Zachary K. Maher

maher@psu.edu • zmaher.github.io

EDUCATION

University of Maryland, College Park • Aug. 2017 – Jul. 2023
- *Ph.D.*, Neuroscience and Cognitive Science
- Dissertation: "Knowledge and processing of morphosyntactic variation in African American Language and Mainstream American English"
- Committee: Dr. Jan Edwards (co-chair), Dr. Jared Novick (co-chair), Dr. Shenika Hankerson, Dr. Colin Phillips, Dr. Charlotte Vaughn, Dr. Jeffrey Lidz (Dean's Representative)

Yale University • Aug. 2009 – May 2013
- *B.A. & M.A.*, Linguistics (GPA: 3.93, *magna cum laude*)
- Honors: Phi Beta Kappa, Distinction in the Major
- Thesis: "Opening a Can of Worms: Idiom Flexibility, Decomposability, and the Mental Lexicon" (Advisor: Maria Piñango)

EXTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS

NSF SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship,
"Neurolinguistic mechanisms of grammatical processing across different dialects," $160,000 • 2023-2025
NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Award,
"Knowledge and processing of morphosyntactic variation," $6,999 • 2022-2023
Paula Menyuk Travel Award, BUCLD • 2019
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, *Honorable Mention* • 2018
Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship • Sept. 2013 – June 2014

INTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS

Ann G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowship, $15,000 • 2022
NSF NRT COVID Fellowship, UMD Language Science Center, $25,500 • 2021
NSF NRT Fellowship, UMD Language Science Center • 2019–2020
PULSAR Fellowship, UMD Language Science Center • 2019
Flagship Fellowship, University of Maryland, $50,000 • awarded 2017

MANUSCRIPTS

Maher, Z., C. Blomquist, A. Byrd, K. Oppenheimer, E. Terrell Shockley, T.C. Thonesevanh, C. Mazzei, J. Harring, and J. Edwards (under revision). Does a dialect-shifting curriculum help early readers who speak African American English? Results from a randomized controlled study.

PUBLICATIONS

Maher, Z., C. Mazzei, T.C. Thonesevanh, E. Terrell Shockley, and J. Edwards (in press). Multiple approaches to "appropriateness": A mixed-methods study of elementary teachers' dispositions toward African American Language as they teach a dialect-shifting curriculum. *Reading Research Quarterly*.

Maher, Z., M. Erskine, A. Byrd, J. Harring, and J. Edwards (2021). African American English and early literacy: A comparison of approaches to quantifying non-mainstream dialect use. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 52*(1), 118-130.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS	Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2023). Morphosyntax plays a unique role in listeners' expectations about minoritized language. Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2023). Real-time interpretation of morphosyntactic variation across varieties and listeners. New Ways of Analyzing Variation. New York, NY.

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2023). They know who speak this way: Knowledge of variation in listeners with different experiences of African American Language. Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing. University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA. **Honorable Mention: Gibson/Fedorenko Prize for young scholars.**

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2023). Knowledge of variation in subject-verb agreement in speakers of Mainstream American English. American Dialect Society Annual Meeting. Denver, CO.

Maher, Z., C. Mazzei, T.C. Thonesevanh, E. Terrell Shockley, and J. Edwards (2022). Exploring Academic Spaces for Equitable Practices: Elementary Educator Dispositions Toward African American Language. American Educational Research Association 2022 Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA. https://doi.org/10.3102/1894097

Maher, Z., C. Mazzei, T.C. Thonesevanh, E. Terrell Shockley, and J. Edwards (2021). How a dialect-shifting curriculum shapes K-1 teachers' attitudes toward language variation: A mixed-methods study. Language, Linguistics, and Life Conference. Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

Erskine, M., A. Byrd, Z. Maher, K. Oppenheimer, and J. Edwards (2019). Expanding your Toolbox: Strategies to Support Linguistically Diverse Students. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention. Orlando, FL.

Maher, Z. and Edwards, J. (2019). Non-linguistic inhibition predicts lexical inhibition in 6-7 year-old children. Boston University Conference on Language Development. Boston, MA.

Huang, N., Z. Maher, S. Matyiku, and R. Zanuttini (2011). Toward an atlas of micro-syntactic variation in varieties of English. Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS	Maher, Z. Toward a Mechanistic Account of Processing Linguistic Variation (2021). Language & Cognition Talk, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Huang, N., Z. Maher, S. Matyiku, and R. Zanuttini (2011). Grammatical Diversity in the US. Friday Lunch Talk, Department of Linguistics, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

Huang, N., Z. Maher, S. Matyiku, and R. Zanuttini (2011). Toward an atlas of micro-syntactic variation in varieties of English. Friday Lunch Talk, Department of Linguistics, Yale University, New Haven, CT.

POSTERS	Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2023). Real-Time Grammatical Interpretation Across Dialects and Listeners. Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting. San

Francisco, CA.

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2022). They Was Giving Accurate Judgments: Speakers of Mainstream American English Show Partial Knowledge of Non-Mainstream Grammar. Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting. Boston, MA.

Byrd, A., Z. Maher, Y.T. Huang, and J. Edwards (2022). Development and Evaluation of a Dialect Experience Questionnaire. Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2021). Comprehenders reduce their reliance on subject-verb agreement when interpreting a less-familiar dialect. Psychonomic Society Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA (virtual).

