

**AMBER THIESSEN, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
CURRICULUM VITAE**

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston
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EDUCATION

- 2010-2013 Ph.D., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Major: Speech-Language Pathology
Emphasis Areas: Augmentative and Alternative Communication &
Neurological Disorders
Dissertation Title: Visual Attention Patterns for Contextually Rich Images:
Neurotypical Adults in Two Age Groups and Adults with Aphasia
- 2005-2007 M.S., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Major: Speech-Language Pathology
- 2000-2005 B.A., University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders
Minor: Psychology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2013-Present **Assistant Professor**
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston, Houston, TX
- 2013-2013 **Visiting Assistant Professor**
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Houston, Houston, TX
- 2010-2013 **Barkley Scholar Graduate Research Trainee**
Augmentative and Alternative Communication Lab
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE
Director: Dr. David Beukelman

CERTIFICATION, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS, AND TRAINING

- 2007-Present American Speech Language Association (ASHA)
- 2011-Present International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- 2010-Present ASHA Division 12-Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- 2010-Present ASHA Division 2-Neurophysiology and Neurogenic Speech and
Language Disorders
- 2013-Present Texas Speech-Language Pathology License
- 2013-Present Texas Speech-Language and Hearing Association
- 2016 National Institute of Health Regional Seminar, Baltimore, MD.
- 2007-2012 Nebraska Speech-Language Pathology License

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Internal Grants and Awards

- 2019 Personalized Images as Communication Supports, Grants to Enhance and Advance Research (GEAR), University of Houston (Funded, \$37,000)
- 2017 Theme Identification of Two Forms of Message Representation: An Eye Tracking Investigation, CLASS Research Progress Grant, University of Houston (Funded \$3,000)
- 2014 Supporting student learning through hands-on access to augmentative and alternative communication technology, Teaching Innovation Program, University of Houston (Funded, \$23,475)
- 2013 The selection of visual scenes: A comparison of visual attention across three types of scenes, New Faculty Research Grant, University of Houston (Funded \$5,950)

External Grants and Awards

- 2019 The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (The RERC on AAC) National Institute Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) (Co-I Unfunded \$925,000)
- 2017 Personalized Images as Communication Supports, National Institute of Deafness and other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) Early Career Research Award (PI, Unfunded \$300,000)
- 2015 Visual Attention of Adults with Traumatic Brain Injury Minnesota Spinal Cord Injury and Traumatic Brain Injury Research Grant Program (Co-I, Unfunded \$115,087)

Peer Reviewed Publications

- Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.**, Freeland, T., & Brewer C. H. (Accepted). Visual processing patterns of adults with TBI when viewing image-based grids and visual scenes. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*.
- Thiessen, A.**, Brown, J., Freeland, T., & Brewer, C.H. (Accepted). Identification and Expression of Themes Depicted in Visual Scene and Grid Displays by Adults with Traumatic Brain Injury. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*.
- Light, J., Wilkinson, K., **Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Fager, S. (2019). Designing effective AAC displays for individuals with developmental and acquired disabilities: State of the science and future research directions. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*.
- Thiessen, A.** & Beukelman, D. (2019). Learning Styles and Motivations of Individuals Without Prior Exposure to Augmentative and Alternative Communication. *Topics in Language Disorders, 39*(1).
- Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2018). Using images to support individuals with aphasia: Current research and clinical trends. *American Journal of Speech Language Pathology, 27*, 504-515.
- Thiessen, A.**, Brown, J., Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2017). The effect of human engagement depicted in contextualized photographs on the visual attention patterns of adults with traumatic brain injury. *Journal of Communication Disorders, 69*:58-71.
- Thiessen, A.**, Brown, J., Beukelman, D., Hux, K., Myers, A. (2017). Effect of message type

on the visual attention of adults with traumatic brain injury. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 26(2), 428-442.

- Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., & Hux, K., & Longenecker, M. (2016). A comparison of the visual attention patterns of people with aphasia and adults without neurological conditions for camera-engaged and task-engaged visual scenes. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 59(2), 290-301
- Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2015). Noun representation in grid displays: Visual attention patterns of people with traumatic brain injury. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 31(1), 15-26.
- Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., Ullman, C., & Longenecker, M. (2014). Measurement of the visual attention patterns of people with aphasia: A preliminary investigation of two types of human engagement in photographic images. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*. 30(2), 120-129
- Dietz, A., **Thiessen, A.,** Griffith, J., Peterson, A., Sawyer, E., & McKelvey, M. (2013). The renegotiation of social roles in chronic aphasia: Finding a voice through AAC. *Aphasiology*, 27(3), 309-325.

