

WHERE IS THE SURFER? WHERE IS THE HIPSTER?: SPATIAL RELATIONS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ENGLISH VS. PACIFIC NORTHWEST ENGLISH

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INTRODUCTION

Spatial Relations Figure-Ground Relations Locatives

- One entity, the figure, is located in relation to another entity, the ground (Bowerman & Pederson, 1992).
- "The cup is on the table."
- FG Relations are often signaled by locatives, which are a major part of spatial relations.



BACKGROUND

- Topological relations differ quite a lot across languages (Levinson & Meira, 2003)
 - What about dialects?
- "The West" based on vowel variation (Labov et al, 2006)
- More recent research showing differentiating linguistics factors (Fridland et al, 2016).



RESEARCH QUESTIONS



01

1. Do locatives differ in the same FG relations between PNW and SoCal English?
→ "the cup is on the table" vs. "the cup is above the table"
2. Are there significant enough variation here that could imply further research in spatial relations between West Coast regional dialects?

SURVEY

"BowPed"

- Designed to elicit specific figure-ground expressions with the highlighted items.
- Also known as "TPRS"
 - Topological Relation Picture Series
- Developed by Melissa Bowerman and Eric Pederson (1992).

Qualtrics

- Anonymous surveying program that is free through UO.
- 71 questions with each BowPed image and its corresponding question.



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04

Where is the ribbon?

→

PARTICIPANTS



10 total:

- 5 from Seattle area
- 5 from Los Angeles area

- Eligibility

→ Born and raised in the area.

→ Gender and age kept as evenly distributed as possible to focus on regional differences.

- Sent the Qualtrics survey via text or social media message.

- ~15 minutes to complete.

METHODOLOGY

Locative Categories

- Coding strategy adapted from Levinson and Meira, 2003.

