it can also improve literacy, act as a social adhesive, and so on and so forth.

The social aspect of accessibility, or rather 'the social model of accessibility' (Greco, 2019) calls for an active participation of all agents involved to create a social environment that is equitable and just for all (Greco, 2019). In so doing, all stakeholders are involved in

the processes, and each contributes to the creation of access for the benefit of all, in line with the universalistic approach. This also includes to educate (as opposed to lecture or to train) students to think and re-think what access is, what it means for us as individuals and as a society, and many more ethical and moral questions. In turn, applied AS can cross-fertilise other disciplines which will benefit from research and practices explored and studied by other disciplines - thus creating a virtuous circle of accessibility. In the words of Greco (2020: 40): "Education and training programmes must include these spaces, because they are where students are enabled to develop a *modus cogendi* which might become a *forma mentis* and then translate into a *modus operandi*."

It is within this framework that AS have become more and more important in many fields and applications, because new situations or issues arising are not tackled by a single front or a single group of experts focussing on one aspect of said situation or issue. Instead, there is collaboration between colleagues from various disciplines joining forces, hybridising their knowledge and methods, in order to address those situations or issues. Researchers, stakeholders (including the industry, service providers, international bodies, and organisations), and practitioners alike, coming from different fields, such as, engineering, psychology, filmmaking, computer science, tourism, arts have been joining forces and setting up international programmes in the shared effort to tackle MA problems (Greco, 2018), thus creating new topics like Game Accessibility, Accessible Filmmaking, and Universal Design, to name but a few.

Therefore, the need to reframe certain modalities or practices usually associated with MA, namely SDH, AD and Sign Language Interpreting (SLI), is now more evident, by refraining from framing MA as a series of specific services for specific groups, namely deaf people or blind people, as by doing so the universalistic approach of accessibility would be betrayed or would cease to exist. Terms such as 'Subtitles for the deaf and the hard of hearing' imply that this modality is reserved for people who are deaf and people who are heard of hearing only, excluding those who do not fit into either one of these two heterogenous categories or those who do not identify as such, like elderly people, children, people with cognitive disabilities, L2 learners, etc. To better frame MA within AS, Greco provides the following statement: "MA is wider than AVT and cannot be merely reduced to a sub-area of TS. It is a broader, interdisciplinary area, that criss-crosses many well-established fields, including translation studies and AVT. However, it cannot be entirely and exclusively reduced to any of them because its true nature is that of being an area within the field of AS" (2018: 218).

2.3 Accessibility and Inclusion

'Accessibility' and 'Inclusion' are two terms sometimes used interchangeably and more often than not, they are so broad and wide that scholars and stakeholders use them to determine the same concept. Instead of providing various points of view and definitions - which are very much related to other sciences, such as sociology, anthropology, and other human sciences - this section will focus on the differences between accessibility and inclusion in relation to Deaf people and the audiovisual realm.

In order to do so, four key concept as put forward by Díaz-Wionczek (2021) will be provided. They are:

1. Identity: How a person sees and defines themselves.
2. Diversity: The presence of a wide range of identity traits.
3. Representation: Showing multiple perspectives.
4. Inclusion: Making the perspectives central to the stories.

I maintain that the above-mentioned concepts not only can be seen as independent as well as interconnected, but they are in fact a progression, a path if you will, towards Inclusion, with a necessary 'detour' called Accessibility. In other words, and by means of explanation, it is possible to (re)define five key elements:

1. Identity: understood as a collection of identifying traits that someone uses to represent themselves, which can be assigned to social groups, fostering a feeling of community based on group identity. These identifying traits include sex, gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, ability, religion, spirituality, age, socioeconomic status, language, political leanings, etc.
2. Diversity: the existence of different identities, ways of thinking, personalities, ways of functioning, backgrounds, and life experiences. It can be perceived or described as a spectrum, and it doesn't refer solely to the existence of historically marginalised groups within a group. It exists at individual and collective level, and it is what makes people different yet the same.
3. Representation: to show said diversity or diversities in all aspects of everyday life as an integral part of our society, such as the representation of diversities in the film industry, *i.e.,* what we see on screen.

4. Accessibility (or access): refers to the way everyone, regardless of human ability and experience, is given access by means of access instruments and practices, ideally conceived during the design process and not as an afterthought.
5. Inclusion: to ensure that a variety of individuals with various identities can fully engage in all facets of society, including leadership roles and decision-making processes. It also refers to the manner that a variety of individuals are recognised as members and integrated in a community. It usually refers to historically underrepresented identities, such as the Deaf community.

Di Giovanni, who considers accessibility as the act of giving people with impairments and special needs the possibility to access places, services and events that would not be accessible in their standard configuration or organisation (2021), also reflects on the difference between accessibility and inclusion by providing a mathematical metaphor (2022). Usually, accessibility moves from a negative position (a negative number) to a neutral position (zero value), whereas inclusion moves from a neutral position (zero value) to a positive position (a positive number). Building on this mathematical metaphor, I maintain that something can indeed be very inaccessible (higher negative number) and inclusion can take different shapes (higher or lower positive number). For example, in the case of TV News, a hearing anchor-person delivering the news in a spoken language without subtitles and without sign language interpreting can be understood as a very negative position (a minus 10 if you will) as they are denying access to information to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. A neutral position would be the provision of subtitles and sign language interpreting, thus enabling everyone to access information, although it could be argued that providing subtitles is already a zero position and sign language interpreting is a plus position (a plus 2 if you will). A TV News segment entirely delivered in sign language by a hearing sign language interpreter is a form inclusion as it acknowledges the Deaf community and their identity (a plus 6 if you will). However, if the person delivering the news is a Deaf person, working with a Deaf Crew and a Deaf cast, delivering the news in sign language, with the provision of subtitles, and a spoken voice over, that could be understood as a 'inclusion at its highest' as it acknowledges identities, recognises diversity, fosters representation, provides accessibility, and denotes inclusion (a plus 10 if you will). Accessibility, and the lack of, can be understood as a spectrum in which more or fewer activities, or more or less work is needed, and the end results can also be perceived as a

spectrum, to which a number can be attributed, which is never finite but can improve as technology and society improve.

To provide a more practical and exhaustive example of the different definitions and interpretations, and with reference to audiovisual material and to the Deaf community, I will discuss movies and series. Identity is the fact that a person who is deaf (smaller letter to indicate the medical condition of deafness - see chapter III in this study) sees themselves and identifies themselves as belonging to a community, that is the Deaf community (capital D). Diversity is the acknowledgment of said identity and that it exists alongside other people who see and identify themselves as belonging to other communities - one person can see themselves, and identify as, belonging to more than one community. Representation is the fact that, in a movie or a series, one or more characters is/are d/Deaf - their storyline and characters developments is not central to the story and to the film or series. For instance, a movie such as *Baby Driver* (Wright, 2017) where one secondary character is Deaf. Usually, this type of representation is used in more recent films and series following a wave of acknowledgment that in the world there are many communities who are underrepresented in films and series. Accessibility is the provision of services to access said films or series taking into account special needs of people - in our example, it would be the provision of SDH or CC. Inclusion is the decision of making the perspective of the characters in films and series central to the storyline. In line with inclusion theories, the characters who are Deaf would not be just one or two, but it would be the majority or the totality of the characters. For instance, the series *Deaf U* (DiMarco, 2020). Inclusion can also be achieved behind the camera, by including the Deaf community in leadership positions and decision-making processes - that means Deaf directors, producers, executive producers, camerapersons, make-up artists, etc. Inclusion can be indeed achieved in many different ways, and this entirely depends on the possibilities given to talented individuals.

Inclusion at its highest brings about a shift of perspective too. In the case of *Deaf U*, as more than 50% of the crew was Deaf (Martin, 2020), the provision of the sign language interpreters on set was conceived to address the issue of a minority - the hearing people - who didn't have access to information in the original form (that is in American Sign Language). The provision of CC in the post-production stage was conceived because the hearing audience is unable to access the information and the entertainment in its original form (in American Sign Language), and 'reasonable adjustments' have been made in the form of AST. This form of inclusion can be achieved by embracing the Deaf community and give a voice (or a sign) to an underrepresented community full of talented individuals who

wish to be seen, recognised and cherished. The same can be said by all (or most) underrepresented communities. In fact, if we were to replace the word ‘Deaf’ with words like ‘Black’ or ‘Queer’ or any other word that identifies a person belonging to a minority - be it about race, ethnicity, language, physical ability, class, faith, education, cognitive ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, age, etc. - the argument put forward thus far will still stand to reason.

Chapter 3 – Deaf Studies

The present chapter scrutinises the development of Deaf studies and the implications in the composition, structure and foundation related to IS. It is divided into three conceptual areas tackling: a) the history of Deaf studies; b) the difference between deafness and Deafhood; c) the social and cultural aspects of being Deaf.

The first section focuses on Deaf studies and Deaf people. Firstly, it provides some definitions and key concepts about the field of research, which is inextricably linked to the history of Deaf people. Therefore, an excursus on the history of Deaf people is presented in chronological order describing the events leading up to the Milan Convention (1880) and the era after that.

The second section focuses on the differences between deafness and Deafhood, and on the fact that the literature on the individuals who make use of SDH/CC tends to put emphasis on the medical definition of deafness - which is then perceived as a disability - as opposed to Deafness - the state of being Deaf. This distinction proves to be useful for the labelling of the AVA modality, of SDH/CC, and of IS. However, as shown in a multitude of contexts, d/Deaf people are a heterogenous group of people, and their heterogeneity constitutes a factor which needs to be taken into account when analysing various forms of SH/CC/IS. As a consequence, a brief description of the medical aspect of deafness will be provided.

The third and final section reflects on the social and cultural aspects of the above-mentioned heterogeneity as a concept and will try to create a link between the social aspects of being Deaf and the common attitudes and behaviour in relation to the consumption of SDH/CC/IS as far as film and cinema audiences, and film festival audiences are concerned. This section is a crucial starting point to introduce chapter 4, whose emphasis will be on the (Accessible) Film Festival as a specific aesthetic genre and a form of access to niche audiovisual productions for a heterogeneous public.

3.1 History and key concepts

Out of the many possible definitions of Deaf Studies, henceforth DS, it can be said that these studies are academic disciplines concerned with the investigation of the deaf social life of human groups and individuals (Sun, 2020), or that DS entail the sphere of “the study of the language, community, and culture of deaf people” (Deaf History - Europe, n.d.), or to put it in perspective, it can be said that “Deaf Studies is not a study of them; it is a study of us” (California State University Northridge, n.d.).

It goes without saying that the history of Deaf Studies - which emerged in the late 1960s, early 1970s in the UK and in the US - is closely linked to the history of the Deaf community. As it aims at investigating the social and cultural, but also linguistic aspects of Deaf people, DS are a multidisciplinary area which rarely discusses deafness from a merely medical viewpoint, *i.e.*, a disability of the person, a deficit of the hearing apparatus of a person. To better understand - and appreciate - the following notions, one (especially if hearing) should consider a whole different point of view than the one we are used to, where the roles or 'we' and 'they' are reversed, and where Deaf people are finally at the heart of their own discourses, offering another viewpoint for anyone interested in reading, or in other words "a study of us" (California State University Northridge, n.d.).

As the definition of 'what is normal' developed, so did the definition(s) of 'what is not normal'. In this dichotomy, the 'normal' is the majority of human beings whereas the 'not normal' is a minority which does not fit into one or more categories of what is considered 'normal'. Hence the majority of human beings are hearing, whereas a minority of human beings are deaf (lowercase D) as their hearing apparatus is not functioning normally. As a consequence, all those who are not normal, not able (or dis-able) to hear, don't have something, can't function properly in a hearing society, can't live up to the standards of a hearing individual, and - if we wish to go down a darker path - need to be eliminated or reduce to a minimum (Johnston, 2006).

Therefore, deafness is understood as a medical condition, the absence of the ability to hear and this lack of hearing - the normative condition of human beings - constitutes a disability (Reagan, 2020). Such pathological view of deafness - widely rejected by many Deaf people themselves - is guided by ableist biases, prejudices, and incorrect assumptions; and this specific type of ableism with reference to deaf people, is called 'audism' (Bauman, 2004). The term was first coined by Humpries who defined it as "the notion that one is superior based on one's ability to hear or to behave in the manner of one who hears" (1977: 12). But, as Reagan (2020: 1481) states

> To begin by assuming that hearing is 'normal' and deaf is in some sense 'abnormal' is profoundly problematic. Within the DEAF-WORLD, there is no interest or concern in remediating or curing deafness, any more than one might try to cure gender or race.

This sentiment is shared by many Deaf people and Deaf activists around the world, but especially in the US, including I. King Jordan, the first Deaf President of Gallaudet University, who stated

> [To have one's hearing restored] that's almost like asking a black person if he would rather be white. I don't think of myself as missing something or as incomplete. It's a common fallacy if you don't know Deaf people or Deaf issues. You think it's a limitation. (quoted in Reagan 2020: 1482)

This viewpoint, or standpoint, is at the heart of what is known as Deaf identity, which can be described as one's identity within the Deaf community, which in turn acknowledges and cherishes Deaf culture, [national] sign language, and everything within the Deaf world, signed in ASL (American Sign Language) as DEAF-WORLD. This concept is very important for framing the difference between deafness and Deafhood, or the difference between those who identify as socially and culturally Deaf and those who have audiological deafness. To give an example, a (hearing) CODA (Child Of Deaf Adults) can identify as a member of the Deaf World, just like elderly hearing people who lose their hearings as a natural consequence of aging are not part of the Deaf World, but 'simply' hearing people who can no longer hear.

In relation to technologies, and attitudes towards it, this distinction is reflected in the use (or not use) of audiological devices focusing primarily on hearing (such as, cochlear implants, hearing aids, etc.) as opposed to technological innovations aiming at bridging the gap between the hearing world and the Deaf world, such as television decoders, closed captioned programs, and household Deaf-friendly technology, like doorbells and alarms.

The history of DS is closely intertwined with the history of Deaf communities, as some pivotal events continue to shape the social and cultural aspects of Deaf people's lives. In his influential work, *Understanding Deaf Culture*, Ladd (2003) provides a historical perspective crucial for grasping Deaf culture. He begins by highlighting that Deaf individuals who communicate using gestures or sign language have been part of human history since its inception, with the earliest written records dating back to the 5th century BC. In early religious literature, be it Judaic or pre-Christian, a complex range of attitudes towards Deaf people is presented, both negative and positive. When it comes to Christianity, the general attitude was that 'the word of God' is a spoken word and therefore Deaf people are excluded from even becoming Christians. Up until the Renaissance, there is little or no literary evidence of Deaf people, but there is evidence of 'visuo-gestural communication modes', recorded by Desloges, writer of the earliest known Deaf book. During the Renaissance, there is an increasing reference to Deaf people, including Deaf artists in Spain and Italy, and in the same period there are records of Deaf people being employed in the Turkish Ottoman court, covering a variety of roles, including delivering messages in signs, and being the Sultan's most trusted companions; and the establishment of a sizeable Deaf community on the island of Martha's Vineyard following its settlement in the 1640s, where the incidence of deafness

in some towns and neighbourhoods was higher than average. During the 16th and 17th century, interest in Deaf people and their sign languages grew exponentially, as did schools for Deaf in the US and in Europe. With reference to the pedagogical condition of the Deaf, new discourses subverting the Christian perspective were put forward by de l'Épée and Desloges, and are still used these days. The establishment of Deaf schools was of significant importance for the creation of a larger collective Deaf identity and of a national and international network. During this period, two parallel discourses were put forward by two different fronts, the oralist method - by which the education of Deaf students should be through oral language - and manualist method - by which the education of Deaf students should be through sign language. This debate culminated in what is known as the greatest event in Deaf history, the Milan Convention in 1880 (see Gallaudet, 1881; Denison, 1881). In brief, the Milan Convention of 1880 was an event attended by the most influential educators of Deaf people at that time who were asked to vote whether oralism or manualism was the preferred and more effective method of teaching Deaf students. A staggering majority voted for the oralist method, and the then new president, Tarra, commented *"I segni uccidono le parole"* [Signs kill the words] and from that moment on, for the following 100 years, Deaf people were forbidden to use their sign languages, were forced to learn the oralist method, and intermarriages were frowned upon.
These post-Milan-Convention era is also known as the era of colonialism which brought about other ideologies, such as the eugenics movement (the elimination of ills through genetics to perfect human beings), supported even by Bell, the inventor of the telephone, a controversial figure in the Deaf community as some of his family members were deaf or hard of hearing. By the 1920s, oralism was the dominant method of teaching and Deaf educators were no longer welcome in educational environments to the point that many schools banned the use of sign languages. It is not until the 1970s that the intellectual and cultural climate began to change, or as Humpries writes "The modern age for Deaf people did not begin until the 1970s" and it is thanks to the rhetoric of culture. In other words, as described by Dirksen and Bauman (2008: 3) "Deaf Culture needed Deaf Studies to articulate, explore, and promote the phenomenon of Deaf Culture, both to the hearing world and to Deaf individuals themselves".

3.2 Deafness *vs* Deafhood

This section starts with the definition of the term 'deaf' (lowercase d) and the term 'Deaf' (uppercase D), as precisely and skilfully summarised by Ladd (2003: xvii).

> The lowercase ‘deaf’ refers to those for whom deafness is primarily an audiological experience. It is mainly used to describe those who lost some or all of their hearing in early or late life, and who do not usually wish to have contact with signing Deaf communities, preferring to try and retain their membership of the majority society in which they were socialised. ‘Deaf’ refers to those born Deaf or deafened in early (sometimes late) childhood, for whom the sign languages, communities and cultures of the Deaf collective represent their primary experience and allegiance, many of whom perceive their experience as essentially akin to other language minorities.

With this distinction in mind, it is possible to differentiate the terms ‘deafness’ (lowercase d) which refers to the medical condition of not hearing, and the term ‘Deafhood’ (uppercase D) which refers to the state of being Deaf. Most academic literature dealing with SDH/CC focuses on the medical and pathological aspect of deafness, *i.e.*, how a sensory deficit affects deaf and hard or hearing people with respect to the appreciation and comprehension of audiovisual material when reading SDH/CC. This is an important factor to take into account when creating or improving (new) practices of SDH/CC; however, it is not the only one to be taken into account. It can’t be stressed enough that deaf and hard of hearing people are a heterogenous group and their diversity poses a challenge for scholars and stakeholders interested in SDH/CC.

For the purpose of this research, some basic medical aspects of deafness are provided in order to point out the diversity of deaf and hard of hearing people. Deafness can be conductive (resulting from a fault in the external or middle part of the ear, which can be caused by ear wax or otitis, or other reasons) or sensorineural (resulting from damage to the inner part of the ear, which can be caused by age, acoustic trauma, genetic predisposition, injuries, etc.) or a combination of both. Hearing loss is classified in four groups, and this classification is based on loudness of the quietest sound heard, which is measure in decibel (dB) (Szarkowska, 2020; Zarate, 2021):

- Mild: sounds between 25/26 and 39/40 dB, *e.g.* a whisper
- Moderate: sounds between 40/41 and 60/69 dB, *e.g.* a conversation
- Severe: sounds between 61/70 and 80/94 dB, *e.g.* a dog barking
- Profound: sounds 81/95+ dB, *e.g.* a lawnmower

Depending on the onset of the hearing loss, *i.e.*, when the hearing loss occurred, it is possible to distinguish between: pre-lingual (up to 2-3 years of age, therefore at birth or before acquiring language), peri-lingual (between 3 and 5 years of age, therefore in the process of acquiring language) and post-lingual (after 5 years of age, therefore after

acquiring the first language). Furthermore, hearing loss can be unilateral (affecting only one ear) or bilateral (affecting both ears). And lastly, people with hearing loss may or may not use a hearing aid or have a cochlear implant; and people with hearing loss may or may not know and use a sign language, which in turn may or may not be their first (native) language.

It should be pointed out, as noted by Szarkowska (2020: 251), that "[different] degree of hearing loss and [different] onset affect language development and, by extension, literacy and reading skills, which have a direct impact on subtitle processing". This is perhaps what prompted studies on the reading abilities (or skills) of deaf and hard of hearing people in the 1970s and 1980s when SDH/CC started to develop in the US and in the UK. Such studies reported that "deaf people tend to be slower readers than hearing people" but also by contrast that "some profoundly deaf people can be proficient readers" (Szarkowska, 2011: 364-365).

Opposite to the term 'deafness' which is medically-oriented, another term was needed, to create a space where Deaf people can identify themselves. The term is 'Deafhood' (uppercase D) (Ladd, 2003). As a consequence of Deafhood, other implications are briefly explored. Following a social and cultural discourse: deaf people identify themselves as Deaf, thus creating the concept of Deaf identity; Deaf individuals gather and form a Deaf community, a safe space away from the colonialist discourses of hearing people; within the Deaf community, Deaf culture is acknowledged and cherished, also through the celebration of Deaf history and the promotion of Deaf language (sign language).

If deafness is considered a negative term, then Deafhood is viewed as a positive concept, to which an even more positive term (or attitude) is introduced, that of 'Deaf Gain'. Deaf Gain can be defined as the reframing, or change of perspective, from being deaf as a form of sensory and cognitive diversity to being Deaf as a form of contributing to the greater good of humanity, a form of 'Deaf Increase', 'Deaf Benefit' or 'Deaf Contribute' (Bauman & Murray, 2009). For instance, the recognition and legitimisation of sign languages have opened up the concept of language in scholarly research. Other positive aspects of Deaf Gain could be the intersection of poetry and literature which has evolved to include visual-gestural testimonies, or the contribution to cinema given the innate storytelling abilities of Deaf people, or the influences of Deaf Studies to the so-called 'Design for All' where, if given a chance, Deaf architects would redesign buildings and cities to make them more inclusive, by adding (gaining) social and cultural implications. For instance, they would replace all rectangular shaped tables with round tables, removing the concept of 'one or two people at the head of the table' and accepting that all participants at the table are equal; or they would

build ramps instead of stairs as signing while walking up and down the stairs is difficult, if not dangerous; and this in turn affects (positively) also blind people, wheelchair users, etc.

It is for the above-mentioned reasons, argumentations, and thinking, that some scholars (Padden & Humphries, 1988; Uzzo, 2020; Tamayo, 2022) use the term 'Deaf' to refer to the members of the Deaf community and Deaf culture belonging to a linguistic minority, and to the term 'deaf' to refer to the audiological condition of not hearing.

3.3 Social and Cultural aspects

In combination to the legal aspects of being Deaf, briefly explored below, there are numerous social and cultural aspects to be taken into account when devising new forms of SDH/CC practices. In relation to the participation in cultural life by persons with disabilities, paragraphs 1, 2, and 4 of Article 30 of the CRPD (United Nations, 2006: 22-23), clearly state that

> States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities: (a) Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats; (b) Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats; (c) Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.
>
> States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.
>
> Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.

In this view, paragraph 1 testifies to the fact that deaf people are seen as persons with disabilities, and as such beneficiary of various legislations aimed to ensure that the rights to access social, cultural and sport events are upheld. Furthermore, paragraph 2 ensures (or aims to ensure) representation and inclusion of what has been previously described as Deaf Gain (benefit for the enrichment of society); and paragraph 4 supports (or aims to support) the linguistic identify of Deaf people through sign languages and Deaf culture.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the majority of Deaf people does not identify as disabled people, thus, it could be argued that some of these provisions or legislations do not

(or should not) apply to them. While this particular topic requires interdisciplinary argumentations that perhaps extend beyond the scope of this research, what remains closely linked to core of this work are the social and cultural aspects of Deaf people in relation to the right to access cultural and social events (of which film festivals represent a great example as a form of aggregation of society sharing common interests in films), as well as the themes or topics explored in those films.

For this purpose, the different models explored by Ladd (2003) are of particular interest and relevance to this study. He distinguishes three models: medical, culturo-linguistic, and social. The medical model portrays deaf individuals as isolated, hearing-impaired, and lacking any inherent connection to Deaf culture or history. It suggests that they can be ‘reintegrated’ into society through technology and oralism, especially if they're isolated from deaf adults and denied sign languages. This model denies the existence of Deaf culture, manufactures ‘cured’ deaf individuals, and association amongst deaf people is frowned upon. The culturo-linguistic model emphasises the collective aspect of the Deaf experience. Deaf people view themselves as complete beings, with their hearing loss being a secondary aspect compared to the positive experiences derived from their social, cultural, and artistic lives. Their main focus is on improving collective life and ensuring quality education for Deaf children. As a consequence of the status of a cultural and linguistic minority, there are forms of frustrations derived from various forms of oppression, and they believe that teaching sign language to hearing individuals can enhance both Deaf and hearing communities. The social model highlights that the central concern in disability studies isn't the impairment itself but how societies have systematically excluded individuals with disabilities, leaving them to beg for access. This model primarily frames Deaf issues as access issues. While government legislation can enhance access for Deaf individuals through technology, true recognition of Deaf culture should lead to addressing Deaf community issues that go beyond the social model. In Deaf discourse, a prevalent idea among certain segments of the Deaf community is that Deaf individuals are not part of, or are significantly distinct from, the disabled movement. A case in point is the then World Games for the Deaf, now known as Deaflympics (Deaflympics, n.d.), which vigorously resisted becoming part of the Paralympics, even though it would have brought substantial financial support and publicity.

The differences between the medical, culturo-linguistic, and social models are somewhat reflected in the manifestos and agendas of the various d/Deaf associations across the globe, which tend to focus on one model over the other, either subtly (through activities and projects) or less subtly, as the names, the acronyms or the mottos of various

associations would suggest. For instance, with reference to one important association in the UK, the now RNID changed its name several times (RNID, n.d.):

- National Bureau for Promoting the General Welfare of the Deaf (1911)
- National Institute for the Deaf (1924)
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) (1961)
- Royal National Institute for Deaf people (RNID) (1992)
- Action on Hearing Loss (2011)
- Royal National Institute for Deaf people (RNID) (2020)

Without going into the details of the value of the organisation, it suffices to say that the current motto (or purpose), is “Together, we will make life fully inclusive for deaf people and those with hearing loss or tinnitus”. (RNID, n.d.).

3.4 Audience(s)

As demonstrated above and reinforced through academic studies and research on SDH/CC practices, d/Deaf and hard of hearing people are a heterogenous group of individuals. Moving from this starting point, the creation of forms of SDH/CC that are, not only effective, but also accepted by the Deaf community and those people revolving around the community itself, is an arduous challenge and ambitious goal. If considered as an audience, or a group of audiences, however, the attitudes, preferences, and opinions of d/Deaf and hard of hearing people, and of the Deaf community as a whole can be gathered, measured, and elaborated with the aid of reception studies within which a methodology that investigates the thinking and beliefs of the audience(s) under scrutiny is systematically applied.

When the reception studies methodology is adopted in settings such as AVT and MA, or AVA in general, the data or the corpus central to the scrutiny are gathered according to a variety of approaches. Chaume (2018), among others, suggests the use of the following procedures:

1. Questionnaires and surveys, especially online, which enable a larger group to respond to questions.
2. Personal interviews and focus groups, useful to discuss a certain topic or present new ideas of a certain kind of AVT and MA modality.
3. Qualitative and quantitative research, usually employed together to support each other or to provide insights of certain patterns emerged from the quantitative analysis.

4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a theoretical framework of analysis, whose interest relies on the scrutiny of the translation type under scrutiny with particular attention to sub-fields, such as censorship, gender issues, etc.

By expanding these concepts, and simultaneously applying them to the scope of this study, it is possible to detect valuable patterns that contain medical, historical, social, and cultural pertinences to the current practices of SDH/CC, and that can contribute to the understanding of people who are d/Deaf and hard of hearing, as well as to the creation of guidelines of IS within the context of Film Festivals.

Chapter 4 - Film Festivals

The first section of this chapter concentrates on film festivals, placing a significant emphasis on the often-overlooked cultural aspects associated with these events, which have been understudied even in scholarly research. It leads with an exploration of the cultural dimensions inherent in film festivals, shedding light on their role and impact. This section further delves into an insightful discussion of some of the most influential film festivals worldwide, revealing their significance in the global cinematic landscape. Subsequently, the focus shifts towards the critical topic of accessibility at film festivals, encompassing various dimensions of accessibility. It explores the nuances of accessible and inclusive film festivals, recognising the intersection of these two concepts. The section culminates with a thoughtful examination of Deaf cinema and Deaf film festivals, which hold particular relevance in framing IS within the film festival context.

The second section of the chapter shifts its focus to the core of this research, the corpus. Here, the spotlight is on the SDH/CC of two prominent film festivals curated by the British Film Institute (BFI), namely the BFI Flare and the London Film Festival. A detailed exploration aims to provide insights into the specific practices and implementations of subtitles within these festivals, shedding light on how accessibility is integrated into the cinematic experiences offered by the BFI Flare and the London Film Festival. By scrutinising the SDH/CC of these festivals, the second section contributes valuable data and observations to a broader understanding of inclusive practices at film festivals, offering a more comprehensive perspective on the role of subtitles in enhancing accessibility.

Films festivals are organised events where people gather to enjoy cinematographic excellency, and usually have a focus or a theme, such as Queer Film Festivals, LGBT+ Film Festivals, Migrant Film Festivals, Deaf Film Festivals, etc., or they have a specific genre, such as animation, documentaries, etc. Film festivals are typically organised on an annual basis or every two years, usually in the same period of the year, usually not overlapping with each other or with other major events, and usually lasting for a period of one or two weeks, with the primary objective of commemorating, rewarding, and evaluating recent film productions, as well as recognising exceptional accomplishments in the realm of cinematic arts. The financial support for these festivals may originate from various sources, such as national or local government entities, industry establishments, individuals or businesses affiliated with the film industry, experimental film groups, etc. Film festivals provide a valuable platform for filmmakers, distributors, critics, and individuals with a vested interest

in the film industry to partake in film screenings and engage in discussions pertaining to current artistic developments within the field (Oncins, 2013).

Film festivals have a strong social, economic, and political impact on the community and on the host city and country, and just like any organised event, they require months of curating, preparation, organisation, and involve many professionals, working on a variety of jobs, ranging from film selection to press, from logistics to localisation, from subtitles to accessibility. Subtitles are, indeed, one of the main characteristics (and requirement) of film festivals as most, if not all, films are shown in original language, *i.e.*, not dubbed. It follows that, for localisation and linguistic accessibility purposes, a form of subtitling is required, be it intralingual, interlingual, or for deaf and hard of hearing audiences. From an academic viewpoint, considerable scholarly attention has been devoted to the practice of subtitling films and television content; however, there is a dearth of knowledge regarding the intricacies of subtitling specifically tailored for film festivals. This study aims to shed light on the latter.

Dawson and Loist (2018), in their examination of Queer Film Festivals, provide a chronological exploration of the evolving emphasis of film festivals throughout history by claiming that the emergence of the festival format can be traced back to a combination of early film conferences, avant-garde film gatherings, and technology and art fairs during the 1910s (Hagener, 2014). The contemporary film festival model can be traced back to the inclusion of a film segment as part of the Venice art biennale in 1932. Since then, the history of film festivals has undergone various phases. The first phase, spanning from the 1930s to the late 1960s, witnessed the consolidation and global expansion of the festival model. The second phase, influenced by social issues in the late 1960s and 1970s, including the Student Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, Second Wave Feminism, and Gay Liberation, had a profound impact on the film festival landscape and its content. This period challenged the dominance of cultural diplomacy in the selection process and emphasised the curation by expert festival directors, leading to the establishment of social issue or activist-focused festivals. During the 1970s and 1980s, various specialised film festivals emerged, representing new social movements such as feminist, Black and African American, indigenous, gay and lesbian, as well as those advocating for other human rights, disability rights, and environmental issues. In the third phase, since the 1980s, the festival landscape has witnessed significant professionalisation and diversification, and today there are thousands of international, local, and niche film festivals worldwide.

