Nikolas E. Webster

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Department of Linguistics, University of California, Santa Cruz
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EDUCATION

2020 – 2026 (expected)	**University of California, Santa Cruz** Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics Advisor and dissertation chair: Ivy Sichel Committee: Maziar Toosarvandani, Mia Gong, Karlos Arregi
2015 – 2019	**New York University** *summa cum laude* B.A. in Linguistics, with honors Minors in Korean Language and Studio Art

Non-degree programs

2022	CreteLing Summer School at the University of Crete in Rethymno, Greece.
2017	HU German Language Academy at Humboldt Universität in Berlin, Germany.
2016	Korean Language Institute (KLI) at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea.

PAPERS

Journal articles

under review	**Webster, N**. Roots introduce low internal arguments.
to appear	Cartner, M., M. Kogan, **N. Webster** (co-first); M. Wagers & I. Sichel. Subject islands do not reduce to construction-specific discourse function. *Cognition: International Journal of Cognitive Science.* Elsevier.

Conference proceedings

2025	**Webster, N**. Acategorial licensing of internal arguments in Korean. In Barrie, M. (ed.), *Proceedings of the 18th Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics.* MITWPL. 249–259.

Edited volumes

2025	**Webster, N**., Y. Kiper, H. Wang, & L. Lyu (eds). *Proceedings of the 41st West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL41).* Cascadilla Press.

PRESENTATIONS

Refereed conference talks

2025	**Webster, N**. Sino-Korean predicates on the nature of syntactic categorization. *Talk at 49. Österreichische Linguistiktagung (ÖLT49): Workshop on Native vs. Borrowed Word Formation in Synchrony and Diachrony.* Klagenfurt University, Klagenfurt, Austria. Dec 5-8.
2025	**Webster, N**. The syntactic and semantic introduction of internal arguments. *Talk at the 32nd Japanese/Korean Linguistics Conference (JK32).* Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. Jun 13-15.

2025   **Webster, N**., M. Cartner, M. Kogan, M. Wagers, & I. Sichel. Information structure alone cannot account for subject islandhood: an experimental study. *Long talk at the 47th Annual Meeting of Generative Linguistics in the Old World (GLOW47).* Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany. Mar 25-27.

2025   **Webster, N**. Internal argument introduction in Korean complex predicates. *Talk at the 14th Workshop on Theoretical East Asian Linguistics (TEAL14).* University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA. Mar 18-20.

2024   **Webster, N**. Acategorial licensing of internal arguments in Korean. *Talk at the 18th Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics and the 26th Seoul International Conference on Generative Grammar (WALF18 & SICOGG26 joint conference).* Jeonbuk National University, Jeonju, South Korea. Aug 22-24.

2024   Cao, Y. & **N. Webster**. Head Movement as PF-Raising/Lowering in Swahili RCs. *Talk at the 55th Annual Conference on African Linguistics (ACAL55).* McGill University, Montreal, QC, Canada. May 2-4.

Refereed conference posters

2025   **Webster, N**., M. Cartner, M. Kogan, M. Wagers, & I. Sichel. Subject islands do not reduce to construction-specific discourse function. *Poster at the 56th Annual Meeting of the North East Linguistics Society (NELS56).* New York University, New York, NY, USA. Oct 17–19.

2025   **Webster, N**. The syntactic and semantic introduction of internal arguments. *Poster at the 43rd West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (WCCFL43).* University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA. Apr 25-27.

2025   M. Kogan, M. Cartner, **N. Webster**, M. Wagers, & I. Sichel. Subject islands are not caused by information structure clashes: cross-constructional evidence. *Poster at the 38th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP38).* University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA. Mar 27-29.

2024   **Webster, N**., M. Kogan, M. Cartner, M. Wagers, & I. Sichel. Subject islands are not caused by information structure clashes: evidence from topicalization. *Poster at the 30th Meeting of Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing (AMLaP30).* The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland. Sep 5-7.

2024   **Webster, N**., H. Byun, & M. Wagers. Processing arguments in Korean nominal predicates. *Poster at the 37th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP37).* University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA. May 16-18.

2024   **Webster, N**. & Wagers, M. Processing thematic (mis)alignment in Korean nominals. *Poster at the 6th California Meeting on Psycholinguistics (CAMP6).* Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA. Jan 13-14.

Invited talks

2026   **Webster, N**. Delayed argument saturation in Korean double ACC constructions. *Syntax and Semantics Circle.* UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, USA. Feb 13.

2025   **Webster, N**. Delayed argument saturation in Korean double ACC constructions. *S-Circle, a forum for syntax and semantics.* UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. Nov 7.

2025   Vasser, M., **N. Webster**, M. Kogan, I. Sichel, & M. Wagers. Does presuppositionality affect DP sub-extraction? *Linguistics Undergraduate Research Conference (LURC).* UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. May 30.