1. In
2. On
3. Attachment
4. Under/Over
5. Proximity
6. Midst
7. Around*
8. Outside/Inside*

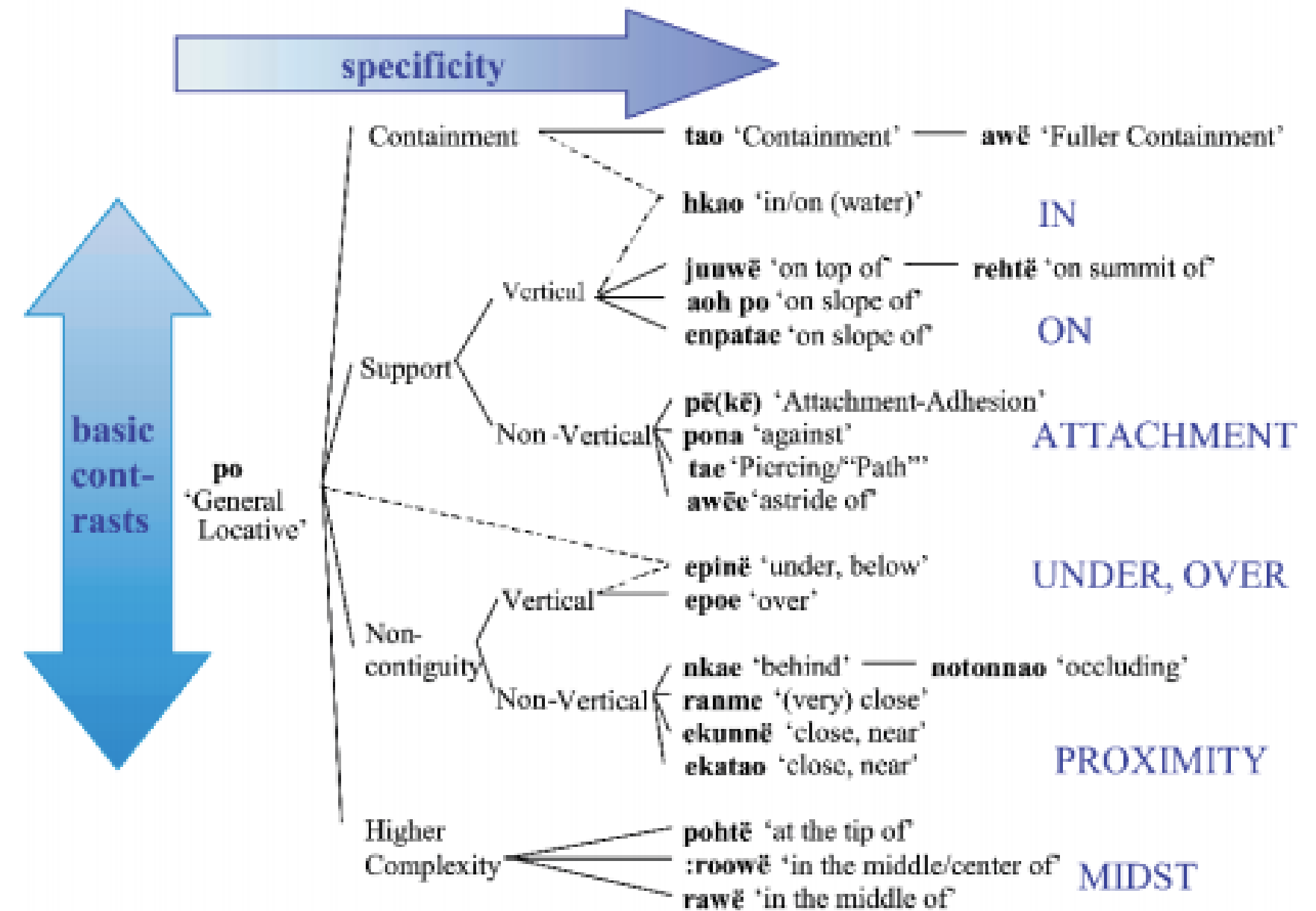


FIGURE 2. Hierarchy in Tiriyo adpositions.

From page 489 of Levinson and Meira, 2003.

* Categories added for this project.

METHODOLOGY

Color Coding

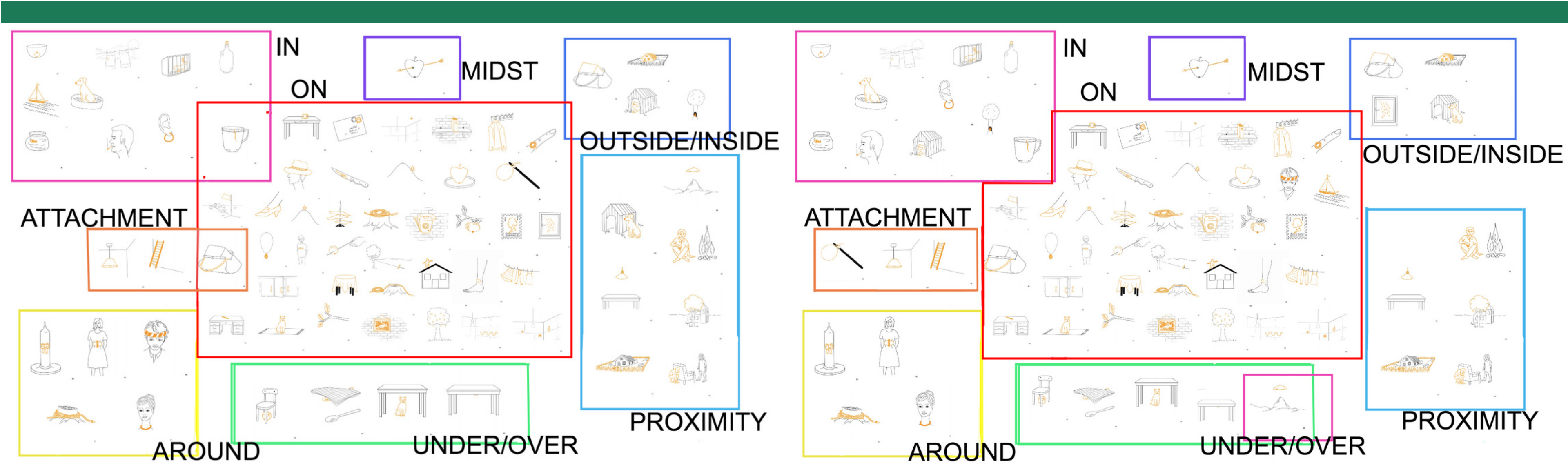
- Color coded based on locative categories.
- "Majority rules" to determine which category represented the dialect.

