

That human communication—including spoken language—involves multiple simultaneous channels or modalities in addition to speech is an ancient idea that has only recently received serious attention from scholars of language and social interaction. Recent advances in the study of multimodality or co-expressivity often involve research in indigenous languages of the Americas, but despite extensive investigation by native and non-native researchers alike, little work by a new generation of scholars includes serious study of how different aspects of what have been called “composite utterances”—including speech (or sign), gesture, bodily configuration, gaze, and touch—coalesce to enable communicative action. This project assembled a team of graduate students and experienced scholars, whose work encompasses a variety of Mesoamerican languages, and whose field experience includes attention to multimodal, interactive material through video and audio recording. Via a series of workshops, held over the 4 years the extended grant period at CIMSUR (UNAM) in Chiapas, Mexico, we explored the notion of multimodal coexpression in communicative interaction, applied it to our various field projects, and will produce several edited volumes of research and this developing interactive web resource to promulgate the theoretical framework and empirical results of our collaboration.