Annotation of Mouth Activities with iLex

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1 sign uttered w/ mouth activity = 1 token tag + 1 mouth tag
- Mouthing can stretch over several signs
- Mouthing is more than co-occurrence

How can mouth activities be annotated in iLex?

VISICAST mouth gesture codes
- See the lists on both sides of the poster
- The idea is to capture the whole gestalt of a gesture in one code, i.e. most codes describe dynamic events
- Code consists of one letter for the main articulator plus an arbitrary number
  - C: Cheeks
  - D: Teeth
  - J: Jaw
  - T: Tongue
  - L: Lips
- Nonsymmetrical gestures have a “-” appended to the code if the activity takes place on “the other” side
- Too many codes to remember, “expert system” available to guide you through the decision process which code applies by asking simple questions step by step.
- Other text-based coding systems may be used in iLex, mixed with mouthing when enclosed in square brackets, or on separate tiers. (In order to drive the avatar from that, some mapping would be needed.)

Binary Feature Coding
Lex implements a new tier kind that allows to check those features (from a vocabulary assigned to the tier) that apply to the given time interval. Any combination of checks leads to one single tag. This approach can be used for any feature-based analysis, lending itself esp. to detailed phonetic analysis.

The example shows the Bergman/Valin (2001) full feature set for coding mouthing in Swedish Sign Language.
In the transcript view, the binary feature value is shown as the comma-separated list of all codes that have been checked – unless you use a converter as shown in the example. "BLABALU" in the reduced set corresponds to "-energo" from the full set. That way, you can enter the detailed set and decide whether you want the detailed or the reduced set displayed.

1 sign uttered w/o mouth activity = 1 token tag + 1 mouth tag
- The usual problem with annotation of optional data also applies to mouth activity: Does no tag mean there isn’t any, or is this aspect not yet annotated? While filling in a or not tag also takes time, it allows to search for signs uttered without any mouth activity.
- Otherwise, you would need to make assumptions if a tag would be there if there were a mouth activity (as there are mouth tags nearby in the transcript). Also from a quality assurance point of view, “null tags” often make sense, e.g. to analyse the borderlines between “nothing” and “something” (cf. "-energo" in Bergman/Valin vs. -).