

Lee-Ann Vidal-Covas | Ph.D.

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Profile

Ph.D. with 10+ years of experience in teaching, research, and data-driven problem solving. Adept at analyzing complex datasets, designing effective processes, and communicating technical insights clearly to diverse audiences. Skilled in R, LaTeX, Praat, and data visualization, with growing experience in Python for automation, data processing, and integration with diverse analytical workflows. Strengths include project management, instructional design, and team leadership. Experienced in translating abstract concepts into practical applications, supporting cross-functional collaboration, and adapting quickly to new tools and challenges. Committed to using language, data, and design thinking to create meaningful impact across education, technology, and research-focused industries.

Education

- 2025 **Ph.D.**, *Boston University*, Linguistics
Dissertation: *Covariation & Saliency in Linguistic Contact: A Sociophonetic Study of Liquid Variation in Spanish in Boston*
Committee: [Daniel G. Erker](#) (Chair), [Neil J. Myler](#) & [Kate Lynn Lindsey](#)
- 2021 **M.A.**, *Boston University*, Linguistics
- 2013 **M.A.**, *Louisiana State University*, Hispanic Studies/Spanish Linguistics
Thesis: *El uso variable de los pronombres sujetos en el castellano puertorriqueño hablado en Luisiana y Puerto Rico*
Committee: [Rafael Orozco](#), [Jeremy King](#) & [Andrea Morris](#)
- 2011 **B.A.**, *Louisiana State University*, Hispanic Studies and Literatures
- 2020 **The New York - St. Petersburg Institute of Linguistics, Cognition, and Culture**, Coursework in writing systems and phonology, morphology, experimental linguistics & syntax

Publications

Refereed Journal Articles

- 2024 [Erker, Daniel G. & Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) Variation, Contact, and Change in Boston Spanish: How social meaning shapes stylistic practice and bilingual optimization. *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics*, 17(2), 223–249.

Refereed Proceedings

- 2023 [Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) ¿Va primero el verbo? or ¿El sujeto va primero?: Subject-verb order in Latin American Spanish. *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America*, 8(1), Article 5542, pp. 1–17.
- 2014 [Orozco, Rafael; Méndez Vallejo, Catalina; & Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) Los efectos condicionantes del verbo en el uso variable de los pronombres personales de sujeto. *Actas del XVII Congreso Internacional de la Asociación de Lingüística y Filología de la América Latina*, pp. 1–17.

Contributions to Edited Volumes (invited)

- 2022 [Erker, Daniel G. & Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) What we say when we say nothing at all: Clues to contact-induced language change in Spanish conversational pause-fillers. *Estudios del Observatorio / Observatorio Studies*, 80, pp. 1–29.
[Erker, Daniel G. & Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) Qué decimos cuando no decimos nada: Claves del cambio lingüístico inducido por contacto en las pausas llenas del español conversacional. *Estudios del Observatorio / Observatorio Studies*, 80, pp. 1–31.

Edited Volumes

- 2021 [Dionne, Danielle & Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) (Eds). *Proceedings of the 45th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development*. Somerville, MA, Cascadia Press.

Other Publications

- 2013 [Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.](#) El uso variable de los pronombres sujetos en el castellano puertorriqueño hablado en Luisiana y Puerto Rico. *LSU Master's Theses*, 3876.

