

# TRANSCRIBING IN ELAN

## DOWNLOADING ELAN

Elan is a flexible tool for language annotation, whether your data is audio or video. It allows for the creation of multiple tiers for different speakers but also for coding particular features that are under study.

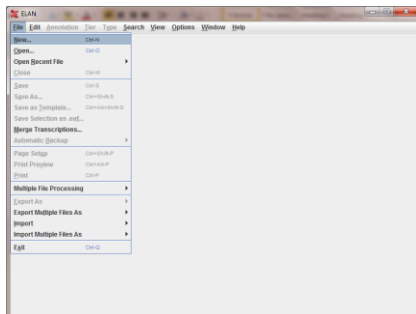
You can get Elan from The Language Archive website, here:

<http://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/download/>

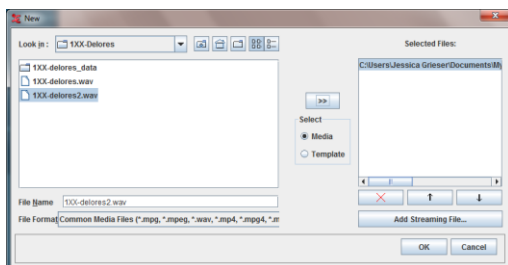
It is available for Windows, Mac and Linux.

## OPENING A NEW TRANSCRIPTION FILE IN ELAN

To create a new transcription file, go to File > New > **Add Media File...**



Navigate to the folder where your media file (.wav) is located, and open the file. (you'll need to click the >> to move the file to the "selected files" box.

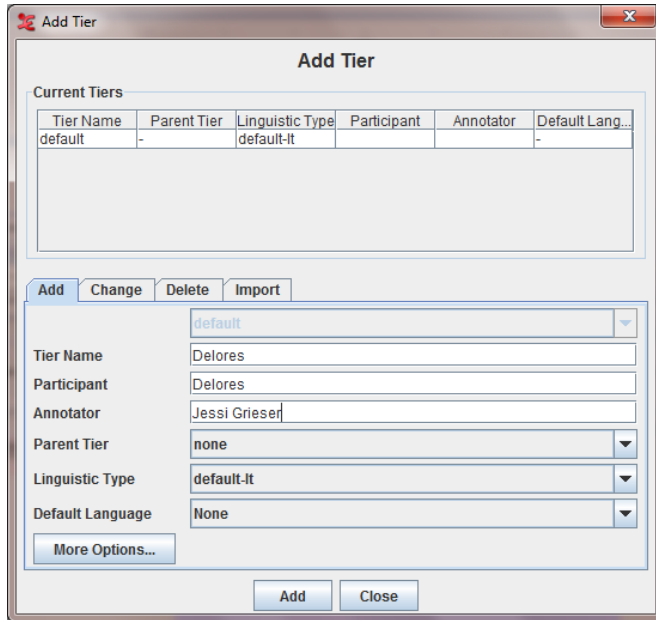


The waveform will appear in the annotation window.

**SAVE YOUR ELAN FILE RIGHT NOW.** Until it has a beginning save point, Elan cannot create autosaves, nor does it prompt you for unsaved data. This is a really good way to lose hours of work by accident. Create that beginning save point right away by going to File > Save As and giving your file a name.

## PREPARING YOUR TRANSCRIPT

First, you'll want to add tiers for your speakers. Go to Tier > Add new tier, and enter in the information about the tier into the dialogue box. Keep the linguistic type as "default-it." Then click "add"



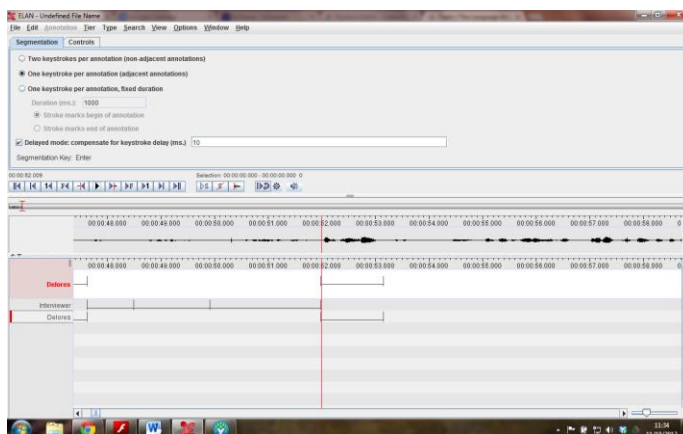
You can change the attributes of the "default" tier by right clicking it, choosing "change attributes" and filling in the same information.

When you have created all your speaker tiers, you can move on to segmentation.