2025	**Webster, N**. The internal arguments of Korean process nominals and complex predicates. *Workshop on Nominals and Nominalizations in Korean and Beyond* University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL, USA. May 9-10.
2025	Kogan, M., **Webster, N**., Cartner, M., Wagers, M. & Sichel, I. Subject island effects cannot be reduced to information structure. *Linguistics at Santa Cruz (LASC).* UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. Mar 10.
2024	**Webster, N**. Verbal material is not needed for argument structure: evidence from Korean. *S-Circle, a forum for syntax and semantics.* UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. Mar 11.
2023	**Webster, N**. On the argument structure of eventive nominals in Korean. *Syntax and Semantics Circle.* UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, USA. Oct 27.
2022	**Webster, N**. Nominal argument structure in Korean: an analysis of argument realization in non-derived nominals. *Linguistics Spring Research Symposium (LSRS).* UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. May 7.

RESEARCH POSITIONS

2025	**Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)**
	University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of Linguistics
	PIs: Matthew Kogan, Nikolas Webster, Matt Wagers, Ivy Sichel
	Collaborative experimental research investigating pied-piping vs. p-stranding in English Subject Islands. GSR position included mentorship of two undergraduate RAs.
2024	**Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)**
	University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of Linguistics
	PIs: Nikolas Webster, Matthew Kogan, Mandy Cartner, Matt Wagers, Ivy Sichel
	Collaborative experimental research investigating Subject Island effects in large scale acceptability studies. GSR position included mentorship of three undergraduate RAs.
2021	**Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)**
	University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of Linguistics
	PIs: Jaye Padgett, Ryan Bennett, Grant McGuire. Reviewing, analyzing and correcting EdgeTrack traces of tongue-body position of Irish and Russian palatized consonants.
2017	**Research Assistant (RA)**
	New York University, Department of Linguistics
	PIs: Maria Gouskova, Gillian Gallagher. Root and affix segmentation of Bolivian Quechua corpus, for research project on non-local phonological alternations.

PEDAGOGY CERTIFICATIONS

	Arizona State University (ASU), with Coursera
in progress	TESOL Specialization, Professional Certificate. *150 hours of online professional training, covering pedagogical practices within ESL classrooms and theories of second language acquisition.*
	The Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) at UC Santa Cruz
2025	Equitable Course Design, Graduate Certificate. *A quarter-long, credit-awarding professional course covering evidence-based practices for designing courses that center student learning.*
2025	Equity-Minded Mentoring, Graduate Certificate. *A quarter-long professional course exploring evidence-based strategies to support underrepresented mentees in research.*

2024	Preparing for Inclusive Teaching, Graduate Certificate. *A day-long professional workshop on equity-minded learning outcomes, student motivation and sense of belonging.*
2022	Teaching for Equity, Graduate Certificate. *A five-week professional development series covering issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.*
2021	Teaching as an Ethical Practice, Graduate Certificate. *An asynchronous, quarter-long course for TAs introducing professional ethics, with focus on educational equity and accessibility.*

Department of Linguistics at UC Santa Cruz

2020–2022	Teaching Assistant Training (TATr). *credit-awarding course that introduces essential teaching practices for new teaching assistants, tailored to the linguistics discipline. Four quarters in total, approximately four meetings per quarter. Fall 2020, 2021; Winter 2021, 2022.*

Teaching experience

2021 – present	**Teaching Assistant**
	University of California, Santa Cruz, Department of Linguistics

⋄ *Syntax core courses and upper division*
LING 112: Syntax I (Fall 2021, Spring 2023, Fall 2023)
LING 113: Syntax II (Winter 2024, Spring 2026)
LING 124: Language Typology (Fall 2024)

⋄ *Other core linguistics courses*
LING 50: Introduction to Linguistics (Spring 2022)
LING 53: Semantics I (Winter 2025)
LING 100: Phonetics I (Winter 2022)

⋄ *Elective courses*
LING 80C: Language, Society and Culture (Winter 2023)
LING 80M: Language and Indigeneity (Fall 2022)
LING 131: Spanglish (Summer 2022)

⋄ *Other/asynchronous*
LING 80K: Intro to Invented Languages (Summer 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025)

2016 – 2019	**7th & 8th Grade Essay and Writing Tutor**
	New York University, America Reads and Counts
	The Ella Baker School (M225), New York, New York

Mentorship experience

Undergraduate

2025	Ulysses Noë. UC Santa Cruz. *Experimental research on subject sub-extraction: pied-piping vs. p-stranding.* RAship funded by UCSC Linguistics.
2024 – 2025	Matthew Vasser. UC Santa Cruz. *Experimental research on extraction from presuppositional DPs* (2024–2025). RAship funded by the National Science Foundation. *Experimental research on sub-extraction: pied-piping vs. p-stranding* (2025). RAship funded by UCSC Linguistics.
2024	Lisa Pham. UC Santa Cruz. *Experimental research on Subject Island effects.* RAship funded by the National Science Foundation.

| 2023 – 2024 | Alison Sun. UC Santa Cruz. *Corpus annotation of Sino-Korean event nouns* (2023). RAship funded by the Tanya Honig Development Fund. *Experimental research on Subject Island effects* (2024). RAship funded by the National Science Foundation. |
| 2023 | Seoleen Lee. UC Santa Cruz. *Corpus annotation of Sino-Korean event nouns.* RAship funded by the Tanya Honig Development Fund. |