	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	BowPed_Question	Response - WA	Response - WA	Response - WA	Response - WA	Response - W		Response - C	Response - CA	Response - I	Response - L
1	Where is the cup?	on the table	on the table	on the table	on top of the table	on the table	ON	on the table	on the table	on the table	on the table
2	Where is the apple?	in the bowl	in the bowl	in the bowl	inside the bowl	bottom of the bowl	IN	in the bowl	inside the bowl	in the bottom of the bowl	in the bowl
3	Where is the stamp?	on the top right of the envelope	on the right edge of the envelope	on the letter	in the upper right corner of the envelope	top right corner of the envelope	ON	on the envelope	placed on the front of the envelope	on the right corner of the envelope	on the envelope
4	Where is the ribbon?	around the candle	tied around the candle	around the candle	around the middle of the candle	mid-way up the candle	AROUND	around the candle	tied around the candle	on the candle	around the candle
5	Where is the hat?	on top of the head	on the person's head	on the head	on top of his head	the top of the head	ON	on the head	on the man's head	on top of the head	on the person's head
6	Where is the dog?	next to the doghouse	next to the doghouse	next to the doghouse	outside of his house	next to the doghouse	PROXIMITY	outside the doghouse	sitting outside of the doghouse	beside the doghouse	next to the doghouse
7	Where is the spider?	on the ceiling	on the ceiling	on the ceiling	on the ceiling	the corner of the ceiling	ON	on the ceiling	on the ceiling	on the ceiling	on the ceiling
8	Where is the book?	on the shelf	on the shelf	on the shelf	in the middle of the shelf	right side of the shelf	ON	on the shelf	on the shelf	on the shelf	on the shelf
9	Where is the coat?	on the coat rack	on the coat rack	on the hanger	hanging on the coat rack	the left most hanger	ON	on the hook	on the coat hook	hanging on the hanger	on the hanger
10	Where is the ring?	on the finger	on the finger	around the finger	at the base of the finger	base of the finger	ON	on the finger	on the finger	on the finger	on the finger
11	Where is the boat?	in the water	in the water	on the ocean	in the sea	in the waves	IN	on the water	in the water	on the ocean	in the water
12	Where is the butter?	on the knife	on the knife	on the knife blade	on the knife	the edge of the knife	ON	on the knife	on the blade of the knife	on the knife	on the knife
13	Where is the lamp?	above the table	over the table	above the table	above the table	hanging above the table	PROXIMITY	above the table	hanging above the table	above the table	hanging above the table
14	Where is the box?	in the bag	inside the bag	inside the bag	inside the bag	inside the bag	OUT/INSIDE	in the bag	inside of the purse	inside the purse	in the bag
15	Where is the fence?	around the house	around the house	around the house	around the house	surrounding the house	PROXIMITY	around the house	around the perimeter of the house	around the house	around the house
16	Where is the ball?	under the chair	under the chair	under the chair	underneath the chair	under the chair	UNDER/OVER	under the chair	underneath the chair	under the chair	under the chair
17	Where is the tree?	on the side of the hill	on the hill	on the hill	near the bottom of the hill	the right side of the hill	ON	on the hill	on the hillside	on the side of the hill	on the hill
18	Where is the hole?	in the towel	on the towel	in the towel	in the towel	on the left towel	IN	in the towel	in the towel hanging on the wall	in the towel	in the middle of the towel
19	Where is the apple?	on the plate	on the plate	inside the circle	on the plate	the middle of the plate	ON	on the plate	on the plate	on a plate	on the plate
20	Where is the balloon?	on the end of the stick	on the stick	on the stick	attached to the stick	the end of the stick	ON	on the stick	tied to the end of the stick	tied to a stick	tied to the end of the stick
21	Where is the shoe?	on the foot	on the foot	on the foot	on the foot	on the foot	ON	on the foot	on the foot	on a foot	on the foot
22	Where are the papers?	on the needle	on the needle	on the spike	on the stubby thing	stuck through a piece of paper	ON	on the needle	placed onto the spike	on the holder	through the holder
23	Where is the hose?	on the stump	on the trunk	on top of the stump	on the stump	on top of the stump	ON	on the stump	coiled on top of the stump	on the stump	on the trunk
24	Where is the spoon?	under the rag	under the towel	underneath the napkin	under the napkin	under the napkin	UNDER/OVER	under the napkin	underneath the napkin	under the towel	underneath the napkin
25	Where is the telephone?	on the wall	on the brick wall	on the wall	attached to the wall	mounted on the wall	ON	on the wall	mounted to the brick wall	on the bricks	on the wall
26	Where is the crack?	in the cup	on the cup	on the side of the cup	in the cup	the side of the mug	IN.ON	in the cup	in the side of the cup	on the side of the cup	in the cup

