

# Nikolas E. Webster

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## EDUCATION

- 2020 – 2026  
(anticipated) **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

## PAPERS

### Journal articles

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

### Conference proceedings

- in press [Webster, N.](#) Acategorical licensing of internal arguments in Korean. *Proceedings of the 18th Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics*. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics.
- submitted [Webster, N.](#) & Y. Cao. Derivational timing of auxiliary insertion in Swahili relative clauses. *Selected Papers from the 55th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. LSP.

### 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.

### Manuscripts

- 2024 [Webster, N.](#) Acategorical licensing of internal arguments. [Qualifying exam, UCSC].
- 2023 [Webster, N.](#) Investigating prominence alignment pressures in Korean event nominals. [Second qualifying paper, UCSC].
- 2022 [Webster, N.](#) Nominal argument structure in Korean: an analysis of argument realization in non-derived nominals. [First qualifying paper, UCSC].

## 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

- (upcoming) 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-constructural 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 presuppositional-ity 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 – present **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 extraction in stage vs. individual level predicates. GSR position includes 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)  
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 – present     Ulysses Noë. UC Santa Cruz. *Experimental research on subject sub-extraction in s-level and i-level predicates*. RAship funded by [UCSC Linguistics](#).

2024 – present     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 in s-level and i-level predicates* (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 *The structure of verbs and their arguments in verb-final languages*. Summer project with three high-school interns, funded by the UCSC [Science Internship Program \(SIP\)](#).

2022 *Code-mixing and multilingual identity in Korean lyricism*. Summer project with three high-school interns, funded by the UCSC [Science Internship Program \(SIP\)](#).

2021 *Corpora statistics on pre-nominal elements in Korean*. Summer project with three high-school interns, 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**

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.

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 **WCCFL41 Organizing Committee Volunteer**

*The 41st West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics, hosted by UC Santa Cruz*

- 2022     **HSP2022 Organizing Committee 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.

## SUMMER SCHOOLS

- 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.

## HONORS

- 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

## GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS

### 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 Fellowship (\$2500)  
University of California, Santa Cruz, [The Humanities Institute](#)

- 2020 – 2021 Regents' Fellowship (\$30,000)  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
*Full tuition coverage and funding package for first-year Ph.D. students.*
- Undergraduate career**
- 2015 – 2019 CAS Scholarship (\$28,970 per year)  
New York University, College of Arts and Sciences  
*Four-year funding package 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 (intermediate, research-focused)  
German (beginner, heritage)  
Turkish (beginner)  
Spanish (beginner)

### Programming

R, PCIBex, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Python, CSS and HTML

### Software

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