Other Publications

- Thiessen, A.,** & Beukelman, D. (2013). Training communication partners of adults who rely on AAC: Co-construction of meaning. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 22(1), 16-20.
- Beukelman, D., Schrunk, A., **Thiessen, A.,** Fager, S., & Ullman, C. (2012). Vocabulary associated with medical procedures. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 22, 119-123.
- Quinn, E., Beukelman, D., & **Thiessen, A.** (2011). Remote instruction of potential AAC support personnel. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 20, 97-101.
- Thiessen, A.,** Horn, C., Beukelman, D., & Wallace, S. E. (2011). Learning motivation of adults involved in AAC intervention. *Perspectives on Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 20, 69-74.

Invited Publications

- Thiessen, A.** (2019). Compensatory and restorative application of AAC in chronic, severe aphasia. In R.C. Branski & S. M. Molfenter (Eds.), *Speech-Language Pathology Casebook*. Stuttgart, New York: Thieme.
- Thiessen, A.** (2016). Preliminary evidence in support of the use of aided modeling to promote question and declarative sentence production in children with complex communication needs. *Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention*, 10(3-4), 148-154.

Complete List of Published Work in MyBibliography:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncbi/1ZU3maaP9jm58/bibliography/53419590/public/?sort=date&direction=ascending>

Peer Reviewed Research Presentations

- Thiessen, A.,** & Thistle, J. (Accepted 2020, January). *SLP Perspectives on Visual Scene Display Design for Adults*. Assistive Technology Industry Association, Orlando, FL.

- Thistle, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (Accepted, 2020, January). *SLPs' Perspectives on Design of Visual Scene Displays for Children*, Assistive Technology Industry Association, Orlando, FL.
- Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2019, November). *Effect of Visuographic Alterations on Attention to Daily Planners by Individuals With Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.
- Boyd, C., Anderson, P., Brown, J., & **Thiessen, A.** (2019, November). *Linguistic Impact of Grid & Scene AAC Displays for Adults With Acquired Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.
- Thiessen, A.**, Thistle, J., & Brown, J. (2019, November). *SLP Perspectives of the Utility and Challenges of Using Visual Scene Displays for Adult Clients*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.
- Thistle, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2019, November). *SLPs' Perspectives of the Utility & Challenges of Using Visual Scene Displays With Children*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Orlando, FL.
- Thiessen, A.** & Brown, J. (2018, November). *Effectiveness of Grid and Scene Supports for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury*, American Speech-Language and Hearing Association, Boston, MA.
- Brown, J., **Thiessen, A.**, Murphy, M., & Keszycki, R. (2017, November). *Creating & Implementing Effective Daily Planner Supports for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A.** & Brown, J. (2017, November). *Preferences & Visual Attention Patterns for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Displays in Traumatic Brain Injury*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A.** & Brown, J. (2017, March). *The Effect of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Display Type on the Theme Identification Abilities of Adults with TBI*. International Brain Injury Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Thiessen, A.**, Schmadeke, S., Sims, F., Justice, R., & Maher, L. (2017, February). *Examining Outcomes from a Community-Based Wellness Center for Adults with Chronic Aphasia*. Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Austin, TX.
- Thiessen, A.**, Justice, R., Schmadeke, S., & Maher, L. (November 2016). *Outcomes from a community-based wellness center for aphasia*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Thiessen, A.**, Brown, J., Freeland, T., & Hux, K. (2016, November). *AAC display theme identification by adults with TBI: Does image type matter?* American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Brown, J. **Thiessen, A.**, Hux, K. & Salley, J. (2016, November). *Analysis of attention, Processing & visual scanning in adults with traumatic brain injury*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA.
- Brown, J. **Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Hux, K. (2014, November). *Message representation in AAC grid displays: Visual fixation patterns of people with traumatic brain injury*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Annual Convention, Orlando, FL.
- Thiessen, A.**, Beukelman, D., & Boersen. (2013, November). *Image Preferences of People with Traumatic Brain Injury: A Comparison of Two Message Types*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.

- Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., Longenecker, M., & Ullman, C. (2013, November). *The Effect of Engagement on the Visual Attention Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Chicago, IL.
- Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D.** (2012, November). *Visual Attention Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Online Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D.** (2012, June). *Visual Fixation Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Beukelman, D. & **Thiessen, A.** (2012, April). *Training communication partners of adults who rely on AAC*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Online Conference.
- Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D. R.** (2011, November). *Learning styles of potential AAC facilitators*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, San Diego, CA.
- Horn, C., **Thiessen, A.,** & Beukelman, D. (2011, January). *Adult learning and AAC*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Annual Conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Orlando, FL.
- Dietz, A., Sawyer, E., Peterson, A., McKelvey, M., and **Thiessen, A.** (2009, May). *Moderate-severe, chronic aphasia: An exploration of the changes in social roles*. Clinical Aphasiology Conference, Keystone, CO.