Presentations

Refereed Papers

- 2024 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** How Saliency Influences Dialectal Persistence and Covariation: Insights from Boston's Spanish-Speaking Community, *New Ways of Analyzing Variation* 52, Miami, Florida, November 7th – 9th.
- Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Investigating Saliency and Ideologies in Greater Boston: a Sociophonetic Analysis of Liquid Variation, *International Symposium on Language Ideologies and Attitudes*, Palma de Mallorca, Spain, October 17th – 19th.
- Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Riding the Waves of Saliency: Exploring Spanish Liquid Variation among Boston Spanish speakers, *LSA 2024*, NYC, New York, January 4th – 7th.
- 2023 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Making a Splash: The Saliency of Liquid Variation among Boston Spanish speakers, *New Ways of Analyzing Variation* 51, NYC, New York, October 13th – 15th.
- 2014 Orozco, Rafael; Méndez Vallejo, Catalina; & **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** The Verb as a Predictor of Variable Pronominal Use in Spanish, *New Ways of Analyzing Variation* 43, Chicago, Illinois, October 23rd – 26th.
- Orozco, Rafael; Méndez Vallejo, Catalina; & **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Los efectos condicionantes del verbo en el uso variable de los pronombres personales de sujeto, *The Association of Linguistics and Philology Latin America Conference*, Paraíba, João Pessoa, Brazil, July 14th – 19th.
- Orozco, R., Méndez Vallejo, Catalina, & **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Verb-related Constraints on Variable Pronominal Use: Do we have all the Answers?, *7th International Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics*, Madison, Wisconsin, April 3rd – 5th.
- Orozco, Rafael; Méndez Vallejo, Catalina; & **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** The Effects of Verb Semantics on Pronominal Expression: A Preliminary Study, *XXIX Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages & Literatures*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Feb 27th - March 1st.
- Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** El uso variable de los pronombres sujetos en el castellano puertorriqueño hablado en Luisiana y Puerto Rico, *XXIX Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages & Literatures*, Baton Rouge, LA, Feb 27th – March 1st.
- 2013 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Variable use of subject pronouns in the Spanish in Louisiana, *2nd Graduate Symposium Universidad de Puerto Rico*, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, April.
- Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M. & Linder, Cali.** Variable use of subject pronouns in Spanish, *Southeastern Conference on Linguistics LXXX*, Spartanburg, South Carolina, April 4th – 6th.

Invited Talks

- 2024 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Salient Features, Strong Identities: Social Meaning and Stylistic Choices in Boston Spanish, *World Languages, Literatures & Cultures Department - Louisiana State University*, New Orleans, LA, Dec 3rd.
- 2023 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Making a Splash: The Saliency of Liquid Variation among Boston Spanish speakers, *Linguistics Program - Northeastern University*, Boston, MA, March 23rd.
- 2020 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Guest Lecture: English/Spanish Contrastive Phonology & Filled Pauses, *Intro to Sounds - Boston University*, Boston, MA, October 15th.
- 2017 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Teaching Foreign Language in the 21st Century Classroom, *Louisiana Education Technology Consortium*, Baton Rouge, LA, March.

Refereed Posters

- 2023 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** ¿Va primero el verbo OR El sujeto va primero?: Subject-Verb order in Latin American Spanish, *LSA 2023*, Denver, CO, January 5th– 8th.
- 2021 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Filled pauses as a site of language contact among Spanish-speaking Bostonians, *LSA 2021*, Virtual, January 9th.

Campus/Departmental Talks

- 2025 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Covariation & saliency in linguistic contact: A sociophonetic study of liquid variation in Boston Spanish, *Dissertation Defense - Boston University*, Boston, MA, April 7th.
- 2023 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Making a Splash: The Saliency of Liquid Variation among Boston Spanish speakers, *Graduate Research Forum - Boston University*, Boston, MA, March 20th.
- 2020 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** Filled pauses as a site of language contact among Spanish-speaking Bostonians, *Graduate Research Forum - Boston University*, Virtual, December 2nd.
- 2013 **Vidal-Covas, Lee-Ann M.** El uso variable de los pronombres sujetos en el castellano puertorriqueño hablado en Luisiana y Puerto Rico, *LSU Spanish Roundtable*, Baton Rouge, LA, October.

Grants and Fellowships

Extramural

- October 2024 **Student Registration Award**, *IDEOLING Organizing Committee*, Fundació Universitat Empresa de les Illes Balears, EUR 100
- 2021 **LSA Registration Award**, Committee on Ethnic Diversity in Linguistics (CEDL), *Linguistic Society of America* (LSA2021)
- 2013 **Graduate Presentation Award**, *2nd Graduate Symposium*, Universidad de Puerto Rico - Río Piedras, April, USD 200

Intramural

- Nov 2024 **Travel Grant**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*, USD 894
- October 2024 **Travel Grant**, *Boston University Graduate Student Organization (GSO)*, USD 700
- January 2024 **Travel Grant**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*, USD 796
- Fall – Spring 2023 – 2024 **Graduate Student Fellowship**, *Boston University GRS & Office of the Provost*
tuition + stipend
- October 2023 **Travel Grant**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*, USD 817
- January 2023 **Travel Grant**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*, USD 910
- Spring 2019, 2022 – 2023 **Graduate Student Fellowship**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*
tuition + stipend
- Sum–Fall 2019, Sm 2020–F 2021 **Research Fellowship**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*
tuition + stipend
- Fall 2018, Spring 2020 **Teaching Fellowship**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*
tuition + stipend
- Spring 2021 **Graduate Research Grant**, *Boston University Linguistics Department*, USD 1,000
- 2016 – 2017 **21st Century Classroom Implementation Grant**, *Saint Joseph's Academy*, USD 10,000
- Spring 2012 – Fall 2013 **Teaching Assistanship**, *Louisiana State University*, Foreign Languages and Literatures Department
tuition + stipend
- April 2013 **Travel Grant** (To deliver paper at SECOL LXXX, Spartanburg, SC), *Louisiana State University*
- April 2013 **Travel Grant** (To deliver paper at 2nd Graduate Symposium UPRRP, Río Piedras, PR), *Louisiana State University*

