

Sahaptin Locational Nouns

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This colloquium presentation represents joint work with Virginia Beavert, a native speaker of the Yakima (Yakama) dialect of Sahaptin, a Plateau Penutian language. The impetus for this study comes from our ongoing lexicographical research on Sahaptin, and the need to be able to assign a lexical category to locational words such as **ts'áa** 'near(by)', **ásht** 'inside', **íip** 'through'. Following a survey of the expected cross-linguistic characteristics of adpositions, we conclude that Sahaptin locational words belong to one of two lexical categories, neither of them adpositions. Most are to be considered nouns, because nominal affixes such as case suffixes can be added to them. A small number cannot undergo nominal affixation and are considered adverbs. The analysis of (the majority of) locational words as nouns makes further correct predictions about the grammar of Sahaptin.