4.1 Cultural aspects of film festivals

Film festivals are a cornerstone of the cultural and creative industries, henceforth CCIs, where creativity and culture intersect to shape the global cultural landscape. Therefore, the promotion of cultural events, both physical and virtual, highlights the importance of making visual and artistic forms more accessible, ultimately contributing to a more connected and culturally enriched global society (Kapsaskis, 2018; Rizzo, 2020).

Film festivals are an essential component of cinephilia and are embedded within a film culture that prioritises alternative cinema over commercially driven mainstream film exhibition. The incorporation of rituals, heightened anticipation, and a sense of group affiliation, whether experienced at prominent A-list festivals, genre-specific festivals, or independent festivals, cultivates an event culture that renders festival screenings appealing to many individuals. Nevertheless, as it will be explored later, these events can inadvertently marginalise some individuals or groups, such as people with sensory disabilities. In the contemporary era, where OTT and streaming platforms have somewhat commodified the film-watching experience, film festivals continue to endure, owing to their profound impact and relevance. However, one perspective put forth by scholars (Damiens & Valck, 2023; Loist, 2023) is that the rise of OTT and streaming platforms presents a potential challenge to the film festival industry; a perspective particularly advocated by influential festivals with global appeal, including Cannes, Venice, Berlin, and Toronto, among others. These festivals are renowned as ‘premiere events’, where new films are first showcased. The festival premiere serves as an initial platform before broader distribution takes place, encompassing the film festival circuit, theatrical cinema market, online platforms, and other distribution channels. It must be said that inevitably, “the first waves of the COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on film festivals” (Smits, 2023: 1). Film festivals are, by nature, in-person events and physical gatherings of people from all over the world, and faced with strict non-gathering regulations, many film festivals had to resort to either online formats, or hybrid formats (physical and online screenings) - the preferred format - or they were postponed, or cancelled all together (Han, 2021; Hanzlík & Mazierska, 2021; Uzzo, 2020). During the Covid-19 pandemic, as film festivals had undergone a transition to hybrid or online formats, discussions about the future direction of these events had arisen. Just like other forms of hybrid or online events, film festivals have returned to their original physical format at the end of the pandemic, whilst some kept their hybrid or blended format. Physical film festivals have long been associated with the collective experience of watching films on the big screen, fostering a sense of community, and allowing for high-quality visuals and sound. The impact that physical festivals have on the local and global community is limitless. Moreover,

physical festivals contribute to the cultural economy of cities, regions, and countries. They utilise cinema venues, event locations for industry professionals, and local establishments like bars and restaurants. Additionally, they coordinate transportation and accommodation for festival guests, including directors, talent, and jury members. On the other hand, there is a growing interest in reducing costs and environmental impact and making film festivals more sustainable.

‘Live’ screenings, where online audiences watch films simultaneously, play a significant role in the collective viewing experience. Online screenings add another dimension to the live experience, while group streaming, exemplified by platforms like Teleparty (formerly Netflix Party), became popular during the pandemic. Teleparty allowed individuals to watch movies and TV shows collectively from a distance, adhering to social distancing guidelines. Teleparty (Teleparty, n.d.) expanded its compatibility to include streaming platforms like Disney+, Hulu, and HBO. Platforms such as Festival Scope Pro (Pro Festival Scope, n.d.) in France have organised hybrid and online industry markets for various festivals. Cannes also developed the online platform Cinando (Cinando, n.d.), enabling industry participants to watch films online in addition to their physical market. Cannes was one of the first festivals to pivot to an online version of their industry market in June 2020 when their regular film festival was cancelled (Taillibert & Vinuela, 2021). In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, watch parties and watch-alongs have gained popularity as forms of audience engagement, offering communal viewing experiences. For film festivals facing the challenge of transitioning to hybrid or fully online formats, watch-alongs can serve as an inspirational model for fostering a sense of community. Festivals that opted not to go online during the pandemic often emphasise the communal viewing experience provided by cinema. The idea of physical spaces as places for encounters in film festivals has been highlighted by both film critics and festival scholars (Brunow, 2020).

In summary, film festivals have navigated the transition to hybrid or online formats, weighing the benefits of physical, in-person experiences against the accessibility and reach offered by digital platforms. Physical festivals offer unique cultural and communal experiences, while online screenings and watch parties provide opportunities for broader audience engagement. The future of film festivals may lie in finding a balance between these two approaches to create inclusive and meaningful experiences for audiences and industry professionals alike.

4.2 Film festivals around the world

Certain film festivals around the world have gained a reputation for being the best or the most representative of the industry, attracting critics, movie-goers, and movie buffs from across the globe.

One such prominent festival is the Sundance Film Festival (Festival Sundance, n.d.), held annually in Park City, Utah, US. Sundance has become synonymous with independent cinema and is known for its focus on innovative storytelling and emerging filmmakers. The festival showcases a wide range of films, including narratives, documentaries, and shorts, making it a go-to event for those interested in innovative and unique cinematic experiences.

The Venice Film Festival (La Biennale, n.d.), part of the la Biennale di Venezia, holds a significant place in the film festival circuit. Established in 1932, it is one of the oldest film festivals in the world. Held in the city of Venice, Italy, the festival has a rich history and a focus on artistic and avant-garde cinema. The prestigious 'Golden Lion award' is presented to the best film of the competition, attracting renowned filmmakers and actors to showcase their work.

The Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale, n.d.), also known as the Berlinale, is another influential event in the industry. Taking place annually in Berlin, Germany, it is one of the largest publicly attended film festivals worldwide. The Berlinale provides a platform for a diverse range of films, including feature films, documentaries, and experimental works. It aims to promote cultural exchange and celebrate cinematic excellence through awards such as the 'Golden Bear', which recognises outstanding films pushing boundaries and exploring new artistic territories.

The Cannes Film Festival (Festival Cannes, n.d.), held in Cannes, France, since 1946, is often considered the pinnacle of film festivals. It is renowned for its glamour, red carpet events, and star-studded premieres. Cannes showcases a broad selection of films, including feature films, documentaries, and short films from around the world. The festival awards the prestigious 'Palme d'Or' to the best film in the competition, recognising exceptional artistic achievements.

The Locarno Film Festival (Locarno Festival, n.d.), held annually in Locarno, Switzerland, is another notable event in the film calendar. Established in 1946, it is known for its emphasis on arthouse and independent cinema. The festival offers a platform for emerging filmmakers and experimental works, attracting cinephiles and industry professionals looking for innovative storytelling and new talent.

These festivals represent just a fraction of the multitude of film festivals taking place worldwide. Other notable festivals include the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in

Canada, the Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) in South Korea, the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) in Japan, the London Film Festival (LFF) in the UK, and the Telluride Film Festival in the US. Each festival contributes to the cultural landscape of its respective region and offers a unique platform for filmmakers to showcase their work and for audiences to discover exceptional films. The abundance of film festivals around the world offers an array of choices to both filmmakers and film enthusiasts. While certain festivals have gained a reputation for excellence and serve as important industry events, there are countless other festivals that cater to specific genres, regional cinema, or emerging talent.

4.3 Accessible film festivals

An accessible film festival is an event that aims to make the cinematic experience accessible, inclusive, and enjoyable for all individuals, including people with sensory disabilities, such as deaf and hard of hearing people, and blind and visually impaired people. The primary focus of an accessible film festival is to remove barriers that may hinder people with any type of disability from fully engaging with, and enjoying, films and the cinematic experience. These festivals prioritise the incorporation of various accessibility features to ensure that all individuals can access and appreciate the films being screened and the film festival in general.

Accessibility, as mentioned elsewhere in this research, can mean different things for different people or groups of people. As a whole, film festivals that aim to be as accessible as possible, tend to incorporate a series of accessibility features within their settings. Such accessibility features are related to various aspects of the event, such as the films screening, the location of the events, and so on and so forth. Drawing from the *Guide to Accessible Film Festivals and Screenings*, put forward by ReelAbilities Film Festival (n.d.), which advocates that “Accessibility is a journey: use this guide on your path to becoming more accessible” (n.d.: 2), and the *Accessibility Resource Guide 2.0*, put forward by ReelAccess (2019), the following list offers a selection of examples, although not exhaustive, for making a film festival accessible. These examples include:

- Production Accessibility: First and foremost, the main advice is to plan the festival with accessibility in mind, to consult people with disabilities, and to select the films that offer different perspectives on disability culture.
- Communication Accessibility: Clear and effective communication is essential. Accessible film festivals prioritise accessible communication methods, such as providing information in multiple formats (text, audio, and visual) and ensuring staff

or volunteers are available to assist attendees with disabilities. Communication and information should be easy and simple, including the website, the ticket office and the online ticketing system, the programme, and leaflets or additional paper material.

- Venue Accessibility: The festival organisers should ensure that the festival venue is accessible to people with disabilities. This includes providing wheelchair ramps, elevators, accessible seating areas, and other necessary facilities such as accessible restrooms. The advice is to make sure that the entryways have space for mobility devices (such as wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, and canes), that elevators have low buttons, Braille or raised number markings, or audible floor announcements. The venues should also have enough disabled parking, and transportation to/from the venue should be adequate, affordable, and simple. Toilets, bars, restaurants, coffee shops, gift and book shops should be accessible for people with mobility devices, and gender-inclusive toilets are recommended. Inside the cinema theatres, there should be sufficient space for accessible seats and attention should be paid to sign language users and interpreters on stage in terms or correct lighting, position, and visibility.
- Sensory Considerations: Some festivals offer sensory-friendly screenings or accommodations for individuals with sensory sensitivities, such as lowered sound volume, dimmed lights, and designated quiet areas. A sensory-friendly or relaxed screening specifically designed to welcome people who will benefit from a more relaxed environment, including people in the autistic spectrum, with sensory and communication disorders, or with a learning disability, should be considered.
- Staff Training: Festival organisers can provide training and education to their staff and volunteers on disability awareness, accessibility, and appropriate etiquette to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment for all attendees.
- Affordability: A film festival should also be affordable, so it is advisable to consider discounted tickets for people with disabilities, for students, and for people with low-income, to apply for funding and other subsidiaries both for patrons and for guests and filmmakers.
- Audiovisual Accessibility: *All* (my emphasis) films should be captioned or subtitled, all films should have audio description, and these two access services should be open (available to anyone) or closed (available to those who require them), especially when it comes to audio description which is less used in film festivals, as opposed to captions or subtitles which are more common. Speeches, Q&A sessions, workshops, etc. should have sign language interpreting in the relevant sign language of the hosting country (*i.e.,* American Sign Language for a US-based film festival) and live

subtitles, either provided by humans or machine.

While some of the above-mentioned services may require a financial effort, there are possibilities to secure funding through government channels, partnerships with associations and universities, and collaborations with the communities involved. These avenues provide alternatives for acquiring the necessary resources to support the implementation of these services.

A film festival can also go beyond the (necessary) accessibility requirements listed above and aim to be as inclusive as possible, starting with the programming, by showcasing a diverse range of films that represent various perspectives, identities, and experiences. This includes films that address disability-related topics, feature filmmakers with disabilities, or explore broader themes of inclusivity and accessibility. Inclusive film festival can also focus on engagement, with the filmmakers, with the industry, and with the community. This can include panels, workshops, and networking events that focus on accessible filmmaking practices and the representation of disability in the film industry; but also, through collaborations with disability organisations, partnerships with advocacy groups, and soliciting feedback and input from attendees with disabilities to improve future festivals. Another perspective on accessible film festivals should be mentioned in relation to who is attending these events, who is not, and why. On the one hand, film festivals occurring in big cities allow for easier accommodation and transportation, as opposed to film festivals occurring in remote locations; on the other hand, big cities tend to be more expensive and therefore less affordable for attendees to make the necessary travel and accommodations arrangements. Furthermore, renowned film festivals have a hefty entrance fee that, although it may cover the entire duration of the event, may not be accessible to everyone. In the words of Brunow (2020: 339),

> [...] not everybody has equal chance to participate in an offline film festival edition: people might not be able to afford the necessary costs for travel, accommodation, or tickets, or they might have health issues that prevent them from being in a crowd or in the dark, enclosed cinema space.

One possible solution is online or hybrid film festivals, which have the opportunity to cater to a nation-wide audience, thus making the event more accessible and inclusive. There are however geo-blocking measures in place due to copyrights (Burgess & Stevens, 2023) which might be seen as a limitation, or a compromise between global and local access. Once again, during the Covid-19 pandemic, cinema theatres, when allowed, were forced to work on half or reduced capacity due to social distancing regulations imposed by the local

governments. As a consequence, there has been a major disruption for film festivals, as described by Smits (2023) who interviewed three representative of three major film festivals, London Film Festival (UK), International Film Festival Rotterdam (Netherlands) and Film Fest Ghent (Belgium).

It follows that, online or hybrid formats can be seen as a form of accessibility in the sense that events, such as film festivals, can cater to a broader audience by granting access or giving the right to access to a broader audience, by making reasonable adjustments to their organisation and setting. These reasonable adjustments span from affordability of tickets and entrance fees to clear and easy information and programming, from captions and subtitles to audio description (more easily implemented in online platforms than in offline events), from inclusive environments to inclusive and engaging relationships with filmmakers, with the industry and with the community.

Scholars such as Martins and Ferreira (2022) have compiled a list of film festivals that have demonstrated a higher level of accessibility and inclusivity compared to others. The following festivals are highlighted:

- The *Superfest International Disability Film Festival* (Super Fest Film, n.d.), held in San Francisco, USA, since 1970. It is the oldest festival on disability and its main purpose is to portray disability, as well as to provide access to impaired filmgoers of all kinds, namely through access for wheelchairs but also by means of AD or American Sign Language.
- *Picture this…* (PTFF, n.d.), a Canadian film festival held in Calgary, Alberta, since 2001. Canada’s first international disability film festival states that it celebrates films by and/or about people with impairments.
- The *Brazilian International Film Festival on Disability Assim Vivemos* (Assim Vivemovs, n.d.), a biennial event that happens since 2003. The aim of the festival is to screen films on disability but also to ensure different language access, such as AD, a catalogue in Braille, closed captioning or Brazilian Sign Language for the debates occurring during the festival.
- *Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival* (TX Disabilities, n.d.), established in 2003 and held in Austin, Texas. It aims to change the approach to disability through film and considers itself an event that provides a unique and entertaining way to view disability positively and accurately.
- The *Oska Bright Film Festival* (Oska Bright, n.d.), held in Brighton, UK, since 2004. It comes forward as the world’s biggest learning disability film festival and

exhibits films made by or featuring people with learning disabilities, autism, or Asperger.

- The *Other Film Festival* (Other Film Festival, n.d.), occurring in Melbourne, Australia, from 2004 where the topic of disability is at the heart of this Australian festival. It is also concerned with accessibility from a physical point of view (*i.e.,* wheelchair accessible and guide dogs' provision) and a linguistic perspective, namely AD, captioning, AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language), and interpreters for all spoken events.
- The *Reelabilties Film Festival* (ReelAbilities, n.d.), which has been around since 2007 and happens in New York, Toronto, Los Angeles, and Cleveland. It aims at the promotion of awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories, and artistic expressions of people with disabilities.
- The *UN Enable Film Festival* (U.N., n.d.), with a short lifespan from 2009 to 2016. It was initially created to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, on the 3rd of December. The short disability-related films were selected on the basis of their content and message to help raise awareness about disability issues and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society.
- The *Cannes Festival entr'2 Marches* (Entr2 Marches, n.d.), which had its beginning in 2010 and is another film festival that focuses on all kinds of disability - physical, cognitive/intellectual, sensorial - or simply on the difference.
- The *International Film Festival on Disability* (Festival International Du Film Sur Le Handicap, n.d.), happening in Lyon, France, since 2016. It intends to showcase the work carried out by people with disability and, above all, with the collaboration of people with impairments as directors, actors, festival workers, audience, among others.

4.3.1 How to measure accessibility at film festivals?

Measuring accessibility at film festivals can be a multifaceted process that involves evaluating various aspects of the festival experience. As pointed out by Dawson and Loist (2018: 11), "access measures improve every year as both the festival itself and the knowledge and experience of the team running it grows".

To provide a more empirical system to measure how accessible a film festivals can really be, a 'Film Event Accessibility Scorecard' has been launched in 2022 (Dimon, 2022), created by filmmaker and former executive of the International Documentary Association, Cassidy Dimon, in collaboration with the Film Festival Alliance and FWD-Doc (a collective

of documentary filmmakers with disabilities). The aim is to collect information from participants and attendees of film festivals. This data will be provided to festival organisers to enhance their understanding of the accessibility of their events and enable them to make improvements accordingly (Ravindran, 2022a). The survey, primarily consisting of multiple-choice questions, covers various important aspects, including the accessibility of websites, physical venues, film screenings, panel discussions, Q&A sessions, virtual events, and overall interaction during the event. The creator commented on the new scoreboard as follows: “The objective of the Scorecard is to make it as easy as possible for people to provide concise feedback without requiring them to invest even more of their time and labor on improving a festival or event” (as cited in Ravindran, 2022b: online).

4.4 Deaf cinema & Deaf film festivals

Deaf cinema refers to a genre or category of films that specifically focus on Deaf culture, experiences, and perspectives. These films often feature Deaf actors, sign language, and explore themes that are relevant to the Deaf community. Deaf cinema aims to highlight the unique aspects of Deaf culture, raise awareness about Deaf issues, and provide a platform for Deaf filmmakers to share their stories.

As highlighted by Di Meo (2021) with reference to *Cinedeaf* (Facebook CineDeaf, n.d.), the International Deaf Film Festival of Rome: “Non è un cinema *per* i sordi, il cinema sordo è un cinema fatto *dai* sordi e *con* i sordi” [It is not a cinema *for* the deaf, Deaf cinema is a cinema made *by* the Deaf and *with* the Deaf] (my translation and emphasis). With Deaf Cinema come Deaf Film Festivals, events that showcase and celebrate Deaf cinema. These festivals provide a dedicated space for filmmakers, actors, and audiences within the Deaf community to come together and appreciate Deaf-themed films. Deaf film festivals not only screen movies but also often include panel discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities. They serve as important platforms for promoting Deaf talent, fostering artistic expression, and fostering a sense of community among Deaf individuals and allies. These festivals also contribute to the visibility and recognition of Deaf cinema within the broader film industry. In recent years, there has been a multitude of Deaf filmmakers producing Deaf cinema which brought about a multitude of Deaf film festivals worldwide, such as *UK Deaf Focus Film Festival*, *Swedish Deaf Film Festival*, *Festival Clin D’Oeil*, *Deaf Maine Film Festival*, *Florida Deaf Film Festival*, *California Deaf Film Festival*, *Chicago Institute for Moving Image Festival*, the *Deaf Rochester Film Festival* (Christie *et al*, 2006) and many more.

The emergence of Deaf filmmakers, Deaf cinema, and Deaf Film Festivals is

inherently intertwined with the political, social, and cultural dimensions of the Deaf community, offering a counternarrative to the previous discussions centred around the hearing community. Historically, the narrative surrounding the Deaf community has predominantly been driven by hearing individuals, often presenting their own perspectives, or addressing issues without providing an authentic insider's view. This is similar to a non-disabled person speaking about, narrating, and discussing the experiences of disabled individuals. In the words of Long (2019: online),

> too often, movies with disabled characters or disability themes remain predictably sappy, safe, or sentimental at best. And they are almost never directed, written by, or produced, nor do they often even feature, actual disabled people. […] Any manifesto on cinema and disability requires a deep dive into the prejudices, taboos, and unexamined assumptions that have influenced how concepts about disability have been perceived, and depicted, on film.

Continuing his argument, he references the words of Cheryl Green, a disabled filmmaker, who emphasises that no manifesto about disability in film would be complete without equal access for all, and with specific reference to the main topics of this study, she 'encourages' film productions to invest in captioning, a sentiment that resonates with activists and accessibility managers, or anyone involved in the production of subtitles, captions, inclusive subtitles, etc.

> My manifesto considers accessibility a path toward justice, equity, and expanding a film's audience. Made a great movie? Add a line item to your budget for high-quality captions the same way you would for gorgeous cinematography, pristine audio, and postproduction… well, everything. And before getting defensive about the cost, remember that captions are only one type of access that serves some audiences. But we'd be deeply grateful if you'd start there." (Long, 2019: online)

In conclusion, accessible film festivals are events that aim to accommodate a diverse range of audiences by implementing 'reasonable adjustments' to their settings and organisational practices, with a focus on accessibility form the onset. These adjustments may include providing captioning or sign language interpretation, ensuring physical accessibility for people with mobility impairments, offering audio description for visually impaired individuals, and employing other inclusive practices. Deaf cinema and Deaf film festivals take accessibility even further by not only addressing these adjustments but also by actively showcasing films created by members of the Deaf community. These films are made with the intention of reaching and resonating with audiences of all backgrounds, regardless of hearing ability. By featuring Deaf-made films, Deaf cinema and Deaf film

festivals offer a unique perspective and an opportunity for broader engagement, allowing audiences to gain insight into Deaf culture, experiences, and storytelling.

In essence, Deaf cinema and Deaf film festivals transcend the notion of mere accessibility. They embrace the principle of inclusivity by creating an inclusive space where films made by the Deaf community can be enjoyed and appreciated by all individuals, fostering understanding, awareness, and appreciation of Deaf culture and the talent within the Deaf filmmaking community.

4.5 British Film Institute

In this research, two film festivals occupy a central focus as they represent an opportunity for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the accessibility features, with particular attention to SDH/CC. The film festivals in question are the BFI Flare and the London Film Festival, both held in London, UK, and produced by the British Film Institute.

The British Film Institute, or BFI (BFI, n.d.), is a cultural charity dedicated to the promotion and preservation of film and television culture in the UK. Founded in 1933, it is the lead organisation for film and the moving image in the UK, and an institution recognised worldwide. Their mission is to provide support for creativity and proactively seek out the upcoming generation of UK storytellers; to cultivate and preserve the BFI National Archive, recognised one as the largest film and television archive worldwide; to offer a diverse selection of UK and international moving image culture through their programs and festivals, both online and in physical venues; to utilise their expertise in educating and enhancing public recognition and comprehension of film and the moving image; and to collaborate with the government and industry in order to ensure the ongoing development of the screen industries in the UK (BFI, n.d.).

The main activities within the BFI can be divided into six chief areas (BFI, n.d.) which include:

1. Archive: the BFI National Archive, one of the largest film archives in the world, holds an extensive collection of films and television programs, representing the rich history of British and international cinema, and it is responsible for preserving and restoring said works.
2. Cinemas: The BFI operates the BFI Southbank (formerly the National Film Theatre) in London, which serves as a cultural hub for film enthusiasts. It also operates the BFI IMAX in London. It is the UK's biggest cinema screen (Shah, 2022; BFI, n.d.) and it recently underwent a major renovation, offering a completely immersive experience.

3. Education and Research: The BFI places a strong emphasis on film education and provides resources, training, and support for teachers, educators, and researchers. It engages in film research, analysis, and publishing activities, and it conducts scholarly research, collaborates with academic institutions.
4. Sight and Sound: a monthly film magazine, offering unrivalled insight into film culture with in-depth reviews, interviews and features exploring contemporary and historical cinema in all its variety.
5. The BFI Player: Their VoD streaming device, offering a curated selection of films from around the world, including contemporary releases, classic movies, and works from the BFI's archive.
6. Festivals: The BFI organises various film festivals, including the two film festivals under scrutiny in this study, namely the BFI London Film Festival, or LFF, one the most important film festivals in the world and a prominent event in the film calendar; and the BFI Flare, one of the most important LGBTQ+ film festivals around the world.

The BFI plays a crucial role in the UK film industry and the global promotion of film culture. Through its preservation efforts, educational initiatives, funding schemes, and exhibition activities, the BFI contributes to the appreciation and understanding of film as an art form.

4.5.1 BFI Player

The BFI Player (Player BFI, n.d.) is an online streaming platform launched by the British Film Institute in 2014 (Smits, 2023), offering a curated selection of films from around the world, including classic movies, contemporary releases, and works from the BFI's own archive. This digital platform provides film enthusiasts with an accessible on-demand streaming service, allowing them to explore a diverse range of films across different genres, styles, and eras through its website. Films are available either for rent, for subscription or for free - depending on their release and the rights they have secured with licensors. Rentals include the latest releases and acclaimed features. Subscription includes classic and cult films. Free includes archive films highlighting the best shorts and features films of the BFI National Archive as well as UK national, regional and partner archives. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the BFI Player has also served as a platform for the online screenings of the BFI film festivals, along with external platforms providers, such as Shift72 (Shift72, n.d.).

The vast selection of audiovisual material comprises classic and contemporary films, BFI Archive collection, curated collection, pay-per-view and subscription collection, film extra

and bonus content, accessible to users within the UK. The ‘search’ feature allows to filter the material by subject, location, decade, archive, whether it’s in colour or in black-and-white, whether it’s silent or with sound, but more importantly for the purpose of this project, it allows user to filter content by accessibility features, namely CC and/or AD. Table 1 shows the audiovisual materials in terms of quantity divided into the three category as of July 2nd, 2023, with indication as to how many films have CC and/or AD (it should be noted that the same film may have both CC and AD, although it is counted twice in the table):

Table 1: Numbers of accessible audiovisual material at BFI Player.

	Total	CC	%	AD	%
Free	11722	377	3	290	2
Subscription	1071	450	42	20	2
Rentals	2245	861	38	80	4

Over the years, there has been a slow but constant increase in the audiovisual material made accessible with the provision of CC and/or AD in terms of numbers, but not in terms of percentage as the audiovisual material, in general, has increased as well. Furthermore, taking into account the audiovisual content specifically tailored for deaf and hard of hearing people through CC, and utilising the filters of genre, topic, location, decade, whether it’s in black-or white or in colour, a noticeable difference emerges between the films offered in the Free section (consisting of shorter, older films predominantly in black and white) and the films available in the Rentals section (comprising newer, longer films in colour).The audiovisual material offering CC, also offer users the possibility to customise the appearance of the CC, by allowing them to select items such as text colour, background colour, window (or box) colour, but also font size, the text edge style and the font, as shown in Figure 8.

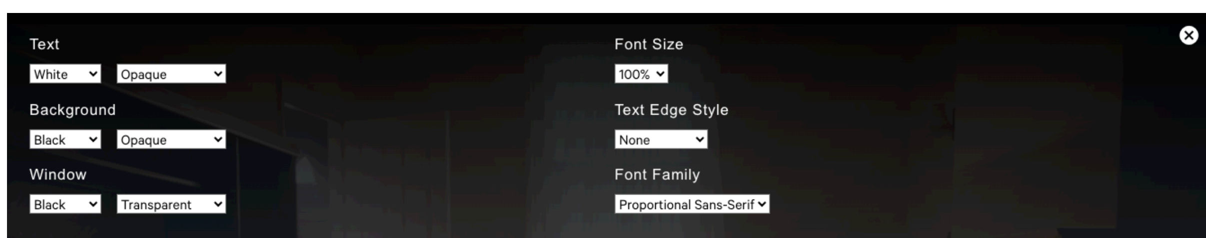

Figure 8: Captions settings on BFI Player.

This captions settings customisation, somewhat greater and freer than most VoD platforms, on the one hand allows the user to customise the captions appearance to their

needs, for example by selecting white text or yellow text, or increasing slightly the text, or having a box behind the text. On the other hand, the (perhaps) excessive customisation of the captions gives users who are not familiar with the standards of captions, the possibility to select a combination of text, background, size, and font which may not be suitable for films or worse may not be readable at all. Below, three versions of the same subtitle are shown in Figures 9, 10, 11. The three different versions represent varieties of subtitles among which the 'standard' and 'custom' subtitle types. Figure 9 presents a standard caption, which precisely contains a white opaque text, accompanied by a black opaque background, with a black opaque window, 100% font size, no text edge, and proportional sans-serif.

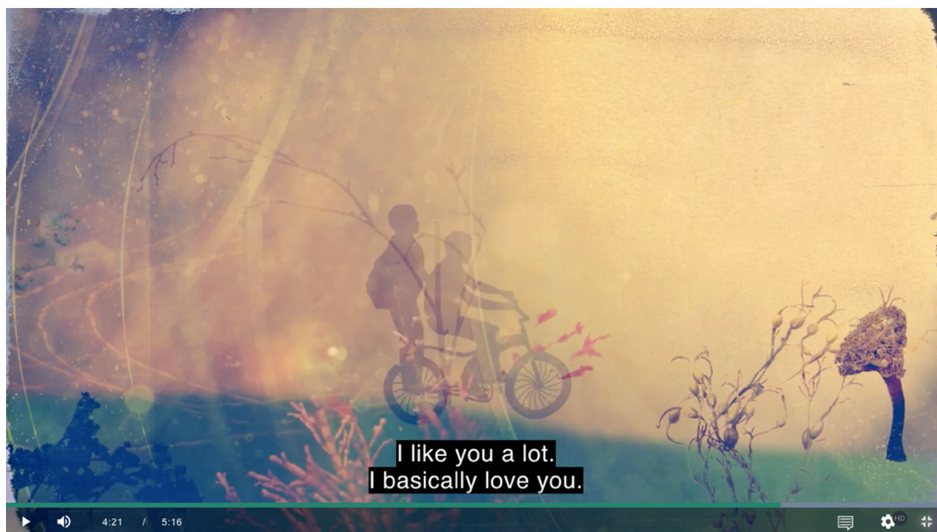

Figure 9: White on black caption, 100% font size.

Figure 10 depicts a custom caption, where it is possible to see a yellow opaque text with a black semi-transparent background and black transparent window, having 125% font size, no text edge, and monospace sans-serif font.

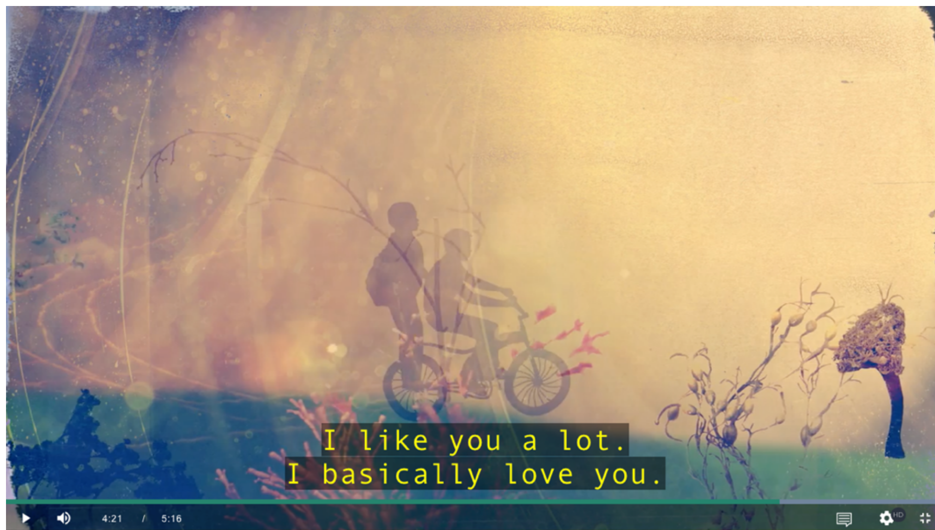

Figure 10: Yellow on black caption, 125% font size.

