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Education

The University of Chicago	Ph.D.	Linguistics	1989
Georgetown University	MS	Linguistics	1980
The University of Virginia	BA	French	1974

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA Department of English, Program for Teacher Education <i>Associate Professor, English Language and Literacy</i>	1999-present
Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA Program for Research and Evaluation in Public Schools, Darden College of Education: <i>Research Scientist</i>	2005-2006
Weber State University, Ogden, UT Department of English. <i>Instructor</i> Department of English. <i>Adjunct</i>	1998-1999 1995-1998

RECENT ARTICLES

- (accepted) "Code-Switching: Critical Thinking Strategies for Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms," *Educational Leadership*. Themed issue on *Teaching Students to Think*, February 2008. Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- (under contract) "Code-switching: Teaching and learning Standard English in African American Classrooms," An invited book chapter in Connie Weaver (ed). *Grammar to Enrich and Enhance Writing*. Heinemann.

- (under contract) “From cold shoulder to funded welcome: How to and how not to talk about dialect in the public schools,” in Kristin Denham and Anne Lobeck, (eds.). *Linguistics is for Kids*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- (forthcoming) “*Taylor Cat is black: Code-switch to Add Standard English to Students’ Linguistic Repertoires*”. In Jerri Scott (ed.) Chapter invited by the NCTE Committee on Language. *Legislated-Litigated Language Policies and Practices: How to Give Students the Right to Their Own Language*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- 2006a Amanda Godley, Julie Sweetland, Rebecca S. Wheeler, Angela Minnicci and Brian Carpenter, “Preparing teachers for the dialectally diverse classroom.” *Educational Researcher*. Vol. 35, No 8., November 2006, pp. 30 – 37.
- 2006b “What do we do about student grammar – all those missing *-ed’s* and *-s’s*”: Using comparison and contrast to teach Standard English in dialectally diverse classrooms. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. Focus: Knowledge about language in the English/literacy classroom. Volume 5, Number 1, (May 2006). pp. 16 – 33.
- 2006c “My goldfish name is Scaley”: There’s nothing to correct – Code-switch to teach Standard English. *Teach Them Well: Whose English. DoubleTake/Points of Entry*. (Spring, 2006) pp. 18 – 21.
- 2005a “Codeswitching: How and why to use students’ vernacular to teach Standard English.’ In Anne Lobeck and Kristin Denham (Eds.). *Language in the School Curriculum: Integrating Linguistic Knowledge into K-12 Teaching*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 171 - 179.
- 2005b “Code-switch to Teach Standard English.” Invited column for *Teaching English in the World*. Ken Lindblom. *English Journal* (May 2005), 109 – 112. Editor, Ken Lindblom says that as Wheeler is “becoming one of the most important professional voices in language instruction.”
- 2001 “From home speech to school speech: Vantages on reducing the achievement gap in inner city schools.” *The Virginia English Bulletin*. Vol 51. No. 2. 4 – 16.
- 1999a “Home speech as springboard to school speech: Oakland's commendable work on Ebonics.” In *The workings of language: From prescriptions to perspectives*, Rebecca S. Wheeler (Ed.). pp. 59 – 66. New Jersey: Praeger.
- 2002 Wheeler, Rebecca S. and Brock Haussamen et. al. *Some Questions and Answers about Grammar*. NCTE Principles and Guidelines. www.ncte.org/positions/grammar.shtml.
- 2004 Wheeler, Rebecca S. and Rachel Swords. “Codeswitching: Tools of language and culture transform the dialectally diverse classroom.” *Language Arts*, NCTE. Vol. 81, No. 6. July 2004, 470 – 480.

