Zangari, C. (1992). *Preferences among types of pictographic symbols by individuals with moderate and severe cognitive impairments*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Purdue University, West Lafayette. Lyle L. Lloyd (Advisor): 128 pages of text, 167 references, 5 appendices, 18 tables, and 2 figures.

This paper describes a study which used object-to-symbol matching and expressive communication tasks to gain insight into the ways in which pictographs are used by individuals with moderate and severe cognitive impairments (n=4). Six different types of pictographs were used, including both color and black and white photographs, shaded line drawings, and unshaded line drawings.

Two experimental tasks were used to obtain data indicative of subjects' preferences among symbol types and to determine whether the accuracy of their performance varied with symbol type. The first task was a receptive matching task in which subjects were shown an object and asked to select a representation of that object from a 6-symbol array. In the second task, subjects participated in a pre-vocational activity which required them to remove an item from each of 7 bins and place it in a bag. Subjects selected a representation of the needed items from a 6-symbol array to communicate their need for that item, which was then provided to them by the experimenter.

Two of the subjects made their selection on the basis of color, with one selecting black and white symbols most frequently and the other choosing color symbols most often. The remaining two subjects made their selections based on the realness of the symbol as compared with the object referent. One subject selected photos most often while the other demonstrated a preference for shaded drawings. A parallel relationship between accuracy and frequency was noted for all subjects. As symbol type frequency declined, so did the rate of accuracy. All subjects made a great many more errors on the expressive task than on the receptive matching task.

Limitations of this study are discussed along with implications for research and clinical/educational findings. Directions for future research are also presented.