FINDINGS

Etic Grids

Pacific Northwest vs. Southern California

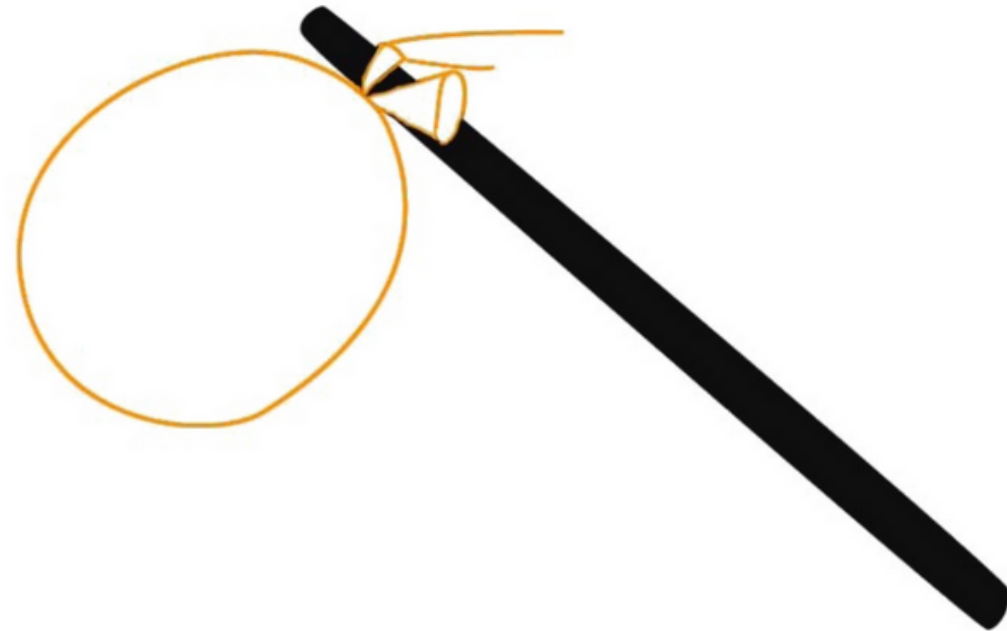


1. 10 cases of disagreement in spatial relation category

2. Variation in every category other than Midst.
3. Differences are not congruent.

FINDINGS

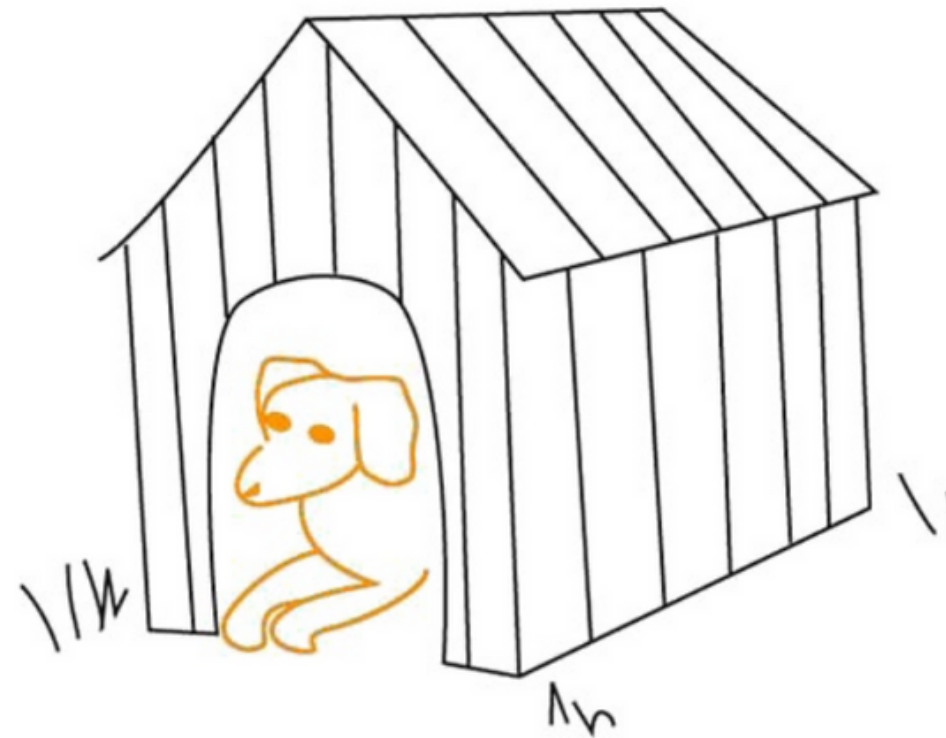
(20) Where is the balloon?



PNW: on the stick (ON)

SoCal: tied to the stick (ATTACHMENT)

(71) Where is the dog?



PNW: inside the doghouse (OUTSIDE/INSIDE)

SoCal: in the doghouse (IN)

PNW vs. SoCal

(6) Proximity vs. Outside/Inside

(11) In vs. On

(20) On vs. Attachment

(26) On, In vs. On

(36) Proximity vs. Under/Over

(46) Around vs. On

(48) On vs. Outside/Inside

(66) On, Attachment vs. On

(67) Outside/Inside vs. In

(71) Outside/Inside vs. In

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- Locatives do differ based on specificity.
 - Containment (IN vs. OUTSIDE/INSIDE)
 - Support (ON vs. ATTACHMENT)
 - Pragmatically motivated? Grice's maxim of quantity.
- 10 instances of topological variation across two dialects alone.
 - So how much topological variation does research across languages actually show?
- Ultimately, more participants and negative evidence needed to pinpoint concrete conclusions on these spatial relations being lexical choices vs. realization choices, and solve idiolectal differences and split data issues.

REFERENCES

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Fridland, V., Kendall, T., Evans, B., and Wassink, A. B. (2016). Speech of the Western States. Volume 1: The Coastal States. *Publication of the American Dialect Society*, 101. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.

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