Finally, Figure 11 contains a custom caption where what really dominates the screen is a blue opaque text, with cyan opaque background, encapsulated within a red semi-transparent window, with font size at 400%, with drop shadow text edge, and script font.

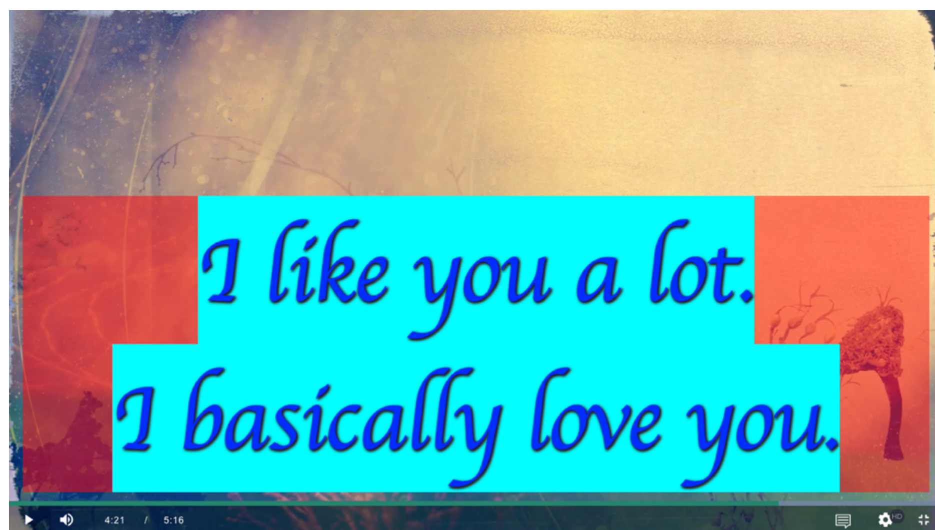

Figure 11: Blue on cyan caption, 400% font size.

As shown in the examples above, a reasonable adjustment to the captions settings allows users to customise the caption according to their own needs based on vision (dis)abilities and preferences. However, extreme customisation prevents the end users to read comfortably the captions which occupy most of the screen, are not in a standard or recommended font, do not take into consideration the suitable colour combination, all crucial aspects of subtitles and captions that have been studied and researched over the years.

Also, it could be argued that, instead of offering end users a plethora of style to choose from, some of which may not even be considered by the majority or by the common sense of captions, an array of captions based on other linguistic aspects could be considered, for examples verbatim, standard, or edited text, or easy to read language, or explanatory subtitles, etc.

4.5.2 London Film Festival

The BFI London Film Festival, or LFF, is an annual event organised by the BFI and one of most significant and prestigious film events at national and international levels. First held in 1957, it is also one of the oldest and, over the years, has grown in size, popularity, and relevance. It usually takes place in the month of October in London and spans approximately two weeks, showcasing a diverse range of films, including feature films, documentaries, shorts, and experimental works. The festival presents a wide selection of films from around the world, including highly anticipated premieres, award-winning works, and independent cinema. It offers a diverse program, encompassing various genres, styles, and themes. It has become an anticipated event in the film calendar, with film enthusiasts attending screenings, participating in discussions and Q&A sessions with filmmakers, and exploring the rich tapestry of contemporary cinema. The LFF features special screenings and gala events, which often include highly anticipated red-carpet premieres, and appearances by renowned actors and filmmakers. Alongside film screenings, the LFF hosts industry events, including panel discussions, masterclasses, and networking opportunities, and allows press and industry delegates to attend film screenings in advance, before the general public, in some instances.

The LFF is one of the two film festivals under scrutiny in this research. In particular, what will be examined is how this film festival is accessible for patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and more precisely how the captions of the films screened at said film festival are made, displayed and what their format is. For quantitative analysis, the films of the 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 edition will be taken into account, whereas for the qualitative analysis, only some of the films from the 2021 and 2022 editions will be examined in detail.

The 64th edition of the LFF occurred from October 7th to 18th, 2020. Because of the widespread impact of the global pandemic and the closure or limited capacity of cultural venues, the festival adopted a hybrid format, offering screenings both in person and online. The official festival programme featured a limited number of films with subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, identified by the 'HOH' symbol commonly associated with the hard of hearing community. Figure 12 shows the key to symbols of the programme:

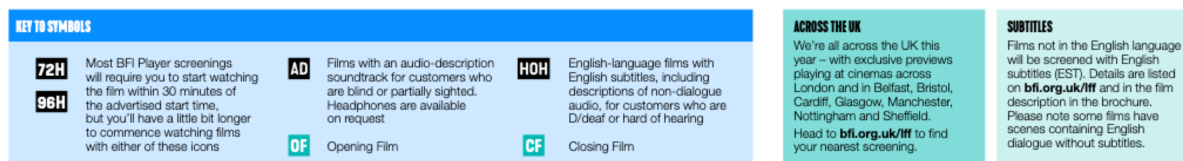

Figure 12: Key to symbols, LFF 2020.

According to the programme, a total of 58 feature films were screened either online or in person, with 15 of them screened multiple times, resulting in approximately 150 screenings overall. Out of these films, only three were made accessible through AD and SDH/CC. Whilst films not in the English language were screened with English subtitles (EST), which is a common practice at film festivals, some films in the English language had the symbol 'HOH' next to it, to indicate subtitles which included description of non-dialogue audio, for the benefit of customers who are deaf or hard of hearing. Unfortunately, there is a lack of information regarding the CC format and style of these films as a result of the difficult challenges and disruptions presented at the time of the festival.

The LFF is not just about films in the most classic way, audiovisual material is also experienced in what the LFF calls Expanded, a new dedicated strand of XR and immersive art, an "an expansive space for programming, featuring Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Mixed Reality and including live immersive performance" (BFI, 2020a: Online).

The 65th edition of the BFI London Film Festival took place once again in hybrid format, in person and online, between October 6th and 17th, 2021. It was an event attended by an audience of 291,000 in person and digitally in the span of 12 days (BFI, 2021a). With a particular attention to the in-person events, a sufficient number of films, have been screened with caption in cinemas. The list is described in Table 2.

Table 2: Films with captions, LFF 2021.

Title	Year	Director	Min.	Original Language
The power of the dog	2021	Jane Campion	126	English
Belfast	2021	Kenneth Branagh	98	English
The phantom of the Open	2021	Craig Roberts	102	English
All these sons	2021	Bing Liu, Joshua Altman	88	English
The lost daughter	2020	Maggie Gyllenhaal	121	English
Mothering Sunday	2020	Eva Husson	110	English
King Richard	2021	Reinaldo Marcus Green	138	English
Lamb	2021	Valdimar Jóhannsson	106	Icelandic
Ear for eye	2021	Debbie Tucker Green	88	English

It is important to highlight that none of these films are indicated as having CC or AD on the programme, whether in print or online. Consequently, it could be argued that individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing might choose not to attend the film festival due to the lack of information or proper labelling regarding the accessibility features available to them. Additionally, it is worth noting that, similar to other major film festivals, members of the press and industry are given the opportunity to view films before the general public through separate screenings that are typically more crowded and less glamorous. Surprisingly, CC were not provided during the press and industry screenings of the LFF 2021, which may imply that, while there may be deaf or hard of hearing individuals among the general public, they might not be included in the press or industry circles. This aligns with the general accessibility measures typically implemented at large events, allowing individuals with mobility disabilities to reach and enter the building or venue, but preventing them to go further. That is to say that they can find ramps to enter the building, and designated seating for wheelchairs, enabling them to be part of the event's audience, but their 'right to access' is limited, since only few buildings and venues extend accessibility to the stage, podium, or main desk at conferences (this observation is anecdotal and lacks empirical evidence). This means that individuals with disabilities might not be able to take on roles such as speakers at a conference, further highlighting the challenges they face in achieving full inclusivity.

The 66th edition of the LFF occurred from October 5th to 16th, 2022. This edition showcased highly acclaimed and eagerly anticipated major films, effectively moving away from the challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The screenings and events primarily took place in person, emphasising a return to normalcy, while the online presence of films and events was comparatively reduced. The programme listed the films with captions, labelled with 'SDH' for in-person screening and with 'CC' for online screening, as it is possible to notice in Figure 13.

ACCESSIBLE SCREENINGS AND EVENTS IN PERSON

Cinema screenings for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss:

SDH Subtitles for the D/deaf and people experiencing hearing loss. On-screen subtitles including descriptions of non-dialogue audio

BSL British Sign Language interpreted introductions, Q&As and events

Cinema screenings for customers who are blind or partially-sighted:

AD Films with an audio-description soundtrack via infra-red headsets (available on request)

ACCESSIBLE SCREENINGS ON BFI PLAYER

English-language features and short films will be made accessible with:

CC Closed caption subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss

AD Audio description for customers who are blind or partially-sighted

All online pre-recorded introductions, Screen Talks and events will have subtitles.

Figure 13: Key to symbols, LFF 2022.

The films with CC, both feature and short, under scrutiny from this edition of the film festival are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Films with captions, LFF 2022.

Title	Year	Director	Min.	Original Language
Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical	2022	Matthew Warchus	120	English
Medusa Deluxe	2022	Thomas Hardiman	101	English
Name me Lawand	2022	Edward Lovelace	82	English, BSL
Living	2022	Oliver Hermanus	102	English
Women Talking	2022	Sarah Polley	104	English
She said	2022	Maria Schrader	133	English
Till	2022	Chinonye Chukwu	130	English
Birds	2021	Katherine Propper	13	English
Groom	2021	Leyla Coll-O'Reilly	16	English
Rosemary A.D. (After Dad)	2021	Ethan Barrett	10	English

The Riley Sisters	2022	Julia Jackman	11	English, BSL
Sticks of Fury	2021	Yuan Hu	7	English
The Debutante	2022	Elizabeth Hobbs	8	English
Drop Out	2022	Ade Femzo	6	English
For Heidi	2022	Lucy Campbell	10	English
Back to School	2022	Tyro Heath	5	English
Blue Room	2022	Merete Mueller	11	English
Skyward	2022	Jessica Bishop	20	English

As part of the effort to shift focus from accessibility to inclusion, two films, specifically *Name me Lawand* (Lovelace, 2022) and *The Riley Sisters* (Jackman, 2022), featured British Sign Language (BSL) as the original language. These films not only had captions available but also included a BSL/English interpretation during the Q&A session preceding the screening of *Name me Lawand*. Moreover, the cast and crew were invited on stage to engage in discussions about the film and interact with the audience. The commendable practice of introducing the general audience to films that feature sign languages as their original language is gradually gaining momentum and making its way into film festivals worldwide. Figure 14 shows a snap of the *Name me Lawand* Q&A session.

Figure 14: *Name me Lawand* Q&A with BSL interpreter.

As far as the Press & Industry screening schedule is concerned, it should be noted that, this year, it showcased a series of films with captions, this time labelled as 'CC' and with the following information, as seen in Figure 15.

ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

The following English-language titles labelled with CC will be made accessible with closed caption subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss.
If you have any additional access requirements you would like to make us aware of, please email us at indaccred@bfi.org.uk and we will make every effort to meet them within our available resources.

Figure 15: Access Requirements for Press & Industry, LFF 2022.

The LFF Expanded held at 26 Leake Street, showcasing a new dimension of storytelling with immersive art and extended reality (XR), was a highly successful event featuring virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) installations. Out of 17 different projects, 4 were presented with closed captions, as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Projects with CC, LFF Expanded 2022.

Title	Year	Lead Artist	Min.
All unsaved progress will be lost	2022	Mélanie Courtinat	10
Apparatus Ludens	2022	Untold Garden	15
Missing pictures: Catherine Hardwicke	2022	Catherine Hardwicke, Clément Deneux	11
On the morning you wake (to the end of the world)	2002	Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio, Mike Brett, Steve Jamison, Arnaud Colinart, Pierre Zandrowicz	38

For the analysis and implementing of captions in such contexts, a distinct analysis and methodology are required, as the immersive experience needs to rely on the head-mounted visual display, captions position in a 360° environment, among others. But it suffices to say that the investigation in this spepific research area is growing exponentially and attracting the interest of academia and industry (Agulló & Matamala, 2020).

4.5.3 BFI Flare

BFI Flare: London LGBTQ+ Film Festival, commonly known as BFI Flare, is an annual film festival held in London, organised by the BFI and one of the world's leading LGBTQ+ film festivals. First established in 1986 as the London Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, it was the

first film festival of its kind in the UK, dedicated to showcasing films representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender themes, and stories. In 2014, it was renamed BFI Flare to reflect its broader focus on the LGBTQ+ community. It usually takes place in March or April, typically spanning over a two-week period, and its aim is to celebrate LGBTQ+ cinema in all its diversity and richness, by exploring LGBTQ+ identities, experiences, and issues. Just like LFF, BFI Flare supports LGBTQ+ filmmakers by providing a platform for their work, offering networking opportunities, and facilitating discussions and industry events, and it showcases both established and emerging filmmakers, presenting a mix of critically acclaimed films, world premieres, and unique cinematic experiences.

As part of this study, the films belonging to the 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 editions will be considered for the quantitative analysis, whereas for the qualitative analysis and subsequent data gathering the captions of some of the 2021 and 2022 editions will be scrutinised in the following paragraphs.

The 34th edition of the BFI Flare, originally scheduled to take place from March 18th to 29th, 2020, faced unfortunate circumstances similar to many other film festivals worldwide. Due to local and national regulations implemented, restrictions on social gatherings were imposed, making it impossible for the event to proceed as planned. On March 16th, 2020, just a few days before the festival's intended start, an announcement was made stating the cancellation of BFI Flare (BFI Flare, 2020a; Dams, 2020). The 34th edition was supposed to showcase a diverse programme, including over 50 features, 85 shorts, and various special events, guest appearances, family-friendly activities, free events, and club nights (BFI, 2020b). However, a modified version of the festival took place, called ‘BFI Flare at Home’. It provided audiences with the opportunity to watch a selection of remarkable LGBTIQ+ shorts and features from March 20th to 29th on BFI Player, which were initially intended to be screened at BFI Flare (BFI Flare, 2020b). Tricia Tuttle, Director of Festivals at the British Film Institute, explained the decision, stating what follows:

> [When] the decision was made to cancel the 'live' festival, the team knew that they wanted to share some elements of BFI Flare digitally to celebrate the spirit of BFI Flare and the incredible range of LGBTIQ+ stories from talented filmmakers being told in the UK and internationally. We want to bring some of the spirit of Flare into viewers' living rooms. (Mustarde, 2020: online)

The new programme of BFI Flare at Home comprised 12 films available between March 20th and 29th 2020 on the BFI Player, of which half were accessible for a deaf and hard of hearing audience through captions.

In 2021, for the 35th edition, the BFI Flare introduced a hybrid format, combining both online and in-person screenings and events. The physical festival occurred from March 17th to 28th, 2021, while the online festival ran concurrently on BFI Player from March 16th to 27th. The programme states that "English-language features and shorts will be made accessible with: CC (Closed captions subtitles, including description of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are d/Deaf and hard of hearing) and AD (Audio description for customers who are blind or partially-sighted)" (BFI, 2021: 8), and it also credited the partnership with Mishcon de Reya (Mishcon, n.d.), a renowned British law firm, "supporting closed captioning to facilitate greater accessibility for d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences across this year's festival" (Mishcon de Reya, 2021: online). Figure 16 shows the Accessibility page of the programme.

ACCESSIBILITY

BFI Flare: London LGBTIQ+ Film Festival is for everyone. We're committed to ensuring it is as inclusive and accessible as possible.

English-language features and shorts will be made accessible with

CC Closed caption subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

AD Audio description for customers who are blind or partially-sighted

All Screen Talks, pre-recorded introductions, Q&As and events will have subtitles

For a full list of films with closed captions and audio description, visit **bfi.org.uk/flare/access**

Booking tickets

Our dedicated access line is 020 7960 2102

You can call us during these times:
25 Feb–16 Mar 10:00-18:00 (Mon-Fri)
17-28 Mar 11:00-19:00 (Mon-Sun)

We welcome calls using text relay services.

If you have any questions about access, please email **box.office@bfi.org.uk**

Festival brochure

This digital brochure is compatible with most screen readers. Please see **bfi.org.uk/flare** or contact us for a copy of a large-print version. We welcome your feedback.

Closed captioning supported by Mishcon de Reya 8

Figure 16: Accessibility Page, BFI Flare 2021.

For the purpose of the qualitative analysis of the above-mentioned CC, the following features films have been considered, as listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Films with captions, BFI Flare 2021.

Title	Year	Director	Min.	Original Language
Jump, Darling	2020	Phil Connell	90	English
The Obituary of Tunde Johnson	2019	Ali LeRoi	104	English
Firebird	2021	Peeter Rebane	107	English
Boy meets boy	2021	Daniel Sánchez López	75	English
Rebel Dykes	2021	Harri Shanahan, Siân Williams	82	English
Rūrangi	2020	Max Currie	96	English, Maori
Well Rounded	2020	Shana Myara	61	English
p.s. Burn this letter, please	2020	Michael Seligman, Jennifer Tiexieria	100	English

With regard to the short films showcased at the festival, they are usually categorised into sections based on the discussed topics, namely Beginning and Endings (6 shorts), For the Record (6 shorts), Into the Unknown (6 shorts), Queer as in Question Everything (4 shorts), Shapes We Make, Spaces We Take (5 shorts), Striving to Be Seen (6 shorts). Below are the descriptions of each section as described by the BFI Programme (BFI, 2021b):

- Beginning and Endings: "From an unexpectedly eventful train journey to the end of the world, this stunning collection of shorts explores trials and triumphs of being your true self."
- For the Record: "Traversing a wide range of subjects, this inspiring selection of short form documentaries is guaranteed to evoke and inspire in equal measure."
- Heart's Desire: "History, geography and personal circumstances may change but challenges facing the heart are timeless and universal."
- Into the Unknown: "The blurred lines of love and friendship between women are explored in these poignant and beautiful short films."
- Queer as in Question Everything: "Here's a collection of funny, sweet and strange short for the natural contrarian."
- Shapes We Make, Spaces We Take: "Our relationship to our bodies and our homes have become more complex than ever. These five shorts up the ante, exploring where, how and with whom we feel at home."

- Striving to Be Seen: “Inquisitive tales of resilience, memory and enlightenment in this largely fictional selection, traversing an expanse of trans experience across Europe and the Americas.”

Out of the 38 short films showcased, the following ones are made accessible with CC and are worthy of further analysis, as they comprehend more features of SDH/CC cases, as per Table 6.

Table 6: Shorts with captions, BFI Flare 2021.

Title	**Year**	**Director**	**Min.**	**Original Language**
Buck	2020	Elegance Bratton, Jovan James	14	English
Pool Boy	2021	Luke Willis	10	English
The Act	2020	Thomas Escott	18	English
The Cost of Living	2021	Alice Trueman	13	English
From A to Q	2020	Emmalie El Fadli	19	English
Love is a Hand Grenade	2020	Jessica Benhamou	13	English
Wings	2020	Jamie Weston	18	English
Acrimonious	2020	Olivia Emden	14	English
Pure	2020	Natalie Jasmine Harris	12	English
Is It Me	2020	Christopher McGill	9	English
This is an Address	2020	Sasha Wortzel	18	English
Transitions II: Movement in Isolation	2020	Tobi Adebajo	12	English
Kind Of	2020	Noah Schamus	9	English
The Lights are On, No One’s Home	2020	Faye Ruiz	10	English
Trans Happiness is Real	2020	Quinton Baker	8	English

The 2022 BFI Flare London LGBTQIA+ Film Festival took place from March 16th to 29th, 2022, in London at the BFI Southbank and was also accessible online in the UK. Similar to the previous edition, the festival embraced a hybrid format, enabling viewers to either enjoy the cinematic experience in theatres or watch films from the convenience of their homes. CC were made available for selected films thanks to the support of the accessibility partner FactSet (FactSet, n.d.), a financial data and software company. The programme, as usual, dedicates a page to the access at the festival and distinguishes between screenings at BFI Southbank (in person) and screenings at BFI Player (online), as per Figure 17.

ACCESS AT THE FESTIVAL

BFI Flare: London LGBTQIA+ Film Festival is for everyone. We're committed to ensuring it is as inclusive and accessible as possible. We offer a number of accessible screenings and events, and will make reasonable efforts to meet any additional requirements within available resources.

Accessible screenings at BFI Southbank

Cinema screenings for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss:

CC On-screen subtitles including descriptions of non-dialogue audio

BSL British Sign Language interpreted introductions, Q&As and events

Cinema screenings for customers who are blind or partially-sighted:

AD Films with an audio-description soundtrack via infra-red headsets

Accessible screenings on BFI Player

English-language features and shorts will be made accessible with:

CC Closed caption subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss

AD Audio description for customers who are blind or partially-sighted

All pre-recorded introductions will have subtitles.

For more information, visit **bfi.org.uk/flare/access** or contact the Box Office.

Booking tickets

To book access tickets or ask any questions about access, please contact our dedicated Box Office number on **020 7960 2102** (lines open 11:30-20:30 daily) or email **box.office@bfi.org.uk**. We welcome calls using text relay services.

BFI Southbank accepts the CEA card.

Venue access

BFI Southbank has wheelchair and step-free access. For more information, visit **bfi.org.uk/flare/access** or contact the Box Office.

Festival brochure

Please visit **bfi.org.uk/flare** for an accessible version of this brochure. We welcome your feedback.

Supported by FactSet

6

Figure 17: Accessibility Page, BFI Flare 2022.

The many feature and short films made accessible to a deaf and hard of hearing audience have been examined across a series of means, including general public in-person screening, general public online screening, press & industry in-person screening, and press & industry online screening, thus making the quantitative analysis rather inaccurate and therefore not note-worthy. However, for the qualitative analysis, the following feature and short films have been taken into consideration, as the CC provided interesting data. The titles are listed in Table 7.

Table 7: Films and shorts with captions, BFI Flare 2022.

Title	Year	Director	Min.	Original Language
Benediction	2021	Terence Davies	137	English
Minutes	2021	Alix Eve, Olivia Dowd	14	English
Do This For Me	2022	Marnie Baxter	19	English
Framing Agnes	2022	Chase Joynt	75	English
Boy Culture: The Series	2021	Q. Allan Brocka	86	English

Charli XCX: Alone Together	2021	Bradley Bell, Pablo Jones-Soler	67	English
Walk With Me	2020	Isabel del Rosal	112	English

From March 15th to 26th, 2023, the 37th edition of the BFI Flare occurred, adopting a hybrid format that encompassed both in-person and online screenings. However, considering the favourable circumstances at that time, greater emphasis was placed on the in-person screenings, reflecting a preference for physical attendance.

The festival programme, in the dedicated access at the festival page, announces that a number of accessible screenings and events are offered and that reasonable efforts will be met if required. The labelling distinguishes between ‘SDH’ (intended as on-screen subtitles including description of non-dialogue audio) for in-person screening, and ‘CC’ (intended as closed captions subtitles, including description of non-dialogue audio, for customer who are d/Deaf or people experiencing hearing loss) on BFI Player, as shown in Figure 18.

ACCESS AT THE FESTIVAL

We are committed to making BFI Flare: London LGBTQIA+ Film Festival as welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible for everyone

We offer a number of accessible screenings and events, and will make reasonable efforts to meet any additional requirements within available resources. Accessibility options may be added to screenings at a later stage, including after tickets have gone on sale. For more information, visit **bfi.org.uk/flare/access** or contact the Box Office.

Accessible screenings at BFI Southbank

For customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss:

SDH On-screen subtitles including descriptions of non-dialogue audio

BSL British Sign Language interpreted introductions, Q&As and events

For customers who are blind or partially-sighted:

AD Films with an audio-description soundtrack via infra-red headsets

Accessible films on BFI Player

English-language shorts will be made accessible with:

CC Closed caption subtitles, including descriptions of non-dialogue audio, for customers who are D/deaf or people experiencing hearing loss

AD Audio description for customers who are blind or partially-sighted

Figure 18: Accessibility Page, BFI Flare 2023.

The feature and short films made available with SDH or CC will not be considered for the qualitative analysis in order to keep a balance between the two film festivals under scrutiny and the editions in which data have been collected. However, for the purpose of the quantitative analysis, it suffices to say that 14 feature and 9 short films were advertised on the BFI website to be screened with SDH at in-person screening.

4.5.4 Data analysis

The corpus examined in the study is derived from a comprehensive dataset accumulated over a three-year period, from 2020 to 2023. This temporal range allows for a thorough and nuanced analysis, capturing potential trends and variations in the application of SDH/CC of the two principal film festivals under scrutiny, the BFI Flare and the London Film Festival. The data extracted from these festivals encompass a diverse array of films, including both feature-length and short films. This inclusive approach ensures a holistic examination of the SDH/CC practices across various cinematic formats, recognising the distinct challenges and considerations associated with feature films and short films. This three-year dataset acts as a rich repository of information, offering a detailed glimpse into the evolution and consistency of accessibility practices within the context of these film festivals.

It is important to note that this period was significantly impacted by the global Covid-19 pandemic, which had a profound effect on the film industry and, in particular, the film festival sector, which are essentially events involving people gathering in enclosed environments enjoying cinematographic excellency. The films showcased at both film festivals under investigation include exceptional works of cinema, encompassing both feature and short films. Especially in the case of the LFF's feature films, these gained great anticipation from the general public, critics, and cinephiles. However, the present research focused solely on one aspect of these films, *i.e.,* the features of SDH/CC provided at the two film festivals. Unlike written texts, literature pieces, or films available on streaming platforms, the data obtained from SDH/CC were collected in real-time during screenings at the LFF and BFI Flare, which took place at various venues in London, but primarily at the BFI in Southbank. It was not possible to rewind the films or revisit specific features, nor were the subtitle files analysed using subtitling software to scrutinise technical aspects like timing and formatting. Additionally, challenges such as the dense programme schedule, difficulties in reaching venues during the Covid-19 pandemic, the inability to attend all films due to scheduling overlaps, and logistic issues, further contributed to the collected data being a reflection of the author's personal experience, rather than a detailed report regarding the accessibility features of both film festivals.

Rather than focusing solely on the quantity of data collected, the emphasis lies in the quality of the data. Whether a film is a feature-length blockbuster or a short film directed by an emerging talent, both hold equal importance for the qualitative analysis. The scrutiny here pertains to the linguistic, technical, and special aspects of SDH/CC in each analysed film. This analysis ultimately fosters a deeper understanding of SDH/CC nuances, the technicalities of subtitles, and the diverse formats and forms of SDH/CC available to the

general public. This will in turn lead to more conscientious and critical ideas, which shape the inclusive subtitles guidelines and practices which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

4.5.5 Methodology

To differentiate SDH/CC from mere intralingual subtitling, four key features are considered:

1. Speaker identification
2. Para-linguistic elements
3. Sound effects
4. Music and Lyrics

For a film to be deemed analysable in this study, it should possess at least two of these four features, as it is possible that certain films do not require speaker identification if all characters or actors are visible on screen, or they may lack any music or relevant sound effects. Although the data were collected chronologically, alternating between BFI Flare (typically held in March) and the LFF (typically held in October), all the collected data has been merged and compiled into a single document. Therefore, a short film from the BFI Flare 2021 edition holds the same significance as a feature film from the LFF 2022 edition, for instance. The collected data can be categorised based on the aspects they analyse and can be further divided into sub-categories. These categories include:

1. Timing: This encompasses synchronisation with the original audio and the behaviour around shot changes.
2. Style: It involves the font, font size, background, position, and justification of the subtitles.
3. Linguistic aspects: This category covers whether the subtitles are edited or verbatim and their segmentation.
4. SDH/CC elements: This includes speaker identification, para-linguistic aspects, sound effects, and music and lyrics.

By organising the data according to these categories, a comprehensive analysis can be conducted, providing insights into various aspects of SDH/CC implemented in the analysed films.

4.5.6 Results

The analysis of the collected data leads to several conclusions regarding the tendencies and preferred style and format of subtitles at the two film festivals under investigation. Out of all the films analysed, a total of 57 films are further considered for in-depth analysis. These films include both features and short films from the 2021 and 2022 editions of both BFI Flare and the LFF, with a relatively equal distribution. The combined runtime of these 57 films amounts to 3,288 minutes, with a median runtime of approximately 58 minutes. As mentioned before, both short films and feature films are given equal importance in this study. Approximately two-thirds of the films were viewed online, while one-third was experienced in cinema theatres. This is primarily attributed to the period of analysis, during which hybrid film festivals took place.

An overwhelming majority of the films, 93% to be precise, have English as original language, with an additional 5% comprised films in English combined with another language, such as Maori or British Sign Language (BSL). Only 2% of the films, *i.e.*, one film, was in Icelandic. This observation underlines the fact that captioning or subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing remains predominantly an intralingual practice. It could be argued that, as it is customary for film festivals to add interlingual subtitles for films that have an original audio in language different from the language of the hosting country, all films have some form of subtitling. In other words, for foreign films, interlingual subtitles serve the purpose of (linguistic) accessibility, while domestic films have SDH/CC which serve the purpose of (sensory) accessibility for a specific group of audience. However, it is important to note that interlingual standard subtitles are not suitable for deaf and hard of hearing audiences, and the old stereotype that SDH/CC is exclusively an intralingual practice is a notion that researchers and professionals are actively working to discourage.

Regarding timing, the majority of cases displayed good synchronisation between the subtitles and the audio, although there were a few instances of noticeable timing issues. These anomalies were significant to the extent that they might have been caused by file malfunctions or mismatches, rather than mere synchronisation errors. Nevertheless, these few occurrences resulted in an unpleasant viewing experience.

Regarding style, the analysis focuses on both the background and foreground elements, as they are interconnected, especially considering the median of display of the subtitles. Films viewed in cinema theatres uniformly featured white text subtitles without any background. In contrast, films watched online provided viewers with the option to customise the foreground, background, font size, and more. This customisation allows for personal

choices that can be influenced by preferences or disabilities. For instance, individuals with visual impairments may opt for larger font sizes to enhance subtitle readability.

In terms of position and justification, all subtitle files follow a centred positioning and justification, aligning with current practices on VoD platforms and cinema subtitles, but differing from some SDH on TV. Similarly to VoD platforms, all subtitles are verbatim, that is to say, a word-for-word transcription of the dialogues with minimal or no alterations. Line breaks are generally considered appropriate, with a few instances where they do not fully adhere to the semantic distribution of the text between the first and second line of the subtitle. The analysis reveals that, for the most part, subtitles consist of two lines, with only three films occasionally employing three lines of subtitles. This trend aligns with the current norms set by VoD platforms, suggesting an abandonment of the occasional use of three-line subtitles sometimes found on TV. While it was not possible to meticulously examine every subtitle line of each film due to the volatile nature of data gathering, the general observation indicates that the maximum number of characters per line is typically within the limit of 42 characters, with a few noticeable exceptions exceeding this limit.