BOOKS

- 2006 Wheeler, Rebecca S. and Rachel Swords. *Code-switching: Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English. **Foreword by John Rickford, Martin Luther King Jr. Centennial Professor, Stanford University.** Rickford says of *Code-switching* that this “is a long overdue and tremendously welcome book.... that will enable teachers to ‘reach out to the students of urban America in ways they weren’t able to do before.’”(Rickford, Foreword, *Code-switching*).
- 1999b (ed.) *The workings of language: From prescriptions to perspectives*. New Jersey: Praeger.
- 1999c *Language alive in the classroom*. New Jersey: Praeger.
- 2005 Mufwene, Salikoko, Elaine Francis, and Rebecca S. Wheeler (eds.) *Interdisciplinary and polymorphous linguistics: Jim McCawley’s Legacy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- 2003 Amy Benjamin, Brock Haussaman, Martha Kolln and Rebecca Wheeler. *Grammar Alive. A guide for teachers*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

PRESENTATIONS

- 2007 Harvard Forum Lecture. “Code-Switching: Teaching Standard English in African American Classrooms,” A forum lecture sponsored by the Achievement Gap Initiative of Harvard University. November 20, 2007
- 2007 “*Taylor cat is black: Code-switch to add Standard English to students’ linguistic repertoires.*” Roundtable presentation at the National Council of Teachers of English, November 2007.
- 2007 American Federation of Teachers (AFT), 3 hour seminar presented at the biennial summer conference in Washington DC. July 13, 2007.
- 2007 Harvard Achievement Gap Initiative. The Director of Harvard’s AGI invited me to present at the annual summer conference. June 19, 2007.
- 2007 Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). 90 minute presentation, Anaheim, CA, March 2007.
- 2007 American Educational Research Association (AERA). Panel: “Preparing Teachers for Dialectally Diverse Classrooms through Sociolinguistic Approaches.” Presentation: ““My Dog Name is Bear”: How to Foster Mainstream Literacy in the Dialectally Diverse Classroom.”Chicago, IL.
- 2006 Keynote speaker, SOL Track. 90 minute presentation. *Virginia Association of Teachers of English*. Richmond, October 2006.
- 2006 Invited Author Strand presentation -- *Code-switching: Teaching Standard*

- English in Urban Classrooms*. 90 minute presentation. National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), Nashville.
- 2006 “‘My Dog Name is Bear’: Fostering Literacy in the Dialectally Diverse Classroom. A paper presented on a panel, at the American Association of Educational Research, San Francisco, April 8, 2006.
- 2005a *Code-switching: Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms*. An invited presentation to showcase our forthcoming book release, the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), Pittsburgh, PA, November, 2005.
- 2005b “Code-switching: Using student language as fulcrum to Standard English mastery,” presentation on a panel (“Some children are left behind: Improving reading and writing through understanding language”) before the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Washington, DC, February 2005.
- 2005c “From cold shoulder to funded welcome in the public schools,” a presentation to the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), Oakland, CA, January 2005.
- 2004 Panel organizer: *Linguistic Diversity, Minority Dialects, and Teaching Standard English in the Urban Writing Classroom*. Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), November, 2004
- 2003a “Codeswitching: Welcoming the languages of home *and* School,” a paper presented at the Annual meeting of the Modern Language Association, San Diego, CA, December 28, 2003.
- 2003b At the **invitation** of the *President of the Linguistic Society of America*, I presented a talk on “The Teaching of Standard English” on a panel, *Bringing Linguistics to the Teaching of English*, at the annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), San Francisco, November 2003. The President of the LSA comments, that my “work in recent years has struck [him] as among the most important [he] has encountered in bringing ideas from linguistics into the classroom, and in particular for training teachers to overcome standard stereotypes about languages in dealing with linguistic minorities.” (letter of invitation, April 11, 2003)
- 2003c Invited: “Codeswitch to Close the Achievement Gap,” a workshop presented in the minicourse of the Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG), State College, PA, July 24, 2003.
- 2003d “Using Students’ Vernacular to Teach Standard English,” a presentation to the annual meeting of the Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG), State College, PA, July 25, 2003.
- 2002a Invited: Plenary Speaker, Louisiana Association of College Composition, February 2002. Topic: “African American Vernacular English in the Classroom: Vantages and Practices.”
- 2002b “From Prescriptivism to Linguistic Habits of Mind: Fostering Discovery Learning of Linguistics in the Teacher Education Classroom,” a paper presented with the symposium from the Linguistics in the Schools Committee: *Bringing Linguistics into the Schools: Preparing K – 12 Teachers and Curricula*. Linguistic Society of America, San Francisco, CA.
- 2001a “What every Educated Person should Know about Language and Why,” a

symposium organized and presented at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, January 2001, Chicago, IL.
2001b Southeastern Conference on Linguistics, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 4-5, 2001, “From Proper to Appropriate Grammar: Discovery learning of Linguistics in English 311, Christopher Newport University.”