High school

2025 – 2026	Grace Guang, Tyler Chandran, Ananya Mallu. UC Santa Cruz. *The structure of verbs and their arguments in verb-final languages.* Funded by the Science Internship Program (SIP).
2022	Carey Chang, Hannah Chung, Josephine Chong, Akkshansh Bagga. UC Santa Cruz. *Code-mixing & multilingualism in Korean lyrics.* Funded by the Science Internship Program (SIP).
2021	Alaap Rag, Tyler Huang, Cansu Akkaynak. UC Santa Cruz. *Corpora statistics on pre-nominal elements in Korean.* Funded by the Science Internship Program (SIP).

Service

To department

2021 – 2026	Equity in Linguistics (EquiL) Member & Organizer
	A UC Santa Cruz graduate working group focusing on projects and events to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion within the department and field. Lead co-organizer 2022–2025.
	◇ First-year graduate student orientations (Fall 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)
	◇ Graduate student wellness & advising events (Fall 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025; Spring 2023, 2025)
	◇ Department-wide pedagogy development workshops (Spring 2022, 2023, 2025; Winter 2023)
2023 – 2024	UC Santa Cruz Linguistics Graduate Representative
	Attended faculty meetings, provided input on graduate student issues, and coordinated student activities related to recruitment and department job searches.
2020 – 2022	UC Santa Cruz Colloquium/Events Committee Member

To field

2025 – present	FASL35 Organizing Committee Member
	The 35th Meeting of Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics, hosted by UC Santa Cruz
2025	Volunteer Proofreader - Language Science Press (LSP)
	Selected Papers from the 54th Annual Conference on African Linguistics
2023 – 2024	WCCFL41 Proceedings Volume Lead Editor
	The 41st West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics, hosted by UC Santa Cruz
2023	WCCFL41 Conference Volunteer
	The 41st West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics, hosted by UC Santa Cruz
2022	HSP35 Conference Volunteer
	The 35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, hosted by UC Santa Cruz

Industry experience

| 2019 – 2022 | **Contracted Native EN Linguist** |
| | Defined.AI via Upwork. Freelance consultant providing linguistic support, such as text-tagging for AI improvement, phonetic transcription, and text normalization. |

Awards

Graduate career

2025 – 2026 Presidential & Chancellor's Dissertation Fellowship, two quarters ($22,000). University of California, Santa Cruz, Graduate Division.

2024, 2025 Grad Peer Mentor Program Funding Award ($2500 first award; $1100 second award). University of California, Santa Cruz, The Graduate Student Commons. *In collaboration with fellow co-organizers of Equity in Linguistics (EquiL).*

2024 TLC Small Grants Funding Award ($3000). University of California, Santa Cruz, The Teaching & Learning Center. *In collaboration with fellow co-organizers of Equity in Linguistics (EquiL).*

2022, 2023 Humanities Division Summer Fellowship ($3500 per award). University of California, Santa Cruz. *Summer funding for Ph.D. students in their 2nd and 3rd years.*

2020 – 2022 Graduate Student Success (G.S.S.) Fellowship ($2500). University of California, Santa Cruz, The Humanities Institute.

2020 – 2021 Regents' Fellowship ($30,000). University of California, Santa Cruz. *Full year funding package for first-year Ph.D. students.*

Undergraduate career

2019 Robert A. Fowkes Prize for Excellence and Achievement in Linguistics. New York University, College of Arts and Sciences & Department of Linguistics. *In recognition of exemplary linguistic work completed by a graduating senior.*

2019 Summa cum laude (with highest distinction), New York University. *Graduation honors: GPA within the top 5% of the graduating class.*

2019 Elected to Phi Beta Kappa – Beta Chapter of New York

2015 – 2019 CAS Scholarship ($28,970 per year). New York University, College of Arts and Sciences. *Four-year tuition coverage for exemplary scholars pursuing a degree in the humanities.*

2018 Nathan Sawaya Brick Artist Scholarship ($3000). New York University. *Merit-based award.*

2018 Blume Family Scholarship ($1000). New York University. *Merit-based award.*

2017, 2018 Gut Family Scholarship ($5000 per award). New York University. *Merit-based award.*

2017 Dean's Opportunity Study Abroad Scholarship ($1500). New York University. *Merit and needs-based award for undergraduates accepted for a summer abroad program.*

2017 Summer Liberal Studies Scholarship ($1700). New York University. *Merit and needs-based award for undergraduates accepted for a summer abroad program.*

2016 Michael L. Probst Scholarship ($2500). New York University. *Merit-based award.*

Skills

Languages
English (native), Korean (advanced), German (intermediate), Turkish (beginner)

Programming
R, PCIbex, LaTeX, Python, CSS and HTML

Software
Praat, RStudio, Microsoft 365, Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign)

Last updated January 28, 2026