Regarding style and format features, the use of a hyphen (or a dash) usually conveys the presence of two speakers (commonly known as dual speakers) in the same subtitle. The implementation of this feature varies depending on factors such as country, language, and other considerations. Following the analysis, four options were identified:

1. One hyphen per speaker without a space.
2. One hyphen per speaker followed by a space.
3. One hyphen when the speaker changes, followed by a space.
4. One hyphen for the second speaker only, followed by a space.

Figure 19 provides further insight, revealing that half of the analysed films prefers the use of one hyphen per speaker without a space, aligning with the majority of guidelines set by major VoD platforms for English Timed Text (see Netflix, n.d.; Prime Video, n.d.; Disney+, n.d.).

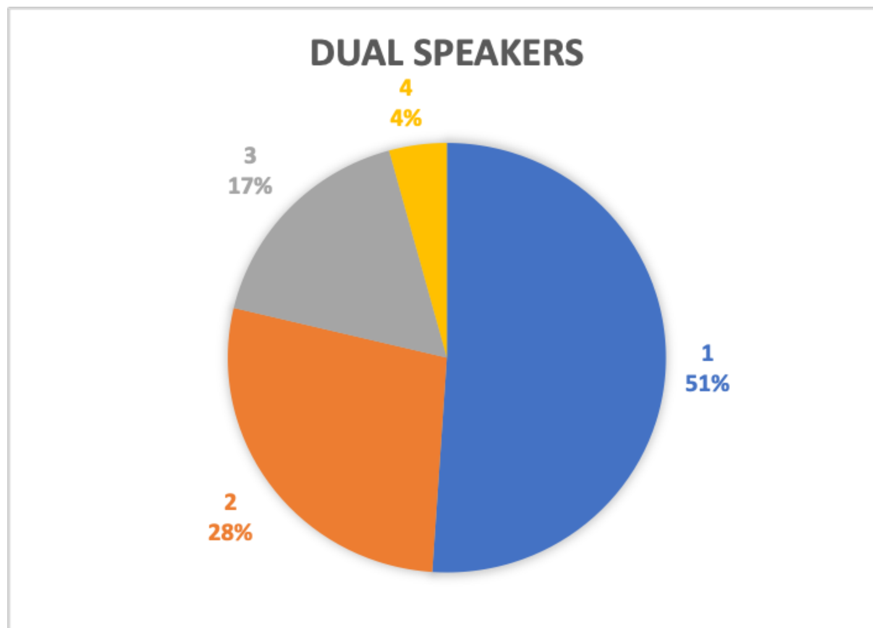

Figure 19: Dual Speakers.

When it comes to off-screen voices, over half of the subtitle files opt for using italics, a commonly employed strategy on VoD platforms. However, this approach is not used in SDH for TV due to the limitations of the teletext system, which cannot display text in italics. Consequently, alternative strategies are employed, such as the use of < or > signs, as seen in the case of Italian broadcaster RAI (2021). Another strategy involves treating off-screen voices similarly to Speaker Identifiers. By indicating the source of the dialogue, viewers can deduce that the dialogue originates from an off-screen source.

One of the distinctive features of SDH/CC are para-linguistic elements, which capture how characters express themselves through intonation, expression of emotions, etc. For instance, for a word shouted out loud, one of the strategies observed consists in representing the word in uppercase letters (*e.g.*, “HELLO!”). Another approach involves extending the length of a word by adding more vowels or consonants (*e.g.*, "Hellooooo!"). However, such practices are generally discouraged in SDH/CC guidelines, as the visual representation of additional vowels or consonants may be perceived as an error by either the subtitler(s) or the broadcaster(s). Nevertheless, some independent companies are beginning to adopt this strategy or other creative approaches.

Speaker Identification is a significant and distinguishing feature of SDH/CC, as it enables deaf and hard of hearing audiences to comprehend who is speaking when a character is not visible on screen or when two characters are shown from behind. While hearing audiences can often recognise distinctive voices, speaker identification becomes essential for deaf and hard of hearing viewers. In the realm of SDH/CC, there are various

methods employed to convey speaker identification, primarily through the use of tags, colours, or speaker-dependent placement.

Speaker-dependent placements are becoming less common, and colours are predominantly used in SDH for TV. Tags have emerged as the preferred strategy to identify speakers, especially in VoD platforms. However, there are multiple ways in which a tag can be displayed in subtitles. For example, when a man is speaking off-screen, his tag can be represented as:

[man] / [Man] / [MAN] / (man) / (Man) / (MAN) / man: / Man: / MAN: / -MAN:

This flexibility allows VoD platforms and agencies to choose their own style as a distinctive mark. For instance, Netflix typically employs a speaker identification tag enclosed within square brackets with all lowercase letters (*e.g.,* [man]), unless it is a proper name. In the analysed films, a range of options were used for speaker identification:

1. All uppercase, followed by a colon, preceded by a hyphen. -MAN:
2. All uppercase, followed by a colon. MAN:
3. First letter in uppercase, followed by a colon. Man:
4. Within round parentheses, with the first letter in uppercase. (Man)
5. Within square brackets, with the first letter in uppercase. [Man]
6. Within square brackets, with all lowercase letters. [man]

Figure 20 below indicates a preference for the strategy of using all capital letters for the name tag, followed by a colon (*e.g.,* MAN:), which is not uncommon in certain cases. However, it could be argued that while ‘man’ is a three-letter word, other name tags, such as ‘businessman’, may present challenges as they occupy more screen space (*e.g.,* BUSINESSMAN: vs. [Businessman]).

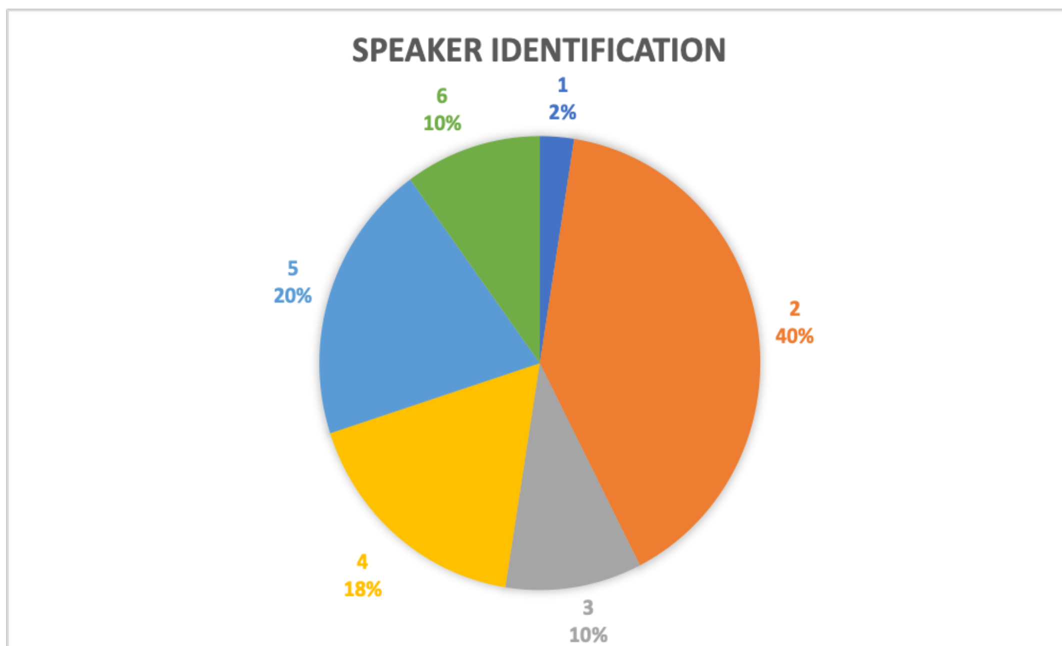

Figure 20: Speaker Identification.

Similarly to speaker identification, sound effects play a crucial role in creating a comprehensive SDH/CC file. And just like speaker identification, the visual representation of sound effects can take various forms. However, unlike speaker identification, the linguistic choices for sound effects labels are less rigid, making their transposition more challenging. Furthermore, an excessive number of sound effects labels can have an unintended effect of distracting the viewer from the film (see Zdenek, 2011).

The subtitles of the analysed films present different strategies for rendering sound effects labels, which are listed below:

1. Within square brackets, with all lowercase letters. [gunshot]
2. Within square brackets, with the first letter in uppercase. [Gunshot]
3. Within square brackets, with all uppercase letters. [GUNSHOT]
4. Within square brackets, with the first letter in uppercase and in italics. *[Gunshot]*
5. Within round parentheses, with all lowercase letters. (gunshot)
6. Within round parentheses, with the first letter in uppercase. (Gunshot)
7. Within round parentheses, with all uppercase letters. (GUNSHOT)
8. All uppercase letters. GUNSHOT

Figure 21 demonstrates a preference for using all uppercase letters for sound effects labels, although alternative strategies have also been employed.

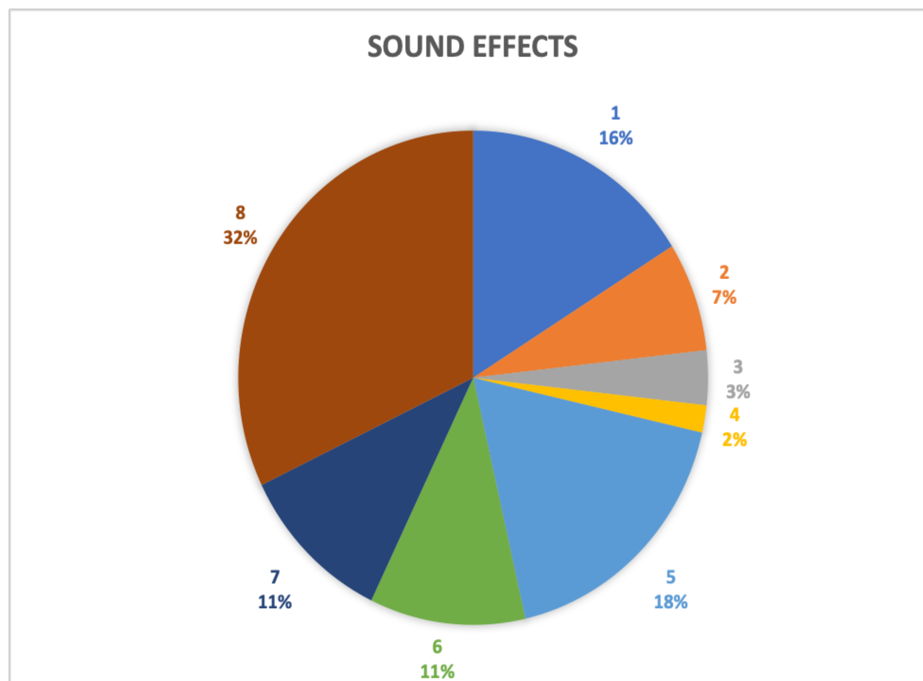

Figure 21: Sound Effects.

The rendering of music and lyrics is another crucial aspect of SDH/CC, which can hold different meanings and significance depending on the type of music or lyrics involved, as well as the genre of the content. For example, music in a musical production holds pivotal importance, whereas in a nature documentary, it may simply accompany the visuals. The strategies employed in the subtitles of the analysed films for music and lyrics vary and are often related to the rendering of sound effects, although lyrics may follow different rules. The following strategies have been observed in the subtitles:

1. Within square brackets, with all lowercase letters.
2. Within square brackets, with the first letter in uppercase.
3. Within square brackets, with all uppercase letters.
4. Within round parentheses, with all lowercase letters.
5. Within round parentheses, with the first letter in uppercase.
6. Within round parentheses, with all uppercase letters.
7. All uppercase letters.
8. "Music" in all uppercase letters, followed by a colon, then the title and artist.
9. Lowercase letters within round parentheses, placed within a single musical note symbol.
10. Single musical note symbol, followed by the title and artist.
11. Title and artist in italics, with a single musical note symbol at the beginning and end.

12. Within round parentheses.

Figure 22 demonstrates a variety of strategies utilised, without a particular preference for one strategy over another.

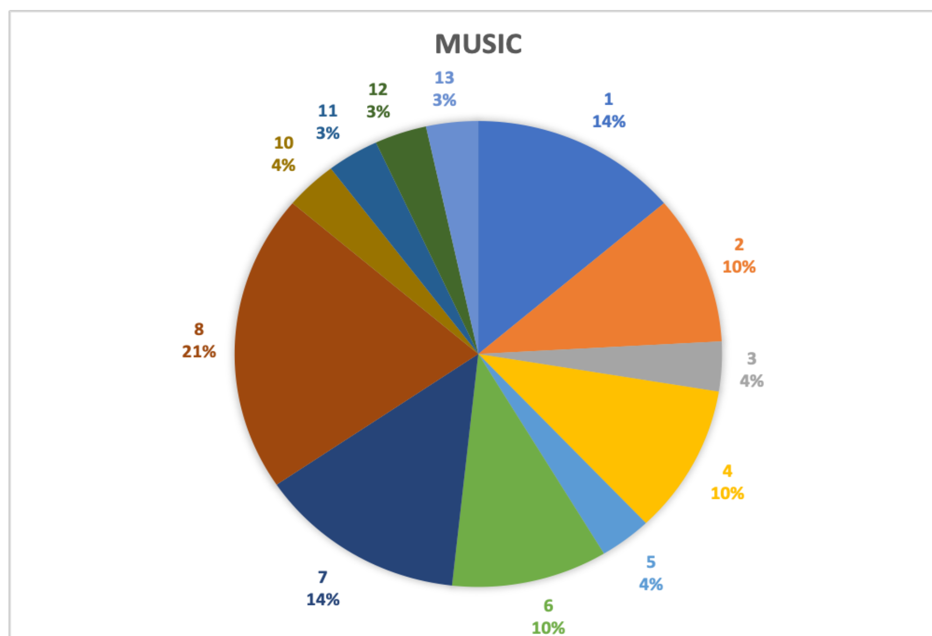

Figure 22: Music.

Similarly, the presentation of lyrics in subtitles adopts various approaches, aligning with the practices of CC on VoD platforms and the Internet. To clearly indicate that a song is being sung and to create a karaoke-like experience that engages all audiences, including those with hearing (dis)abilities, the symbol of a single musical note (♪) is introduced. This symbol serves as a visual cue for the presence of a song, and the strategies observed in the subtitles of the analysed films for presenting lyrics are as follows:

1. Two single musical notes.
2. Single musical note at the beginning, displayed in italics.
3. Single musical note at the beginning, displayed in non-italics.
4. Single musical note at the beginning and at the end, displayed in italics.
5. Single musical note at the beginning and at the end, displayed in non-italics.
6. Displayed in italics.
7. Displayed in non-italics (no specific treatment).
8. Hyphen, single musical note, lyrics, displayed in non-italics.
9. Hyphen, two single musical notes at the beginning and one at the end.

As indicated in Figure 23, nearly half of the subtitle files, shows a preference for using a single musical note at the beginning of each subtitle containing lyrics, along with two musical notes (one at the beginning and one at the end) for the final sung subtitle.

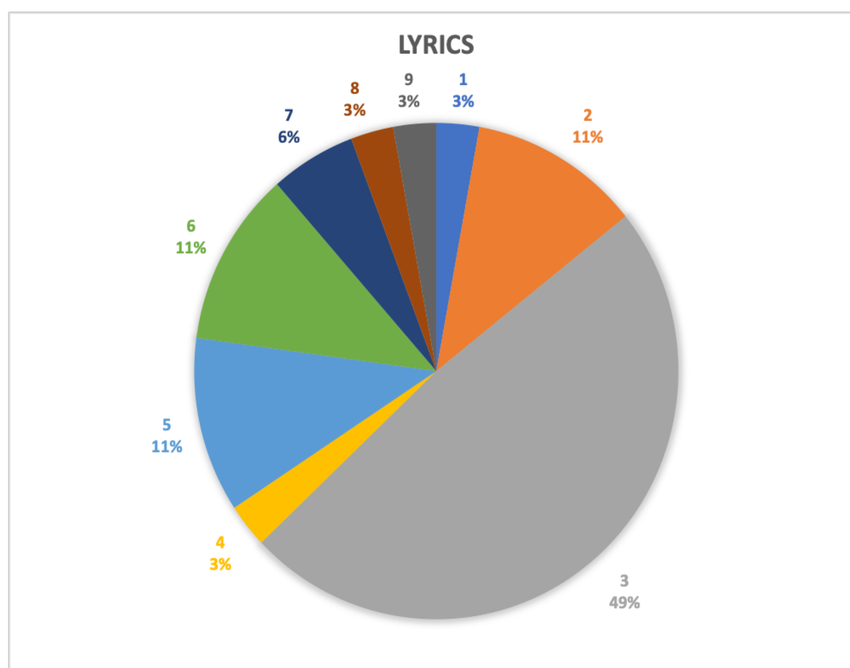

Figure 23: Lyrics.

The final element examined pertains to the inclusion of the subtitler(s) or subtitling agency's name in the end credits, similar to how the entire cast and crew are acknowledged at the end of a film. The subtitler(s) or subtitling agency's name credits are usually displayed as a single subtitle at the very end of the film. Regrettably, only 4 out of the 57 films display the name of the subtitling agency who took care of the SDH/CC file. This is perhaps due to the fact that most SDH/CC files are supplied by the production company or distribution agency (Darren Jones, private communication) and this also accounts for the disparities or variations in SDH/CC style and format.

This aspect forms a crucial cornerstone of this study, whose aim is to develop comprehensive guidelines for inclusive subtitles at film festivals. These guidelines consider various facets of this practice and can be universally adopted by film festivals seeking to offer high-quality SDH/CC that are beneficial for both deaf and hard of hearing audiences while remaining unobtrusive for the hearing audience. Ultimately, the goal is to create subtitles that everyone can appreciate and derive value from, ensuring an enjoyable and inclusive experience for all.

Chapter 5 - Inclusive subtitles

This chapter resumes the theoretical framework addressed in the previous chapters, namely ATVS and MAS (or studies on Audiovisual Accessibility), AS and Disability studies, Deaf studies, and Film Festival studies from an academic and an industry perspective. It then provides an in-depth description and analysis of the practice of IS, with a particular focus on the technical and linguistic aspects, through the examination of the main reasoning guiding a number of technical and linguistic choices over others. This investigation is carried by shedding light upon excerpts from the Extended Inclusive Guidelines (Appendix 2) which were firstly written in Italian, then translated in English, adapted, and expanded for the purpose of this research, that is, the creation of new and innovative alternative to SDH and CC for film festivals. Finally, two case studies are presented: the first case study was developed during the past three years at an Italian film festival; the second case study involves the IS of a short film (Appendix 3).

5.1 Premises

In 2008, Neves pointed out ten fallacies about subtitling for the d/Deaf and the hard of hearing that were, at the time, prominent in both academic and industry discussions. Today, roughly 15 years later, several of these issues remain unsolved. Nevertheless, research has made significant strides, particularly through the intersection with other disciplines. This has meant examining the same issues through different lenses, leading to the emergence of completely new perspectives. It should be pointed out that in 2008, VoD and OTT platforms had just surfaced, being available to the general public only in 2007. VoD and OTT platforms, such as Netflix, Hulu and more recently Prime Video and Disney+, have revolutionised the way CC are thought, perceived, made, research, and consumed. An update on the most crucial fallacies related to SDH/CC is long overdue. This update, though not exhaustive as it ideally should be, focuses primarily on practices relevant to IS, intended as a variant of SDH/CC for film festivals and other cultural events, such as theatre, opera, arenas, museums, galleries, etc.

As a starting point, the expression ‘subtitles for the d/Deaf and the hard of hearing’ is being put under scrutiny by Neves stating that “'subtitling/captioning' are simple British English / American English varieties […] just as it happens with 'flat/apartment', 'truck/lorry' or 'taxi/cab'” (2008: 130). The ‘taxi/cab’ opposition is rather pertinent to this idea because, although they both signal what dictionaries refer to as “a car with a driver who you pay to take you somewhere” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) or “an automobile that carries

passengers for a fare" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), in fact, they are two different things. That is to say that a 'taxi' in the US may bring to memory a typical yellow taxi that can be found in the streets of New York, whilst a 'cab' may bring to memory the typical black cabs that can be found in the streets of London. Moreover, the term 'taxi' is used in various languages and cultural contexts to denote the same type of vehicle. Translating this term into English may present a similar dilemma: "Are we referring to a New York City taxi or a London cab?" They vary in terms of shape, colour, size, and the side of the road they use, among other aspects. Similarly, subtitles for hearing-impaired audiences, in all their variations, share the common objective of providing access to individuals who would otherwise be unable to comprehend the audiovisual content, but their appearance, style, and technical and linguistic constraints differ.

Another important point put forward by Neves is the second part of the phrase 'subtitles for the d/Deaf and the hard of hearing', that is to say, what comes after the preposition 'for'. This issue, as discussed in chapter two, has been debated and has received feedback and inputs from many stakeholders, producers and consumers involved in the practice. When discussing SDH/CC, we are delving into a subtitling approach designed to accommodate a diverse array of users. This spectrum includes people who are deaf, employing an oral language as their primary means of communication; people who are Deaf, who are part of linguistic minority communities and rely on sign language as their primary language; and people who are hard of hearing, possessing varying degrees of residual hearing and thereby sharing varying levels of auditory experience with the hearing population. Neves argues that "when we speak of SDH we are addressing a subtitling solution that is directed towards a rather diverse group of receivers" (2008: 129), and she recognises the reality of the practice by adding that "the provision of a unique set of subtitles for all will inevitably be inadequate for some if not most viewers" (2008: 131) as SDH/CC seek to address a broad spectrum of viewers who are grouped together due to their unique characteristics and requirements. When creating SDH/CC, the assumption is that the subtitles provided is equally suitable for deaf and for hard of hearing viewers; pre-lingually and post-lingually deaf; oralist and signing deaf; deaf who feel they belong to the hearing majority social group and Deaf who identify as a linguistic minority; deaf for whom the written text is a second language; deafened viewers who have residual hearing and/or hearing memory, etc. While there have been attempts to provide different types of SDH/CC of the same product which address more directly a certain group over another, the reality is that this practice is far from mainstream, especially in the reality of some VoD and OTT platforms not offering standard intralingual subtitles (*e.g.*, English to English, without any paralinguistic

elements designed for the benefit of DHH users) which may be useful and appreciated by an array of groups, including language learners. It is worth noting that the discourse among various stakeholders, primarily associations, the industry, and academia, carries certain political or sociological dimensions that, in my perspective, are more intricate than they may initially appear. Nevertheless, there is a common ultimate objective shared among these entities - the pursuit of making audiovisual material accessible - which is supported by all parties involved: policymakers, service providers, and society as a whole. I would argue that within the phrase 'subtitles for the d/Deaf and the hard of hearing', there is another issue that requires further attention, that is the preposition 'for'. This preposition inadvertently imposes limitations on the individuals or groups who will use this service or derive benefit from it. In essence, the expression 'subtitles *for* someone' implies that they are *not* intended for others, potentially fostering a sense of segregation or privilege. The precise definition of who is excluded and who constitutes the privileged group benefiting from such provisions remains unclear. The phrase invokes associations with the word 'exclusive,' embodying both its meanings: "restricted to a single person or specific group" and "costly and accessible only to those who are affluent or belong to a higher social stratum" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In response to the term 'exclusive,' its antonym 'inclusive' is purposefully adopted in shaping the methodology examined in this research. The term 'inclusive' encapsulates a dual dimension, also drawn from its definition, that is to say, "including everything or all types of people" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) (*i.e.,* taking into consideration the diverse needs of the audiences) but also "containing or including a particular thing" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) (*i.e.,* containing the necessary elements required for comprehension and enjoinment).

5.2 Definition and theories

As discussed before, IS is a form of subtitling designed for a mixed audience*, i.e.,* d/Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing people, with applications for film festivals (pre-recorded audiovisual material), in the presence of a double subtitle track (two languages). IS have been designed specifically for film festivals, taking into account the technical limitations and possibilities, and the tight turnaround, but they can be employed in any cultural setting in which an accessible approach towards a heterogeneous audience is required or desired, such as festivals, theatres, museums, galleries, and similar cultural contexts. IS aim to combine the best practices of SDH - subtitles for d/Deaf and hard of hearing people available on TV - and CC - closed captions available on streaming platforms.

In this research, a diverse set of research questions (which can be summarised in four chief interrogatives) has been pursued, encompassing various aspects that are central

to the exploration of subtitling practices within the context of film festivals, accessibility, and inclusion.

The first research question explores the applicability and effectiveness of SDH/CC in the unique environment of film festivals. This involves an examination of how well these subtitling practices serve the needs of diverse festival audiences, including individuals who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing.

Furthermore, the study also aims to address the concept of a standardised and all-encompassing subtitling solution. The second research question investigates the idea of whether there could be a single, universally effective approach to subtitling that can be applied across various film festival scenarios, genres, and languages.

Another crucial aspect explored is the identification and analysis of best practices in subtitling. This involves the third research question which entails the investigation of techniques, choices, and linguistic considerations that contribute to effective and inclusive subtitling practices. By understanding these best practices, the study seeks to contribute to the enhancement of subtitling quality and accessibility.

Lastly, the research extends to the exploration of audience perceptions. This area, which regards the fourth research question, involves gathering insights from d/Deaf, hearing, and hard of hearing audiences to understand their perspectives on IS. By considering the viewpoints of these different audiences, the research aims to shed light on how inclusive subtitling is perceived and experienced.

In summary, this bottom-up research spans a broad spectrum of fields, encompassing aspects of applicability, universality, best practices, definition, and audience perspectives within the realm of subtitling, particularly in the unique context of film festivals, in relation to accessibility and inclusion.

The theoretical framework in which IS are introduced encompasses some theories based on recent developments in AVT and MA, reception studies applied to AVT and MA, and industry practices. Firstly, audiences attending film festivals (and Queer film festivals in particular) are different from the ‘average’ audience reading subtitles on TV (Di Giovanni, 2020). They are younger, more educated, eager to read subtitles, speak foreign languages (mainly English or French), and have overcome, as Bong Joon-Ho puts it, the “one-inch-tall barrier of subtitles to be introduced to so many more amazing films” (Variety, 2020). Secondly, what is conventionally known as SDH, intended in this study as subtitles used mainly on TV (see BBC for the UK, and RAI for Italy), are not suitable for screening at film festivals, because they have been designed for the teletext system. For example, one of the features of SDH for TV through the teletext system are Add-On or Cumulative subtitles. Add-

On, a term used in the guidelines for SDH proposed by RAI in Italy, are subtitles where "the second line must appear on screen at least one second after the first line and [where] the two lines of the subtitle must have a permanence consistent with the times and durations indicated [in the guidelines]" (RAI, 2021: online). For cumulative subtitles, the BBC guidelines provide the following definition: "[…] consist of two or three parts - usually complete sentences. Each part will appear on screen at a different time, in sync with its speaker, but all parts will have an identical out-cue" (BBC, 2022: online).

SDH, often used in an intralinguistic context, are a more complex variant of standard subtitling, which allows viewers to read the dialogues, but also conveys information related to sounds, noises, music, accents, foreign language, and intonation (Szarkowska, 2020). Its purpose is to enable d/Deaf and hard of hearing people to access audiovisual material that they would not be able to access otherwise (Szarkowska, 2013). Thirdly, although CC (the subtitles mainly used on streaming platforms, such as, Netflix, Disney+, Prime Video, Hulu, HBO Max, and so on) are more suitable to describe subtitling at film festivals, the term is incorrect because the subtitles are not actually closed, that is, they cannot be activated or deactivated by patrons in the cinema theatre, and the expression usually refers only to intralingual subtitling intended for hearing-impaired viewers. Lastly, as IS have various applications, they do not fall exclusively into the aforementioned categories of subtitles for TV or subtitles for VoD and OTT platforms. They have been designed specifically for film festivals, taking into account the technical limitations (and possibilities) and the tight turnaround times, but they can be employed in any cultural and audiovisual setting in which an accessible approach towards a heterogeneous audience is required or desired.

Some of the technical aspects of subtitling (in all its forms) have been the subject of debate and research among scholars and practitioners alike. Some of the most important are the maximum number of characters per line, the maximum number of lines per subtitle, synchronisation (in-time and out-time), minimum and maximum duration, subtitling around shot changes, etc. On the more stylistic side of this debate, other features that have been investigated and studied, are font and style, preference for one-liners or two-liners, subtitle position and alignment, etc.

One of the main characteristics of subtitles at film festivals is the presence of two sets of subtitles, one in English, used as a *lingua franca* in international film festivals, and one in the language of the host country (Uzzo, 2020). The added difficulty, then, is the synchronisation between the second set of subtitles and the English set of subtitles, which are usually embedded in the video; synchronising the second set of subtitles with the original dialogues in a language other than English is also a challenge. This aspect of subtitling at

film festivals has received more attention from practitioners than scholars, as practitioners aim to avoid the so-called ‘Christmas tree effect’ (Spoletti, 2006), *i.e.,* the second set of subtitles haphazardly appearing and disappearing, without being synchronised to the first set, thus jeopardising the viewers’ enjoyment of the film. IS take into consideration all the aforementioned characteristics of the practice and attempt to provide a clear and precise solution to the various situations that may arise, thanks to specific guidelines.

5.3 Guidelines

‘Guidelines’, often plural, can be defined as “the document that sets out the norms that govern the behaviour of practitioners” (Pedersen, 2019b: 419). Drawing on Toury’s (1995) and Hermans’ (1999) terminology, Pedersen (2019b) categorises, in decreasing order of potency: rules, norms, conventions and regularities. All or most of the above constitute guidelines, a single document varying in length that, in AVT and MA, often refers to the technical and/or linguistic aspects of a given modality. Guidelines deal with the dos and the don’ts, often providing correct, and at times incorrect, examples. They recommend, suggest but rarely forbid something. These documents provide practical guidance by illustrating examples of recommended practices and cautioning against certain practices. Notably, they tend to employ a suggestive tone rather than prohibitive tone. For instance, sentences like "the use of semi-colons should be avoided" (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2014: 106) and "avoid the term ‘we see’" (ACB, 2003: online) exemplify the advising nature of guidelines in relation to practices that in fact are rarely or never used. In guidelines, the language choice holds immense significance for practitioners, as it plays a pivotal role in distinguishing between various levels of guidance, such as rules, norms, conventions, regularities, suggestions, and preferences. More often than not, subtitling guidelines provide a simple rule and an example without delving into the reasoning behind a certain choice over another, thus limiting the practitioner to apply said rule to other instances which are not listed in the guidelines. In fact, over time, the use of verbs and modals has shifted from ‘must-oriented’ documents (see Ivarsson & Carroll, 1998) to ‘should-oriented’ documents (see BBC, 2022), thus allowing more freedom to practitioners. However, a simple, clear, easy-to-understand and easy-to-interpret choice of words will help distinguish between rules, norms, conventions, and regularities, but also suggestions and preferences. This will in turn guide newcomers through IS, as well as experienced professionals navigating complex situations and, ultimately, will help reduce mistakes, errors, misinterpretations, and ambiguous use of unwritten rules.

