

Gilles Polian

Researcher-Professor at Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS), Unidad Sureste, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico

Email: poliang@cieras.edu.mx | gillespolian@yahoo.com

Web: <https://tseltal.aldelim.org/>

Academia.edu: <https://cieras.academia.edu/GillesPolian>

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0642-2875>

Education

- 2004 PhD in Language Sciences, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, France. Thesis: *Éléments de grammaire du tseltal*.
- 1999 Master 2, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, France. Thesis: *Morpho-syntaxe du verbe tzeltal*.
- 1998 Master 1, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, France. Thesis: *L'état du nom en kabyle (berbère)*.
- 1997 Licence in Language Sciences, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, France.
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Academic Career

Research and Teaching Positions

2005 – present Researcher-Professor (*Investigador-Profesor*), CIESAS Sureste, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico

- Permanent research position at Mexico's Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS), Unidad Sureste
 - Line of research: Indigenous Languages and Peoples, Past and Present
 - Active member of the graduate faculty of the *Posgrado en Lingüística Indoamericana*, CIESAS, since 2005; teaches graduate seminars and supervises master's and doctoral theses on Mayan and other Mesoamerican languages
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Administrative and Leadership Roles

February 2024 – March 31, 2026 Regional Director, CIESAS Sureste, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico

- Head of the Sureste regional unit of CIESAS, Mexico's foremost social-science and anthropology research center, overseeing research programs, graduate education, and institutional affairs

October 2014 – September 2016 Academic Coordinator, *Maestría y Doctorado en Lingüística Indoamericana*, CIESAS, Mexico

- Responsible for the coordination of one of Mexico's most prominent graduate programs in the linguistics of indigenous languages

National Research Recognition

Sistema Nacional de Investigadoras e Investigadores (SNII), Level II, Secretaría de Ciencia, Humanidades, Tecnología e Innovación (Secihti), Mexico.

Research Grants and External Funding

- 2026** ELDP Archiving Fellowship (Berlin)
- 2024-2027** *Documenting the use of nouns and verbs in the linguistic environment of Tseltal children: Transcription and annotation*, project funded by the University of Chicago.
- 2021-2022** *SCALa Tseltal annotation project*, project funded by the University of Tokyo.
- 2021** *Documenting the social and linguistic lives of young children in Tenejapa*, project funded by the University of Chicago.
- 2020** *Study of the speech environment and language development of Tseltal children: Transcription*, project funded by the University of Manitoba.
- 2017-2019** *Linguistic Atlas of Occidental Tseltal*, Investissement d'Avenir ANR-10-LABX-0083, awarded by the Labex-EFL (Excellency Lab "Fondements Empiriques de la Linguistique"), French National Centre for Scientific Research.
- 2015-2016** *Editing a Tseltal Multimedia Corpus for Multiple Uses*, project funded by the INALI, National Institute of Indigenous Languages.
- 2011-2019** *Documentation of spontaneous conversations in Tseltal*, project funded by The Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen.
- 2010-2013** *Linguistic documentation, study of dialectal variation, and compilation of a comparative vocabulary in Tseltal*, project funded by the CONACYT, National Council of Sciences, and Technologies, and by the INALI, National Institute of Indigenous Languages.
- 2007-2009** Major Documentation Project (Grant ID: MDP0164) *Ethnographic and discursive audiovisual corpus of Tseltal*, Endangered Languages Documentation Programme (ELDP), now affiliated with the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften
- 2006** Fieldtrip Grant (Grant ID: FTG0114) *Documentation of Central Tseltal: creation of a broad corpus for multiple uses*, Endangered Languages Documentation Programme (ELDP)
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Archival Collections

Polian, Gilles 2011. *El Proyecto para la Documentación de Tseltal de Gilles Polian*. Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America (AILLA), University of Texas at Austin, Collection 1105. <https://www.ailla.utexas.org/collections/1105/>

Polian, Gilles 2016. *Ethnographic and discursive audiovisual corpus of Tseltal*. Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR), Collection ID: 0097. <https://www.elararchive.org/dk0097>

Polian, Gilles 2026. *Documentation of Carranza Tsotsil / Documentación del tsotsil de Carranza*. Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR), Collection ID: 0876. <https://www.elararchive.org/dk0876>

Digital Research Infrastructure

ALiSTO — *Atlas Lingüístico Sonoro del Tseltal Occidental* <https://alisto.aldelim.org/>

- Phonetically documented dialectological atlas of Western Tseltal, covering 17 communities; combines geolinguistic mapping with laboratory phonetics

DITSEL — *Diccionario Tseltal en Línea* <https://ditssel.aldelim.org/>

- Interactive open-access online dictionary of Tseltal

Tseltal documentation hub <https://tseltal.aldelim.org/>

- Central open-access portal aggregating all digital resources on Tseltal produced by Polian and collaborators
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Awards and Honours

Premio Wigberto Jiménez Moreno 2019 Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), Mexico

- Awarded for the best linguistic research published in 2018
- Work recognized: *Diccionario multidialectal del tseltal, tseltal-español* (INALI/CIESAS, 2018)

Premio Wigberto Jiménez Moreno 2014 Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), Mexico

- Awarded for the best linguistic research published in 2013
 - Work recognized: *Gramática del tseltal de Oxchuc*, vols. 1–2 (CIESAS, 2013)
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Memberships and Academic Affiliations

CIESAS — *Posgrado en Lingüística Indoamericana* (graduate faculty member, since 2005)

SECIHTI / SNII — Member of the Sistema Nacional de Investigadoras e Investigadores at Level II (ongoing).

Collaborative research networks:

- 2019-ongoing **DALIMA** (Diccionarios y Atlas Lingüísticos para Idiomas Mayas), coordinated by María Magdalena Pérez Conguache (ALMG), B'alam Mateo Toledo (CIESAS), Gilles Polian (CIESAS) and Telma Can Pixabaj (CIMSUR-UNAM), <https://dalima.aldelim.org/>.
- 2008-2019 **ALTO** (Atlas Lingüístico del Tseltal Occidental), coordinated by Gilles Polian and Jean Léo Léonard (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III / Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier).
- 2007-2014 **MesoSpace Project** (spatial cognition in Mesoamerican languages), coordinated by Jürgen Bohnemeyer (University at Buffalo); multinational team including researchers from UNAM, UAM, Smithsonian Institution, University of Surrey, and multiple Mexican institutions (<https://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~jb77/Mesospace.htm>).