AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF MODELLING ON
MORPHEMIC AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES AS A
FUNCTION OF FAMILY INCOME AND AGE¹

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Children were asked to describe pictures in alternation with an adult model who used either descriptive adjectives in one condition or no adjectives in another condition. No reinforcement or instructions to imitate were given. The variables of age and family income were also studied in a $2 \times 2 \times 3$ factorial design. The effect of modelling on the children's use of adjectives was significant, as were the main effects for family income and age. All two- and three-way interactions were also significant. The significant interactions reflect the fact that the modelling effect was less strong for the preschool children, especially for those from low-income families. Inspection of the individual data for these subjects suggests that the effect was weak and inconsistent across subjects. These results only partially confirm the stronger effects found by Lahey (*Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 1971, 4, 19-22) using a similar population. Clear modelling effects on descriptive adjectives were found with second- and fourth-grade children at both economic levels, however. In the second part of the experiment, the effect of modelling on prepositional constructions was studied using the same procedure and design. Although a statistical test of the modelling effect was significant, no clear evidence for the influence of modelling on prepositional constructions was found.

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