The ground-breaking Inclusive Subtitles practice highlighted in this research marks a pioneering venture into the context of film festivals and their unique requirements. While this study unveils innovative guidelines tailored for film festivals, it is essential to acknowledge the parallel efforts of inclusivity advocated in other contexts and within specific regions. Noteworthy examples include the Proposed guidelines for inclusive subtitles in a Maltese context, created by Spiteri Miggiani (2021), where a set of tailored guidelines, informed by user-centered research, have gained prominence, and are actively applied on a national scale. Additionally, the work of Martínez Lorenzo (2021) has contributed to shaping inclusive subtitling practices with specific reference to minority languages, such as Galician. By exploring these varied initiatives, it is possible to observe valuable insights into the adaptable nature of inclusive subtitling across different territories and linguistic landscapes.

The Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines is a document written for practitioners to clearly present the technical and linguistic aspects of IS at film festivals. A first draft of the guidelines for IS was produced (version 1.0) at the beginning of the research. The initial concept envisaged two versions of the same guidelines: a compact and practical version of approximately 2-3 pages, and an extended version of approximately 10-12 pages. The former was intended as a quick reference guide to the basics of IS, to be used daily by practitioners; the latter was intended as a more in-depth handbook with more examples and rare cases that may arise. In the end, the final version, version 2.0, comprises a 6-page document (Appendix 1), also known as the Compact Version, and a 11-page document (Appendix 2), also known as the Extended Version. Both versions are divided into 9 main sections (plus an introductory section and a section with miscellaneous indications, such as credits, proofreading, etc.), each covering a different technical and/or linguistic aspect of IS: synchrony, format(ting), style, speaker identification, sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, music and songs, punctuation, and language. The following paragraphs explore each section in detail, explain the reasoning behind each technical, linguistic, and stylistic choice over another, provide plenty of examples, and display excerpts from the Extended Version.

5.3.1 Technical aspects

Synchrony is the main feature of any type of subtitling (also concerning other AVT modalities), and whilst most scholars and practitioners agree that the minimum duration of a subtitle should be at least 1 second and the maximum 6 seconds (Díaz Cintas & Remael 2014; 2021), the additional difficulty in subtitling at film festivals is the double set of subtitles which requires specific instructions. Hence the need to provide two separate set of

directives, one in the presence of the double set of subtitles, and on in the absence of the second set of subtitles. To better understand how the two sets of subtitles are displayed and laid out, a few pictures taken at various film festivals are provided.

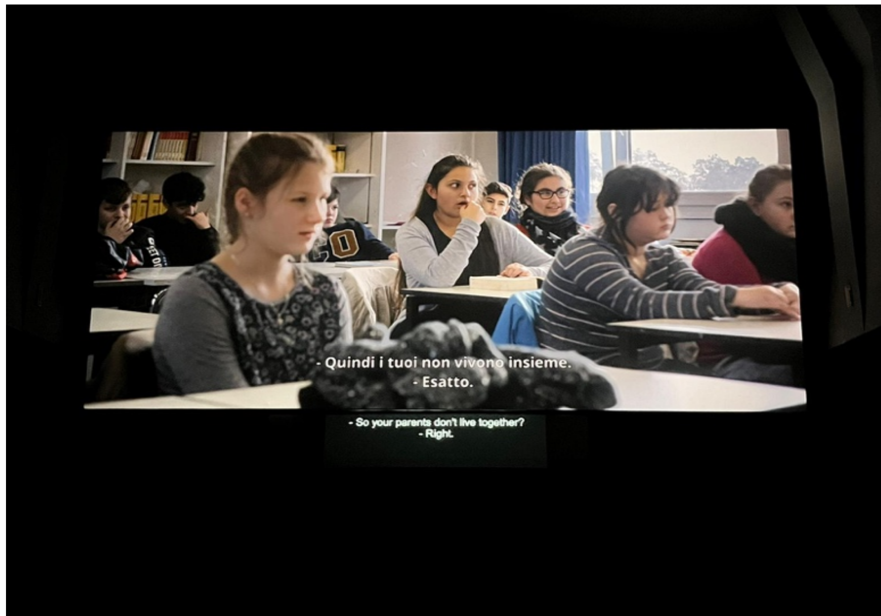

Figure 24: Double set of subtitles at Altre Rive Film Festival, June 2022, Palermo.

Figure 25: Double set of subtitles at Quo Vadis? Film Festival, July 2023, Rome.

Figure 26: Double se of subtitles at Taormina Film Festival, July 2021, Taormina.

- In the absence of a double subtitle track:
  - Minimum duration: the minimum duration is 1 second.
  - Maximum duration: the maximum duration is 7 seconds.
  - Gap: the gap between two consecutive subtitles is 2 frames (if the distance is less than 6 frames, reduce it to 2 frames).
  - Shot-change: in the proximity of a shot-change, or a scene-change, a subtitle ends 2 frames before the shot-change and the following begins on the shot-change. (See picture below).

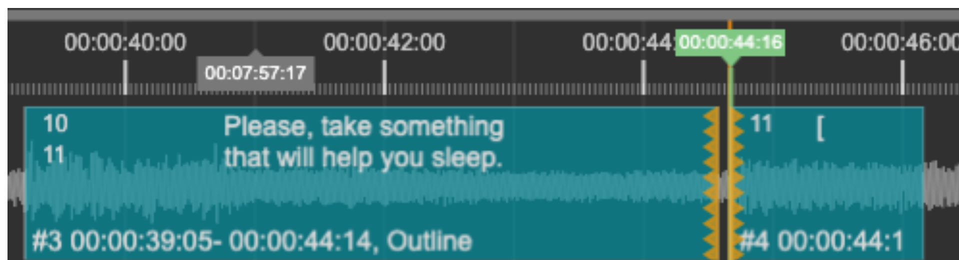

Figure 27: Synchronisation in the absence of the second set of subtitles.

- With a double subtitle track:
  - Synchronisation: time-in and time-out must be perfectly synchronised with the on-screen subtitles.
  - Minimum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is less than 1 second, increase it to 1 second. (However, if the duration of the on-screen subtitles is at least 5/6 of a second, and the reading speed allows it, match the duration, in order to avoid discrepancies between the two sets of subtitles).
  - Maximum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is longer than 7 seconds, it is possible to split the subtitle into two (or three) subtitles, making sure that the time-in of the first and the time-out of the second (or third) coincide with the on-screen subtitles. The gap between the consecutive subtitles is 2 frames. (See picture below).

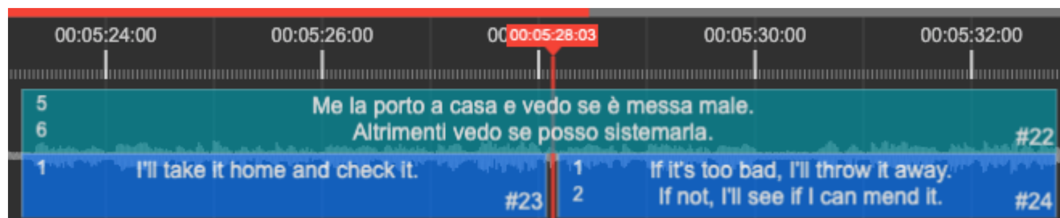

Figure 28: Synchronisation in the presence of the second set of subtitles.

The reasoning behind the choice of having the second set of subtitles perfectly synchronised has been discussed earlier and this is even more relevant at film festivals taking place inside cinema theatres, where the darkness of the theatre is somewhat interrupted by the appearance of second set of subtitles against a white background. The background against which subtitles are cued is usually white, as is the big screen where the film is projected, therefore examples in the guidelines are provided in black text against a white background (same as a Word document) as opposed to white text against a black background as it is the case in some guidelines or manuals, as shown below.

I'll take it home and check it.

The minimum and maximum durations are mostly in line with the most recent CC guidelines (see Netflix, n.d.; Disney+, n.d.; Prime Video, n.d.) which, additionally, decrease the minimum duration to a fraction of a second, namely 5/6, in instances where it is possible to accommodate short words (for instance, a simple 'Yes.'), but all increase the maximum duration to 7 seconds following the same principle that presumably led to the golden 6-second rule, that is

37 characters x 2 lines = 74 characters / 6 seconds = 12.3 CPS reading speed
42 characters x 2 lines = 84 characters / 7 seconds = 12 CPS reading speed

Consequently, reading speed, or more correctly viewing speed, is a crucial issue in subtitling and in particular in SDH, because of the intended audience(s) which is diverse, as seen previously. Whilst SDH for TV recommend a lower reading speed (See BBC, 2022; RAI, 2021), and CC for VoD and OTT advocate for a higher reading speed, even higher than in standard subtitling, a middle ground have been found, in the sense that the recommended reading speed is 17 CPS with the possibility to increase it to 20 CPS in the presence of speaker identification. It is worth noting that both SDH for TV and CC for VoD and OTT are primarily focused on intralingual subtitling. This is linked to the ongoing discussion

surrounding different approaches to text editing: verbatim subtitles (word for word), standard subtitles (which encompass most of the dialogue while omitting some minor repetitions and elements of spoken language) (Szarkowska *et al.,* 2015), and edited subtitles. On the other hand, IS primarily relate to interlingual subtitles, particularly to the second set of subtitles, thus a comfortable reading speed can be achieved by acting on the text editing of the translated text. The following excerpt of the guidelines aims at providing clear and simple instructions and a visual aid to the practitioner.

- Reading Speed: 17 cps (characters per second) including spaces and punctuation, up to a maximum of 20 cps (including spaces and punctuation) in the event of fast-paced dialogues and/or in the presence of a subtitle with speaker identification (e.g. [Thomas]). (See how the speaker identification [Gonçalo] changes the reading speed from 17.3 CPS to 20 CPS in the example below).

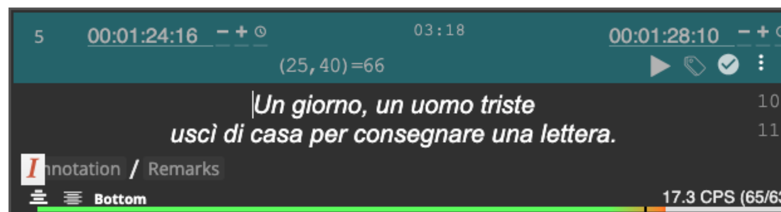

Figure 29: Subtitle without speaker identification, reading speed 17.3 CPS.

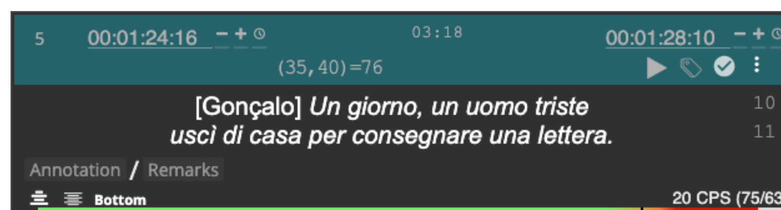

Figure 30: Subtitle with speaker identification, reading speed 20 CPS.

The formatting of subtitles includes a series of setting, some of which purely technical, other referring to the possibilities and/or the limitations of the given method of transmission of subtitles. In particular, the maximum number of characters and the maximum number of lines per subtitle are strictly connected to the method of transmission of subtitles. For example, the maximum numbers of characters per line can be dictated by the limitations of the analogue technology of teletext (37 characters for SDH on TV, which decreases to 36 characters if the subtitles are in any colour other than white, due to the technical code needed to transmit the subtitle in cyan, green, magenta, yellow, etc.) (BBC, 2022; RAI, 2021), or by strict guidelines which do not provide further explanations. For example, section 1.2 of the Netflix guidelines simply states: “42 characters per line” (Netflix n.d.). IS also allow a maximum of 42 characters per line, but it is possible to exceed this number by a few (1 or

2) characters based on the proportional lettering of variable-width fonts (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021), that is, depending on the actual space that letters occupy on the screen ('i' or 'j' occupy less space than 'w' or 'm', for instance). The maximum lines or rows per subtitle, on the other hand, is dictated by the height of the white screen available for the second set of subtitles. Being positioned outside and at the bottom of the main screen, its height is considered enough to accommodate two rows or lines of subtitles as a third line would imply an increased height of the screen or a decreased font, possibly compromising the readability of the subtitles by patrons at the back of the cinema theatre. Some broadcasters, such as the BBC, still allow 3 lines per subtitle, especially if there is a dialogue and a sound effect. Although this practice may not be as intrusive as 3 full lines of dialogues, it still occupies more space on screen taking it from the visual elements of the films, which is something that should be avoided. Position and justification of IS follow the standard at film festivals where subtitles are always cued at the bottom, centred and with centred justification. Below is an excerpt of the formatting section including a visual aid to better understand the proportional lettering.

1. Formatting

- Encoding: use UTF-8 encoding.
- Characters per line: maximum 42, including spaces and punctuation.
  This can be stretched to 43 or 44 characters if the sentences contain characters that occupy less space (for example, f, i, j, l) as opposed to characters that occupy more space (for example, w, m, b).
  This is an exception, and not a rule, and it should be used if text reduction or other strategies are not successful.
  (See below: the first line has 43 characters, but it looks shorter than the second line which has 42 characters. The two sentences are quotes and the text can't be edited.)

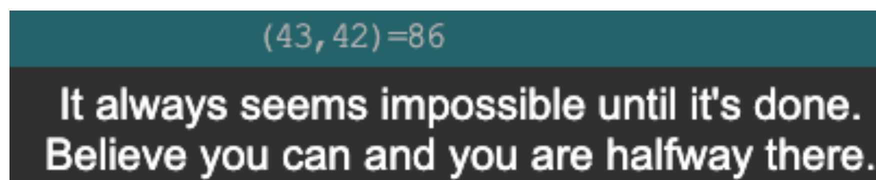

Figure 31: Proportional lettering of variable-width fonts.

- Lines per subtitle: maximum 2.
- Position: bottom, centre.
- Justification: centre.
- Font: MS sans serif (or Arial or Verdana) with size 40.

5.3.2 Linguistic aspects

In general, the style section of guidelines includes a series of individual or company choices and each subtitling agency has different views on the appearance of subtitles. For instance, whilst many agree that segmentation is important for comprehension and advise not to separate articles and nouns, prepositions and nouns, adjectives and nouns, subjects and verbs, etc., SDH for TV does not always follow this rule, probably because of the smaller number of characters per line, therefore limiting the choices of line breaks. There are also cases where this rule does not apply at all, *e.g.*, in live subtitling, due to the technical process of respeaking or stenography for roll-up subtitles (Romero-Fresco & Eugeni, 2020). For IS and subtitling at film festivals, consideration should also be given to the double set of subtitles, in the sense that, inevitably, the way subtitles are segmented in the first set of subtitles affects the way subtitles are segmented in the second set of subtitles, and this applies not only to segmentation but also to line breaks. Whilst some advocate for one liners for DHH audiences as they are easier to read, and others recommend syntactic and grammatical considerations over aesthetic rules (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021), for IS at film festivals, it is desirable to follow the first set of subtitles on screen as closely as possible so that the subtitles are visually more coherent, yet functional and readable. The excerpt below tries to exemplify this rule in the guidelines and the Figures 32 and 33 allow the practitioners to immerse themselves into the setting their subtitles will be displayed.

- Line breaks: whenever possible, try to maintain line breaks graphically similar to the subtitles on-screen, with a similar number of words distributed between the first and second line while following a grammatical and semantic sense. However, do not separate article and noun, preposition and noun, adjective and noun, subject and verb, auxiliary and verb, qualification and proper name, etc. unless strictly necessary. (See below).

Figure 32: IS segmentation and like breaks example in the first set of subtitles.

Per strada incontrò una donna
che gli disse:

Figure 33: IS segmentation and like breaks example in the second set of subtitles.

Another important aspect of formatting is the use of italics, which is employed in various ways by different VoD and OTT platforms. Conventionally, italics is used for voice-off (narrator style), speech through means of communication (telephone, intercom, radio, etc.), song lyrics, and titles of books, films, or TV series. Dual speakers, on-screen text, and acronyms are also part of this section of the guidelines as the choices or preferences are numerous. For instance, as seen in the previous chapter, dual speakers can be introduced by a hyphen allocated for each speaker, a hyphen for the second speaker only, or a hyphen each time a speaker changes. Also, for acronyms and on-screen text, although they have not been analysed in depth in the data gathered from the two film festivals under scrutiny in the previous chapter, it is possible to notice various possibilities to describe the same feature. The correct use of other elements, such as abbreviations, numbers, currencies, percentages, and spaces, is covered in detail in the guidelines, which provide a variety of examples to avoid misunderstandings, as shown in the excerpts below.

- Dual speakers: use one hyphen per speaker followed by a single space.

  - How are you, Luke?
  - Fine, thank you. And you?

- Italics: use italics in the following cases
  - Voiceover (narrator style).

    [Narrator] *Once upon a time,*
    in a far far land away

  - Voices through media, such as: telephone, radio, TV, computer, etc.
  - Song lyrics (see section Music & Songs).
  - Titles of books, films, series, etc.

    Have you seen *Home alone*?

  - Emphasis: only when the emphasis of the word is clearly intentional.

    I bumped into Simon yesterday.
    He said hello, but I didn't.

- On-screen text: for brief on-screen text (NO SMOKING / STOP / Paris, 1889) use upper and/or lower case as per the original, without full stops at the end. For longer on-screen text, such as prologues or epilogues, use upper and/or lower case, with the necessary punctuation.
- Acronyms: acronyms should be written in upper or lower case (USA, BBC, UNESCO, am, pm, mph) depending on the style. If new or unfamiliar, add full stops (I.S. = Inclusive Subtitles).

The following section centres on numbers, and in particular cardinal and ordinal numbers, time, date, and currency. The list aims to be as exhaustive as possible providing many examples that take into account various use of numbers, and the limitations and possibilities of special characters, for instance '%' for percentages, '/' for dates, '£', '€', '$' for currencies which should not be dismissed as banal considering that, for instance, the Italian teletext system, does not recognise the '€' symbol, as the euro has been introduced in the early 00s, as opposed to the teletext system which is almost 40 years old.

- Numbers: numbers from 1 to 12 should be written in letters, from 13 upwards in digits. If the subtitle begins with a number, it should be written in letters, except for numbers that are too long and/or with decimals.

- How old are you?
- Eighty-four years old.

- How far is the Earth from the Moon?
- 384,400 km more or less.

- Percentages: use the % sign to indicate precise numbers and the word 'percent' with expressions, such as (I am one hundred percent sure).

20% of employees will be fired.

- Cardinal numbers: use a comma to separate thousands and a full stop to separate decimals (1,340,560.89 = 1 million 340 thousand 560 and 89). Use letters with expressions, such as (I told you a thousand times).
- Ordinal numbers: use the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th. Use letters in expressions, such as (I am the second son).

He arrived 104th in the marathon.

I'll tell you again, for the 38th time.

- Time: the exact time is indicated using a colon (See you at 11:15). With a specific hour, use numbers (See you at 9 / The meeting is at 12). Use the 12-hour clock system unless the characters say otherwise.
- Date: day, month and year can spelled out or separated by a slash.

The contract expires on 28 July 2021.

The contract expires on 28/07/2021.

- Decades: decades are followed by an -s (The Glorious 20s).
- Centuries: centuries are indicated using the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th after the number.

She lived
between the 3rd and the 4th century BC.

- Currency: the currency symbols (£, €, $) should be placed after the digit, followed by a space (This coffee costs 1.50 €). Use the nouns in instances, such as (The euro is a young currency). For less known or ambiguous currencies, write them in full.

That house costs 350,000 Canadian dollars.

In Thailand,
I changed all my money into baht.

5.3.3 Paralinguistic features

Delving into the most characteristic elements of SDH/CC, and therefore of IS, this section focuses on speaker identification, sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, and music and songs. These distinguishing features have been investigated in depth and various alternatives have been put forward in the process, taking into account the results from the corpus analysed in chapter IV related to the BFI Flare and LFF film festivals, but also current practices of both SDH for TV, mainly in the UK and in Italy, and CC for VoD and OTT platforms.

5.3.3.1 Speaker identification

Regarding speaker identification, multiple alternatives have been investigated. Although uppercase letters offer greater visibility, their use on the big screen can diminish the viewing experience, as the viewers are constantly reminded of the different set of subtitles, *i.e.,* a set of subtitles with dialogues only, and another set of subtitles with dialogues and speaker identification. Therefore, in IS, speaker identification is conveyed in lowercase letters, apart from the first letter which is always in uppercase letters, unlike Netflix (n.d.), encapsulated

within square brackets, as shown in the excerpt below. When one or more characters are not in shot, the combination of dual speaker and speaker identification guides the viewer to read the subtitles as follows:

1. How many people are speaking? Dual speaker with hyphens.
2. Who is speaking? Speaker identification with tag.
3. What are they saying? Dialogue.

> To identify speakers who are in shot or when it is not clear who is speaking, use square brackets [ ]. It is possible to use the name even if it is revealed a little later in the film, to avoid an abuse of generic tags, such as [Man] or [Woman]. The first letter is always in uppercase. Be careful not to reveal information that is intentionally concealed.
>
> [Luke] I want to go to the concert.
>
> - [Mary] Don't tell anyone.
> - I won't say anything.
>
> - [Professor] Did you do your homework?
> - [Student] No, I'm sorry.

5.3.3.2 Sound effects

As far as sound effects are concerned, this aspect of IS has undergone extensive contemplation and revision. A range of possibilities were explored, including shifting subtitles to the left, which was subsequently deemed unsuitable due to the increased visual navigation by the eye required in a cinema setting where cinema screens are much larger. Furthermore, when the same subtitle file was used in a different setting with a smaller screen, for instance a smartphone through an app, this displacement would go unnoticed. An alternative that was investigated involved presenting all sound effects in uppercase letters, without round parentheses, square brackets, or other indicators typically used to signify sound effects. However, this approach posed a conflict with the visual style of the on-screen text, which shared the same format. Additionally, the absence of round parentheses or square brackets, which are usually linked to captions, may lead the intended audience to undermine the subtitle. Ultimately, the choice to have sound effects in uppercase letters within square brackets, and the addition of having a single space before and after the text was considered appropriate for the use of inclusive subtitles. In so doing, sound effects - present in the second set of subtitles but absent in the first set of subtitles - become highly noticeable. This prompts the subtitler to exercise greater discretion in determining when to

include a sound effect subtitle, in contrast to certain VoD and OTT platforms, such as Netflix, where an overabundance of sound effects has been noticed, which in turn could potentially distract the viewer's attention from fully enjoying the scene and the film.

This abundance of sound effects has been discussed by scholars, such as Zdenek (2009; 2011) who asks the simple question “What sounds are significant?” (2011: 5), and broadcasters who recommend “not to congest a show with unnecessary descriptive captions" (CBC, 2003: 15). Particularly in VoD and OTT platforms, there is an abundance of sound effects, in the attempt to convey the entire film or series as verbatim as possible (not only in relation to dialogues, but also to non-speech information). Perhaps, this is due to less noticeable sound effects style with lowercase letters, or as a response to their interpretation of equal access to information. However, the end result is that “captions equalize sounds by removing or downplaying the distinctions between loud and quiet sounds. All sounds become equally ‘loud’ on the caption track” (Zdenek, 2009: 25). Sound effects such as ‘Background noise’ or ‘Indistinct chatter’, if rendered verbatim and intertwined with the dialogues, may distract the viewer from a dramatic scene, from the enjoinment of the film, and from the cinematic experience all together, especially in the context of a cinema theatre or a film festival. A similar concept is applied on SDH for TV by the broadcaster RAI, which chooses to display sound effects in blue foreground and yellow background, centred (as opposed to the dialogues which are left aligned), thus making the sound effect evident during a film or a TV series.

As for the synchronisation of the sound effects subtitles, it was ultimately decided to allocate a reasonable duration, in the order of 2 seconds (despite the general rule for minimum duration of 1 second) so that everyone can recognise the meaning of that subtitle indicating a sound effect, as previous versions of the guidelines suggested a shorter duration of 1 second which was not enough to understand that there was a subtitles to be read. In addition to the style of sound effects, even more crucial is the content within the sound effect subtitle. This content should be concise yet clear, and it should answer the following questions:

- What sound is being produced by the person, animal, or object within the frame? Then, use a single verb to convey the sound. (*e.g.*, if a character is in shot and they are yawning, the sound effect subtitle with the text ‘yawning’ is sufficient).
- If the person, animal, or object is not visible in the shot? Then, their identity should be specified (*e.g.*, if a character is not in shot and they are yawning, a sound effect subtitles with the text ‘Paul yawns’ is sufficient).

Concerning the appropriate verb tense, the use of past tenses should be actively avoided. Instead, the present participle tense of the verb for continuous sounds (*e.g.*, ‘barking’) should be used, while the third person verb form should be applied for sudden or abrupt sounds (*e.g.*, ‘barks’). The following section of the guidelines tries to condense the above description and provides plenty of examples grouped by possible scenarios.

Sound effects subtitles are indicated in uppercase, within square brackets, preceded and followed by a single space. They last 2 seconds, and they are aligned and justified to the centre, in a single line.
As sound effects subtitles are intentionally noticeable (square brackets, uppercase letters, spaces) only indicate sounds that are relevant to the narration, and if necessary, also the source. Avoid an abuse of sound effects subtitles in certain scenes, for example in action scenes where the actions of the characters are understandable from images and context.
Try to be concise but clear and describe the sound following one of these structures:

Verb
(when the subject is clear)

[NEIGHING]
(if the horse is in shot)

Subject + Verb
(when the subject is not clear)

[DOG BARKING]
(if the dog is in shot)

[PHILIP SNEEZES]
(if it is not immediately clear who sneezes)

[LUISA AND MARIA SCREAM]
(if there are other characters besides Luisa and Maria)

Verb + Adverb
(when the adverb adds relevant information)

[GASPS SOFTLY]
(when the action substitutes a dialogue)

Subject + Verb + Adverb
(when the subject is not clear, and the adverb adds relevant information)

[LAURA SCREAMS LOUDLY]
(when the action is relevant)

Noun (when one word is sufficient to describe the sound) [THUNDER] (following lightning)

Adjective + Noun (when the noun on its own is not sufficient information) [INDISTINCT VOICES] (used as a generic label) [METALLIC NOISE] (if the sound is not attributable to a particular object)

5.3.3.3 Extra-dialogue elements

Extra-dialogue elements are all those paralinguistic features that may have communicative value and may include accents, pronunciations, intonation, and generally identify how a person speaks. They can be found at the beginning of a sentence (for instance, 'whispering' if what follows is said very softly), in the middle of a sentence, and often at the end of a sentence. When found at the end of a sentence, they also serve the purpose of replacing a sound effect subtitles which would normally follow a different style and therefore would be more noticeable. In terms of synchronisation this expedient also helps with the distribution of time, as a subtitle with dialogue and a sound effect subtitle should not be placed within the same subtitle due to different styles being employed, unlike most VoD and OTT platforms that allow such expedient, thus creating a rather confusing subtitle as in the example below.

- [man] This is boring.
- [yawning]

Therefore, instead of having one subtitle with dialogue and another subtitle with a sound effect, both deserving the correct amount of time, this can be summarised into a single subtitle with dialogue and extra-dialogue element placed just after the main punctuation of the subtitle, as in the example below.

[Man] This is boring. (yawning)

Another instance that may create confusion is presented when a character speaks and subsequently laughs, where the laughter can be included in the subtitle to enhance its impact or provide additional information. This addition contributes a certain 'flavour' to the subtitle, enriching the viewer's experience. However, this additional element remains non-essential for comprehension, *i.e.*, the subtitle's meaning can still be grasped without it. In contrast, a self-contained sound effect subtitle like '[GUNSHOT]' should always be added as a single subtitle on its own. In a crime scene scenario, such a subtitle is likely to hold greater significance, or even playing a pivotal role in ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the film.

> Extra-dialogue elements are indicated within round parentheses ( ), in lower case, and placed in the subtitle, as needed. They may indicate intonation, tone, attitude, foreign languages, dialects, accents, etc.
>
> (whispering) I know
> what you did last summer.
>
> (in French) How dare you?
>
> Where did you put (shouting) the lighter?
>
> And now that you have signed,
> your soul is mine! (laughs)

> Extra-dialogue elements are also used in lieu of sound effects subtitles when the sound comes from the character speaking, such as in the example above. This is especially useful when the sound effect is a laugh, a scoff, a gasp or similar sounds produced by the character right before, during, or right after the sentence. Do no use extra-dialogue elements ( ) with sound effects that deserve their own subtitles, such as a gunshot, a thunder, that are not produced by a character.

5.3.3.4 Music and songs

Music, song, and lyrics are another important aspect of film that DHH viewers may not grasp unless a subtitle is provided. In many guidelines, a distinction is made between music, background music, songs, lyrics, and lyrics sung by multiple singers. It should be noted that DHH viewers, as a diverse group, may have different approaches towards music which may be linked to their hearing impairments, or more generally speaking, they may 'listen to the world' in different ways. Moreover, music is an integral component of our society, and in films, it serves as a guiding force that leads the audience on an emotional journey. Subtitles can effectively convey these emotions by describing the nature of the music being played,

whether it is diegetic, existing within the narrative, or extra-diegetic, external to the narrative context.

In recent years, the concept and the role of creativity has intruded AVT and MA conferences and publications (see Romero-Fresco, 2021; Romero-Fresco & Chaume, 2022; Bassnet & Venuti, 2022; Chaume & Ranzato, 2021; 2023; Sutton-Spence & Machado, 2023 to name but a few). Outside the academic circles, some artists and filmmakers have contributed greatly to the cause by creating original and remarkable works of audiovisual art that are accessible, inclusive, and thought-provoking. One of such artist is American sound artist Christine Sun Kim who talks about 'Closer Captions' (Pop-Up Magazine, n.d.) by describing how standard (and rule-following) captions are not adequate to describe the music played in certain films. For instance, she argues that the following simple and correct captions cannot truly convey the meaning, or the significance of the music being played:

[music]
[violin music]
[mournful violin music]

Instead, she suggests captions that are not only meaningful, in the sense that they convey meaning, but also that become poetry, such as:

[mournful violin music that sounds like crying alone in an empty bar]

or even the following creative text, split into four consecutive captions:

[mournful violin music that sounds like crying alone in an empty bar]
[in 1920s Paris]
[you're wearing a tiny but fashionable hat]
[that you tip to the bartender as you order a fourth martini]
[music stops]

Whilst the poetry in the captions above is remarkable and worthy of a discussion amongst all parties involved in the process of captioning, including captioners, broadcasters, researches, and last - but definitely not least - end users, it could be argued that such elegant and creative approach may not be suitable at all times, for all genres, for all audiovisual products, especially in the context of film festivals where quantity and tight turnaround are

substantial. The heart of this discussion, or perhaps the central distinction, resides in the fact that captioners and subtitlers are usually hearing individuals. They create SDH/CC to cater to individuals who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing, who have different perspectives on music and sound. In other words, as put forward by Zdenek (2011; 2014; 2015), and elaborated by Greco (2020), SDH/CC practices tend to exhibit a predominant bias towards prioritising speech over non-speech elements, often resulting in a neglect of both visual imagery and the intricate communicative functions fulfilled by auditory elements. This inclination carries the potential of jeopardizing impartial access not only for individuals with hearing impairments but also for all SDH/CC users. Furthermore, prevailing practices and established guidelines are permeated with an ableist perspective, which regrettably overlooks the art of subtitling/captioning "as a creative act of rhetorical invention" (Zdenek, 2015: 62). Zdenek advocates for a direction that perceives sound through an inclusive lens, thereby enhancing our comprehension of sound, writing, and rhetoric with an accessibility-driven sensibility.

