**Notes for Using *audiogrep* and *transcriptinator* on Alumni Oral Histories**

**For audio files without a manual transcription:**

**Before interviews:**

* Try out/become familiar with the recording device. Make sure you know the distances and positions that it best picks up speech/sounds in relation to the source. Make sure you know what volumes it picks up best.

* Expressive story-tellers are great, but they need to speak loud enough to be picked up by the recorder.

* Share relevant ‘during interviews’ tips with the interviewee(s).
* Decide on visual signals and time limit with the interviewee(s). If they have a time limit, set a quiet alarm to notify you when the end time is drawing near.
* Ensure that any names or other information given to you beforehand is correct.
* Everybody take a drink. Even if you/they aren’t thirsty. You will be.
* If you have a sheet of questions, ask whether the person would like you to read the questions or if they would like to read them by themselves.

**During interviews:**

* Try not to talk over the person. If you want to react to something they said, use facial expressions or head shakes/nods instead of verbal reactions, unless you are asked a question or the person is struggling to explain something.
* Give a pause before replying/speaking.
* Let the person explain their experience/story in full. While you might understand or remember something that they are talking about, a later listener may not have had the same experience.
* Try to finish your own sentences too; incomplete thoughts make for a confusing transcript.
* Try not to let the talk/conversation drift towards yourself. Keep your subject/purpose for the interview in mind, and focus on topics that will add to/benefit that subject.
* Make sure you have both your name and the name(s) of the person/people being interviewed recorded somewhere (the interviewee usually announces themselves, but it's useful to have the proper spelling for their name). Also, try to get spellings for the names/surnames of any other people mentioned (such as roommates, friends, other students, townspeople, professors, etc.) after the interview. If they never mention an actual name, don't worry about it.
* Remember that hand gestures are only useful to the people in the room. People who listen to the interview will not be able to tell if you’re pointing in a certain direction or drawing a square in the air, or playing cat’s cradle. Try to keep as much information verbal/audible as possible.
* If the interviewee is pausing to think, take the opportunity to write notes – either to the transcriber(s) or to yourself (a question you think would be a good addition, a name to ask about, etc.).
* If you have multiple interviewees, try to give each person their own time to answer a question. (Consider referring to them by name if you ask them a question to make it easier for listeners to distinguish who is being addressed/will talk next.)

**Running Audiogrep:**

* Make sure that the folder containing the MP3 files is write-accessible, and that you are in the same directory as the MP3 file you want to audiogrep.

* Type **audiogrep –-input MP3FILENAME.MP3 –transcribe** into the terminal, and replace MP3FILENAME with the name of the actual MP3 file before hitting enter.

**Before running the transcriptinator:**

* Try to find the times in the *mp3.transcription.txt* file that match with the times when the speaker changes (between interviewee and interviewer, and in cases of a group interview). This isn't always possible with rapid back-and-forth discussions or times when two or more people are trying to talk, but mark it to the best of your ability. If the interviewer says a short confirmation or an utterance that does not affect the interpretation of the interviewee's words, it can be left unmarked here and during later editing.
* Insert a speaker tag on its own new line above the first (approximate) word spoken by a person when they take the focus of the interview (including the very first speaker):

*something 0.00 0.50 0.2*

*<speaker>New Speaker</speaker>*

*new 0.51 1.01 0.6*

* Words that have a number in parentheses after them ( example(2) ) will have their parentheses removed by the transcriptinator.
* <s> tags and <sil> tags can be left alone. They are also removed by the transcriptinator.
* The time values and the certainty value should also be left unchanged.

**Running transcriptinator:**

* In the terminal, **cd** to the folder containing **transcript\_parsing.py** The folder is /Users/libstu/Projects/transcriptinator/transcription.
* Enter **python** **transcript\_parsing.py** followed by the path to the folder containing the *mp3.transcription.txt* file that you want to run the transcriptinator on.
* The transcriptinator creates a new subfolder in the same location and with a similar name as the *mp3.transcription.txt* file. There will be two other (empty) subfolders that can be deleted. You may move the objects from the new subfolder(s) into the main folder.

**After running the transcriptinator:**

* Make changes in the *ready\_for\_editing\_transcript.xml* file. You might want to change the name to *ready\_for\_ingestion.xml* when you are done editing the file.
* If you need to split/add a new speaker section, follow the format generated by the transcriptinator:

*<cue>*

*<speaker>CURRENT SPEAKER</speaker>*

*<start>START TIME (in seconds)</start>*

*<end>END TIME (in seconds)</end>*

*<transcript>DIALOGUE</transcript>*

*</cue>*

* When adding or splitting a speaker section, make sure to update the start and end times of any relevant sections. This may require you to compare the times by using the times shown in ExpressScribe (or whatever software you use to listen to the audio file) with the previous start and end times created by the transcriptinator.
* Correct each block/section's grammar and spelling. Audiogrep is horrible at its job, but sometimes it gets a string of words right. A speaker might stutter or use "um" or "like" often, but these don't need to be included. They might also start and stop sentences repeatedly: please correct the transcript to what you believe would be easiest to read, but still matches what the speaker is saying.
* Try to check that proper nouns are spelled correctly. This might involve using the internet to check a professor's name or the name of a place on campus.
* Move the person’s folder to the “Complete” folder, but do not put it into the “Ingested” subfolder until it has been ingested.

**For audio files with a manual transcription:**

* Follow the same format for the .xml file as above:

*<cue>*

*<speaker>CURRENT SPEAKER</speaker>*

*<start>START TIME (in seconds)</start>*

*<end>END TIME (in seconds)</end>*

*<transcript>DIALOGUE</transcript>*

*</cue>*

* The first lines of the .xml file should be:

*<?xml version='1.0' encoding='UTF-8'?>*

*<cues>*

and the last line should be:

*</cues>*

* **(Optional)** Create a new cue block every time a new person starts speaking, or when one person talks for more than 45 seconds. Enter the time they begin as *START TIME* or use the previous block’s end time (there may be a large silence between speakers, so this is not encouraged). Enter the time they stop as *END TIME.*
* You may also insert speaker tags into the *mp3.transcription.txt* file and run transcriptinator to use the blocks generated by transcriptinator instead of writing the blocks by yourself.
* Make sure that each block’s speaker tag matches the current speaker at the block’s times.
* Copy and paste the manual transcription that matches with each block’s start and end times into *DIALOGUE*.
* Save the file in the “Completed” folder as: *FirstName\_LastName\_ClassYear\_ready\_for\_ingestion\_transcript.xml*

“I’m kinda sorry if this is terrible, but not really.” –Mackenzie M.