## SEGMENTING YOUR TRANSCRIPT

At first, it may seem that the only way to segment your transcript is to select an intonation unit, annotate it, and save it. This is certainly a valid way to do things, but not the fastest. To gain speed, you'll want to use segmentation mode.

Go to Options > Segmentation Mode and the top part of your screen will change.



Unless you need to correct an error, most often you'll want to use "One keystroke per annotation (adjacent annotations)." This will allow you to simply hit "enter" to enter the boundary point for an intonation unit.

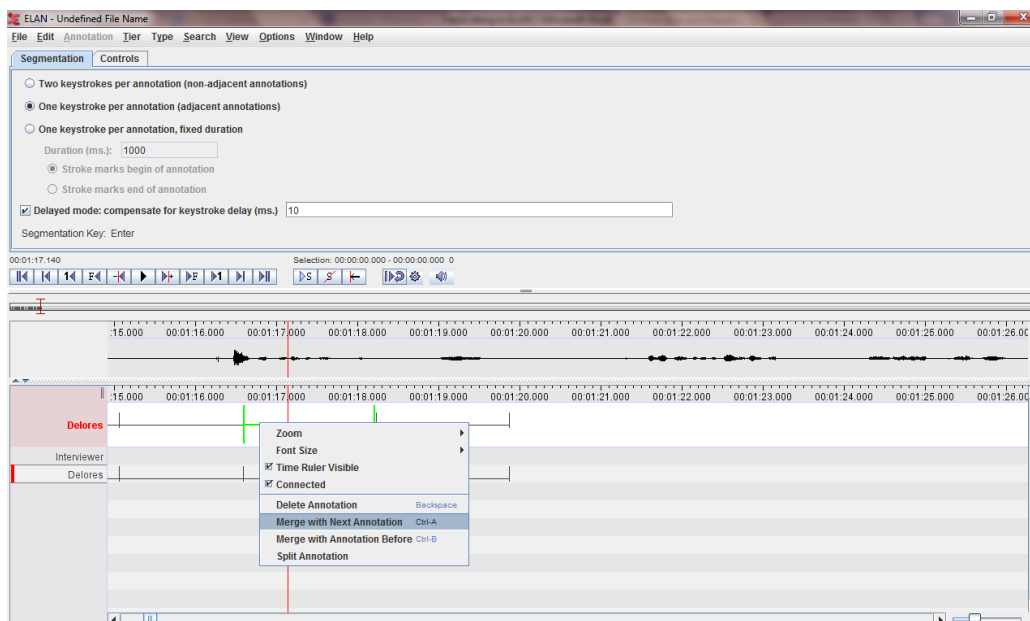
Some things about One Keystroke mode:

1. ENTER creates a boundary point.
2. SPACE stops and starts your audio file
3. You can navigate your waveform by using the mouse.
4. To destroy the last created boundary, hover over the segment so that it turns green, and hit BACKSPACE.
5. The UP and DOWN arrows allow you to cycle through the tiers; the tier which appears at the top in red is the tier for which you are creating your segments.

TIP: When using one keystroke mode, you can save time by checking the box for "Delayed Mode." This allows you to enter the time in milliseconds that your keystroke is delayed after you hear the end of an IU. Experiment to figure out about how long your delay should be (this will vary based on the individual interview), and then you can keep the sound playing continuously as you create boundaries.

## EDITING SEGMENTS

Inevitably, you'll create some boundaries incorrectly. You can go back and re-insert additional boundary points by splitting and merging segments. To do this, click on a segment so that it highlights in green, then right click to bring up the segment menu.



You have the options to:

Delete annotation

Merge with next annotation

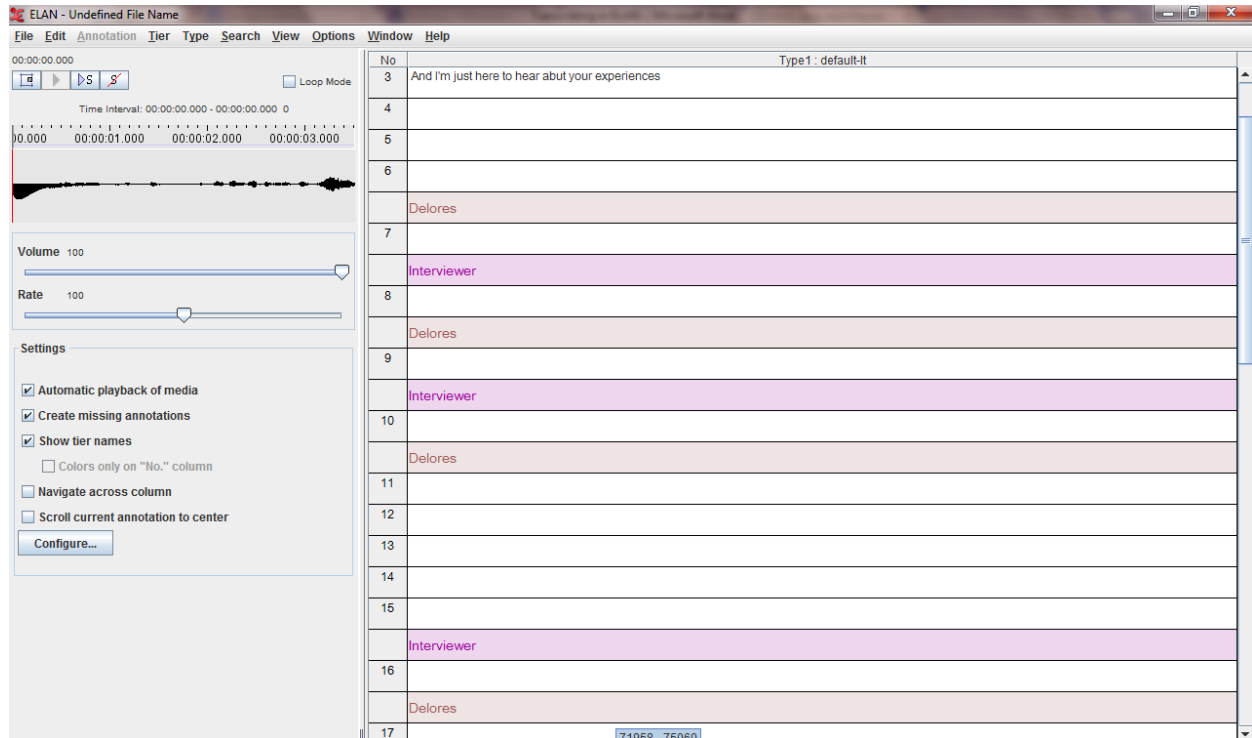
Merge with annotation before

Split annotation (at the point of your cursor)

## TRANSCRIBING YOUR SEGMENTED INTERVIEW

I have found that my personal workflow goes best when I segment an entire interview and then transcribe it. (Easier to get going.) Your mileage may vary. Either way, when you want to move into transcription mode, save your file, and go to Options > Transcription mode.

Accept the defaults in the transcription window: default-IT for linguistic type, and 2 columns.



You'll see your segments represented as blank lines, with changes in speaker represented in colored bars.

For efficient transcription, check the box for "Loop mode." Then click on any empty segment to hear that segment played as you transcribe.

To move to the next segment, simply hit "enter."

To edit any previous segments, simply click on that segment.

If, in transcribing, you discover you want to split or merge segments, you'll need to go back to Segmentation Mode to do this.

**TIP:** You'll notice segments are numbered. I've found this a good for goal setting and record-keeping. If you've segmented your entire interview (or the entire part you wish to work with), you can then simply count the number of segments you need to transcribe and use that to guide your work.

## EXPORTING YOUR TRANSCRIPT

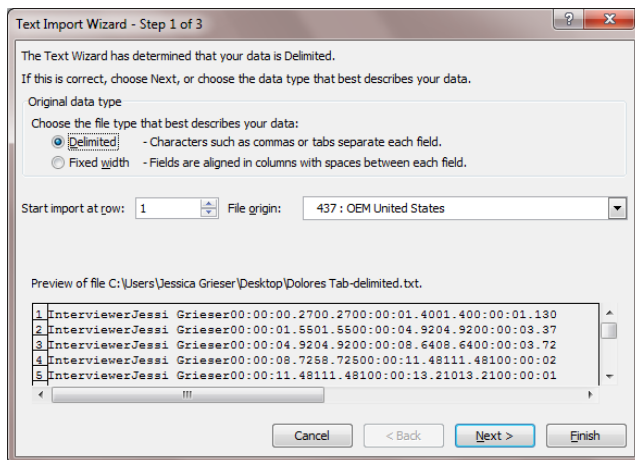
One of the great reasons to use Elan is for its exporting capability. Elan supports exporting your annotations into a number of different formats. The two you'll be most likely to use are into a tab-delimited file, and into a Praat TextGrid.