In light of all the above, for IS, a more realistic and simple solution was found in the description of music encapsulated within the '#' symbol, inspired SDH practices for TV that employ this symbol, possibly because the more attractive and straightforward music note '♪' is not available within the teletext symbols. Coincidentally, sharps or flats (denoted by # symbols) find their application in musical sheets to signify a note of heightened pitch. Consequently, when viewers encounter these symbols in subtitles, they may inadvertently associate the symbol with musical elements. To facilitate the reading of both categories of subtitles with music and lyrics, all subtitles that incorporate music, background music, songs, lyrics, and lyrics with multiple singers, begin and end with a '#' symbol, as explained in the excerpts below.

- Music: the subtitle indicating the music opens and closes with the symbol # , lasts 2 seconds and is added if important or relevant to understand the scene or film.

Techno music

- Background music: for background or ambient music, a subtitle with two symbols # lasting 2 seconds is sufficient. However, it should not be added anytime there is background music, but only when relevant.

# #

- Songs: indicate the name of the artist and the title of the song, if known.

Space Oddity
by David Bowie #

- Lyrics: lyrics are in italics, open and close with the symbol # , and last for as long as lyrics are sung, whether by the characters or as part of the soundtrack. Punctuation is reduced to a minimum (without any full stops or commas unless needed for the comprehension) and each line (coinciding with a verse) begins with an uppercase letter. Translate only if relevant to the plot.

 # Ground Control to Major Tom
Ground Control to Major Tom #

 # Take your protein pills
And put your helmet on #

- Lyrics with dual speakers: if the song is sung by more than one character and they are not in shot, resort to speaker identification.

- [Danny] # *I got chills #*
- [Sandy] # *They're multiplyin' #*

5.3.4 Punctuation

In all forms of subtitling, punctuation is regarded as a key element, to the extent that manuals or guidelines often allocate an entire section or a substantial paragraph to the topic. As a starting point, the taxonomy proposed by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2014, 2021) is used to explore the various punctuation marks and their use within IS. Standard and conventional punctuation marks such as: commas, full stops, colons, and triple dots are used, as prescribed by the aforementioned authors and by many professional guidelines. However, with reference to three punctuation marks, which vary from guideline to guideline, a useful descriptive explanation is provided.

Semi-colons are usually avoided in subtitles because "they can be easily confused with a colon" (Díaz Cintas & Remael 2014: 106). However, since this punctuation mark is used in the Greek language (and in subtitles) to indicate a question mark, and its use in general grammar has a specific meaning, different from commas and full stops, it has been deemed 'accepted if necessary' in IS.

Exclamation marks and question marks should be used as prescribed by standard grammar, avoiding an excessive use of exclamation marks, which are otherwise useful to convey anger, raised voice, in standard subtitling. Unlike in SDH for Italian TV, put forward by RAI (2021), which require a space between the exclamation or question mark and the

preceding word, there is no space in IS. Lastly, the combinations of exclamation and question marks, conventionally referred to as ‘interrobang’ (Merriam-Webster n.d.), for example ‘!?’ or ‘?!’, can be used at the end of exclamatory rhetorical question, or to express shock or surprise.

Other symbols, usually not included in subtitles, nor in SDHC/CC, but used in everyday communication, especially in social media and instant messaging, can be used to convey certain aspects of communication. For example, ‘#’ for Tweets, ‘/’ for websites, ‘@’ for email addresses, ‘&’ for commercial names instead of a simple ‘and’, and other symbols, such as, ‘|’, ‘=’, ‘<’, ‘>’, ‘°’, ‘+’, used for a variety of reasons.

With regard to punctuation marks, it should be noted that three punctuation marks, namely square brackets [ ], round parentheses ( ), and diesis #, are employed to convey all paralinguistic features of IS, as incapsulated in them are speaker identification, sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, music and lyrics. The rationale behind this choice is that, over time, users will develop the ability to connect these punctuation marks with the characteristic indicators of IS, a form of SDH/CC, with its own characteristics and peculiarities, as visually summarised below:

[Speaker Identification]
[SOUND EFFECTS]
(extra-dialogue elements)
Music # and # *Lyrics*

It is important to highlight that adhering to the established rules of the English language is recommended. In cases of uncertainty, it is advisable to adhere to these conventions rather than introducing novel uses of punctuation marks. The many examples provided aim to encompass a wide range of punctuation marks, illustrating instances where their usage could be ambiguous, such as the use of quotation marks which is often mistaken by novel practitioners. Finally, it is worth noting that the use of punctuation marks in IS aligns more closely with that of CC for VoD and OTT platforms rather than SDH for TV, and this is due to the fact that the technology used to cue subtitles at film festivals allows more flexibility in the use of punctuation marks and symbols. The following excerpts provide directions with regard to the use of punctuation in IS.

Punctuation should be used following the rules of the English language.

- Full stop: use full stops only at the end of sentences, not at the end of every subtitles.
- Comma: commas should be used to separate sentences, with yes and no, in lists, etc.
- Exclamation and question marks: exclamation and question marks should be used to facilitate understanding of the speaker's tone. Avoid excessive use of exclamation marks.
- Interrobang: you can use the interrobang (?!) or (!?) to emphasise a tone of question and statement at the same time, to expresses excitement, disbelief or confusion in the form of a question, or with rhetorical questions.

Do you really think I'm stupid?!

- Colon: the colon is used to open direct speech or a list.

- Quotation marks: quotation marks for direct speech and quotations. Open them in the first subtitle, in any subsequent subtitle, and in the last subtitle, and close them only at the end of the last subtitle. They are preceded by a colon and a space. The first letter is in uppercase.

John texted me: "How are you?

“I’ve heard that you are moving
to another city,

“which is sad,
but exciting at the same time.

“If you need anything,
just let me know.”

And I replied: “Thank you for your text.”

- Full stops and commas, go inside the quotation marks, as in the example above, whereas exclamation and question marks go outside the quotation marks, as in the examples below:

Why did he say “I love you”?

- Ellipsis: use ellipsis dots to indicate intentional pauses or change of subject. After the three dots, the word is in lower case if it is a continuation of the previous sentence, and in uppercase if it is a new sentence. Make sure that the ellipsis dots are formatted as three individual characters, and not as a single symbol.

I tried... to help him.

The truth is... That’s the truth.

- The underscore sign (_) is allowed for emails or websites, which never end with a full stop, not even at the end of a sentence.

My e-mail is inc_sub@si.com
Drop me a line whenever you want.

- Semicolon: the semicolon is not needed, although it is possible to use it.
- Other symbols: the following symbols are permitted: * # @ x - + / =

It's easy.
7 x 8 = 56 and you find the result.

5.3.5 Inclusive language

The final section of the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines is related to inclusive language which is understood in this article as a language that "acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities" (Linguistic Society of America, 2016). IS capitalises on the available technologies and aims to disseminate subtitles where inclusive language, characters and symbols are not only welcome, but also encouraged. While the focus on inclusive language is particularly marked in gendered languages, the English language can also be perceived as having varying degrees of inclusivity. In specific contexts, such as Queer film festivals, this attribute could be considered an added advantage, enhancing the accessibility and inclusivity of subtitles. Along with inclusive language, this section of the guidelines covers foul languages, swear words, but also instances of typos and errors, as shown in the excerpt below.

- Foul language: do not censor or water down the dialogues in the presence of slang or foul language. In the case of bleeped words, asterisks can be used to cover missing letters.

What the fuck are you doing?
(if this is what the character says and what the audience can hear)

What the f**k are you doing?
(if the f- word is censured by a bleep, but it is clear that the character is saying it)

- Errors and typos: correct characters' grammatical errors if they compromise the comprehension of the sentence unless these errors are intentional.
- Inclusive language: when possible (but also necessary in case of uncertainty), it is recommended to use inclusive language, which takes into account gender diversity.
  This is particularly important for gendered languages (for example, romance languages) where the dichotomy male / female concerns articles, adjectives, nouns, verbs, and other parts of speech and there is no neutral option.

5.3.6 Extra

At the very end of the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines, a section called 'Extra' enlists any miscellaneous piece of information useful for the completion of a subtitle file for film festivals. Namely, it discusses, or rather stresses the importance of quality control (including adherence to the guidelines, but also a correct use of grammar and punctuation); it then considers the translation of film titles, a practice that is not so common in subtitling, especially at film festivals but nevertheless a practice that can help the spectators better understand the meaning of the title of the film and its relevance; and lastly, it deliberates on the use of credits, *i.e.,* the insertion of a single subtitle with the translator, adapter, or captioner, in short, the person(s) involved in the IS, to give recognition to their practice, and to help get their names spread in the industry, as more often than not, film festivals are attended by industry professionals who may notice their names in the credits, thus generating interest and more work.

- Quality control: always check grammar, punctuation, correct use of sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, speaker identification, etc. and perform a spellcheck.
- Title: the title of the film should not be translated if it is a single word easily understandable (Amor), but it should be translated if it is longer (La grande bellezza = The Great Beauty).
- Credits: credits should be inserted after the end credits of the most relevant crew (actors, director, etc.) and before the long list of names. A single subtitle, lasting 2 seconds, should be inserted as follows:

  Inclusive subtitles by
  Name Surname

5.4 Case studies

To test and validate the findings that underpinned the development of IS, two case studies were conducted as part of this research. The first case study pertains to the initial implementation of IS, in Italian, involving a reception study carried out through a questionnaire administered at the *Sicilia Queer Film Fest*. The second case study focuses on the creation of IS for a short film screened at one of the two festivals discussed in the preceding chapter, with collaborative input from the director.

5.4.1 Case study: Sicilia Queer Film Fest

As an addition to the present research, a case study carried out during three editions of the *Sicilia Queer Film Fest* in the years 2021, 2022, 2023 is presented. Thanks to this case

study, the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines were produced, first in Italian and then translated in English, and adapted to the larger scope of this research.

At the beginning of spring 2021, I was given the opportunity to test theories and research hypotheses on IS during the second part of the eleventh edition of the *Sicilia Queer Film Fest* (Palermo, 8-12 September 2021). Originally, the entire list of festival feature and short films was considered for IS. However, after careful consideration of the available time and resources, it was decided to focus only on the short films of the 'Queer Short' section, a competitive section of LGBTQ+ works related to queer issues in a broad sense, which included 13 short films of different length, audio languages and subjects. Together with the festival's Artistic Director and Organising Director, it was decided that, due to the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy and in Europe, and following the great success of other online streamed film festivals in 2020 (including the Venice Film Festival, the BFI London Film Festival, the Locarno Film Festival, etc.), the eleventh edition would also be made available online to Italian audiences through the MyMovies platform[1]. Before the festival, the first version of the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines (version 1.0) was drafted and shared with the subtitling team members so that they could work on the technical and linguistic aspects of IS. In addition, after the screenings of the 'Queer Short', a questionnaire was distributed to the patrons who were physically present in the cinema theatre. The corpus of the case study described consists of 36 short films subtitled in the three editions of the festival[2]. The original audio languages of the shorts are various, with a predominance of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, and two shorts in Italian. The material provided to translators for each film was: a clean video (no subtitles), a video with embedded English subtitles (when the source language was a language other than English), an .srt file with the English subtitles synchronised with the audio, and other material, such as the press kit, director bio, synopsis, subtitle files in other languages, images and when possible, a Digital Cinema Packaging (DCP) copy for projection at the festival. As for the team that worked on the translation and adaptation to inclusive subtitles, the 2021 edition had a team of volunteers consisting of three young subtitlers who worked with the author on the Italian translation and the adaptation to IS; for the 2022 and 2023 editions, the translation of the short films was carried out by SudTitles,[3] while I only carried out the adaptation to IS as a solo project in a shorter period preceding the festival; therefore, it was 'only' necessary to make the subtitles accessible for the hearing-impaired audience, by adding paralinguistic

[1] This limitation was due to copyright issues.
[2] Total runtime: approximately 650 minutes. Average runtime: 18 minutes.
[3] The translation agency in charge of the festival subtitles.

features, such as sound effects, speaker identification, extra-dialogue elements, music and songs, etc.

As each short film offered an opportunity to test and analyse a specific aspect of IS, the case study is added to this research to demonstrate the process of developing the guidelines, the reasoning, and the theoretical considerations behind the technical, linguistic, and stylistic choices over another. At the same time, as Italian is a gendered language, the inclusive language section of the guidelines was originally expanded and tested. Encouraged by the positive feedback received from the patrons who answered the dedicated section of the questionnaire and in the spirit of inclusivity as a whole, inclusive language has been introduced in IS as per the recommendations below:

- The symbol ‘@’ is used to indicate nouns and adjectives ending in ‘-o’ in the masculine form and in ‘-a’ in the feminine form, for instance ‘Amic@’ instead of ‘Amico/a’.
- The schwa, ‘ə’, is used for nouns that end in ‘-tore’ in the masculine form and in ‘-trice’ in the feminine form, for instance ‘Scultorə’ instead of ‘Scultore/trice’. For the plural form, the number 3 can be used.
- The symbol ‘*’, a simple asterisk, is used for nouns that end in ‘-e’ in the masculine form and in ‘-essa’ in the feminine form, for instance ‘Dottor*’ instead of ‘Dottore/ssa’.

This symbol is also used in other cases, because the ‘@’ symbol, though visually similar to an ‘a’ and ‘o’ combined, occupies more pixels, *i.e.,* it is bigger than other characters; but also due to the fact that the ‘ə’ is perhaps still too debated and therefore may distract the viewer from reading if overused. The above symbols were used as needed in some of the short films in this empirical case study and were shown on the big screen through the software Subtivals - a piece of software commonly used to project subtitles at film festivals - without any technical problems. For example, in one of the short films in the 2022 edition, entitled *Sad Cowboy Platonic Love* (Sourdeau, 2021), some of the characters, such as the minstrel and the gnomes, are gender non-specific and translating their name tag for the purpose of speaker identification posed a challenge to the translator, who decided to render the names gender non-specific by adding the suffix ‘-ə’ to the names 'menestrellə' and 'gnomə' and consequently adding the same symbol to all adjectives and nouns referring to these characters. For the translation of ‘menestrello/a’, although the guidelines recommend the use of the symbol '@' to indicate nouns and adjectives ending in '-o' in the masculine form and '-a' in the feminine form, the schwa, 'ə', was deemed acceptable due to

interaction with the director and artistic director of the festivals, who provided the following biography of the artist: "Natə nel 1997, è giovanə cineastə e compositorə musicalə francesə.] [Born in 1997, they is a young French cineaste and music composer] (Sicilia Queer, n.d.: online). The practise of inclusive language in subtitles also proved useful in translating the title of a short film, *Herman@s (Les Adelphes)* (Mourrier, 2021). The title refers to a way of expressing brothers and sisters in both Spanish and French (the English title is *SIBLINGX*). The Italian language does not have a single word to refer to both brothers and sisters, such as 'siblings', so the inclusive language is useful as it allows to include unusual symbols and letters. The official translation of the title in the IS was '*GERMAN3*', using the old Italian word 'germano/a' to indicate a brother or sister and adding the suffix '-3' to indicate the plural of the schwa.

5.4.1.1 Reception of IS from the audience and the industry

To understand whether the empirical approach used to develop the Inclusive Subtitling Guidelines was appreciated and welcomed by the audience, a questionnaire was administered to viewers of the 2021 edition of the *Sicilia Queer Film Fest*. The questions aimed at gaining an insight on who the patrons were, what their attitude towards IS was, and what they thought of certain technical and linguistic aspects of the subtitles. The results have confirmed some of my initial assumptions. The questionnaire consisted of 15 sections and a final one left blank for comments, divided as follows:

- Five questions to collect demographic data, such as, age group, gender, education, occupation, and type of hearing-impairment.
- Two questions on the number of film festivals patrons attended throughout the year and their opinion on subtitles at film festivals, in general.
- Four questions designed to test audience satisfaction with technical and linguistic aspects of IS, such as synchronisation, reading speed, and introduction of inclusive language.
- Four questions presented through a 5-point Likert scale to test whether certain aspects of subtitles intended for deaf and hard of hearing people (such as sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, speaker identification, music, and lyrics) affected the viewers' experience.

The data collected from the questionnaire was used to improve the first versions of the guidelines, leading to the final version, used in film festivals and cultural events.

Regrettably, no d/Deaf or hard of hearing people attended the film festival, which is not surprising as it can be related to a cultural attitude that film festivals are not accessible. In this respect, more and more international film festivals around the world are changing the way festivals are organised and structured with the aim of reaching "an audience as large and varied as possible, regardless of their physical location, physical (dis)abilities, sensorial (dis)abilities, cognitive and behavioural tendencies and, last but not least, of their language skills and competences" (Uzzo, 2020: 70). The results of the questionnaire also confirmed that the audiences attending film festivals are used to watch films in original version with subtitles and are accustomed to different subtitling styles depending on the film festival they attend. The questionnaire also confirmed that the audience is generally satisfied with the subtitles provided at film festivals, as 60% said they were 'satisfied' and 15% said they were 'neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, but they could be better'.

Two important aspects that emerged from the answers to the questionnaire related to the technical aspects of IS and, in particular, to the synchrony of the double set of subtitles. The majority of respondents confirmed that the set of IS in Italian was 'well or adequately synchronised' with both the audio and the English subtitles on the screen. The respondents also confirmed that the reading speed was 'adequate', with 75% of positive responses, although some respondents complained about the duration of the sound effects which was minimal. Therefore, the minimum duration of the sound effects was increased from 1 second in the first version of the guidelines to 2 seconds in the final version. In the questionnaire administered to the patrons, one of the questions asked whether the introduction of inclusive language and uncommon symbols and letters when the narrative of the film required a neutral translation was a good or a bad solution. The majority of respondents agreed that it was a 'good solution', with the predictable exception of a few people who expressed negative feedback, perhaps as a ripple effect of their opinion on inclusive language in general. It should be noted, however, that the patrons of the *Sicilia Queer Film Fest*, a festival that celebrates Queer and LGBTQ+ cinema, may be more inclined towards the use of inclusive language.

5.4.2 Case Study: *Pure*

This section presents another case study of IS, carried out for the purpose of this research, that is the process of translation, adaptation and conforming to Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines of a short film. The short film is titled *La vita sarebbe più facile senza*, written and directed by Federico Mottica, who kindly accepted this collaboration. The short film is produced by Aurina (Federico Mottica) in association with CSC – Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

The short talks about a gay couple who questions the certainty of their relationship and their feelings, in the midst of love, hate, desire and jealousy. The synopsis is:

> *Andrea and Fabrizio are a gay couple living together. On the evening of Fabrizio's birthday, a straight couple of friends, Michele and Valeria, join them to go out for dinner, but the evening is ruined when Michele and Valeria announce that they are breaking up. Later that evening Andrea wants to invite over Jean-Malik, a French guy cycling around Europe found on a dating app. Fabrizio is reluctant at first because he is tired but then he agrees to the arrangement provided that Jean-Malik would sleep on the guest bedroom. When Jean-Malik arrives at the apartment, Andrea, who speaks French fluently, offers him a glass of milk and the two engage in a conversation, whilst Fabrizio briefly introduces himself in English before going to bed. In the middle of the night Jean-Malik sends a message to Andrea asking him to come to the guest bedroom where the two have sex. Early the morning after, Andrea wakes up to find Fabrizio and Jean-Malik sleeping in bed together. Andrea goes out for a walk and upon returning to the apartment, the couple has an open-hearted conversation.*

The short film is 17 minutes long and the dialogues are mainly in Italian, with some French and English. It premiered at the 2023 edition of the BFI Flare before touring other film festivals in the US and in Europe, with the international title *Pure*, and it is distributed by The Open Reel (The Open Reel, n.d.), an international sales agency aiming to support and develop independent cinema on an international level. In the UK, it is available for streaming on Prime Video, and Deekoo (Deekoo, n.d.), an LGBT+ streaming platform based in the US. As far as subtitles, SDH and CC are concerned, the director kindly provided the English subtitles, the Italian subtitles of the dialogues in French and in English, and a video with the burnt-in Italian subtitles. From the streaming platform Deekoo, it is possible to activate CC which add sound effects (only) interlaced with the open subtitles in English. The combination of the two files, *i.e.,* the official English translated subtitles and the sound effects subtitles, henceforth the original version, has been adapted to the parameters and style of IS using the Review PRO tool by OOONA (OOONA, n.d.), a cloud-based subtitling software that allows a comparison between two versions of the same subtitles file, but also allows remarks and annotation, and the export the IS file, henceforth the adapted version, which constitutes Appendix 3. The case study does not entail the mere proofreading of the work done by the subtitlers and captioners involved in the creation of the original version of the subtitles, instead the case study aims to provide a single IS file useful for further analysis, highlighting some of the most significant changes and adaptations that are presented in the following paragraphs to produce a practical example of IS and its distinctive features.

5.4.2.1 Synchronisation and timing

The correct timing is supposed to generate subtitles that have a comfortable reading speed including as much text as the original as possible, *i.e.,* verbatim subtitles when dealing with intralingual translation. However, when translating interlingually, the translation of the subtitles serves as a text editing practice to fit a correct and sensical adaptation of the text within the given duration, thus resulting in a comfortable reading speed. In the original version, there were subtitles with a high reading speed, in the region of 25 CPS, sometimes 30 CPS, and even one instance of 43 CPS. As the re-timing of the subtitles is not permitted in IS, and in general in subtitling at film festivals, due to the double set of subtitles, the merging of two consecutive subtitles and the editing of the text is a viable solution to the problem, as presented in Figure 35.

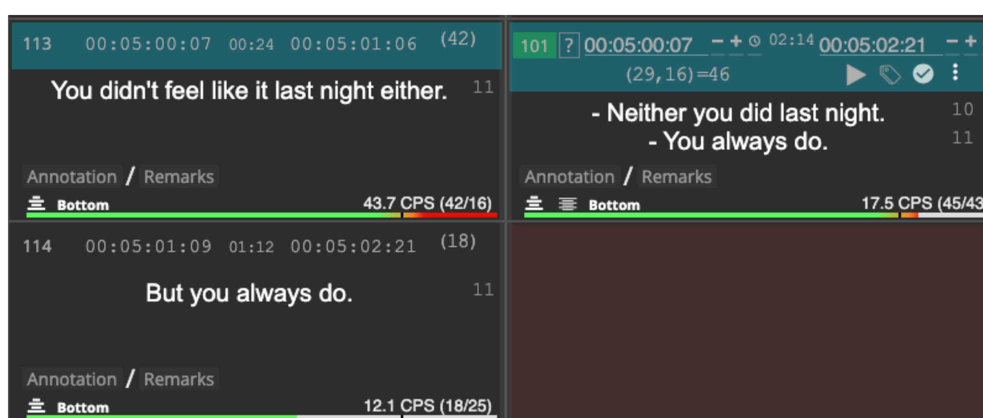

Figure 35: Merging and text editing of two consecutive subtitles.

Text editing is a strategy to condense dialogues without compromising the sense of the sentence(s). It was employed in approximately 40 instances throughout the file to accommodate a more comfortable reading speed which aims to follow the maximum of 17 CPS, as recommended by the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines, although in some instances this was not achievable. Therefore a few subtitles, especially those with the added tag for speaker identification, were left with a reading speed of 20 CPS, and 24 CPS[4] at times. The merging of two consecutive subtitles was also employed in scenes where one character asked a question, and another replied with a simply 'Yes' or 'No'.

[4] This is not an ideal scenario, but it is common practice for fast dialogues, aggravated by the impossibility to edit the timing of the subtitles.

5.4.2.2 Dialogue translation

Some translation in the original version contained some grammatical errors, which were corrected in the adapted version, whilst other subtitles were re-translated as they contained ambiguous translation, which incidentally were longer than needed. Whilst typos and grammar mistakes may occur, the importance of performing a spellcheck and a grammar check is especially significant here, as a film festival is an immersive experience in which patrons read an impressive amount of subtitles in a reduced amount of time, and such mistakes should be kept to a minimum or avoided altogether. To provide a numeric example: a feature film of 100 minutes may contain approximately 1.000 subtitles; multiplied by 3 films per day equals to 3.000 subtitles per day; multiplied by 10 days of film festivals equals to 30.000 subtitles that an average film festival goer reads during a film festival. It follows that consistency, accuracy, and in general good subtitles are pivotal to the comprehension and the enjoyment of a film festival[5].

5.4.2.3 Paralinguistic features

Delving into the distinctive features of SDH/CC, *i.e.,* paralinguistic features, it should be noted that the Deekoo platform follows a style guide similar to that of Netflix, with sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, and music in lowercase letters encapsulated within square brackets. The original version featured 18 subtitles with sound effects and 2 subtitles with music, including certain sound effects that were deemed unnecessary in the adapted version, as they were either obvious, generic, or they didn't add any extra information to the plot or to the enjoyment of the short film. For instance, some sound effects referred to sound produced by people or objects visible, such as the pouring sound of milk onto a glass, or Andrea's footsteps visibly walking on camera, as can be seen in Figure 36.

[5] These figures are anecdotal and based on personal and professional experience. They vary based on several factors and are not applicable to all film festivals goers and to all film festivals.

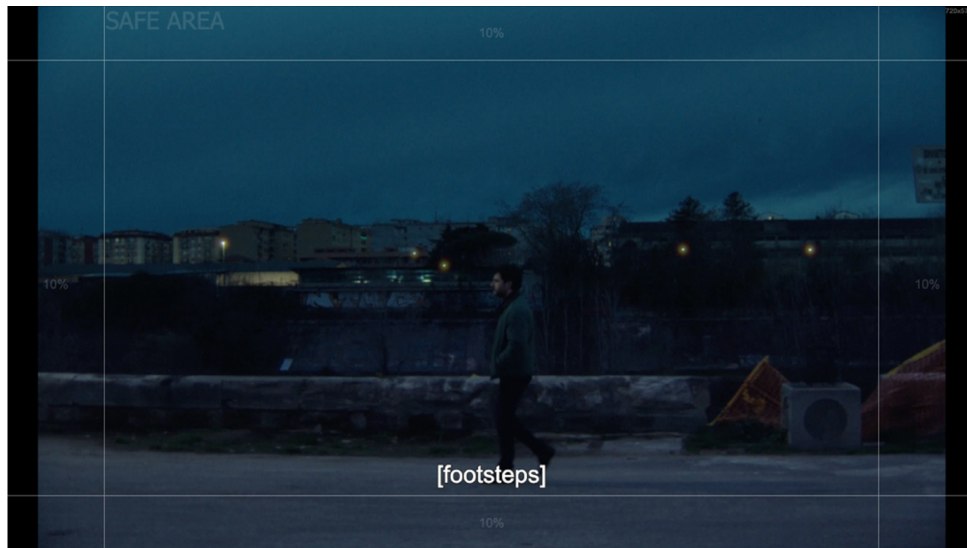

Figure 36: Caption [footsteps] used when visible on screen.

Furthermore, in the bathroom scene, where Andrea asks Fabrizio if the guy he was messaging with could come to their apartment, the dialogues are sometimes interrupted by a notification chime from a recognisable dating app used by gay men, Grindr. In the attempt to be more specific, and to bring cultural references to what could be a well-known dating app amongst the patrons of an LGBT+ film festival, the sound effect subtitle has been adapted as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Adaption of sound effect to IS.

#	Timing	Original Text	Reviewed Text
94	00:04:37:24 - 00:04:39:10	[phone bings]	[GRINDR NOTIFICATION]

Speaker identification was not provided by the Deekoo streaming platforms in the original version, leaving the audience wondering who was speaking in certain scenes, especially those shot at night or with poor lighting. Speaker identification with the tag of the names of the characters were then added in the adapted version in over 30 instances, which were deemed necessary to distinguish who was speaking.

Extra-dialogue elements were added to the adapted version only to indicate the conversations in languages other than in Italian between Andrea, Fabrizio and Jean-Malik, in order to convey the fact that Fabrizio doesn't understand French very well and that he prefers to speak in English with Jean-Malik and in Italian with Andrea, and the fact that Andrea speaks French fluently with Jean-Malik. Even in short films, multilingualism is very frequent, and considered part and parcel of modern cinema (Szarkowska, 2013). The various languages in which films and TV series are made, are used, not only to express

dialogues between characters, but also to convey certain traits of their personalities or plot developments (Uzzo, 2022). The taxonomy put forward by Szarkowska *et al.* (2014) highlights different ways to deal with multilingualism in SDH/CC, of which Translation + Explicit Attribution (involving the translation of the foreign-language dialogue and indication in brackets that another language is spoken) is one of the preferred choices for most VoD and OTT platforms, including IS, which do not use colour-coding for this paralinguistic feature.

Lastly, it is common to treat subtitles indicating music - not lyrics - as subtitles indicating sound effects in most VoD and OTT platforms, including in the CC by Deekoo which rendered the extra-diegetic music of the short film in lowercase letters within square brackets. Such subtitles have been adapted to IS, introduced by the '#' symbol, and when deemed necessary, the double '#' symbol was used to indicate a generic background music, since, in fact, it didn't add any particular information or relevance to the plot or enjoyment of the short film.

5.4.2.4 Format, Punctuation, and Extra

As far as the format(ting) is concerned, in the original version ellipsis were used abundantly both at the end of the first subtitle, and at the beginning of the following subtitle, thus adding unnecessary characters to already long lines of subtitles. Similarly, exclamation marks were abundant in sentences that did not denote any particular tone of voice by the character, therefore misleading the viewer to think that the conversation was more animated than it actually was. With respect to maximum characters per line, the original version featured many subtitles with long lines of text exceeding the 42 characters per line usually allowed, with peaks of 46, 48, and even 56 characters per line: an issue easily rectified with correct line breaking, that is the splitting into two lines of subtitles of no more than 42 characters per line, as recommended by the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines. From a stylistic point of view, certain adaptations were made, for instance, 'eight' became '8th', and italics was added to a voice-over subtitle. The original title of the short film *La vita sarebbe più semplice senza* was translated into *Pure* for international distribution, therefore this is reflected in the subtitle at the beginning of the film. If an international title had not been provided, the literal translation of the original title - which roughly translates as *Life would be simpler without* - would have been the chosen title to be added to the IS file.

5.5 Logo

Finally, for the dissemination of IS as a practice, it was important to associate it with a visual element, as the standardisation of symbols plays an important role in introducing and helping people to use a product or service (Miller, 2007). With this in mind, and in the hope of spreading IS across several countries and across multiple platforms and venues, it was considered appropriate to give a visually recognisable symbol to the newly introduced subtitles. In order to create a simple yet effective logo which included the letters 'I' (for 'inclusive') and 'S' (for 'subtitles'), and which could be read as 'IS' (Inclusive Subtitles) but also 'SI' ('*Sottotitolazione Inclusiva*' in Italian, '*Subtitulación Inclusiva*' in Spanish, '*Sous-titrage Inclusif*' in French), a graphic solutions was found, as shown in Figure 34.

Figure 34: IS Logo in English and Italian.

Concluding remarks

In recent years, there has been a surge in innovative subtitling techniques. Subtitling is no longer just seen as a mere translating of spoken dialogue; it has evolved to become a creative and dynamic process. Subtitlers are now using enriched, creative, and emotive subtitles to enhance the viewing experience, making content more engaging for audiences. Scholars and industry professionals have actively engaged in developing and analysing these innovative subtitling strategies, understanding the significance of creating subtitles that go beyond mere translation. The collaboration between the academia and practitioners is driving improvements in the field, ultimately benefiting audiences, by addressing their needs and preferences.

