

Getting Started with ELAN

(the quick way!)

1 What is ELAN?

ELAN is software for transcribing and annotating audio and video recordings. ELAN has five modes for different stages of the annotation process:

- Annotation Mode: provides a top-down view of all annotations (e.g., transcriptions, translations, notes), but is not very useful for entering data or making changes
- Media Synchronization Mode: for use with projects that involve both audio and video
- Segmentation Mode: for dividing a recording up into segments that will be annotated
- Transcription Mode: for entering transcriptions and other time-aligned annotations
- Interlinearization Mode: a new mode in ELAN 5 and higher that includes parsing and lexicon capabilities

This guide explains how to create an .EAF file, segment a recording, and enter a transcription. Media Synchronization and Interlinearization are not described in this guide, but there are many excellent resources online to learn more about these and other features of ELAN.

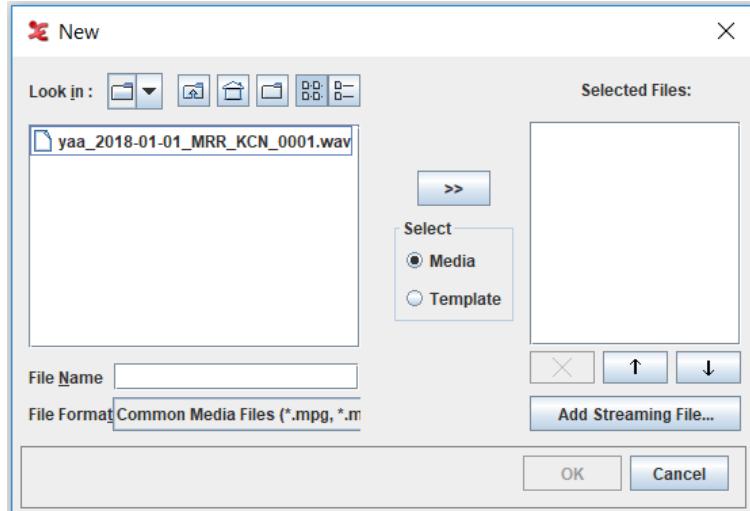
There are many different ways to incorporate ELAN into a project's workflow. A minimal workflow is likely to include the following steps:

1. Create a recording
2. Open the recording and template in ELAN
3. Segment the recording
4. Transcribe and annotate the recording

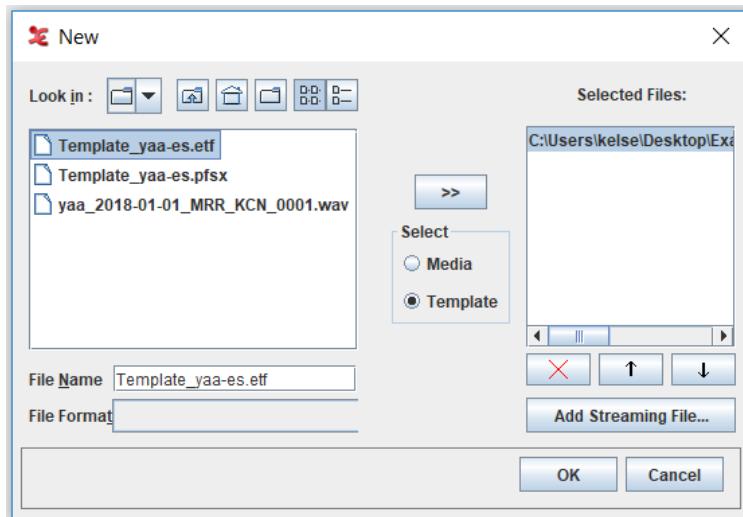
In reality most workflows will involve additional steps including changes to the segmentation and annotations, and imports/exports from/to other software like Praat or FLEX. This guide only covers items 2-4 above.

2 Opening a file in ELAN for the first time

When you open ELAN for the first time you will notice that there is almost nothing on the screen. To start a new .EAF annotation file, click File → New. This will open a window:



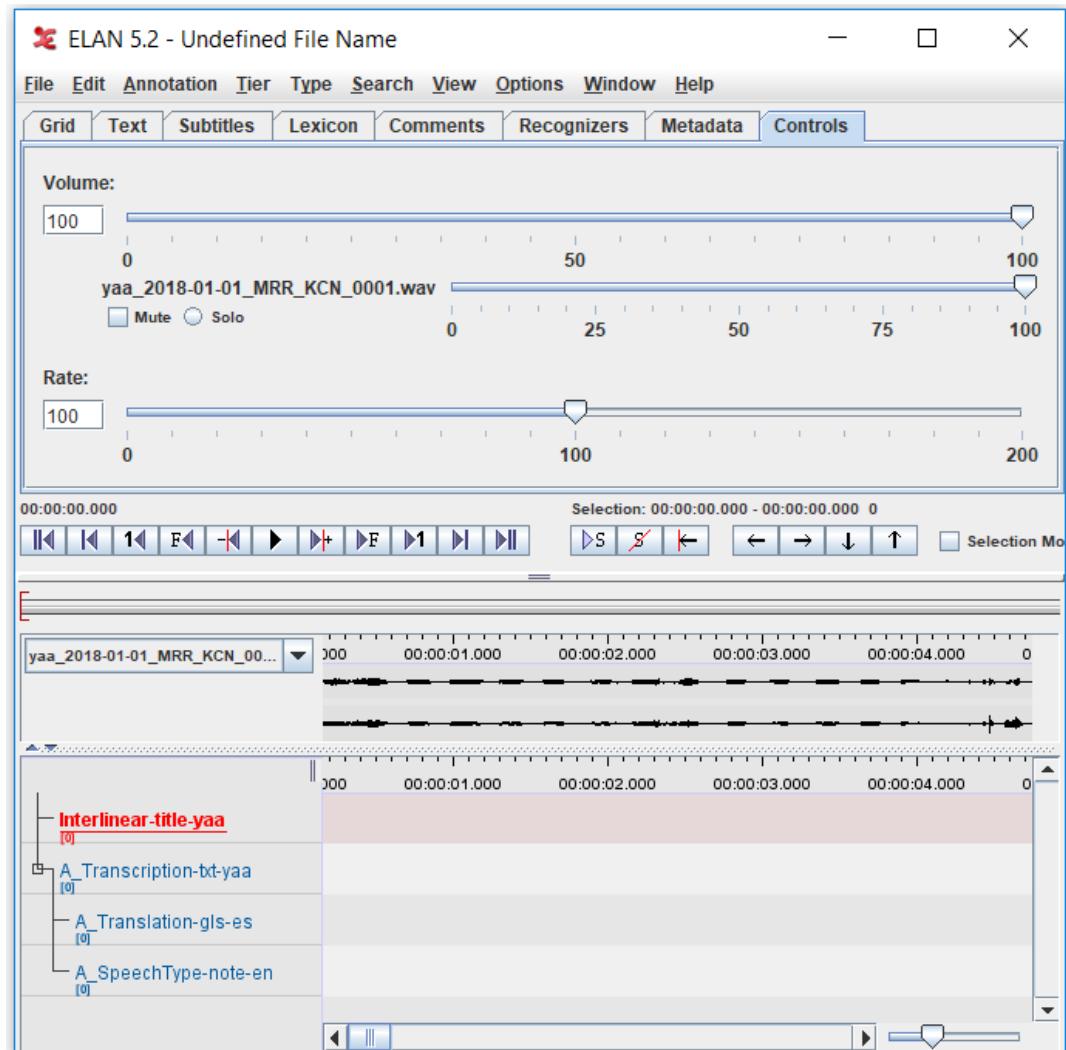
Navigate to the folder where your recording is located, click it, then use the '">>' button to add it to the file list on the right.



Select the ‘Template’ button and navigate to the folder where your project ELAN template is located. Select the template and add it by clicking ‘>>’ as above.

Clicking ‘OK’ will open your audio file and first .EAF file in Annotation Mode, which is basically the master viewing mode.

It should look something like this:

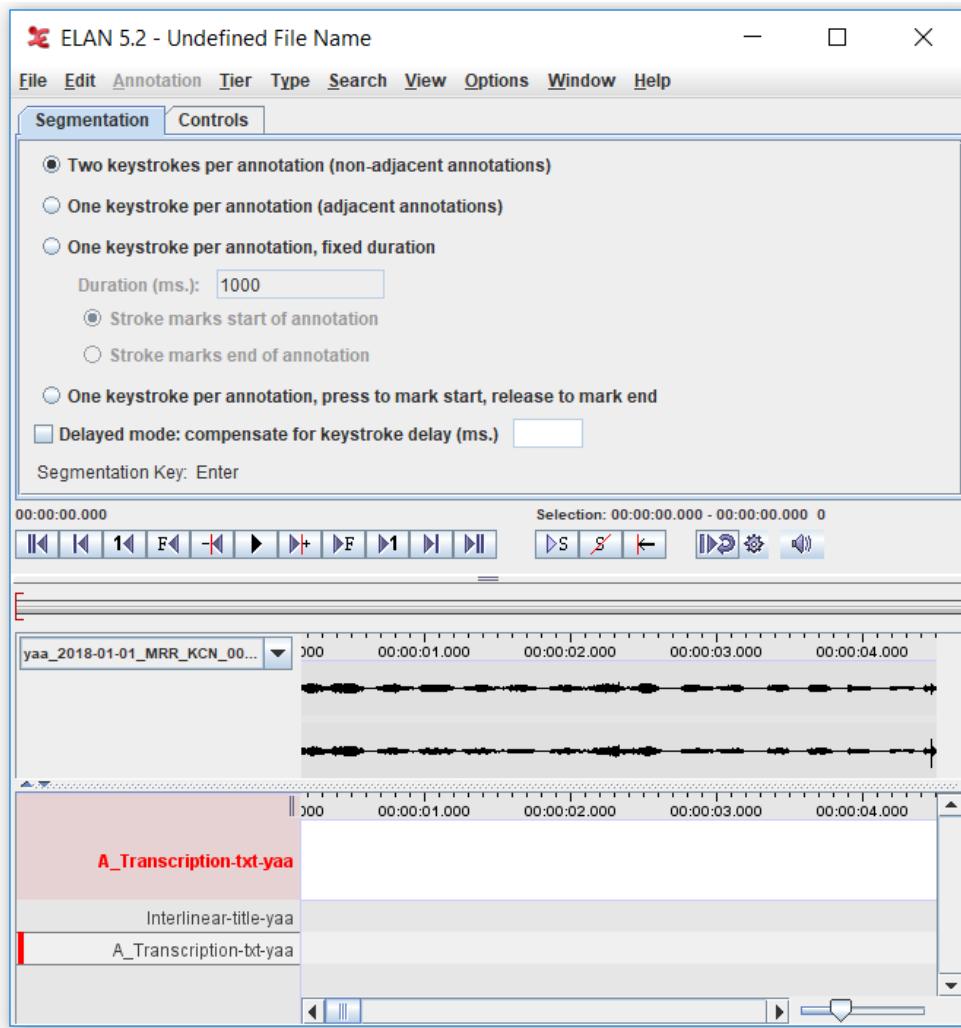


Don’t forget to save your file with a name that refers to the recording and to a location that you can easily find.

The next step is segmenting the recording to prepare it for transcription and annotation...

3 Segmentation Mode

To open Segmentation Mode, click the Options menu, then select ‘Segmentation Mode’. You should see something like this:

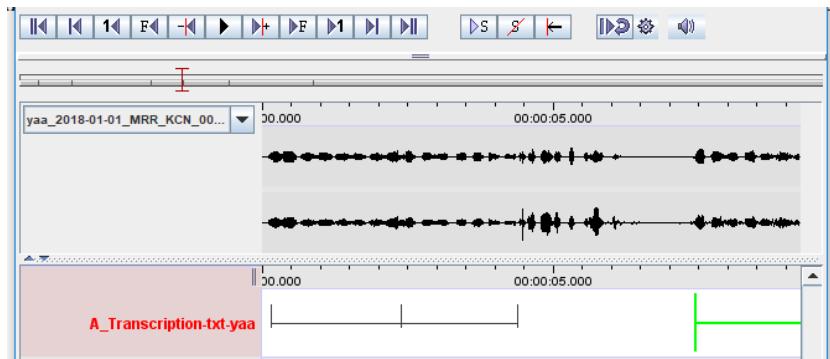


In Segmentation Mode, you can change the preferences for how you want to create your segments.

This tutorial will show how to make non-adjacent annotations, which is what many fieldworkers use for monologic speech or elicited speech.

Different fieldworkers may prefer to use two keystrokes (i.e., press Enter to start and press Enter again to end) or a single keystroke (i.e., press and hold Enter for the duration of the segment).

Segments can be created while the recording is playing in ELAN or while it is paused. Using the two keystroke method, you can mark the beginning of a segment, play or pause as necessary, then mark the end of that segment. Once some segments have been created, the window should look like this:



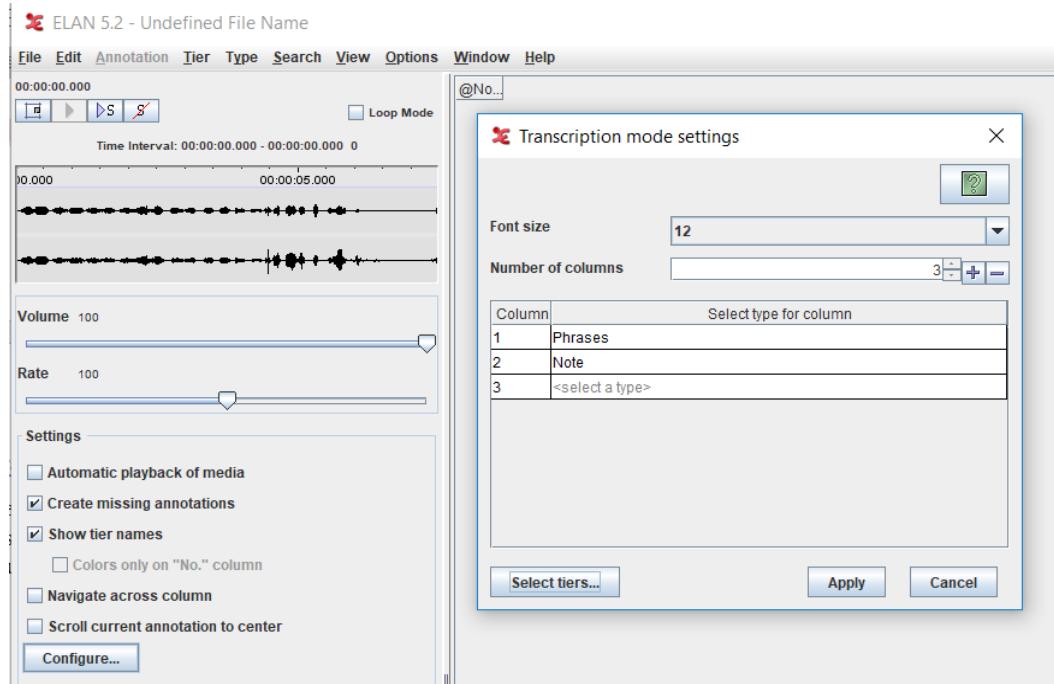
Hovering over a segment will turn it green. To delete it, press backspace.

If you need to adjust the beginning or end, hover over the vertical bars and drag left/right.

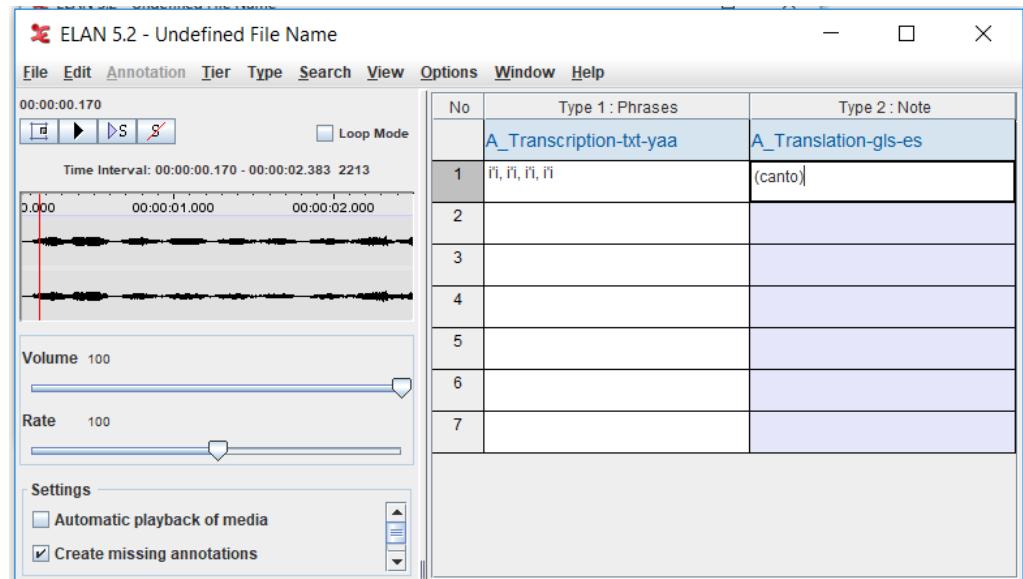
If a whole segment needs to be moved, hover over the horizontal bar and drag and drop into position.

4 Transcription Mode

Once some or all of the segments have been created, Transcription Mode can be used to create transcriptions, translations or other annotations. To open Transcription Mode, click the Options menu, then select 'Transcription Mode'. This will open a window like this:



The number of columns, including the blank column 3 shown above, can be adjusted by clicking the +/- buttons. Remove column 3 using the '-' key and click 'Apply'. Transcription Mode should look something like this:



To set up a new transcription, you select the 'types' that correspond to the appropriate tiers in your template.

Phrases corresponds to material in the study language and Notes to material in the contact language.

To get started, click on the first line and hit the tab key to play.

Transcribe what you hear!

Enter a translation or other note in additional columns if desired (as shown).

The settings can be changed to automatically play media when selected.

Complete your transcription/annotations and don't forget to save periodically!