### TAB-DELIMITED

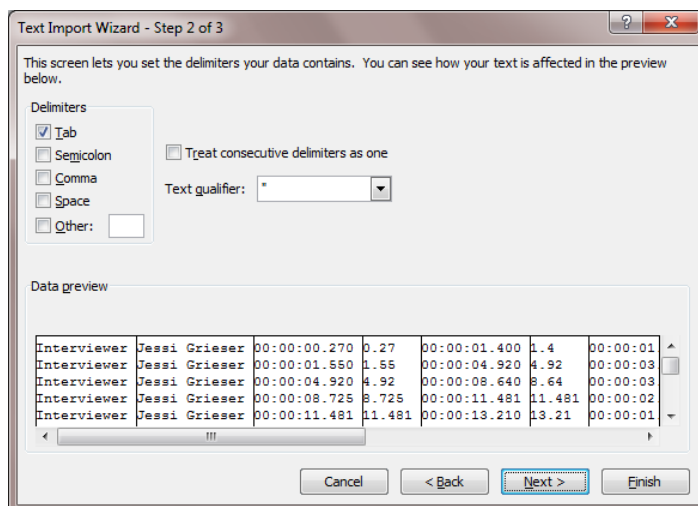
Tab-delimited allows you to export your file into a format you can use in Excel. You can clean this file up to additional analysis, for instance, to export into RBrul.

To export, go to File > Export as > Tab Delimited. Save the resulting file, and open it in a spreadsheet program. (The following steps are for Microsoft Excel, your mileage may vary if you open it In Google Spreadsheets, Open Office, or Mac Numbers).

Go to File > Open in Excel and select the file you created from Elan. You'll be presented with the following box:



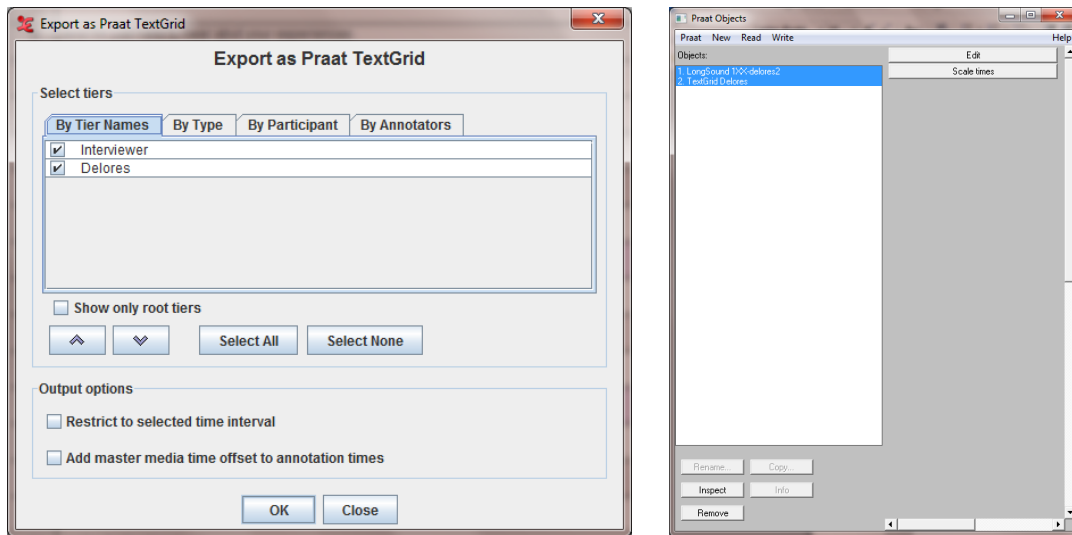
Make sure “delimited” is selected. When you click “Next” it will show you exactly where your text will be separated into columns:



Make sure “tab” is checked, and verify that your data looks okay. Then click “Finish” and your data will be put into a spreadsheet. You’ll notice you have columns for the name of the tier, the name of the participant, and two columns each for the start of segment, end of the segment, and segment duration. Your annotations will appear to the far right. By default, your data will be sorted by tier name—you will probably wish to sort it by segment start instead.

From here, you can take your data and put it into Word, mark it up for additional coding (you can also do the coding in Elan using a different tier), etc.

## TEXTGRID



Elan can also export directly into a Praat TextGrid file. To do this, go to File > Export As > Praat TextGrid. Select the tiers you wish to export, and click “ok.” Save the file where you’d like it saved.

In Praat, choose Read > Open Long Sound File to open the .wav file you used for your transcription in Elan. Then choose Read > Read from File to open your text grid. Select both (ctrl+click) and select “Edit.” [see above] This will open your transcription as multiple tiers in Praat, aligned with your .wav file.



## MORE INFORMATION ON ELAN

Elan User's Manual (Max Planck Institute)

<http://www.mpi.nl/corpus/html/elan/>

Using Elan with FAVE align

<http://fave.ling.upenn.edu/usingFAValign.html>

UPenn transcription instructions (includes Mac screenshots)

[http://fave.ling.upenn.edu/downloads/ELAN\\_Introduction.pdf](http://fave.ling.upenn.edu/downloads/ELAN_Introduction.pdf)

Chris Rogers YouTube channel

<http://www.youtube.com/user/chrilro?feature=watch>