Another significant trend is the growth of international film festivals. These events showcase films of different countries, in different languages, and depicting different cultures, providing audiences with a unique cultural perspective on the global cinematic landscape. As part and parcel of film festivals, subtitles - in the form of SDH, CC or IS - play an important role by ensuring that audiovisual content is accessible to a broader audience, including those with hearing impairments. As these features become more creative, they not only aid accessibility but also enhance the understanding of cultural nuances in the content. This, in turn, contributes to cross-cultural connections, as viewers from different backgrounds can better appreciate and engage with content from around the world.

The research described thus far represents a pioneering effort to create a novel form of subtitles that cater to a broad spectrum of audiences, including individuals who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing. IS are not just a static implementation but rather a dynamic and adaptive solution that has been refined through an empirical approach marked by ongoing experimentation and adjustment. Initially conceived for use within the unique context of international film festivals, IS offer a ground-breaking approach to audiovisual accessibility; and film festivals, with their diverse range of films from various cultures and languages, are an ideal testing ground for such innovation. IS are tailored to enhance the experience of diverse festival audiences, making it easier for everyone to understand and engage with the content being presented. What sets IS apart is their adaptability. They are not a one-size-fits-all solution but are constantly evolving and adapting to specific contexts. Their dynamic nature means that they can adjust to the particular needs and preferences of different audiences and contexts. This adaptability is essential in ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their hearing (dis)abilities, can fully enjoy and understand the audiovisual content. IS have found applications in a range of domains, other than film

festivals, such as: tourism, where they can improve the experience of tourists by providing information in their language and accessible formats; theatre, where they make live performances more inclusive and engaging; museums, where they help convey information to a diverse group of visitors; and VoD and OTT platforms, where they offer accessible content to a wider audience.

The results of this research culminate in the creation of the Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines, a set of guidelines in a dual format, which is a significant contribution to the field of subtitling. These guidelines were carefully crafted to serve as a valuable resource for practitioners, offering support and direction in their subtitling tasks. The dual format comprises two versions: the compact version consisting of 6 pages, and the extended version, consisting of 11 pages. The compact version is designed to provide quick and easy reference for practitioners in their daily subtitling activities. In a fast-paced industry, where efficiency and accuracy are paramount, having a succinct set of guidelines that can be accessed and applied swiftly is immensely beneficial. The extended version offers a more in-depth and comprehensive resource. This version delves into greater detail, providing practitioners with a thorough understanding of subtitling principles, techniques, and best practices. It includes detailed examples and explanations that cater to more intricate and complex subtitling scenarios. The dual-format guidelines presented in this research are a valuable resource for subtitling practitioners, addressing the needs of those seeking quick reference and practical guidance, as well as those aiming for a more comprehensive understanding of IS intricacies.

Although this study has provided a pioneering exploration into the realm of Inclusive Subtitles, particularly within the context of film festivals, it is crucial to acknowledge certain limitations that could guide future research endeavours. Notably, the absence of DHH participants in the reception study carried out in Italy presents a significant drawback, necessitating further investigation to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of IS on diverse audiences. Furthermore, regarding the second case study presented, an intriguing prospect emerges in the form of a reception study comparing both versions of the same short film, *Pure*, and other similar audiovisual products. This approach aims to delve deeper into the reception and perception of IS by film festival attendees, irrespective of their hearing (dis)abilities. These recommendations aim to propel the field forward, fostering continuous growth and refinement with the ultimate goal of enhancing accessibility at film festivals.

Going back to the fallacies addressed by Neves, one of the misconceptions she exposes is that "true accessibility comes with sign language interpreting (SLI). Subtitles are

a second choice" (2008: 137). Neves explains that SLI and SDH/CC represent two distinct translation solutions that should not compete against each other. This distinction is crucial because sign languages are not universal, and universally used by all DHH viewers. Consequently, considering sign language as a one-size-fits-all translation approach for DHH viewers would be inaccurate and, in fact, counterproductive to achieving true accessibility. However, sign languages, viewed as distinct languages in their own right (rather than mere acts of interpretation), hold immense significance for the Deaf community, which identifies itself as a linguistic minority. In relation to the focal point of this project, that is SDH/CC and IS, some scholars have contemplated the integration of sign language syntax and vocabulary within SDH/CC (Tamayo, 2022). This is an intriguing avenue to explore, especially for translation choices that align with the vocabulary of sign language users, and that are considered more than acceptable by those who do not know sign language. It's important to bear in mind that for many Deaf individuals, reading subtitles in a written language (*e.g.*, English) is often considered reading in a second language. This is particularly true for Deaf individuals whose primary mode of communication is a sign language, like BSL. Subtitles in written language may not align with the grammatical structure and vocabulary of sign languages, making them a form of translation or adaptation.

Lastly, as emphasised by Neves in one of her last fallacies,

> 100% subtitling is the ultimate goal. […] It is natural that quantity should be a goal when nothing or very little is available. Quantity loses its validity when quality is not guaranteed, and when compliance is solely measured by the quantity of programme hours covered by accessibility services (2008: 138).

While she was referring to SDH for TV, her vision can be extended to film festivals, by aiming at full accessibility at film festivals (quantity), and new and innovative ways to make subtitles, in all forms, crucial elements of inclusion (quality).

Making content accessible at film festivals, as in many other contexts, is often perceived as ‘just’ making a certain quantity of content accessible. However, quantity alone cannot be the sole measure of success. When the drive to increase accessibility is solely based on quantity, the risk is that the quality of the accessibility services may suffer. Quality encompasses factors such as accuracy in subtitling, adherence to best practices, and consideration of the diverse needs and preferences of the audience. Simply adding more content with subpar accessibility features can be counterproductive, as it may result in a less satisfying or frustrating viewing experience for the audience. The ultimate goal, as advocated in this research, should be full accessibility at film festivals. This means that all content, without exception, should be made accessible to the widest range of viewers.

Achieving full accessibility implies going beyond just the quantity of content and ensuring that the quality of the accessibility services meets the highest standards. Essentially, encouraging a holistic approach to accessibility at film festivals implies that, while quantity is an important initial goal, it should not come at the expense of quality. The ultimate objective is to provide full accessibility to all attendees through innovative and high-quality subtitling and accessibility services.

In the past, discussions around accessibility often took a more neutral or even passive stance, primarily focusing on meeting legal requirements or providing basic accommodations. However, in recent years, there has been a noticeable shift towards a more proactive and positive approach of inclusion. This new approach recognises the importance of not just providing access but actively involving the Deaf community in the conversation and decision-making processes. One significant aspect of this shift is the conscious effort to place the Deaf community at the forefront of discussions and decision-making regarding accessibility. Instead of making decisions for the Deaf community, efforts are now made to involve them in shaping their own narrative and advocating for their needs and preferences. By shifting the focus from accessibility to inclusion, this approach has the potential to uproot prejudices and disrupt ingrained habits. It challenges misconceptions and biases that may exist regarding the Deaf community. The ultimate goal of this positive stance of inclusion is to create truly accessible cultural events, including film festivals. This means events where everyone, regardless of their (dis)abilities or differences, can fully participate and enjoy the experience. The promotion of accessibility in cultural events, in turn, contributes to a more diverse, inclusive, and vibrant cultural landscape.

The case studies presented serve as compelling examples of the feasibility of adapting previously translated material to IS. This practice enriches the viewing experience for a wide range of audiences, and the content becomes more informative and engaging, enhancing the overall quality of the cinematic experience. One of the key advantages of this adaptation is that it caters to a diverse spectrum of needs among viewers. The additional information provided by IS is indispensable for some, necessary for others, and supplementary for many. The adaptation of content to IS ultimately contributes to the goal of universal access to cultural experiences. This means that individuals, regardless of their hearing (dis)abilities, can participate in, and enjoy, cultural events without limitations. It fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion, where all members of society have the opportunity to engage with, and appreciate, the cultural and creative environments.

In conclusion, it is of paramount importance that event organisers, accessibility managers, and all individuals involved in the creation and dissemination of art and culture

make accessibility and inclusion central to their endeavours. By doing so, they acknowledge the diversity of their audience and their commitment to making cultural experiences accessible to all.

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Baker, Q. (Director). (2020). *Trans Happiness is Real* [Film].

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Baxter, M. (Director). (2022). *Do This for Me* [Film].

Bell, B. & Jones-Soler, P. (Directors). (2021). *Charli XCX: Alone Together* [Film]. Snoot Entertainment.

Benhamou, J. (Director). (2020). *Love is a Hand Grenade* [Film].

Bishop, J. (Director). (2022). *Skyward* [Film].

Branagh, K. (Director). (2021). *Belfast* [Film]. Northern Ireland Screen; TKBC.

Bratton, E. & James, J. (Directors). (2020). *Buck* [Film].

Brocka, Q. A. (Director). (2021). *Boy Culture: The Series* [TV Series].

Campbell, L. (Director). (2022). *For Heidi* [Film].

Campion, J. (Director). (2021). *The Power of the Dog* [Film]. New Zealand Film Commission; BBC Film; Max Films; See-Saw Films; Bad Girl Creek; Cross City Films.

Chukwu, C. (Director). (2022). *Till* [Film]. MGM; Eon Productions Ltd.; Whoop Inc.; Frederick Zollo Productions.

Coll-O'Reilly, L. (Director). (2022). *Groom* [Film].

Connell, P. (Director). (2020). *Jump Darling* [Film]. Big Island Productions; 2645850 Ontario.

Courtinat, M. (Lead Artisti). (2022). *All unsaved progress will be lost* [Extended Reality]. Diversion Cinema.

Currie, M. (Director). (2020). *Rūrangi* [Film]. Autonomouse.

Davies, T. (Director). (2021). *Benediction* [Film]. Creative England; M.Y.R.A. Entertainment; EMU Films; BFI; BBC Films; Lipsync Productions.

Del Rosal, I. (Director). (2020). *Walk with Me* [Film].

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El Fadli, E. (Director). (2020). *From A to Q* [Film].

Emden, O. (Director). (2020). *Acrimonious* [Film].

Escott, T. (Director). (2020). *The Act* [Film].

Eve, A. & Dowd, O. (Directors). (2021). *Minutes* [Film].

Femzo, A. (Director). (2022). *Drop Out* [Film].

Green, R. M. (Director). (2021). *King Richard* [Film]. Keepin' It Reel; Warner Bros. Pictures; Westbrook Studios; Star Thrower Entertainment.

Gyllenhaal, M. (Director). (2021). *The Lost Daughter* [Film]. Samuel Marshall Productions; Endeavor Content; Pie Films; Faliro House Productions.

Hardiman, T. (Director). (2022). *Medusa Deluxe* [Film]. BFI Films; BBC Film; EMU Films.

Hardwicke, C. & Deneux, C. (Lead Artists). (2022). *Missing Picture: Catherine Hardwicke* [Extended Reality]. Atlas V; Arte France; BBC; Serendipity; PTS Taiwan; Wild Fang Films; GIIOII.

Harris, N. J. (Director). (2020). *Pure* [Film].

Heath, T. (Director). (2022). *Back to School* [Film].

Heolimeleikalani Osorio, J., Brett, M., Jamison, S., Colinart, A. & Zandrowicz, P. (Lead Artists). (2022). *On the morning you wake (to the end of the world)* [Extended Reality]. Archer's Mark; Atlas V.

Hermanus, O. (Director). (2022). *Living* [Film]. Ingenious; Film i Väst; Kurosawa Production; Number 9 Films; County Hall; Lipsync Productions; BFI; Film4; Filmgate Films.

Hobbs, E. (Director). (2022). *The Debutante* [Film].

Hu, Y. (Director). (2022). *Sticks of Fury* [Film].

Husson, E. (Director). (2021). *Mothering Sunday* [Film]. Number 9 Films; BFI; Lipsync Productions; Film4; ZDF/Arte.

Jackman, J. (Director). (2022). *The Riley Sisters* [Film].

Jóhannsson, V. (Director). (2021). *Lamb* [Film]. Chimney Poland; Rabbit Hole Productions; Film i Väst; Black Spark Film & TV; Chimney Sweden; Madants, Go to Sheep.

Joynt, C. (Director). (2022). *Framing Agnes* [Film]. Fae Pictures; Level Ground.

LeRoi, A. (Director). (2019). *The Obituary of Tunde Johnson* [Film]. The Launch Productions; Zgreen Entertainment; Marginal Mediaworks; Jason Shuman Productions.

Lovelace, E. (Director). (2022). *Name Me Lawand* [Film]. Pulse Films; The Electric Shadow Company.

Liu, B. & Altman, J. (Directors). (2021). *All these Sons* [Film]. Concordia Studio.

McGill, C. (Director). (2020). *Is It Me* [Film].

Mottica, F. (Director). (2023). *La vita sarebbe più facile senza* [Film]. Aurina.

Mourrier, H. A. (Director). (2021). *Herman@S (Les Adelphes)* [Film]. Le G.R.E.C.

Myara, S. (Director). (2020). *Well Rounded* [Film].

Mueller, M. (Director). (2022). *Blue Room* [Film].

Polley, S. (Director). (2022). *Women Talking* [Film]. Plan B Entertainment; Orion Pictures; Hear/Say Productions.

Propper, K. (Director). (2022). *Birds* [Film].

Rebane, P. (Director). (2021). *Firebird* [Film]. Firebird Production; The Factory; Film Estonia; No Reservations Entertainment.

Roberts, C. (Director). (2021). *The Phantom of the Open* [Film]. BFI; BBC Film; Ingenious Media; Water & Power Productions; Baby Cow Films; Cornerstone Films.

Ruiz, F. (Director). (2020). *The Lights are On, No One's Home* [Film].

Sánchez López, D. (Director). (2021). *Boys meets Boy* [Film]. GagaOOLala; Cosmic Productions.

Schrader, M. (Director). (2022). *She Said* [Film]. Annapurna Pictures; Plan B.

Seligman, M. & Tiexiera, J. (Directors). (2020). *p.s. Burn this Letter, please* [Film].

Shamus, N. (Director). (2020). *Kind of* [Film].

Shanahan, H. & Williams, S. (Directors). (2021). *Rebel Dykes* [Film]. Riot Productions.

Sourdeau, C. (Director). (2021). *Sad Cowboy Platonic Love* [Film]. HEAD Genève.

Tucker Green, D. (Director). (2021). *Eye for Eye* [Film]. BBC Film; BFI; Fruit Tree Media; Eon Productions.

Trueman, A. (Director). (2021). *The Cost of Living* [Film].

Untold Garden (Lead Artist). (2022). *Apparatus Ludens* [Extended Reality]. Untold Garden.

Warchus, M. (Director). (2022). *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* [Film]. Netflix; Working Title Films; TriStar Pictures.

Weston, J. (Director). (2020). *Wings* [Film].

Willis, L. (Director). (2021). *Pool Boy* [Film].

Wortzel, S. (Director). (2020). *This is an Address* [Film].

Wright, E. (2017). *Baby driver*. [Film] U.S. TriStar Pictures; Working Title Pictures; Big Talk Productions; Media Rights Capital.

Appendix 1 – Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines Compact Version

Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines
Compact Version 2.0_2023_English

1. Introduction
2. Synchronisation
3. Formatting
4. Style
5. Speaker Identification
6. Sound Effects
7. Extra-dialogue elements
8. Music & Songs
9. Punctuation
10. Language
11. Extra

1. <u>Introduction</u>

Inclusive subtitling is a form of subtitling designed for a mixed audience, i.e., d/Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing people, with applications for film festivals (pre-recorded audiovisual material), in the presence of a double subtitle track (two languages). These guidelines are also available as an extended 11-page document.

2. <u>Synchronisation</u>

- In the absence of a double subtitle track:
  - Minimum duration: the minimum duration is 1 second.
  - Maximum duration: the maximum duration is 7 seconds.
  - Gap: the gap between two consecutive subtitles is 2 frames (if the distance is less than 6 frames, reduce it to 2 frames).
  - Shot-change: in the proximity of a shot-change, or a scene-change, a subtitle ends 2 frames before the shot-change and the following begins on the shot-change.

- With a double subtitle track:
  - Synchronisation: time-in and time-out must be perfectly synchronised with the on-screen subtitles.
  - Minimum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is less than 1 second, increase it to 1 second.
  - Maximum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is longer than 7 seconds, it is possible to split the subtitle into two (or three) subtitles, making sure that the time-in of the first and the time-out of the second (or third) coincide with the on-screen subtitles.

- Reading Speed: 17 cps (characters per second) including spaces and punctuation, up to a maximum of 20 cps (including spaces and punctuation)

in the event of fast-paced dialogues and/or in the presence of a subtitle with speaker identification (e.g. [Thomas]).

3. Formatting

- Encoding: use UTF-8 encoding.
- Characters per line: maximum 42, including spaces and punctuation.
- Lines per subtitle: maximum 2.
- Position: bottom, centre.
- Justification: centre.
- Font: MS sans serif (or Arial or Verdana), size 40.

4. Style

- Line breaks: whenever possible, try to maintain line breaks graphically similar to the subtitles on-screen, with a similar number of words distributed between the first and second line while following a grammatical and semantic sense.
- Dual speakers: use one hyphen per speaker followed by a single space.

- How are you, Luke?
- Fine, thank you. And you?

- Italics: use italics in the following cases
  - Voiceover (narrator style).
  - Voices through media, such as: telephone, radio, TV, computer, etc.
  - Song lyrics (see section Music & Songs).
  - Titles of books, films, series, etc.
  - Emphasis: only when the emphasis of the word is clearly intentional.
- On-screen text: for brief on-screen text (NO SMOKING / STOP / Paris, 1889) use upper and/or lower case as per the original, without full stops at the end.
- For longer on-screen text, such as prologues or epilogues, use upper and/or lower case, with the necessary punctuation.
- Acronyms: acronyms should be written in upper or lower case (USA, BBC, UNESCO, am, pm, mph) depending on the style. If new or unfamiliar, add full stops (I.S. = Inclusive Subtitles).
- Numbers: numbers from 1 to 12 should be written in letters, from 13 upwards in digits. If the subtitle begins with a number, it should be written in letters, except for numbers that are too long and/or with decimals.

- How old are you?
- Eighty-four years old.

- How far is the Earth from the Moon?
- 384,400 km more or less.

- Percentages: use the % sign to indicate precise numbers (20% of employees will be fired) and the word 'percent' with expressions, such as (I am one hundred percent sure).
- Cardinal numbers: use a comma to separate thousands and a full stop to separate decimals (1,340,560.89 = 1 million 340 thousand 560 and 89). Use letters with expressions, such as (I told you a thousand times).
- Ordinal numbers: use the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th (He arrived 104th in the marathon / I'll tell you again, for the 38th time). Use letters in expressions, such as (I am the second son).
- Time: the exact time is indicated using a colon (See you at 11:15). With a specific hour, use numbers (See you at 9 / The meeting is at 12). Use the 12-hour clock system unless the characters say otherwise.
- Date: day, month and year can spelled out (The contract expires on 28 July 2021) or separated by a slash (The contract expires on 28/07/2021).
- Decades: decades are followed by an -s (The Glorious 20s).
- Centuries: centuries are indicated using the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th after the number (She lived between the 3rd and the 4th century BC).
- Currency: the currency symbols (£, €, $) should be placed after the digit, followed by a space (This coffee costs 1.50 €). Use the nouns in instances, such as (The euro is a young currency).

5. Speaker Identification

To identify speakers who are in shot or when it is not clear who is speaking, use square brackets [ ]. It is possible to use the name even if it is revealed a little later in the film, to avoid an abuse of generic tags, such as [Man] or [Woman]. The first letter is always in uppercase.

[Luke] I want to go to the concert.

- [Mary] Don't tell anyone.
- I won't say anything.

- [Professor] Did you do your homework?
- [Student] No, I'm sorry.

6. Sound Effects

Sound effects subtitles are indicated in uppercase, within square brackets, preceded and followed by a single space. They last 2 seconds, and they are aligned and justified to the centre, in a single line. Only indicate sounds that are relevant to the narration, and if necessary, also the source.

[DOG BARKS]
(if the dog is in shot)

[NEIGHING]
(if the horse is in shot)

[INDISTINCT VOICES]
(generic label)

[PHILIP SNEEZES]
(if it is not immediately clear who is sneezing)

7. Extra-dialogue elements

Extra-dialogue elements are indicated within round parentheses ( ), in lower case, and placed in the subtitle, as needed. They may indicate intonation, tone, attitude, foreign languages, dialects, accents, etc.

(whispering) I know
what you did last summer.

(in French) How dare you?

And now that you have signed,
your soul is mine! (laughs)

8. Music and songs

- Music: the subtitle indicating the music opens and closes with the symbol # , lasts 2 seconds and it is added if important or relevant to understand the scene or the film.

Techno music

- Background music: for background or ambient music, a subtitle with two symbols # lasting 2 seconds is sufficient. However, it should not be added anytime there is background music, but only when relevant.

# #

- Songs: indicate the name of the artist and the title of the song, if known.
- Lyrics: lyrics are in italics, open and close with the symbol # , and last for as long as lyrics are sung, whether by the characters or as part of the soundtrack. Punctuation is reduced to a minimum and each line (coinciding with a verse) begins with an uppercase letter. Translate only if relevant to the plot.

 # Ground Control to Major Tom
Ground Control to Major Tom #

 # Take your protein pills
And put your helmet on #

- Lyrics with dual speakers: if the song is sung by more than one character and they are not in shot, resort to speaker identification.

- [Danny] # *I got chills* #
- [Sandy] # *They're multiplyin'* #

9. Punctuation

Punctuation should be used following the rules of the English language.

- Full stop: use full stops only at the end of sentences, not at the end of every subtitle.
- Comma: commas should be used to separate sentences, with yes and no, in lists, etc.
- Exclamation and question marks: exclamation and question marks should be used to facilitate understanding of the speaker's tone. Avoid excessive use of exclamation marks.
- Interrobang: you can use the interrobang (?!) or (!?) to emphasise a tone of question and statement at the same time.
- Colon: the colon is used to open direct speech or a list.
- Quotation marks: use quotation marks for direct speech and quotations. Open them in the first subtitle, in any subsequent subtitle, and in the last subtitle, and close them only at the end of the last subtitle. They are preceded by a colon and a space. The first letter is in uppercase.

John asked: "Are you OK?"
I replied: "Of course."

- Full stops and commas, go inside the quotation marks, as in the example above, whereas exclamation and question marks go outside the quotation marks, as in the examples below:

Why did he say “I love you”?

- Ellipsis: use ellipsis dots to indicate intentional pauses or change of subject. After the three dots, the word is in lower case if it is a continuation of the previous sentence, and in uppercase if it is a new sentence. Make sure that the ellipsis dots are formatted as three individual characters, and not as a single symbol.

I tried... to help him.

The truth is... That’s the truth.

- The underscore sign (_) is allowed for emails or websites, which never end with a full stop, not even at the end of a sentence:

My e-mail is inc_sub@si.com
Drop me a line whenever you want.

- Semicolon: the semicolon is not needed, although it is possible to use it.
- Other symbols: the following symbols are permitted: * # @ x - + / =

10. Language

- Foul language: do not censor or water down the dialogues in the presence of slang or foul language. In the case of bleeped words, asterisks can be used to cover missing letters.
  (What the fuck are you doing? / What the f**k are you doing?)
- Errors and typos: correct characters' grammatical errors if they compromise the comprehension of the sentence unless these errors are intentional.
- Inclusive language: when possible (but also necessary in case of uncertainty), it is recommended to use inclusive language, which takes into account gender diversity.

11. Extra

- Quality control: always check grammar, punctuation, correct use of sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, speaker identification, etc. and perform a spellcheck.
- Title: the title of the film should not be translated if it is a single word easily understandable (Amor), but it should be translated if it is longer (La grande bellezza = The Great Beauty).
- Credits: credits should be inserted after the end credits of the most relevant crew (actors, director, etc.) and before the long list of names. A single subtitle, lasting 2 seconds, should be inserted as follows:

Inclusive subtitles by
Name Surname

Appendix 2 – Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines Extended Version

Inclusive Subtitles Guidelines

Extended Version 2.0_2023_English

12. Introduction
13. Synchronisation
14. Formatting
15. Style
16. Speaker Identification
17. Sound Effects
18. Extra-dialogue elements
19. Music & Songs
20. Punctuation
21. Language
22. Extra

2. Introduction

Inclusive subtitling is a form of subtitling designed for a mixed audience, i.e. d/Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing people, with applications for film festivals (pre-recorded audiovisual material), in the presence of a double subtitle track (two languages).

Inclusive subtitles have been designed specifically for film festivals, while taking into account the technical limitations and possibilities, and the tight turnaround, but they can be employed in any cultural setting in which an accessible approach towards a heterogeneous audience is required or desired, such as festivals, theatres, museums, galleries, and similar cultural contexts.

Inclusive subtitles aim to combine the best practices of SDH – subtitles for d/Deaf and hard of hearing people available on TV – and CC – closed captions available on streaming platforms.

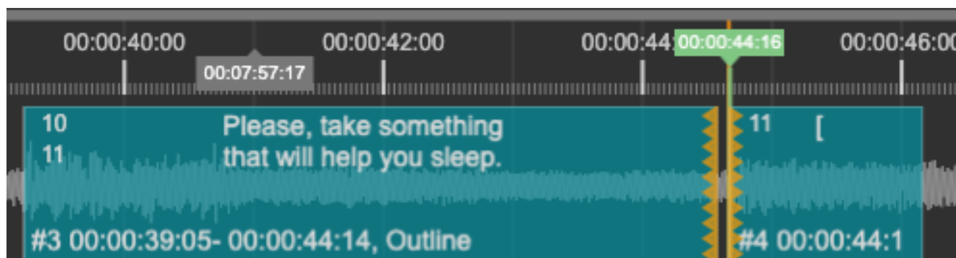
The guidelines, available in a compact 7-page document as a reference guide and in this extended 11-page document with more general explanations, provide a variety of examples to avoid misunderstandings.

The guidelines are divided into 9 main sections (plus an introductory section and a section with miscellaneous indications), each covering a different technical or linguistic aspect of inclusive subtitling: synchronisation, formatting, style, speaker identification, sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, music and songs, punctuation, and language.

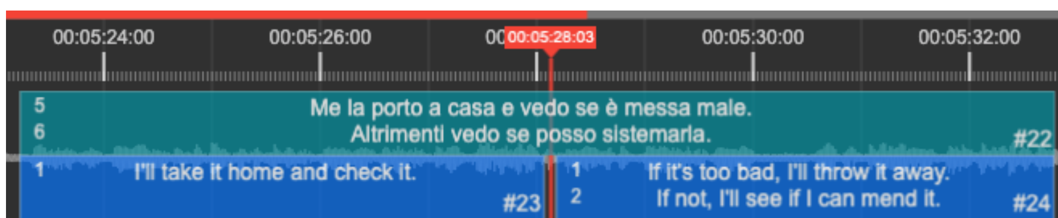
When translating interlingually, the fundamental principles of subtitling, especially at linguistic level, apply.

3. Synchronisation

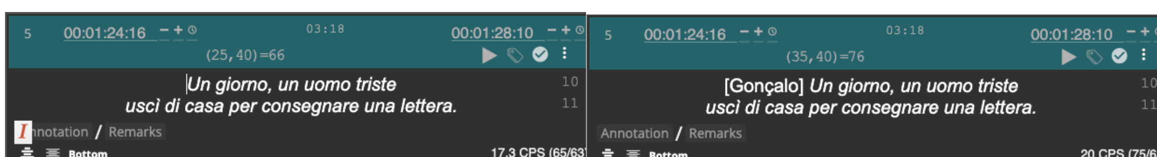
- In the absence of a double subtitle track:
  - Minimum duration: the minimum duration is 1 second.
  - Maximum duration: the maximum duration is 7 seconds.
  - Gap: the gap between two consecutive subtitles is 2 frames (if the distance is less than 6 frames, reduce it to 2 frames).
  - Shot-change: in the proximity of a shot-change, or a scene-change, a subtitle ends 2 frames before the shot-change and the following begins on the shot-change. (See picture below).



- With a double subtitle track:
  - Synchronisation: time-in and time-out must be perfectly synchronised with the on-screen subtitles.
  - Minimum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is less than 1 second, increase it to 1 second. (However, if the duration of the on-screen subtitles is at least 5/6 of a second, and the reading speed allows it, match the duration, in order to avoid discrepancies between the two sets of subtitles).
  - Maximum duration: if the duration of the on-screen subtitle is longer than 7 seconds, it is possible to split the subtitle into two (or three) subtitles, making sure that the time-in of the first and the time-out of the second (or third) coincide with the on-screen subtitles. The gap between the consecutive subtitles is 2 frames. (See picture below).



- Reading Speed: 17 cps (characters per second) including spaces and punctuation, up to a maximum of 20 cps (including spaces and punctuation) in the event of fast-paced dialogues and/or in the presence of a subtitle with speaker identification (e.g. [Thomas]). (See how the speaker identification [Gonçalo] changes the reading speed from 17.3 CPS to 20 CPS in the example below).



4. Formatting

- Encoding: use UTF-8 encoding.
- Characters per line: maximum 42, including spaces and punctuation.
  This can be stretched to 43 or 44 characters if the sentences contain characters that occupy less space (for example, f, i, j, l) as opposed to characters that occupy more space (for example, w, m, b).
  This is an exception, and not a rule, and it should be used if text reduction or other strategies are not successful.
  (See below: the first line has 43 characters, but it looks shorter than the second line which has 42 characters. The two sentences are quotes and the text can't be edited.)

(43,42)=86

It always seems impossible until it's done.
Believe you can and you are halfway there.

- Lines per subtitle: maximum 2.
- Position: bottom, centre.
- Justification: centre.
- Font: MS sans serif (or Arial or Verdana) with size 40.

5. Style

- Line breaks: whenever possible, try to maintain line breaks graphically similar to the subtitles on-screen, with a similar number of words distributed between the first and second line while following a grammatical and semantic sense. However, do not separate article and noun, preposition and noun, adjective and noun, subject and verb, auxiliary and verb, qualification and proper name, etc. unless strictly necessary. (See below).

Per strada incontrò una donna
che gli disse:

- Dual speakers: use one hyphen per speaker followed by a single space.

- How are you, Luke?
- Fine, thank you. And you?

- Italics: use italics in the following cases
  - Voiceover (narrator style).

[Narrator] *Once upon a time,*
in a far far land away

  - Voices through media, such as: telephone, radio, TV, computer, etc.
  - Song lyrics (see section Music & Songs).
  - Titles of books, films, series, etc.

Have you seen *Home alone*?

  - Emphasis: only when the emphasis of the word is clearly intentional.

I bumped into Simon yesterday.
He said hello, but I didn't.

- On-screen text: for brief on-screen text (NO SMOKING / STOP / Paris, 1889) use upper and/or lower case as per the original, without full stops at the end. For longer on-screen text, such as prologues or epilogues, use upper and/or lower case, with the necessary punctuation.
- Acronyms: acronyms should be written in upper or lower case (USA, BBC, UNESCO, am, pm, mph) depending on the style. If new or unfamiliar, add full stops (I.S. = Inclusive Subtitles).
- Numbers: numbers from 1 to 12 should be written in letters, from 13 upwards in digits. If the subtitle begins with a number, it should be written in letters, except for numbers that are too long and/or with decimals.

