

Linguistics 191A Documenting Languages

HANDOUT #7b: ELAN TUTORIAL

These are some things that I have learned. I am a total beginner. If you use this application very much, you will quickly get more adept than me. This will get you started. I'll probably add some more. We can learn together!

Recommendation: Put your ELAN file and all files related to it in a single folder. This would include any sound and/or video files, word processed transcripts of the text you are annotating, etc. Also recommended is to give all the files the same name, e.g my_text.eaf (the ELAN file), my_text.wav (an audio file in .wav format), my_text.doc (an MS Word transcript), etc.

NOTES ON AUDIO FORMAT: ELAN automatically displays a waveform of .wav files. Selecting portions of a waveform is by far the best way to annotate a recorded text. You should therefore have your audio in .wav format. If you are using video, you should extract the audio if possible and make a .wav version of it. If you use the same sample rate for the .wav file as for the audio portion of the video, the audio and video should sync. ELAN seems to require 16-bit audio, so if you use a program that gives you a choice between creating an 8-bit or a 16-bit audio file, you should choose the latter.

CREATING .WAV FILES: There are several ways to make a .wav file. Here are some comments on creating .wav files that don't cost money.

(a) **Creating a .wav file directly:** You can record of file directly to .wav by using the internal mic in your computer or an external mic plugged into your computer. A popular application that lets you do this is Audacity, which can be downloaded from

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

(b) **Creating a .wav file from the audio track of a video:** One way to do this¹ is to use iTunes. Here are the basic steps (which I hope I have right!):

- (1) Drag your video into the iTunes library.
- (2) From the menu, select iTunes > Preferences
- (3) Under Advanced > Importing > Import Using, choose WAV Encoder and "Apply"
- (4) Exit Preferences and to to Advanced > convert to wave

You will now have your original video and a separate .wav file. You important both of them as in step #1 below. The should be in synch even though the .wav is playing separately from the movie since they should match exactly in length.

(c) **Converting .wmv files to files usable in ELAN:** .wmv videos will not work in ELAN, but QuickTime will. You can open .wmv files and convert them to QuickTime with Flip4Mac with a free download from


<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/player/wmcomponents.msp>

You can convert .wmv audio to .wav by downloading FLVPlayer at²

<http://www.topdrawerdownloads.com/download/104928>

¹ Thanks to Dawn Reid, who figured this out.

² Thanks to Keko Begolli for finding this.

1. Starting an ELAN annotation: Open ELAN. Select File > New and navigate to the folder where you have put your audio and/or video file(s). Select the media file that you want and click the  button. Click OK.

(2). Including more than one media file: If you have, say, a video and a separate .wav audio file, you will want to import them both. Follow the procedure in #1 for each file. It seems that ELAN wants the audio file to be at the top of the list. If it is not, select it and click the “up” arrow in the lower right part of the screen. Adding additional media files after you have started your project: Once you have started a new file and exited the initial window, you cannot click “new” again to add additional media files (for example, if you want to add an additional movie file). To add a new file, select Edit > Linked Files > Add. You can then navigate to the new file that you want to add and proceed essentially as above. [Thanks to Dawn Reid for figuring this out!]

3. Saving your ELAN file: Select File > Save, navigate to the folder where you want your ELAN file to be, type in the name for your ELAN file (you do not have to add “.eaf”—this will be added automatically), and click SAVE.

4. Creating an annotation tier: Tiers are where you put your annotations, i.e. morpheme-by-morpheme annotations, interlinear glosses, text in orthography, phonetic transcription, etc. Each type of notation will have its own tier. Select Tier > New. There is already a tier called “default”. You will probably want to rename this as your first tier. Decide what kind of information you want in this tier. Most likely is a morpheme-by-morpheme transcription for your first tier. Give the tier a name.

5. Font for the tier: If your tier requires a special font, such as a phonetic font or a non-Roman font, click the “More Options” button. You will see “Font” next to a box and a “Browse” button. If you know the exact name of the font, you can type it into the box. Otherwise, click the “Browse” button, and you will see a list of all the fonts available on your computer. Select the one you want and click “Apply”.

6. Including the tier in your ELAN document: Once you have completed 4-5, click “Close”. (If you click “Add”, you will be prompted to add another tier rather than returning to the ELAN main interface. If you know the tiers you want, you can keep adding.)

7. Adding content to your tier: To the left of the ELAN window, you will see the name of your tier. Select a portion of the waveform that you want to annotate, then click in the selected area to the right of the tier name. The flashing cursor should appear. You can now type your annotation. It will be in the font you selected. ONCE YOU HAVE TYPED YOUR TEXT, SAVE IT BY TYPING “CONTROL+ENTER” ON WINDOWS OR “COMMAND+RETURN” ON A MAC! If you don’t do this and move the cursor out of the selected area, the text disappears. Very annoying feature!

SUGGESTION ON SELECTING PORTIONS TO ANNOTATE: For any given tier, do not leave blank spaces between selections. Select the portion of the waveform moving right to left, with the right edge of the selection starting where you will want the next selection to start, then dragging leftward to the end of the preceding selection.

SUGGESTION ON ADDING LONGISH SELECTIONS OF TEXT: The ELAN text editor seems to be a little sensitive. At least on my Macintosh, using certain fonts that require keystrokes like OPT+SHIFT+some letter, the editor does unpredictable things. If you want to add longish sections of text, e.g. in your free translation, you might want to type them out in a


word processor that you are comfortable with. You can then copy that text and paste the whole thing into the tier where you want it.

8. Viewing annotations: In upper right portion of the ELAN window you will see several menu items, including “Text” and “Subtitles”. If you select “Text”, then select the name of one of your tiers from the pulldown menu, you will see all the annotations in that tier lined up. If you select “Subtitles”, you will see pulldown menus corresponding to all the available tiers (as well as “empty” tiers). For the tier you select, you will see just the annotation that is in the area where the red timeline is located.

9. Changing font sizes: The font size that you chose to type in your annotation is independent of the font size that displays in the “Text” or “Subtitles” area. To change font size in the area where you type annotations (for example, to make it smaller so that it will all fit into the selected part of the waveform), right click (Windows) or CTRL click (Mac) in the selected area in the appropriate tier. Select “Font size” from near the top of the menu. To change font size in the “Text” or “Subtitles” menu, do the same in the section where you want the font sized changed.

10. Changing the size of the waveform selection: You may have selected too much or too little of the wave form for the tier that you want to annotate. Right click (Windows) or CTRL click (Mac) in the selected area in the appropriate tier and select “Modify annotation time” about two-thirds down. Then put the cursor over the right or left vertical bar of the selected area, hold down the Alt key and the mouse, and drag the bar left or right.

11. Matching size of selection for tiers and different selection sizes for different tiers: You may want the size of the selection that you annotate on one tier to match the size on another tier (for example, you will usually want the selection showing a passage in the language to match the selection for its translation). If you click the horizontal line in an annotation, it will re-highlight the annotated selection of the wave form. You can then double click in another tier, type in data, save it, and the size of the selection for that tier will match that of the tier that you clicked. You may also want one tier to have a different sized selection than another (for example, you may want a free translation to encompass several selections made for morpheme by morpheme glosses. Manually select the area of the waveform that you want, which can be bigger or smaller than the selections of other tiers, type in data, save, and the data that you typed in will show up in the new selection size.

12. Navigation controls: The set of navigation controls to the left control playback and cursor movement for the entire media file. They are fairly self-explanatory. The ones in the middle have to do with controlling selection.  plays just the selection in the waveform. The S with the slash through it deselects the section. The third button places the red cursor at the beginning or end of the selection.