Research Experience

Graduate Student Researcher

- 2021 – 2025 **Dissertation**
Covariation & Salience in Linguistic Contact: A Sociophonetic Study of Liquid Variation in Spanish in Boston
Committee: Daniel G. Erker (Chair), Neil J. Myler & Kate Lynn Lindsey
- 2020 – 2021 **2nd Ph.D. Qualifying Paper**
Subject-Verb Order in Latin American Spanish
Committee: Neil Myler (1st Reader), Danny Erker, & Paul Hagstrom
- 2019 – 2020 **1st Ph.D. Qualifying Paper**
Filled Pauses as a site of dialectal and language contact among Spanish-speaking Bostonians
Committee: Danny Erker (1st Reader), Neil Myler, & Jon Barnes
- 2011 – 2013 **M.A. Thesis**
El uso variable de los pronombres sujetos en el castellano puertorriqueño hablado en Luisiana y Puerto Rico
Committee: Rafael Orozco (Chair), Jeremy King, & Andrea Morris

Research Assistanships

- 2018 – 2025 **Sociolinguistics Lab**, *Spanish in Boston Project*
Directed by Dr. Daniel Erker
- 2020 – 2021 **Structures of Under-researched Languages Lab**, *The Mirror Principle Violations Project*
Directed by Dr. Neil Myler

Linguistic Fieldwork

2012 – 2013 **Puerto Rican Spanish**, in Puerto Rico (DEC – JAN)
in Louisiana

Teaching Experience

Boston University

Fall 2021 **Language and Music**, CAS LX 120
Grader for Daniel G. Erker

Fall 2020 **Introduction to Sound Systems**, CAS LX 301/601
Course Assistant for Kate Lynn Lindsey

Fall 2018 & Spring 2020 **Say what? Accents, Dialects, and Society**, CAS LX 110
Teaching Fellow for Neil J. Myler

Academy of the Sacred Heart (Middle School)

2017 – 2018 **Introductory Spanish & Basic Technology**
Instructor of Record

Saint Joseph's Academy (High School)

2014 – 2017 **Elementary Spanish I & II; Computer & Software Orientation**
Instructor of Record

Louisiana State University

2012 – 2013 **Elementary Spanish I & II**, Span 1101 & 1102
Instructor of Record

Service

To the Department

2021 – 2022 **Graduate Student Organizer**, Linguistics Department Colloquium Series, Boston University

Summer 2019 **Lab Manager**, Sociolinguistics Lab(Spanish in Boston Project), Boston University

To the Discipline: Committee

2020 **Co-Organizer**, 45th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development

Sponsorship Chair, 45th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development

2019 **Volunteer Chair**, 44th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development

To the Discipline: Other Work

2021 **Panelist**, Virtual Open House for MA/PhD Linguistics Programs, Boston University, December 13th

Volunteer, 95th Annual Meeting Linguistic Society of America (LSA2021), Boston University, January

2020 **Panelist**, Panel on PhD Applications, Boston University, November 4th

Fall 2018 **Volunteer**, 43rd Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston University

February 2014 **Volunteer**, XXIX Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages & Literatures, LSU

April 2013 **Volunteer**, LXXX SouthEastern Conference on Linguistics (SECOL), Spartanburg, SC

February 2012 **Volunteer**, XXVIII Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages & Literatures, LSU

Other Service

2014 – 2017 **Co-Organizer**, Louisiana Association of High School Spanish Clubs' Annual Conference

Languages

Native English, Spanish
Elementary Brazilian Portuguese
Fieldwork Indonesian, West Greenlandic, Wichita, Yagua, Zulu

Technology

R ●●●● Praat ●●●●
GitHub ●●●● L^AT_EX ●●●●
Python ●●●● ELAN ●●●●