

Nigam, R. (1999). *Acquisition and generalization of two-term semantic relationships by children who use augmentative and alternative communication*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Purdue University, West Lafayette. Lyle L. Lloyd (Advisor): 106 pages of text, 72 references, 14 appendices, 2 tables, and 6 figures.

Strategies for producing generalized language skills in children with cognitive disabilities continue to be of considerable interest to clinicians and educators. Matrix strategies employing linguistic elements (e.g., verbs, nouns, adjectives) arranged in systematic language matrices and milieu language teaching strategies have been successfully used to teach generalized word combining skills. Most of the studies employing matrix training or the milieu language teaching strategy to teach generalized word combining skills have involved individuals with some functional speech. The present study investigated the acquisition, and subsequently the generalized production of two-term semantic relationships by children with cognitive disabilities and little or no functional speech. A matrix training strategy and milieu language teaching strategy (a combination of the mand-model and the time delay procedure) were used concomitantly as an intervention procedure. Three children with moderate cognitive disabilities who were augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) users participated in the present investigation. A multiple baseline design across sets of action-object combinations with generalized probes of untrained combinations was used to teach production of graphic symbol combinations. Two of the three participants learned the early syntactic-semantic rule of combining action-object symbols and demonstrated generalization to the untrained action-object combinations in addition to generalization across individuals. The results and future directions for research are discussed.