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Principal Investigator: SCHEV (State Council on Higher Education of Virginia), *TELES: Technology Enhanced Learning of English and Science in Middle School*. With Co-PI, Dr. Raj Chaudhury, CNU Department of Physics and Co-PI Diane Gladstone, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Northampton Middle School. TELES brings technology to the service of science learning and to using code-switching to teach Standard English to African American children in a high poverty, rural middle school. **Amount funded: \$93,564 under the Title II, Part A – Improving Teacher Quality State Grants of the No Child Left Behind Program.**

Principal Investigator: Funded: \$27,000. Code-switching on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, Grades 6-8. Professional development funded by the Northampton County Public Schools,. July 1, 2007 – May 15, 2008. **Amount funded: \$27,000.**

Principal Investigator: Code-switching on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, Grades 6- 9. Professional development funded by the Northampton County Public Schools, and the Virginia Department of Education. July 1, 2006 – May 15, 2007. **Amount funded: \$20,000.**

Consultant, US Department of Education – GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, Grant # PRP334A050167). 2007 – 2008, Professional Development for teachers in Newport News Public Schools: Warrick High School as experimental group, Heritage High School as control group. Assessing efficacy of Code-switching in changing teachers’ attitudes, students’ self-efficacy and student Standard English performance. **\$20,000.**

Consultant, US Department of Education – GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, Grant # PRP334A050167). 2006 – 2007, consulting with An Achievable Dream Academy (grades 6 – 8)). Goal: teachers use research based tools to foster Standard English mastery among African American students. **\$20,000.**

Consultant, US Department of Education – GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. Grant # P334A990543-04.). 2003 – 2005, consulted with Huntington Middle School to bring teachers research based tools to foster Standard English mastery among African American students. Worked with 8th grade teachers. **\$20,000 per year.**

CONSULTING

Urban Renewal Zone, University of Arkansas, Jonesboro, July 27, 2007. Six hour professional development for teachers, university educators and administrators. \$2,500.

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Consultant. Member of the NCTE consulting network with specialty in teaching Standard English in urban classrooms and improving minority students' writing.

Northampton School district, Eastern Shore, Virginia. 2004 – 2007. Working with English teachers (grades 4 – 9) to integrate Contrastive Analysis and code-switching into the writing curriculum. Goal: boost student performance on Virginia year-end writing tests and assure students gain skills required by broader society. Supported by the Va. Department of Education, through Old Dominion.

Riverside Elementary School, Newport News, VA: 2003 – 2004. I conducted a series of whole-school workshops on code-switching. These workshops teach teachers how to use the linguistic tools of code-switching and contrastive analysis to improve students English scores on statewide tests.

Interboro Business College, New York, New York: Spring 2004. Half day workshop on code-switching to teach teachers how to help urban students to transition to Standard English.

Newport News School System: I consult with Riverside Elementary School and Huntington Middle School, teaching teachers how to use student vernacular language to teach Standard English and so raise student usage/mechanics performance on the Virginia Standards of Learning statewide tests.

Delgado Community College: I analyzed data from Delgado students' writing and gave 2 workshops helping teachers see how to respond to student vernacular language in the classroom, June 13, 2003

Language Consultant: In a series of grammar videos for K – 4 students, slated for nationwide distribution to schools and libraries, I guided Schlessinger Media to move *beyond the traditional notional definitions*, into the use of *form and distribution as tests for determining parts of speech*. This series also features language variation as children play as sleuths discovering contrasting patterns of speech and writing.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

The Linguistic Society of America (LSA)

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

The Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG)

The American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL)

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

American Dialect Society (ADS)

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

NCTE Spokesperson on Grammar, minority language and dialect.

The Undergraduate Program Advisory Committee, Linguistic Society of America (LSA)
(member, 1999 – 2000, **chair**, 2001-2002).

Committee on Language in the School Curriculum, Linguistic Society of America (LSA),
(member 2002 – 2005).

Liaison, between the Linguistics in the Schools Committee of the LSA and the
Undergraduate Program Advisory Committee of the LSA (2001-2002).

Executive Council, Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG) (2000 –
2003).