Maher, Z., J. Edwards, and J. Novick (2021). Dialect differences in the comprehension of agreement in U.S. varieties of English. Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing. Paris, France (virtual).

Maher, Z., M. Erskine, A. Byrd, and J. Edwards (2021). Evaluating the influence of peers on the acquisition of mainstream forms by children who speak African American English. Variation in Language Acquisition. Rorschach, Switzerland (virtual).

Maher, Z. and J. Edwards (2019). Changes in attitudes toward variation in teachers of a code-switching curriculum. New Ways of Analyzing Variation. Eugene, OR.

Erskine, M., Z. Maher, and J. Edwards (2019). Dialect mismatch influences sentence *not* lexical comprehension in young children. Symposium for Research in Child Language Disorders.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Learning to Talk Lab • Fall 2017 – present
- Provide general research assistance on ToggleTalk intervention study funded by the Institute of Education Sciences
- Provide lab database support
- Designed dialect assessment to evaluate student progress

Yale Grammatical Diversity Project • Fall 2010 – Spring 2013
- Created the first centralized reference for grammatical variation in North American English
- Wrote review articles about phenomena including positive *anymore* and *needs washed*
- Developed user guide for the database's web interface

Pittsburgh Science of Learning Center, *Research Assistant* • Summer 2012
- Reviewed literature and developed an experimental paradigm for a psychology of reading project under the direction of Dr. Charles Perfetti at the University of Pittsburgh's Learning Research and Development Center; analyzed and presented pilot study data
- Participated in weekly seminars on education, psychology, linguistics, and technology

Newark Charter School Fund • Sept. 2015 – July 2017
Quality Schools Analyst • July 2016 – July 2017

- Formed organizational data strategy, applied for grant funding, and developed data partnerships
- Wrote organizational strategic plan based on consultant input

Program Associate & Education Pioneers Analyst Fellow • Sept. 2015 – June 2016
- Managed a $1.5 million grant portfolio, performed due diligence research, and presented to board focusing on special education and board governance support for the Newark charter sector
- Maintained student enrollment and achievement datasets through collaboration with a third party data vendor, the state, the local school district, and charter schools
- Analyzed data for reporting and publication
- Cultivated partnerships to grow a high-quality charter sector in Newark

Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, *Life Together Fellow* • 2014-2015
- Coordinated a prisoner mentoring program and other outreach initiatives for the Episcopal Chaplaincy at Harvard and Christ Church Cambridge
- Lived in an intentional community and received training in social justice and nonprofit work, including community organizing, fundraising, and combating oppression

The Fulbright Program, *English Teaching Assistant* • Sept. 2013 – June 2014
- Taught and assistant-taught English courses (gr. 3–10) to German students and recent immigrants at a special education school in Berlin for students with conduct disorders

Yale Student Technology Collaborative • Jan. 2010 – May 2013
- *Coordinator* (Jan. 2011 – May 2013): Managed the eight student techs in the Saybrook residential college; maintained computer cluster; performed Dell warranty hardware repairs
- *Student Technologist* (Jan. – Dec. 2010): Provided technical support for fellow students

Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences, *Undergraduate thesis advisor* 2022–2023
- Madison Lenhart: "Comprehension of Subject-verb Agreement in Mainstream American English and African American Language" (2023)

LING460: Diversity and Unity in Human Languages [Intro. Sociolinguistics], University of Maryland, *Instructor of record*   Spring 2022

Project RISE, *Graduate Student Mentor*   2019–2020
- Paid research fellowship for undergraduate students designed to "increase diversity in the pool of students who pursue doctoral studies in a broad range of fields related to language and literacy"
- Partnership between University of Maryland, College Park and Bowie State University (a Historically Black Univerisity)
- Mentored student project on African American Language

- Gave guest lecture on language variation (Summer 2018)

PULSAR, *Graduate Fellow* • Spring, Fall 2019
- Undergraduate language science honors program ("Program for Undergraduate Language Science Ambassadors in Research") at the University of Maryland, College Park
- Met with students twice per semester for mentorship
- Led 1-2 class sessions per semester on topics in research, such as reference management and crowdsourced studies

Other Activities   **UMD Language Science Center (LSC) Policy Committee**
Chair • 2018–2020
- Organized initiatives supporting dialect diversity at the University of Maryland, College Park

UMD LSC Winter Storm, *Session Organizer* • 2020–2021
- Two-week intensive language science professional development program
- Led workshop on using git and github (January 2021)
- Led workshop on eye-tracking data analysis (January 2020)
- Led planning sessions for dialect diversity initiative (January 2020)

UMD LSC Outreach Committee, *Member* • 2017–2019
- Co-organized 1-2 activities per year
- Gave demonstrations of language science concepts for school-age children at large science fair events

UMD Hearing and Speech Faculty Search Commmittee,
Student Representative 2022–2023

Skills

Language:	English (native), German (fluent)
Research Software:	R, Prolific, Amazon Mechanical Turk, Qualtrics, Praat, E-prime, IBEX with PennController
Computer:	LaTeX, command line, Microsoft Access, Git/GitHub, advanced troubleshooting & hardware repair
Music:	Cello, Voice (Bass II)