

# Analyzing the Effects of Different Signs to Increase the Availability of Designated Accessible Van Parking Spaces

E (Alice) Zhang, M.Ed., Glen W. White, Ph.D.

RTC on Community Living Retreat  
Sept. 15-16, 2014  
Houston, Texas



# Background

- Problem to solve
  - The van accessible designated parking spaces are used by the non-ramp or lift equipped vehicles (NRLEV) with accessible parking permits (Zielinski, 2010; Vogel, 2012). As the group of ramp or lift equipped van (RLEV) users grow because of the needs of the aging society, the problem will be even more salient in the future.

# Background 1

- Goals and objectives

- To investigate whether inappropriate van accessible space parking is a problem that needs to be addressed;
- To evaluate whether intervention signs for van accessible parking can provide better prompts for drivers with accessible parking permits to allow RLEV to park in their designated spaces compared with the current signage.

# Background ctd.

- Hypothesis

- The currently used van parking sign does not sufficiently warn drivers with accessible parking permits who drive a regular car not to park in the van accessible designated space.
- The installation of a more discriminant van identified sign might reduce the number of NRLEV that park in the van identified space.

# Progress to Date

- Study 1 Focus Group
- Study 2 Intervention experiment
- Study 3 Interviews

# Study 1 Focus group

- Participants

12 participants; 10 were people with disabilities and 2 were people without disabilities who provided care and transportation for people with disabilities.

- Questions

Experiences with van accessible parking, and the experience of the van designated space being occupied by drivers driving a regular car with accessible parking permits.

# Study 1 Focus group ctd.

- Key results

- Importance of the accessible van designated parking space
- Concerns about the current van accessible parking space
- Strategies RLEV users used to find parking spaces
- Suggestions

# Study 2 Experimental Study: Multiple Baseline across Two Sites to Assess the Effects of Different Signs

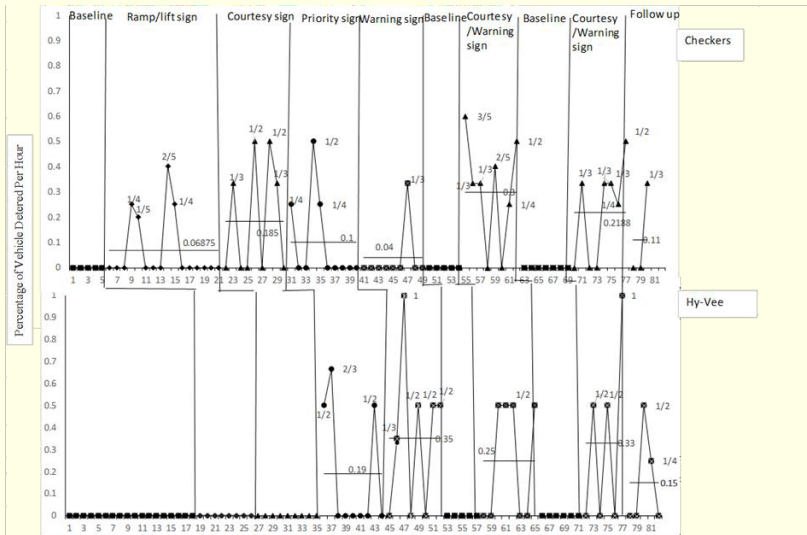
- Method

Current Signs

Intervention signs



# Study 2 Results



# Study 3 Interview

- Purpose

To better understand NRLEV drivers' perceptions about the current signs for accessible van identified parking, who parked at the accessible van identified space

- Questions

Whether the drivers could distinguish the standard accessible parking signs from the standard accessible van parking signs.

# Study 3 Interview ctd.

- Key Results

- Among 10 participants who parked in the accessible van parking space with NRLEVs, 6 indicated that they parked in the space with the regular ADA parking sign, while 4 indicated that they parked in the space with the accessible van parking sign.
- Four out of 7 participants thought it was unnecessary that the van should be ramp or lift equipped to park in the van accessible space.

# Implications

- For consumers
- For practitioners and advocates
- For policymakers
- For researchers

# References

- Zielinski, K. J. (2010). Where Do I Park This Thing? Let's keep van-accessible handicapped parking spaces for those who need them. *Real Living with Multiple Sclerosis*, 17(5), 6-7.
  
- Vogel, B. (2012) . Accessible Parking Etiquette Tips. Retrieved from <http://blog.therohogroup.com/index.php/2012/04/accessible-parking-etiquette-tips/>

# Acknowledgements

- I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who helped me with the project.
- I express my warm thanks to Dr. White for his guidance and support with the project.  
I would also like to thank Dr. Nary for her stimulating suggestions and encouragement.
- Furthermore, I would also like to acknowledge with much appreciation the crucial role of the cohorts and undergraduate students, who helped with collecting data, Jeff Gordon, Kelsey Shinnick, Megan Lounds, James Peter, Mackaela Carter, Katie Cleary, and Kirsten Eyestone.
- The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) grant number H133B110006. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.