Other Peer Reviewed Presentations

- Brown, J. & **Thiessen, A.** (2017, November). *Eye-Tracking Technology: Methods for Evaluating Cognition Following TBI*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Wilkinson, K., O'Neill, T., **Thiessen, A.,** Light, J., Weiss, A., Liang, J., Fehr, C., & Spencer, J. (2017, November). *Optimizing AAC Display Design for Individuals With Developmental or Acquired Disabilities: Contributions of Eye tracking Research*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A. & Brown, J.** (2017, November). *Current Research & Clinical Trends in Image Use for Adults With Aphasia*. American Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Thiessen, A. & Brown, J.** (2016, May). *Communication supports for people with aphasia: An examination of current practices and research trends*. Clinical Aphasiology Conference, Charlottesville, VA.
- Thiessen, A. & Brown, J.** (2014, November). *The visual system after brain injury: Using eye-tracking technology for applied clinical research*. American Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Orlando, FL.
- Thiessen, A.** (2014, February). *Selecting Optimal Visual Scenes for People with Aphasia*. Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Houston, TX.
- Maher, L., **Thiessen, A.** Schmadeke, S., & Justice, R. (2014, February). *A Comprehensive Wellness Approach to Managing Chronic Aphasia*. Texas Speech Language and Hearing Association Convention, Houston, TX.

Invited Research Presentations

- Light, J., Wilkinson, K., **Thiessen, A.,** Beukelman, D., & Fager, S. (2018, July). Designing

effective AAC interface displays for individuals with complex communication needs: State of the science and future research directions. Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Augmentative and Alternative Communication State of the Science Conference, Arlington, VA.

Other Presentations

Thiessen, A. (2018, October). Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), MCO Medical Director's Quarterly Meeting. Austin, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2016, September). Visual scene displays: Existing research and upcoming projects, Texas Institute of Rehabilitation and Research, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2015, May). Selecting optimal visual scenes for people with aphasia. Hot Topics Conference, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. (2015, April). The role of eye tracking in the design of aided AAC displays. Rice University, Houston, TX.

Thiessen, A. & Beukelman, D. (2012, November). *Visual Fixation Patterns of Adults with Aphasia*. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Research Fair, Lincoln, NE.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Coursework

University of Houston

Fall 2015 & 2016 COMD 2376 Anatomy and Physiology

Spring 2015 COMD 6326 Motor Speech Disorders

Fall 2013-2019 COMD 6328 Acquired Cognitive Disorders

Spring 2014-2019 COMD 7381 Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Summer 2013 COMD 7281 Communication Partner Training Clinical Boot Camp

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Fall 2012 SLPA 397A, Observation Class

Fall 2010 & 2011 SLPA 886, Augmentative and Alternative Communication Lab

Fall 2010 Co-Instructor, SLPA 886, Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Student Mentoring

Master's Students

Celene Marie Morales, Committee member, Master's Thesis, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (expected Summer 2019)

Ashley Ramsey, Committee member, Master's Thesis, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Summer 2018)

Casey Richardson, Committee member, Master's Thesis, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Spring 2016)

Chung Hwa Brewer, Independent Research Advisor, Independent Project, University of Houston (Spring 2016)

Caitlin Calder, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2017-2019)

Caitlyn Pratt, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2018-2019)

Meredith Daly, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2018-2019)

David Horn, Specialty concentration advisor, University of Houston (2019-2020)

Undergraduate Students

Farrah Rahim, Independent Research Advisor, Biomedical Engineering, University of Houston (Spring/Fall 2017)

Marisa Martinez, Independent Research Advisor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Summer/Fall 2018)

Emily Starling, Independent Research Advisor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Houston (Fall 2018)

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

National Service

January 2020-	Editor, Perspectives Journal SIG 12 Augmentative and Alternative Communication
January 2017- September 2017-2019	Editorial Board, American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology United States Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) Disaster Relief Committee
March-April 2014	Member of the 2014 ASHA Program Committee for AAC
March-April 2012	Member of the 2012 ASHA Program Committee for AAC

Scholarly Journal/Manuscript Reviews

Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Since 2013
Aphasiology	Since 2015
American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology	Since 2016

Department Service

2019-	Evidence-Based Practice Report (EBPR) Coordinator, COMD, University of Houston
2018-	Academic Advisor, COMD, University of Houston
2016-	Member, COMD Scholarship Committee, University of Houston
2016-	Member, COMD Research Committee, University of Houston
2014-	Member, COMD Admissions Committee, University of Houston
2013-	AAC Team Meeting, University of Houston
2013-2018	Neurological Disorders Team Meeting, University of Houston

Other Service

2018-	Houston Aphasia Recovery Center (HARC) Program Committee
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