- How old are you?
- Eighty-four years old.

- How far is the Earth from the Moon?
- 384,400 km more or less.

- Percentages: use the % sign to indicate precise numbers and the word ‘percent’ with expressions, such as (I am one hundred percent sure).

20% of employees will be fired.

- Cardinal numbers: use a comma to separate thousands and a full stop to separate decimals (1,340,560.89 = 1 million 340 thousand 560 and 89). Use letters with expressions, such as (I told you a thousand times).
- Ordinal numbers: use the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th. Use letters in expressions, such as (I am the second son).

He arrived 104th in the marathon.

I'll tell you again, for the 38th time.

- Time: the exact time is indicated using a colon (See you at 11:15). With a specific hour, use numbers (See you at 9 / The meeting is at 12). Use the 12-hour clock system unless the characters say otherwise.
- Date: day, month and year can spelled out or separated by a slash.

The contract expires on 28 July 2021.

The contract expires on 28/07/2021.

- Decades: decades are followed by an -s (The Glorious 20s).
- Centuries: centuries are indicated using the suffixes -st, -nd, -rd, -th after the number.

She lived
between the 3rd and the 4th century BC.

- Currency: the currency symbols (£, €, $) should be placed after the digit, followed by a space (This coffee costs 1.50 €). Use the nouns in instances, such as (The euro is a young currency). For less known or ambiguous currencies, write them in full.

That house costs 350,000 Canadian dollars.

In Thailand,
I changed all my money into baht.

6. Speaker Identification

To identify speakers who are in shot or when it is not clear who is speaking, use square brackets [ ]. It is possible to use the name even if it is revealed a little later in the film, to avoid an abuse of generic tags, such as [Man] or [Woman]. The first letter is always in uppercase. Be careful not to reveal information that is intentionally concealed.

[Luke] I want to go to the concert.

- [Mary] Don't tell anyone.
- I won’t say anything.

- [Professor] Did you do your homework?
- [Student] No, I'm sorry.

7. Sound Effects

Sound effects subtitles are indicated in uppercase, within square brackets, preceded and followed by a single space. They last 2 seconds, and they are aligned and justified to the centre, in a single line.
As sound effects subtitles are intentionally noticeable (square brackets, uppercase letters, spaces) only indicate sounds that are relevant to the narration, and if necessary, also the source. Avoid an abuse of sound effects subtitles in certain scenes, for example in action scenes where the actions of the characters are understandable from images and context.
Try to be concise but clear and describe the sound following one of these structures:

Verb
(when the subject is clear)

[NEIGHING]
(if the horse is in shot)

Subject + Verb
(when the subject is not clear)

[DOG BARKING]
(if the dog is in shot)

[PHILIP SNEEZES]
(if it is not immediately clear who sneezes)

[LUISA AND MARIA SCREAM]
(if there are other characters besides Luisa and Maria)

Verb + Adverb
(when the adverb adds relevant information)

[GASPS SOFTLY]
(when the action substitutes a dialogue)

Subject + Verb + Adverb
(when the subject is not clear, and the adverb adds relevant information)

[LAURA SCREAMS LOUDLY]
(when the action is relevant)

Noun
(when one word is sufficient to describe the sound)

[THUNDER]
(following lightning)

Adjective + Noun
(when the noun on its own is not sufficient information)

[INDISTINCT VOICES]
(used as a generic label)

[METALLIC NOISE]
(if the sound is not attributable to a particular object)

8. Extra-dialogue elements

Extra-dialogue elements are indicated within round parentheses ( ), in lower case, and placed in the subtitle, as needed. They may indicate intonation, tone, attitude, foreign languages, dialects, accents, etc.

(whispering) I know
what you did last summer.

(in French) How dare you?

Where did you put (shouting) the lighter?

And now that you have signed,
your soul is mine! (laughs)

Extra-dialogue elements are also used in lieu of sound effects subtitles when the sound comes from the character speaking, such as in the example above. This is especially useful when the sound effect is a laugh, a scoff, a gasp or similar sounds produced by the character right before, during, or right after the sentence. Do no use extra-dialogue elements ( ) with sound effects that deserve their own subtitles, such as a gunshot, a thunder, that are not produced by a character.

9. Music and songs

- Music: the subtitle indicating the music opens and closes with the symbol # , lasts 2 seconds and is added if important or relevant to understand the scene or film.

Techno music

- Background music: for background or ambient music, a subtitle with two symbols # lasting 2 seconds is sufficient. However, it should not be added anytime there is background music, but only when relevant.

# #

- Songs: indicate the name of the artist and the title of the song, if known.

Space Oddity
by David Bowie #

- Lyrics: lyrics are in italics, open and close with the symbol # , and last for as long as lyrics are sung, whether by the characters or as part of the soundtrack. Punctuation is reduced to a minimum (without any full stops or commas unless needed for the comprehension) and each line (coinciding with a verse) begins with an uppercase letter. Translate only if relevant to the plot.

 # Ground Control to Major Tom
Ground Control to Major Tom #

 # Take your protein pills
And put your helmet on #

- Lyrics with dual speakers: if the song is sung by more than one character and they are not in shot, resort to speaker identification.

- [Danny] # *I got chills* #
- [Sandy] # *They're multiplyin'* #

10. Punctuation

Punctuation should be used following the rules of the English language.

- Full stop: use full stops only at the end of sentences, not at the end of every subtitles.
- Comma: commas should be used to separate sentences, with yes and no, in lists, etc.
- Exclamation and question marks: exclamation and question marks should be used to facilitate understanding of the speaker's tone. Avoid excessive use of exclamation marks.
- Interrobang: you can use the interrobang (?!) or (!?) to emphasise a tone of question and statement at the same time, to expresses excitement, disbelief or confusion in the form of a question, or with rhetorical questions.

Do you really think I'm stupid?!

- Colon: the colon is used to open direct speech or a list.
- Quotation marks: quotation marks for direct speech and quotations. Open them in the first subtitle, in any subsequent subtitle, and in the last subtitle, and close them only at the end of the last subtitle. They are preceded by a colon and a space. The first letter is in uppercase.

John texted me: "How are you?

"I've heard that you are moving
to another city,

"which is sad,
but exciting at the same time.

"If you need anything,
just let me know."

And I replied: "Thank you for your text."

- Full stops and commas, go inside the quotation marks, as in the example above, whereas exclamation and question marks go outside the quotation marks, as in the examples below:

Why did he say "I love you"?

- Ellipsis: use ellipsis dots to indicate intentional pauses or change of subject. After the three dots, the word is in lower case if it is a continuation of the previous sentence, and in uppercase if it is a new sentence. Make sure that the ellipsis dots are formatted as three individual characters, and not as a single symbol.

I tried... to help him.

The truth is... That's the truth.

- The underscore sign (_) is allowed for emails or websites, which never end with a full stop, not even at the end of a sentence.

My e-mail is inc_sub@si.com
Drop me a line whenever you want.

- Semicolon: the semicolon is not needed, although it is possible to use it.
- Other symbols: the following symbols are permitted: * # @ x - + / =

It's easy.
8 x 8 = 56 and you find the result.

11. Language

- Foul language: do not censor or water down the dialogues in the presence of slang or foul language. In the case of bleeped words, asterisks can be used to cover missing letters.

What the fuck are you doing?
(if this is what the character says and what the audience can hear)

What the f**k are you doing?
(if the f- word is censured by a bleep, but it is clear that the character is saying it)

- Errors and typos: correct characters' grammatical errors if they compromise the comprehension of the sentence unless these errors are intentional.

- Inclusive language: when possible (but also necessary in case of uncertainty), it is recommended to use inclusive language, which takes into account gender diversity.
  This is particularly important for gendered languages (for example, romance languages) where the dichotomy male / female concerns articles, adjectives, nouns, verbs, and other parts of speech and there is no neutral option.

12. Extra

- Quality control: always check grammar, punctuation, correct use of sound effects, extra-dialogue elements, speaker identification, etc. and perform a spellcheck.
- Title: the title of the film should not be translated if it is a single word easily understandable (Amor), but it should be translated if it is longer (La grande bellezza = The Great Beauty).
- Credits: credits should be inserted after the end credits of the most relevant crew (actors, director, etc.) and before the long list of names. A single subtitle, lasting 2 seconds, should be inserted as follows:

Inclusive subtitles by
Name Surname

Appendix 3 – *Pure* Inclusive Subtitles File

#	Timing	Duration	Text
1	00:00:15:09 - 00:00:17:09	00:00:02:00	# Light piano music #
2	00:00:20:08 - 00:00:22:11	00:00:02:03	PURE
3	00:00:22:13 - 00:00:23:14	00:00:01:01	[SIGH]
4	00:00:23:21 - 00:00:25:07	00:00:01:11	[Speaker] *How to learn to write?*
5	00:00:25:18 - 00:00:29:13	00:00:03:20	*Here are the five basic prerequisites* *you absolutely need to know.*
6	00:00:30:07 - 00:00:33:14	00:00:03:07	*Creativity is within you!* *It only takes a few steps...*
7	00:00:33:18 - 00:00:36:19	00:00:03:01	Why these TV people are always so enthusiastic?
8	00:00:37:15 - 00:00:39:23	00:00:02:08	Will you get ready? They’re coming.
9	00:00:40:18 - 00:00:43:19	00:00:03:01	- [Andrea] How do you write like this? - Come on, they’ll get pissed off.
10	00:00:44:22 - 00:00:47:18	00:00:02:21	[Andrea] Who cares? It's just for going to Chinese...
11	00:00:47:24 - 00:00:49:13	00:00:01:14	Only you don't want to go.
12	00:00:49:15 - 00:00:52:14	00:00:02:24	I try to ruin dinner with my complaints, but it never works.
13	00:00:52:19 - 00:00:54:13	00:00:01:19	That's why I wouldn't invite you.
14	00:00:56:04 - 00:00:57:09	00:00:01:05	Can you get dressed?
15	00:00:58:01 - 00:00:59:14	00:00:01:13	Did you think I'd forget?
16	00:00:59:20 - 00:01:00:17	00:00:00:22	About what?
17	00:01:02:15 - 00:01:03:23	00:00:01:08	Happy birthday.
18	00:01:06:12 - 00:01:08:11	00:00:01:24	That’s the least you could do.
19	00:01:09:14 - 00:01:10:21	00:00:01:07	Aren't you gonna open it?
20	00:01:11:10 - 00:01:13:22	00:00:02:12	Do you mind if I open it later? They’re coming.
21	00:01:14:17 - 00:01:16:17	00:00:02:00	- Hello. - Hey.
22	00:01:16:21 - 00:01:18:18	00:00:01:22	- What’s up? - All good, and you?
23	00:01:18:22 - 00:01:20:17	00:00:01:20	- [Guest] Hi, Fabbri. - Hey.

24	00:01:20:20 - 00:01:24:05	00:00:03:10	- Hi, Fabbri. Happy birthday! - Hey, gorgeous. You're so beautiful.
25	00:01:24:16 - 00:01:27:24	00:00:03:08	Can I get you to skip the Chinese for once?
26	00:01:28:07 - 00:01:30:16	00:00:02:09	No, not a chance. None.
27	00:01:33:09 - 00:01:37:22	00:00:04:13	Before we go out for dinner, we want to tell you something.
28	00:01:37:24 - 00:01:39:14	00:00:01:15	Perfect.
29	00:01:39:16 - 00:01:41:01	00:00:01:10	- Will you tell him? - What?
30	00:01:41:05 - 00:01:43:01	00:00:01:21	- No, you do it. - Should I go?
31	00:01:43:05 - 00:01:44:12	00:00:01:07	Someone just tell us.
32	00:01:46:00 - 00:01:47:13	00:00:01:13	Michi and I are breaking up.
33	00:01:48:10 - 00:01:50:16	00:00:02:06	Yes, we talked about it a lot
34	00:01:50:19 - 00:01:53:06	00:00:02:12	and we realised it was the right thing to do.
35	00:01:54:10 - 00:01:55:20	00:00:01:10	What does that mean?
36	00:01:55:23 - 00:01:59:22	00:00:03:24	Let's not make a big deal out of it. We're fine, we're not upset.
37	00:02:00:10 - 00:02:02:14	00:00:02:04	Yes, we're fine. Yes, yes.
38	00:02:02:17 - 00:02:05:14	00:00:02:22	We're both... We've discussed it.
39	00:02:05:20 - 00:02:07:08	00:00:01:13	It's mutual.
40	00:02:07:13 - 00:02:09:04	00:00:01:16	- Really? - Yes.
41	00:02:09:13 - 00:02:11:10	00:00:01:22	Please, let's just go to dinner.
42	00:02:11:13 - 00:02:13:18	00:00:02:05	No, we are not going. What's the point?
43	00:02:13:21 - 00:02:16:13	00:00:02:17	When did you decide this? What does it mean?
44	00:02:16:19 - 00:02:18:13	00:00:01:19	We’ve been discussing it for long.
45	00:02:18:16 - 00:02:22:21	00:00:04:05	Don't worry, we're fine. There is no hostility and no one is angry.
46	00:02:23:01 - 00:02:23:23	00:00:00:22	What's the reason?
47	00:02:24:01 - 00:02:26:02	00:00:02:01	That' s none of our business, Andrea.
48	00:02:26:10 - 00:02:27:19	00:00:01:09	We are fine.

49	00:02:29:01 - 00:02:30:14	00:00:01:13	This is a positive step for us.
50	00:02:30:23 - 00:02:31:21	00:00:00:23	I understand...
51	00:02:32:16 - 00:02:36:19	00:00:04:03	but you have to explain how one decides to break up. Especially you two.
52	00:02:36:24 - 00:02:39:24	00:00:03:00	There' no need to bore you now with all the details...
53	00:02:40:02 - 00:02:41:22	00:00:01:20	Are you fucking around with us?
54	00:02:42:08 - 00:02:45:08	00:00:03:00	You've always been good together. When did this happen?
55	00:02:45:11 - 00:02:46:10	00:00:00:24	He's right.
56	00:02:46:19 - 00:02:49:02	00:00:02:08	I don't know. Did you both find someone else?
57	00:02:49:06 - 00:02:50:11	00:00:01:05	This isn't our business.
58	00:02:50:14 - 00:02:52:23	00:00:02:09	- I'm fascinated. - [Fabrizio] And I’m upset.
59	00:02:53:01 - 00:02:55:05	00:00:02:04	[Michele] We don't want to destroy anything.
60	00:02:55:17 - 00:02:58:09	00:00:02:17	We simply want to see what it means to be...
61	00:02:59:09 - 00:03:01:23	00:00:02:14	- [Andrea] To be? - [Michele] To be...
62	00:03:02:04 - 00:03:03:10	00:00:01:06	Enough. Let's go for dinner.
63	00:03:03:17 - 00:03:06:11	00:00:02:19	No, we're not going for dinner. You want to go for dinner?
64	00:03:06:15 - 00:03:07:18	00:00:01:03	Don't get angry.
65	00:03:07:21 - 00:03:09:02	00:00:01:06	- I'm not. - Yes, you are.
66	00:03:09:06 - 00:03:11:15	00:00:02:09	No, I just have a stomach ache. I'm not angry.
67	00:03:11:21 - 00:03:14:21	00:00:03:00	It just seems absurd that you come here out of the blue
68	00:03:14:23 - 00:03:16:24	00:00:02:01	and tell us that you are breaking up.
69	00:03:17:02 - 00:03:20:05	00:00:03:03	- Well, it's none of our business. - It is. They're our friends.
70	00:03:20:08 - 00:03:23:14	00:00:03:06	You're always looking for an answer. It's not a tragedy.
71	00:03:24:15 - 00:03:26:02	00:00:01:12	People break up for many reasons.

72	00:03:26:12 - 00:03:28:06	00:00:01:19	[BRUSHING TEETH]
73	00:03:32:05 - 00:03:34:22	00:00:02:17	- [Fabrizio] That's awesome. - [Andrea] What?
74	00:03:35:12 - 00:03:39:24	00:00:04:12	[Fabrizio] You think you know someone and then you realise you don't.
75	00:03:43:08 - 00:03:44:22	00:00:01:14	Are you hiding anything from me?
76	00:03:45:24 - 00:03:47:08	00:00:01:09	[Andrea] Like what?
77	00:03:47:14 - 00:03:53:18	00:00:06:04	[Fabrizio] Desires, dissatisfactions, feelings. I don't know.
78	00:03:54:20 - 00:03:56:06	00:00:01:11	[Andrea] No. You?
79	00:03:56:18 - 00:03:59:01	00:00:02:08	[Fabrizio] Well, maybe something.
80	00:04:01:13 - 00:04:02:17	00:00:01:04	Like what?
81	00:04:03:09 - 00:04:05:02	00:00:01:18	[Fabrizio] Like, you're always so critical,
82	00:04:05:04 - 00:04:06:23	00:00:01:19	but we've already talked about that.
83	00:04:07:01 - 00:04:10:05	00:00:03:04	Maybe this isn't the right evening to talk about these things, right?
84	00:04:10:13 - 00:04:11:09	00:00:00:21	[Fabrizio] Uh-huh.
85	00:04:12:17 - 00:04:15:15	00:00:02:23	Is it true that Michele told you that Valeria is cold in bed?
86	00:04:15:22 - 00:04:17:06	00:00:01:09	[Fabrizio] Apparently.
87	00:04:17:23 - 00:04:19:15	00:00:01:17	You know, I'm not surprised.
88	00:04:21:13 - 00:04:22:22	00:00:01:09	[Fabrizio] Am I cold in bed?
89	00:04:23:09 - 00:04:25:04	00:00:01:20	Well, I wouldn't say so.
90	00:04:25:22 - 00:04:27:08	00:00:01:11	[Fabrizio] You've always said so.
91	00:04:27:14 - 00:04:31:06	00:00:03:17	I said that once. Every time we argue, you bring it up.
92	00:04:33:16 - 00:04:36:23	00:00:03:07	You're not the most affectionate person in the world,
93	00:04:37:00 - 00:04:37:22	00:00:00:22	and you know that.
94	00:04:37:24 - 00:04:39:10	00:00:01:11	[GRINDR NOTIFICATION]
95	00:04:40:14 - 00:04:42:00	00:00:01:11	Do you think we'll break up?
96	00:04:42:21 - 00:04:44:09	00:00:01:13	What kind of question is that?
97	00:04:45:11 - 00:04:47:14	00:00:02:03	I don't know, I think about it.
98	00:04:48:06 - 00:04:49:15	00:00:01:09	Well, I don't.
99	00:04:55:08 - 00:04:57:02	00:00:01:19	There's a cute guy nearby.

100	00:04:57:14 - 00:05:00:04	00:00:02:15	Please, don't. I don't feel like it tonight.
101	00:05:00:07 - 00:05:02:21	00:00:02:14	- Neither you did last night. - You always do.
102	00:05:03:14 - 00:05:05:23	00:00:02:09	Come on. My birthday's already gone to shit.
103	00:05:06:09 - 00:05:08:12	00:00:02:03	Look how cute he is. He's French.
104	00:05:11:14 - 00:05:13:06	00:00:01:17	Yeah, he's definitely French.
105	00:05:13:09 - 00:05:16:10	00:00:03:01	He says he's cycling around Europe and needs to sleep.
106	00:05:16:14 - 00:05:19:13	00:00:02:24	- He doesn't even want to fuck. - Good. I don't feel like it.
107	00:05:19:15 - 00:05:20:15	00:00:01:00	[WATER RUNNING]
108	00:05:21:05 - 00:05:22:18	00:00:01:13	We can't leave him on the street.
109	00:05:22:21 - 00:05:23:24	00:00:01:03	We can't, huh?
110	00:05:24:10 - 00:05:28:02	00:00:03:17	If you were somewhere in Europe wouldn't you want someone to take you in?
111	00:05:28:17 - 00:05:30:13	00:00:01:21	The Good Samaritan.
112	00:05:35:00 - 00:05:36:17	00:00:01:17	If you want him to come, let him.
113	00:05:36:19 - 00:05:39:02	00:00:02:08	But you fuck him in the other room and let me sleep.
114	00:05:39:06 - 00:05:42:18	00:00:03:12	- All right, I'll tell him to come up. - Yes.
115	00:05:44:09 - 00:05:45:11	00:00:01:02	And the bike?
116	00:05:45:17 - 00:05:49:00	00:00:03:08	He’ll leave it at the entrance. He has to leave early in the morning.
117	00:05:53:05 - 00:05:54:18	00:00:01:13	[FOOTSTEPS]
118	00:05:57:14 - 00:05:58:20	00:00:01:06	- Hi. - Hi.
119	00:05:59:19 - 00:06:02:05	00:00:02:11	- How are you? - Fine, thanks.
120	00:06:02:08 - 00:06:05:18	00:00:03:10	- A lot of stairs. - Yeah, 8th floor.
121	00:06:07:00 - 00:06:07:21	00:00:00:21	May I?
122	00:06:08:09 - 00:06:09:18	00:00:01:09	You can put it there.
123	00:06:13:22 - 00:06:16:08	00:00:02:11	Would you like a glass of milk?

124	00:06:16:10 - 00:06:18:00	00:00:01:15	- Milk? - Yes.
125	00:06:26:17 - 00:06:27:14	00:00:00:22	Thanks.
126	00:06:30:15 - 00:06:32:00	00:00:01:10	- (in French) Hi. - (in Italian) Hi.
127	00:06:34:01 - 00:06:36:14	00:00:02:13	- [Andrea] So, where are you from? - Lille.
128	00:06:36:18 - 00:06:38:08	00:00:01:15	- [Andrea] Lille? - Yeah. You know it?
129	00:06:38:10 - 00:06:40:23	00:00:02:13	- [Andrea] Yeah. It's up north, right? - Yeah.
130	00:06:41:01 - 00:06:42:11	00:00:01:10	[Andrea] I've never been.
131	00:06:43:07 - 00:06:44:19	00:00:01:12	But now I live in Paris.
132	00:06:45:11 - 00:06:48:14	00:00:03:03	(in English) Sorry, I don't speak French very well
133	00:06:48:16 - 00:06:50:18	00:00:02:02	but I can understand a little bit.
134	00:06:51:12 - 00:06:53:12	00:00:02:00	- (in English) We can speak in English? - No, no.
135	00:06:53:18 - 00:06:56:13	00:00:02:20	You can speak French with him and English with him.
136	00:06:57:10 - 00:06:58:13	00:00:01:03	Wow.
137	00:06:58:16 - 00:07:00:16	00:00:02:00	- Your name? - Jean-Malik.
138	00:07:01:06 - 00:07:03:14	00:00:02:08	[Andrea] Jean-Malik? That's weird.
139	00:07:04:07 - 00:07:07:10	00:00:03:03	Yeah, it’s half French and half Algerian.
140	00:07:08:24 - 00:07:10:14	00:00:01:15	And what are your names?
141	00:07:10:16 - 00:07:11:12	00:00:00:21	Andrea.
142	00:07:11:14 - 00:07:12:11	00:00:00:22	Fabrizio.
143	00:07:12:19 - 00:07:16:19	00:00:04:00	Ok, glad to meet you both. Thank you so much for hosting me tonight.
144	00:07:16:21 - 00:07:17:22	00:00:01:01	[Andrea] You're welcome.
145	00:07:20:05 - 00:07:21:24	00:00:01:19	And you're very cute, too.
146	00:07:22:06 - 00:07:24:08	00:00:02:02	- (in Italian) What did he say? - [Andrea] That we're cute.
147	00:07:25:08 - 00:07:26:15	00:00:01:07	(in English) Thank you.
148	00:07:26:21 - 00:07:31:10	00:00:04:14	Sorry. I'm a little bit tired. Tomorrow I get up early.

149	00:07:31:13 - 00:07:33:00	00:00:01:12	So I go to sleep. Sorry.
150	00:07:33:05 - 00:07:35:15	00:00:02:10	Sure, no problem. Thanks again.
151	00:07:35:18 - 00:07:36:19	00:00:01:01	Good night.
152	00:07:43:09 - 00:07:44:22	00:00:01:13	So, Jean-Malik...
153	00:07:44:24 - 00:07:47:02	00:00:02:03	All these kilometres by bike?
154	00:07:48:12 - 00:07:49:20	00:00:01:08	- Yeah. - Yeah.
155	00:07:49:22 - 00:07:51:14	00:00:01:17	Yeah.
156	00:07:51:16 - 00:07:54:08	00:00:02:17	I didn't know where to go when I left.
157	00:07:55:12 - 00:07:56:13	00:00:01:01	And what did you do?
158	00:07:56:16 - 00:08:00:06	00:00:03:15	I left Paris and went through a bunch of cities around Italy.
159	00:08:01:14 - 00:08:03:21	00:00:02:07	I went through Florence, Turin...
160	00:08:03:23 - 00:08:05:09	00:00:01:11	- By bike? - Yes.
161	00:08:05:15 - 00:08:08:05	00:00:02:15	Ride, ride, ride...
162	00:08:08:09 - 00:08:09:23	00:00:01:14	A lot of kilometres.
163	00:08:16:12 - 00:08:17:16	00:00:01:04	He's nice, huh?
164	00:08:18:10 - 00:08:21:22	00:00:03:12	Well... I talked to him for a second.
165	00:08:22:12 - 00:08:24:07	00:00:01:20	You could have stayed a little longer.
166	00:08:24:12 - 00:08:26:23	00:00:02:11	I told you I was sleepy.
167	00:08:29:22 - 00:08:31:11	00:00:01:14	Did you give him a towel?
168	00:08:31:22 - 00:08:33:08	00:00:01:11	I even gave him a toothbrush.
169	00:08:33:15 - 00:08:34:22	00:00:01:07	A toothbrush?
170	00:08:36:04 - 00:08:38:18	00:00:02:14	This guy goes around Europe without a toothbrush?
171	00:08:40:04 - 00:08:41:06	00:00:01:02	What can I say?
172	00:08:41:18 - 00:08:42:18	00:00:01:00	[FABRIZIO SIGHS]
173	00:08:45:17 - 00:08:47:19	00:00:02:02	I see you want to fuck him.
174	00:08:48:15 - 00:08:49:19	00:00:01:04	I'm not offended.
175	00:08:53:21 - 00:08:54:23	00:00:01:02	Not like this.
176	00:08:56:22 - 00:08:59:02	00:00:02:05	It could have been fun together, but...
177	00:09:03:07 - 00:09:05:06	00:00:01:24	[Fabrizio] You're really not going?
178	00:09:06:01 - 00:09:07:17	00:00:01:16	I can't believe it.
179	00:09:09:17 - 00:09:11:00	00:00:01:08	[Andrea] Good night.
180	00:09:19:15 - 00:09:20:21	00:00:01:06	[PHONE VIBRATING]
181	00:09:57:18 - 00:09:59:10	00:00:01:17	It only took one message.

182	00:10:00:24 - 00:10:03:05	00:00:02:06	[Andrea] I can be easily convinced.
183	00:10:16:13 - 00:10:17:24	00:00:01:11	You're cute.
184	00:10:32:09 - 00:10:33:14	00:00:01:05	So are you.
185	00:10:59:02 - 00:11:01:13	00:00:02:11	[Jean-Malik] I've never met a couple like you.
186	00:11:02:11 - 00:11:03:14	00:00:01:03	Yeah?
187	00:11:06:05 - 00:11:07:12	00:00:01:07	What kind?
188	00:11:08:24 - 00:11:10:09	00:00:01:10	[Jean-Malik] I don't know.
189	00:11:11:24 - 00:11:13:21	00:00:01:22	You're very calm.
190	00:11:14:20 - 00:11:16:18	00:00:01:23	You seem to be free.
191	00:11:19:19 - 00:11:21:16	00:00:01:22	I'm not sure if we're free...
192	00:11:22:15 - 00:11:24:23	00:00:02:08	Well, yeah.
193	00:11:25:19 - 00:11:29:04	00:00:03:10	From the outside, you seem to love each other.
194	00:11:32:11 - 00:11:35:12	00:00:03:01	When I met him, he wasn't the ideal man at all.
195	00:11:36:04 - 00:11:37:14	00:00:01:10	Not at all.
196	00:11:40:05 - 00:11:43:01	00:00:02:21	But I started to appreciate him with time.
197	00:11:44:20 - 00:11:46:01	00:00:01:06	He's kind.
198	00:11:46:07 - 00:11:47:13	00:00:01:06	[Jean-Malik] Kind?
199	00:11:48:06 - 00:11:49:02	00:00:00:21	Yes.
200	00:11:50:08 - 00:11:51:13	00:00:01:05	He can't lie.
201	00:11:53:06 - 00:11:54:16	00:00:01:10	He's pure.
202	00:11:59:00 - 00:12:00:00	00:00:01:00	[TRAFFIC]
203	00:12:12:10 - 00:12:13:10	00:00:01:00	[SIGH]
204	00:13:04:13 - 00:13:06:12	00:00:01:24	[BICYCLE IN THE DISTANCE]
205	00:13:13:22 - 00:13:15:12	00:00:01:15	[Andrea] *When did you write this?*
206	00:13:16:20 - 00:13:18:24	00:00:02:04	A couple of weeks after I met you.
207	00:13:23:20 - 00:13:25:00	00:00:01:05	When will he be here?
208	00:13:27:00 - 00:13:28:14	00:00:01:14	He said he was downstairs.
209	00:13:30:10 - 00:13:33:20	00:00:03:10	- If you don't want, I'll tell him. - No, no.
210	00:13:35:17 - 00:13:37:07	00:00:01:15	Did you write today?
211	00:13:38:11 - 00:13:39:07	00:00:00:21	Well...
212	00:13:40:01 - 00:13:42:07	00:00:02:06	Not much.
213	00:13:42:09 - 00:13:43:18	00:00:01:09	When's the deadline?
214	00:13:43:24 - 00:13:45:10	00:00:01:11	On the 14th.

215	00:13:45:24 - 00:13:47:20	00:00:01:21	You can do it.
216	00:13:50:15 - 00:13:52:17	00:00:02:02	Sometimes I feel a bit like that.
217	00:13:53:21 - 00:13:55:06	00:00:01:10	Like what?
218	00:13:57:07 - 00:13:58:24	00:00:01:17	A bit suspended...
219	00:13:59:10 - 00:14:00:19	00:00:01:09	on the edge.
220	00:14:04:17 - 00:14:06:09	00:00:01:17	What are you thinking about?
221	00:14:06:11 - 00:14:07:24	00:00:01:13	# #
222	00:14:09:04 - 00:14:11:03	00:00:01:24	[DOOR UNLOCKS]
223	00:14:30:06 - 00:14:32:02	00:00:01:21	[RECORD SCRATCHES]
224	00:14:32:18 - 00:14:34:14	00:00:01:21	[Fabrizio] You picked the right one.
225	00:14:45:10 - 00:14:46:24	00:00:01:14	Where have you been?
226	00:14:48:18 - 00:14:50:06	00:00:01:13	Away from you.
227	00:14:54:12 - 00:14:56:00	00:00:01:13	Do you love me?
228	00:15:06:00 - 00:15:07:08	00:00:01:08	No.
229	00:15:21:06 - 00:15:23:07	00:00:02:01	I'll make you some coffee?
230	00:15:25:12 - 00:15:27:05	00:00:01:18	Go brush your teeth.
231	00:16:11:03 - 00:16:13:08	00:00:02:05	Inclusive subtitles by Gabriele Uzzo