

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.** The syntactic introduction of low internal arguments.
- revise & resubmit Cartner, M., M. Kogan, **N. Webster** (co-first); M. Wagers & I. Sichel. Subject islands do not reduce to construction-specific discourse function.

Book chapters

- revise & resubmit **Webster, N.** & Y. Cao. Derivational timing of auxiliary insertion in Swahili relative clauses. *Selected Papers from the 55th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. LSP.

Conference proceedings

- in press **Webster, N.** Acategorial licensing of internal arguments in Korean. *Proceedings of the 18th Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics*. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.

Edited volumes

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

PRESENTATIONS

Refereed conference talks

- 2025 **Webster, N.** The syntactic and semantic introduction of internal arguments. *Talk at the 32nd Japanese/Korean Linguistics Conference (J/K 32)*. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA. June 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 (GLOW 47)*. Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany. March 25-27.
- 2025 **Webster, N.** Internal argument introduction in Korean complex predicates. *Talk at the 14th Workshop on Theoretical East Asian Linguistics (TEAL-14)*. University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA. March 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 & SICOOG26 joint conference)*. Jeonbuk National University, Jeonju, South Korea. August 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 (NELS 56)*. New York University, New York, NY, USA. October 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. April 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 (HSP 38)*. University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA. March 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 (AMLaP 30)*. The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland. September 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 (HSP 37)*. 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 (CAMP 6)*. Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA. January 13-14.

Invited talks

- 2025 Vasser, M., **N. Webster**, M. Kogan, I. Sichel, & M. Wagers. Does presuppositionality affect DP sub-extraction? *Linguistics Undergraduate Research Conference (LURC)*. University of California 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)*. University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. March 10.
- 2024 [Webster, N.](#) Verbal material is not needed for argument structure: evidence from Korean. *S-Circle, a forum for syntax and semantics*. University of California Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA, USA. March 11.
- 2023 [Webster, N.](#) On the argument structure of eventive nominals in Korean. *Syntax and Semantics Circle*. University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, USA. October 27.
- 2022 [Webster, N.](#) Nominal argument structure in Korean: an analysis of argument realization in non-derived nominals. *Linguistics Spring Research Symposium*. 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.

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 subject 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 Grace Guang, Tyler Chandran, and Ananya Mallu. UC Santa Cruz. *The structure of verbs and their arguments in verb-final languages*. Summer internships funded by the UCSC [Science Internship Program \(SIP\)](#).

2022 Carey Chang, Hannah Chung, Josephine Chong, and Akkshansh Bagga. UC Santa Cruz. *Code-mixing and multilingual identity in Korean lyricism*. Summer internships funded by the UCSC [Science Internship Program \(SIP\)](#).

2021 Alaap Rag, Tyler Huang, and Cansu Akkaynak. UC Santa Cruz. *Corpora statistics on pre-nominal elements in Korean*. Summer internships funded by the UCSC [Science Internship Program \(SIP\)](#).

PEDAGOGY CERTIFICATIONS

The Teaching & Learning Center at UC Santa Cruz (TLC)

2025 [Equitable Course Design](#), Graduate Certificate. *A quarter-long 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 quarter-long professional development series covering issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.*
- 2021 [Teaching as an Ethical Practice](#), Course Completion. *An asynchronous course for TAs introducing professional ethics, with focus on educational equity and accessibility.*

SERVICE

- 2025 – present **FASL 35 Organizing Committee Member**
The 35th Meeting of Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics, hosted by UC Santa Cruz
- 2021 – present **Equity in Linguistics ([EquiL](#)) Member & Organizer**
A UC Santa Cruz graduate working group focusing on projects to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion within the department and field. Lead co-organizer 2022–2025.
- 2025 **Volunteer Proofreader - Language Science Press (LSP)**
Selected Papers from the 54th Annual Conference on African Linguistics
- 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.
- 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 **HSP 35 Conference Volunteer**
The 35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, hosted by UC Santa Cruz
- 2021 – 2022 **UC Santa Cruz Colloquium/Events Committee Member**

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 undergraduate award.*
- 2018 Blume Family Scholarship (\$1000). New York University. *Merit-based undergraduate award.*
- 2017, 2018 Gut Family Scholarship (\$5000 per award). New York University. *Merit-based undergraduate 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 undergraduate award.*

SKILLS

Languages

English (native), Korean (advanced, research-focused),
German (intermediate, heritage), Turkish (beginner)

Programming

R, PCIBex, L^AT_EX, Python, CSS and HTML

Software

Praat, Notepad++, RStudio, Wordpress, Elementor,
Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign)