Linguistic politeness in middle childhood:
its social functions, and relationships to
behaviour and development

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Abstract

This research compared Brown and Levinson's "face saving" account of linguistic politeness with the everyday or social normative account in the context of children's requesting skills. The research also explored the relationship between children's politeness skills and their behavioural adjustment. The subjects comprised four groups of ten-and-a-half year old children: a comparison group without behaviour problems; a hostile-aggressive group; an anxious-fearful group; and a comorbid group. All the children were selected from the Australian Temperament Project subject population based on parents' ratings of the children on the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful subscales of the Rutter Child Behaviour Questionnaire. Study 1 found that all the groups of children discriminated between others on the power and distance dimensions in ways consistent with social norms, e.g. adults are judged as more powerful than children. Study 1 also showed that the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups were significantly less likely to discriminate between others on these dimensions compared to the comparison group. Study 2 showed that for all the children studied politeness as a normative way of speaking was marked by use of please whereas face saving politeness was marked by the use of question directives and hints compared to other request forms. Further, Study 2 showed that there were no differences between children with and without behaviour problems in their use of please to mark different ways of asking. Children with hostile-aggressive and comorbid behaviour problems were less likely than comparison group children to use question directives and hints in some social contexts. Children with anxious-fearful
behaviour problems on the other hand showed a similar profile to comparison group children. Study 3 showed that the major factor influencing children's evaluation of the effectiveness of different strategies was whether the requests contained politeness features. Children without behaviour problems were more likely to judge rude requests as effective compared to children with behaviour problems. Study 4 showed that children's level of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems was related to their sensitivity to social distance on the production and evaluation tasks. There was a significant association between children's empathy and their evaluation of the effectiveness of different request strategies. The results showed no association between children's politeness skills and gender. Overall, the results of this program of research suggested the existence of a link between children's hostile-aggressive behaviour problems and their limited skills in the production and evaluation of different politeness strategies. Further, it was concluded that a comprehensive theory of politeness needs to account for children's 'everyday' concept of politeness as well as their use and understanding of politeness as a way of avoiding conflict in social interactions.
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Chapter 1: Overall Introduction

1.1 The research questions

The study of children's production and comprehension of polite forms of language has received considerable attention in recent years (reviewed by Snow, Perlman, Gleason, & Hooshyar, 1990; see also Baroni & Axia, 1989; Ervin-Tripp, 1976, 1977; Bates, 1983). Most of this research has followed the broad approach to linguistic politeness outlined by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Their face saving model viewed linguistic politeness as a means for the strategic avoidance of conflict in social interactions. However, Watts, Ide and Ehlich (1990) noted that this view of politeness does not match the "everyday" usage of politeness. The everyday usage of politeness refers to a socially acceptable or "normative" way of speaking (Fraser, 1990). Watts et al. (1990) noted that researchers in politeness have barely addressed the distinction between what they refer to as first order politeness, i.e. the everyday sense of the term, and second order or theoretical models of politeness. The difference between these two senses of politeness is of particular interest in the study of children's politeness since there is evidence that parents explicitly teach and are concerned about their children speaking politely. However, most of what parents teach explicitly seems to relate to the use of particular forms, e.g. saying please and thank you (Becker, 1986 and see also Gleason, Perlman, & Blank, 1984). This finding suggests that much of children's exposure to direct socialisation in politeness may be to everyday politeness rather
than to politeness as a means of conflict avoidance in social interactions.

The act of requesting has been identified as a key element of linguistic interactions (Labov, & Fanshel, 1977), and one with important social interaction implications. Further, the ability to use requests appropriately in social interactions represents an important sociolinguistic skill that children must acquire (Becker, 1986). This suggests that it is of particular interest to explore the ways in which children vary their requests to mark the different aspects of linguistic politeness in their interactions.

The origin of most contemporary research on linguistic politeness can be traced to Grice’s 1975 suggestion that politeness may represent a social maxim in conversation. There has been in practice surprisingly little research directly investigating the association between social behaviour and linguistic politeness (Tomasello, 1990). Given the suggested relationships mentioned earlier between children’s politeness skills and socialisation, and the relationships between social adjustment and socialisation, this question has particular relevance in terms of children’s development.

As well as these theoretical issues, there are a variety of potential applied implications if linguistic politeness is linked to children’s broader social behaviour. Given the value that parents attach to their children learning polite language routines as a part of socialisation (Gleason et al., 1984), it seems that children’s development of linguistic politeness represents an important element in the child’s acquisition of competent social behaviours.
Thus understanding the relationship between the development of linguistic politeness and other areas of socialisation has the potential to further our understanding of the socialisation of socially competent behaviours. Further, from the perspective of reducing antisocial behaviours, it seems likely in a developmental context that polite language provides an alternative strategy for obtaining desired goals in a social interactions, and one which does not carry some of the undesirable social consequences of aggression (Roedell, Slaby, & Robinson, 1977). Following this argument, considerable effort has been devoted to social skills training programs which seek to improve children's interactional skills as a way of decreasing interpersonal aggression (Bierman, 1986; Ladd, 1981). While the current study does not directly address the social skills domain it has the potential to provide some insights in this area.

In general Brown and Levinson's (1978,1987) politeness theory did not deal with developmental issues. Brown and Levinson suggested that individual's ability to use linguistic politeness is dependent on their accumulated knowledge of social rules and interactional conventions. However Brown and Levinson's model does not address how this knowledge is acquired and the potential for individual differences. The current research extends Brown and Levinson's work to explore some aspects of development and individual differences in linguistic politeness. Following Brown and Levinson's suggestion that the ability to use politeness depends on knowledge of social rules and conventions, children with developmental behaviour problems who are likely to have a different knowledge of
social rules and conventions, than children without behaviour problems, would be expected to show different politeness skills. This is especially true for those children with aggressive behaviour problems who also have difficulties with some of the skills that are likely to shape children's knowledge and use of politeness such as social information processing (e.g. Dodge & Frame, 1982) and the capacity for empathy with others (e.g. Fesbach, 1978). If politeness skills are associated with the range of skills in which children with aggressive behaviour problems have deficits, then we would expect that early as well as concurrent aggressive behaviour would predict limited politeness skills.

Another factor which may influence the use of politeness in social interactions by children with aggressive behaviour problems is the effect of motivation. There is some evidence that children's use of linguistic politeness strategies has a positive effect on their social acceptance by adults, parents and other authority figures and to some extent by peers (Becker, 1988; Becker, & Hall, 1989; Gleason et. al, 1984). However children with aggressive behaviour problems are likely to be less concerned about their social acceptance by others (Patterson, Vuchinich, & Bank 1992). Thus one possible explanation for children with aggressive behaviour using linguistic politeness strategies less often is that they may be less motivated to use politeness. However if they have the same competence as comparison group children this suggests that they would show similar ability to make judgments about different politeness strategies compared to children without behaviour problems.

By comparison there is little evidence to suggest that children with anxious-
fearful behaviour problems have deficits in the areas associated with politeness. Thus we would expect that anxious-fearful behaviour problems would not predict children's politeness skills. Further, to the extent that children's politeness skills are dependent on their knowledge of social rules and interactional conventions, a range of other factors which influence children's social interaction during development would be expected to influence these skills. However, relatively little attention has been devoted to studying linguistic politeness in relation to children's broader social behavioural development. Whether politeness is considered as a socially normative way of speaking or a means for strategic conflict avoidance, it seems clear that we would expect children's knowledge and use of politeness to be significantly influenced by some aspects of the broader non-linguistic social and behavioural context of development (Tomasello, 1992).

1.2 Theoretical approaches to politeness

Watts et al. (1992) distinguished between first order or everyday politeness and second order or theoretical models of politeness. Fraser (1990) proposed a definition of first order politeness as a social "norm" or socially acceptable way of speaking, i.e. "that there are standards of behaviour in society and in any age by which the speaker is deemed to have spoken correctly or not" (page 223). Fraser (1990) noted that, with the exception of some early work in linguistics (e.g. Mathews, 1937), everyday politeness has been largely ignored by researchers. For the current research everyday politeness was defined in terms of children's
understanding of what it means to ask in a "usual", "polite" or "rude" way. This is likely to be a familiar concept to children from parental socialisation in politeness (Becker, 1990).

By contrast, theoretical models of linguistic politeness have received a great deal of attention from researchers (Lakoff, 1973; Kelley, 1987; Watts, 1989; also see Kasper, 1990 and Fraser, 1990 for reviews). The dominant model of linguistic politeness was proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). According to Brown and Levinson, politeness arises from each individual’s desire to preserve their own "face" and minimally threaten other’s "face". "Face" has been defined as the socially situated identity that a person claims for her/himself or attributes to others (Tracy, 1990). It has features in common with the idea of "losing face" or being humiliated, and with the concept of "self presentation".

In Brown and Levinson’s theory people were modelled as rational actors who tried to minimise the threat posed to their own, and/or the other's face by their acts. The threat to face from social acts was seen as an arithmetic function of three dimensions: P, the power relationship between the speaker and hearer; D, the social distance between the speaker and hearer; and R, a culturally determined ranking of the face threatening act.

According to Brown and Levinson’s theory, depending on the level of threat to face, speakers could select one of five super strategies which function as a means of face redress. Face redress referred to various methods of repairing or mitigating the damage to face that could be caused by acts which threaten the others face, for
example, by a request that would impose on the other. The five super strategies in
essence constituted a set of options for how to do a face threatening act or FTA.

1. The first choice which speakers make, according to Brown and Levinson’s
model, is whether or not to do the act.

2. Given that the speaker decides to do the act, the speaker can then identify a
choice between off the record and on the record FTA’s. The distinction
expressed is whether or not there is a single unambiguously expressed
intention. If there is, this is considered as an on the record FTA; if not, it is
considered an off the record FTA.

3. Given that the speaker decides to make an on the record FTA there is then
an option to do so without any face redress, or with face redress.

   Face redress can then take one of two forms:

4. Positive politeness which means to express some positive approval for the
other.

5. Negative politeness which consists of an avoidance of imposition on the
other, e.g. more formal politeness.

Brown and Levinson elaborated for each of their super strategies a series of
specific message strategies. For example, within positive politeness, they identified
specific strategies such as use of in-group identity markers, assuming or asserting
reciprocity, and presupposing common ground between the speaker and hearer.

According to Brown and Levinson’s model, then, politeness is a function of
both the linguistic form and the relationship between the speaker and hearer. Thus
in different contexts the same linguistic form will convey varying levels of politeness, e.g. an unnecessary level of indirectness between equals or intimates may convey sarcasm. Brown and Levinson based their model on observations drawn from a large body of cross-cultural socio-linguistic research which they presented in support of their set of super-strategies and message strategies. The major substantive accomplishment of this study lay in their demonstration that a large amount of linguistic data from several cultures could be accounted for within their theoretical framework. Thus their model is based on a structural interpretation of a large body of observational data. Polite language constitutes in Brown and Levinson’s view a series of strategies for face redress which are used to balance the threat to the other’s face when an individual carries out a face threatening act (FTA). Therefore, following Brown and Levinson’s model, to effectively use polite language as a means for the strategic avoidance of conflict, individuals must continuously consider the impact of their own utterances on the other’s face. In principle, this would also apply to the individual’s own face although most of Brown and Levinson’s discussion concerns the other’s face.

Subsequent research within the framework of Brown and Levinson’s theory has identified a number of serious problems and issues. Several studies have found evidence to suggest the existence of a distinct dimension of relationship affect, i.e. the emotional relationship between speaker and hearer, that can be distinguished from the social distance dimension (e.g. Sluiter, & Turnbull, 1988; Blum-Kulka, 1990). In a comprehensive review of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory,
Craig, Tracy, and Spisak (1986) identified several important problems with the theory. They study attempted to use Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to describe the variability in large body of existing request data. Craig et al. found problems in identifying when particular strategies were being used and they noted that multiple strategies can co-occur. Further, Craig et al. noted that politeness theory does not lend itself well to quantitative predictions about the form of the relationship between situational context and the output strategies utilised, i.e. whilst the theory suggests that the polite strategy selected should be an additive function of power, distance and ranking of the FTA, in practice they argued that it is very difficult to develop specific predictions when working from the theory. Craig et al.'s work is one of the few studies that has used Brown and Levinson's model to attempt to comprehensively account for the variability in social relational markers in a single large scale data set. This contrasts with Brown and Levinson's original work which identified commonalities in the use of social relational markers across a broad body of data from a range of sources without attempting to completely account for the variability in a single data set.

For the current research, it is argued that politeness theory essentially predicts a specific interaction between social context dimensions and use of politeness strategies, i.e. that more face redressive strategies should be used when making requests to more powerful and/or more distant others and/or requests that are more imposing. Further, politeness theory makes a strong claim that this interaction should be invariant across all speakers. The current research explored the
hypothesis that this interaction may vary between normally developing children and children with different types of social behaviour problems.

It is notable that Brown and Levinson's model assumes the existence of power and distance dimensions which every individual uses to categorise others in their social world. This assumption is potentially problematic in a developmental context and particularly for children with disordered social behavioural adjustment, who may not categorise others in their social worlds in the same way as normally developing children. This is an aspect of Brown and Levinson's theory that does not appear to have been addressed by previous research in children's politeness.

A broader issue raised, in a recent review of politeness research, by Kasper (1990) is that, while Brown and Levinson's model deals with politeness as a means for the strategic avoidance of conflict, it does not address the broader concept of politeness as a social construct which serves such functions as social indexing, i.e. the use of politeness as normative social way of speaking as discussed earlier. Further, Watts et al. (1990) argued that "As we have seen, in examining linguistic politeness we are dealing with a lay first-order concept which has been elevated to the status of a second order concept within the framework of some more or less adequate theory of language usage. This being so, it is crucially important to state in what ways the two concepts differ and this, as we have also seen, is rarely if ever done." (page 4). The difference between the two concepts of politeness is thus an issue that applies both to Brown and Levinson's model and more broadly to other theories of politeness. This is of particular interest in terms of children's politeness.
skills since it relates to what children learn when they develop pragmatic skills. This distinction is explored in the current research by investigating both children's use of politeness in requests in relation to the social context dimensions and their use of politeness as a normative "way of asking".

Tracy (1990) used the term "facework" to describe the range of communicative strategies that individuals use in interactions in the enactment of, support of, or challenge to face. It has been argued that a more comprehensive analysis of facework in social interactions, compared to Brown and Levinson's approach, shows that avoiding threatening the other's face is only one of a wide range of approaches that individuals adopt both within and across interactions (Craig et al., 1986; Coupland, Grainger, & Coupland, 1988; Tracy, 1990). Other researchers have argued that Brown and Levinson's use of the concept of face is grounded in a Western cultural concept of individual face that is not applicable to many non-Western cultures (Ide, 1989). These issues are not pursued within the current research but they may represent limitations to the generality of politeness theory (see however Scollon and Scollon (1981) for a notable application of Brown and Levinson's model in a cross-cultural context). For the current research Brown and Levinson's theory will be considered as offering a rich interpretive framework for research but one that is in some respects incomplete and it is also some distance from directly specifying testable hypotheses.

Most of the major theoretical models of politeness such as Brown and Levinson's politeness theory have conceptualised politeness as residing in the
relationship between the specific linguistic form and aspects of the social context in which the utterance was produced. However there is also evidence for another aspect of politeness characterised by a particular way of speaking which is recognised as polite in terms of the socio-cultural norm (see for example Fraser's 1990 definition of first order politeness.) This is in part a value laden construct and historically has been linked to social class (Mathews, 1937). For the current research it is suggested that these two aspects of politeness may represent related elements of a broader construct of politeness.

Linguistic politeness, in common with many other theoretical constructs in psychology, e.g. intelligence, began as a lay concept that has been refined and elaborated into a theoretical construct (Ide, 1989). Various researchers have identified different concepts of linguistic politeness. Kasper (1990) distinguished between politeness as social indexing and the strategic use of politeness in social interactions. Politeness as social indexing operates independently of the immediate goals of the participants in the interaction. Rather, Kasper argued that social indexing recognises the fact that some individuals or roles exercise a claim to deference irrespective of the goals of the immediate social interaction. By comparison strategic politeness is concerned with the immediate goals of the participants in the interaction. Ervin-Tripp et al. (1990) proposed, on similar lines to Kasper, a distinction between politeness as social indices, as social tactics and as persuasive tactics. Ervin-Tripp's use of "social indices" is essentially the same as Kasper's social indices and her concept of social tactics is similar to the face saving
view of politeness. The concept of persuasive tactics is the use of politeness to achieve specific instrumental goals, e.g. the child persuading a parent to get a toy. Fraser (1990) identified four current theoretical views of politeness: the social norm view, the conversational maxim view, the face saving view, and the conversational contract view. The social norm view is essentially the "folk" idea of politeness as a particular normative way of speaking. The conversational maxim view identifies politeness as a maxim in spoken interaction similar to other maxims such as "be relevant" etc. The face saving view is Brown and Levinson's model of politeness. The conversational contract view holds that the participants in a conversational interaction bring an understanding of some initial rights and obligations that at least in part determine what each can expect from the other (Fraser, 1990).

In summary, there is evidence of recognition in the literature of these different aspects of politeness. However, no empirical research was located that had compared the characteristics of different aspects of politeness. Understanding the relationships between children's use and understanding of conventional politeness routines and "face saving" aspects of politeness has the potential to offer insights into children's development of politeness skills.

1.3 The development of politeness

The development of linguistic politeness among children is an issue which has received a considerable amount of attention. Ervin-Tripp (1977) presented an
extensive analysis of the development of children’s comprehension and production of linguistic politeness. She studied children aged 3-and-a-half to 5-years and reported that they responded to the addressee’s age and dominance as well as the task in producing and making judgments about different politeness strategies.

Ervin-Tripp concluded that children from an early age have a system of alternative request forms that are used in ways which are systematically related to social context. According to Ervin-Tripp children acquire with age increasingly complex rules for the production and interpretation of requests and more importantly the ability to conceal their purposes, i.e. the use of indirect requests. Broadly, Ervin-Tripp’s results suggest that with age children acquire more sophisticated ways of dealing with others through the use of politeness.

Axia and Baroni (1985) investigated children’s politeness skills at five, seven and nine years of age. They reported that only the nine years olds had in their terms fully mastered politeness, i.e. children of this age were able to use politeness in interactions to take account of other’s feelings. Axia and Argenti (1989) outlined a three stage model of the development of linguistic politeness based on empirical data:

1. In the first phase, children have minimal knowledge of politeness in language; they recognise the partner’s feelings and try to do something about them with language but they do not use politeness.

2. In the second phase, around seven years of age, children know some sociolinguistic rules of politeness and can use them to repair interactions.
In the third phase, around age nine, children can incorporate both sociolinguistic rules and concern for the other person's feelings into their use of language in interactions.

In summary, then, there is evidence that children acquire a basic set of politeness routines relatively early but do not develop the capacity to use politeness in responding to the feelings of the other participant until around seven to nine years of age.

Various approaches have been used to test children's abilities to produce and understand linguistic politeness. Understanding here refers to making a judgement as to whether a given form is more or less polite, more "nice" or more "bossy", than another alternative (Becker, 1986). The development of requesting is an area of politeness which has received significant attention because any speech act that has clear interactive consequences may be seen as a request for a response of a certain kind (Labov & Fanshel, 1977). Thus the handling of requests is a key aspect of conversational competence, particularly in a developmental context where the child speaker is frequently at a power disadvantage compared to the hearer. Further, according to Labov and Fanshel (1977), "We find that most of these requests are employed to accomplish other purposes, which strongly affect the social and emotional relations of the persons involved" (page 93). Thus requests have been identified as having a significant social interactional role.

Blum-Kulka (1990) investigated the use of politeness between children and adults within the family context. She reported that language used in family settings
is highly direct, but that this is perceived by the participants as appropriate and not offensive due to the asymmetric power relationship between children and adults, i.e. both children and parents perceive it as acceptable that parents can direct children, and also accept the level of informality that is expected within the family. In a similar analysis of naturalistic language data from family settings, Snow, et al. (1990) also reported that a high level of directness is used in language spoken between family members. These findings suggest that children’s patterns of politeness may not be what would be expected on the basis of Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory. Specifically, the results suggest that a high level of directness is considered polite or at least not impolite when directed towards older, more powerful others within the family.

In a series of experiments, Becker (1986) examined five and ten year old children’s production and interpretation of requests which varied in their degree of directness and in the status of the intended hearer. She reported a production experiment in which children were asked to make the same request to an imagined other varying in status. She reported that children can vary the directness of their requests in relation to the status of the intended hearer. The number of different linguistic devices used and the extent of the differentiation increased with age. Becker also reported a judgement study in which children were asked to make judgements as to whether requests made by various imaginary others were “nice” or “bossy”. The variables manipulated for this study were the status of the other and the directness of the request. Becker showed that ten year olds use a variety of
features to distinguish "nice" vs "bossy" requests. The features that they made use of included grammatical form, use of "please" and request for an object compared to other requests. Becker reported that children judged as "bossy" any direct requests from low status others. The results of Becker's studies provided empirical confirmation that the politeness of a given utterance is a function of the form of the utterance in relation to the status relationship between the speaker and the intended hearer. In another study using a somewhat different methodology Becker, Kimmel and Bevill (1989) explored the relationships between request form, speaker status and college student's judgements of requests. The subjects in this research were required to rate the speaker in a vignette on politeness and other qualities. Becker et. al reported an interactive effect of request form and speaker status on subjects ratings of speakers.

In one of the most extensive studies of children's judgements of politeness, Wilkinson, Wilkinson, Spinelli, and Chiang (1984) conducted a series of experiments which examined school age children's knowledge of pragmatic rules. In one experiment they examined children's judgments of the appropriateness of different requesting strategies in various social contexts. They presented the children with scenarios involving a child asking the teacher for help or asking another student for help, and several different ways the child could ask. They then asked the children whether each of the ways presented would be a good way to ask, and they asked the children to explain their judgments. The results showed a number of factors influencing children's judgements, including indirectness, use of
the word "please", requests for object versus action and age of the intended hearer. Wilkinson et al. (1984) also asked the children to explain the reasons for their judgments. Factors which significantly influenced the explanations children produced included age of the child, linguistic ability, form of the request and use of "please".

Ervin-Tripp, Strage, Lampert, and Bell (1987) investigated two alternative models of children's understanding of requests in a series of observational and experimental studies. The first model proposed that understanding of requests starts from the hearer's literal interpretation of what is said. The hearer then checks with context, identifies speaker intention, and finally proceeds to choice of action. A second contextually based model assumed hearers start from the situation, project normal activities for their role, process language enough to identify contextual references, and check mismatches with the projected action. They argued that their data supported the second model in which situation plays a stronger role than linguistic form in the understanding of requests.

Garton and Pratt (1990) investigated eight to twelve year old children's ratings of the politeness, effectiveness and likelihood of use of different request forms presented in scenarios that systematically varied the age of the intended hearer. The results showed that politeness was highly correlated with effectiveness except when the child was addressing another child of the same age. Further, the study showed that children did not differentiate between hearers based on age, i.e. their ratings did not vary with the age of the intended hearer.
In a similar study Bernicot (1991) examined children's ability to think about variation in the linguistic forms of requests in different communicative situations. She asked five, seven and ten year old children to evaluate the appropriateness of requests made by characters in stories and to explain their judgments. Bernicot reported that children's explanations for the appropriateness of requests varied primarily due to request form, and also that there was an age effect, i.e. both number of explanation types and length of explanations increased with the age of the child. Bernicot (1994) examined relationships between the pragmatic aspects of mothers speech to their daughters and the mothers cultural origin and parent rearing style. She reported that mothers with a coercive parenting style spoke more and used more assertive speech acts than mothers with an inductive parenting style.

Camras, Pristo, and Brown (1985) studied children's understanding of the relationship between immediate social context, request style and affective state of the speaker. The results showed that the style of the requests children attributed to angry speakers were significantly less polite than those attributed to happy or neutral speakers. This suggests that children understand the relationship between request style and the affective relationship between participants. Further, this provides some evidence of a direct linkage between request style and broader aspects of social interaction.

Studies investigating children's politeness skills can be divided into two main types based on the methodology used, those which either capture children's spontaneous productions or seek to elicit them and those which involve children
making explicit judgments of some kind regarding the politeness of different linguistic forms. Gombert (1987) argued that these different types of studies tap what he referred to as pragmatic skills, i.e. the ability to produce differing polite forms in response to context, and meta-pragmatic skills, i.e. the ability to consciously reflect on the politeness of linguistic forms. He further suggested that differences between the results of a substantial number of studies of children's politeness could be accounted for if metapragmatic skills are acquired significantly later than pragmatic skills. He suggested that a basic set of pragmatic skills are acquired around 3-4 years of age whereas meta-pragmatic skills are acquired significantly later, around 7-9 years of age. Gombert (1992) in a broader review of work in pragmatic development summarised a broad range of studies all of which provided further support for the view that children initially acquire a limited set of conventional politeness routines at 3-to-4-years-of-age and acquire more sophisticated meta-pragmatic skills later in development.

This work fits within the broader context of work on children's development of meta-pragmatic awareness (see for example Pratt, & Nesdale, 1984; Clark, 1978). In general this research has supported the argument for later acquisition of meta-pragmatic skills around seven to nine years of age.

To summarise, the studies by Axia and Baroni indicated that children's development of politeness skills is not completed until at least seven to nine years of age. The studies by Blum-Kulka and Snow et al. suggested that the relationship between politeness strategies and familiarity predicted by Brown and Levinson's
work may not hold for interactions with others within the family. From the work by Wilkinson et al. (1984) and Becker (1986) there is evidence that children's use of politeness strategies in requests is influenced by context in ways broadly consistent with Brown and Levinson's model. The studies by Ervin-Tripp et al. (1987) of the roles of context and linguistic form in children's ability to understand and respond to requests found that context plays the primary role. Bernicot's (1991) work suggested that children's politeness judgments were primarily influenced by the form of the request and that context played a lesser role. The study by Camras et al. suggests an association between children's politeness skills and knowledge of social interactional conventions. The work by Gombert (1987) suggests that children's ability to produce polite forms may be acquired significantly earlier than their ability to make judgments about the politeness of different forms. The research summarised concerning children's production and judgements about polite language suggests two broad alternative views of the developmental relationship between these domains. The first view is that these are very closely related domains primarily involving children's knowledge of and ability to discriminate between linguistic forms. The second view is that children's pragmatic skills reflect a combination of their tacit knowledge of linguistic forms and their knowledge of social interaction while their ability to make judgements about the effectiveness and appropriateness of different politeness strategies are indicative of a broader "social sensitivity" to others that is closely related to constructs such as empathy.

Finally, with the exception of some work by Becker and Smenner (1986), very
little attention has been given to children’s use of everyday politeness as compared to their strategic use of politeness in interactions, i.e. face saving politeness (see also Gleason et al., 1984).

The current research followed in significant respects from the approach used by Becker (1986) and by Wilkinson et al. (1984) in that it investigated children’s ability to produce and evaluate requests differing in politeness. Following Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory it was hypothesised that more indirect strategies would be used in requests to more powerful and/or more distant others and/or for requests that make a greater imposition on the other. The current research also explored factors influencing children’s evaluations of different requesting strategies. Following from the basic assumptions of Brown and Levinson’s theory and other work in politeness it was hypothesised that children would use two rules in evaluating the effectiveness of requests, a) be polite, i.e. requests containing politeness features would be judged as effective regardless of context, and b) respect the other’s face, i.e. requests that minimised the threat to the other’s face would be judged to be more effective than those that did not. The current work extended the research agenda to explore children’s use of everyday politeness in requests and how this compared to their use of strategic, or face saving, politeness. Further, in order to make a preliminary investigation of the developmental origins of children’s politeness skills, this research directly compared the effects of children’s current and prior behaviour adjustment on their production and evaluation of politeness.
1.4 Politeness and social behavioural adjustment

As noted earlier, Brown and Levinson's work did not address developmental questions in politeness and did not deal with the issue of individual differences. However, their model assumed that the ability to use politeness in interactions is dependent on the individual's cultural knowledge of social rules and conventions, e.g., be deferent to superiors. Thus, to the extent that groups of children with different types of social behavioural problems show differences in their knowledge and sensitivity to social rules and conventions, we would expect these groups to show differences in their ability to use linguistic politeness effectively in interactions.

In general, research on children's behavioural problems has identified two major groupings: children with externalising problems, "troublesome children"; and children with internalising problems, "troubled children" (Prior, Smart, Sanson, Pedlow, & Oberklaid, 1992). Recently "comorbid" children showing both types of behaviour problems have attracted research attention (e.g. Quiggle, Garber, Panak, & Dodge, 1992). Children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems form a subset of the externalising group. These children may be involved in incidents of hitting, kicking, biting or using verbal aggression against others; they also engage in destructive behaviour and are often disruptive and non-compliant at school or in the home (e.g. Pitkanen, 1969; Pitkanen-Pulkinnen, 1981). Children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems form a subset of the internalising group. These children tend to show withdrawn behaviour, they may appear anxious in social interactions,
they often worry about things, and frequently cry (Rubin, Moller, & Emptage, 1987).

The approach that was adopted in the present research was to identify children as belonging to one of: a comparison group without behaviour problems; a hostile-aggressive group; an anxious-fearful group; or a comorbid group. These classifications were based on parents ratings on an age appropriate measure of child behaviour problems, the Childhood Behaviour Questionnaire (Rutter, Tizard, & Whitmore, 1970). A study by Rubin et al. (1987) verified the validity of this instrument by comparing results obtained with the Preschool Behaviour Questionnaire, a closely related form of the CBQ, with conceptually related behaviours observed during free play in a group of 157 elementary school aged children.

There are a variety of sources of evidence which suggest that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems, including children with comorbid behaviour problems, show deficits in a range of areas that are likely to be implicated in their capacity to use linguistic politeness appropriately in social interactions. These areas include the capacity for empathy with others, a history of positive relationships with parents and siblings, and a range of social information processing skills. In reviewing this research it is necessary to take into account that research in linguistic politeness and the study of individual differences in children’s development represent very different domains of research which have employed quite distinct methodologies and conceptual frameworks (for a discussion of this issue, see
Vuchinich, Vuchinich, & Coughlin, 1992). Thus politeness research has typically dealt with variables acting in language populations, e.g. the general effects of power and distance relationships on types of linguistic strategies produced, whereas work on social and behavioural development has typically focused on differences between children rather than relationships between variables. Further, and more critically, the basic concepts in research on individual differences were developed within a measurement tradition, whereas the basic concepts in linguistic politeness were developed within a structuralist framework which in general did not address measurement issues.

At a theoretical level the capacity for empathy appears to be implicated in an individual's ability to use politeness in social interactions. Research on conversational interactions in clinical settings, for example, has emphasised the importance of empathy through the therapist’s use of language (Condon, 1984). Further, Brown (1988) described politeness as the ability to "take account of the feelings of the other" which is conceptually very close to the concept of empathy. There is a significant body of research in individual differences suggesting that children with aggressive behaviour problems show lower levels of empathy compared to children without behaviour problems (Fesbach, 1978; Eisenberg, & Fabes, 1990).

There is a limited but developing body of research on the role of parental interaction in children’s development of politeness skills. Becker and her colleagues (e.g. Becker, 1988) have found that parents place a high value on their children
developing appropriate politeness skills. Other research evidence suggests that, while parents may directly teach some conventional forms of politeness, e.g. "please" and "thank you" they tend to use more indirect methods in conveying the use of social politeness (e.g. Gleason et al., 1984). Becker (1994) conducted a detailed investigation of parents pragmatic inputs to preschoolers. She reported that parents provide a rich variety of pragmatic inputs including both abstract discourse skills and specific inputs such as use of "please" and "thank you" and polite requests. Research on parent child interactions with children with aggressive behaviour problems suggests that these children and their parents tend to have cycles of antagonistic and coercive interactions (Patterson et al., 1992). This may result in these children receiving less effective politeness teaching from their parents compared to children without behaviour problems.

There is an extensive literature on aggressive behaviour and its relationship to social information processing following the model developed by Dodge and his colleagues (see for example Dodge, 1980; Dodge, & Frame, 1982). According to Dodge's model there are five major social information processing steps involved in social interactions:

1. encoding - where the social situation is encoded;
2. interpretation - where the results of the encoding stage are interpreted;
3. response generation - where a number of possible responses are generated;
4. response selection - where possible responses generated in the previous stage are evaluated and a response is selected; and
response enactment when the chosen response is produced.

This model has been subject to a substantial amount of research which has tended to support the model (for reviews see Ahktar, & Bradley, 1991; Crick, & Dodge, 1994).

The effective use of linguistic politeness as a means for the strategic avoidance of conflict clearly entails efficient and accurate processing of social cues. Thus if, as Dodge proposed, children with externalising behaviour problems have deficiencies in their ability to process social cues, this would be expected to have a negative impact on their ability to modulate their style of language in relation to the social context.

Research into social information processing in children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems is somewhat more limited than on children with aggressive behaviour problems. Hymel et al. (1990) found linkages between internalising behaviour problems, social isolation, and perceived social incompetence. A body of work by Rubin (for a review see Rubin, LeMarc, & Lollis, 1989) suggests that children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems show similar social information processing skills to those of children without behavioural problems. According to Rubin et al. these children’s relative lack of social success is due to high levels of social anxiety combined with low self esteem arising from a history of unsuccessful social interactions. Overall, while children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems show evidence of a number of problems in social interaction, these children do not show evidence of deficits in the skills specifically related to linguistic politeness.
No research was located that distinguished children with comorbid behaviour problems from children with aggressive behaviour problems in studies of social information processing. Based on the evidence noted above regarding some of the difficulties experienced by children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems, i.e. high levels of social anxiety which may result in less social interaction of any kind, combined with high levels of aggressive behaviour problems, it seems plausible that these children would show poorly modulated responses even compared to the hostile-aggressive group.

In summary, the research reviewed so far has suggested that children with aggressive behaviour problems may have deficits in a number of the basic skills required to use politeness effectively in social interactions. It should be emphasised that it is not argued here that a social information processing model or any other single theoretical perspective is sufficient to integrate linguistic politeness and individual differences research. The research suggests that there are differences between children without behaviour problems and children with aggressive behaviour problems in

- social information processing skills
- the capacity for empathy; and
- experience of interaction and modelling of social behaviours by their parents.

Further, as discussed in section 1.1 and elsewhere, it is likely that children with aggressive behaviour problems may be less motivated to use politeness in
interactions compared to children without behaviour problems. Children with aggressive behaviour problems are likely to be less concerned about avoiding conflict in interactions since they may prefer to use aggressive strategies in interacting with others.

Overall, these differences suggest that children with aggressive behaviour problems would be expected to be less likely to use politeness to avoid conflict in their social interactions, e.g. by modulating their requests in relation to the social context, compared to children without behaviour problems. Viewed from a broader perspective the effective use of linguistic politeness in social interactions may be considered as a key skill required to be a socially competent individual. Thus it may be that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems level of skill in using politeness in their social interactions is either a reflection and/or a cause of these children being less able to interact successfully with a range of others (Attili 1990). Also there is evidence that children with aggressive behaviour problems have a history of antagonistic, coercive interactions with their parents who also tend to be more punitive and authoritarian. This may tend to work against children with aggressive behaviour problems receiving the kinds of pragmatic inputs from parents that Becker (1994) reported children without behaviour problems receive.

There has been relatively little work that has tested directly whether children’s skills in linguistic politeness show any relationship to their level of aggressive behaviour. Some work by Slaby, and Crowley (1977) showed that teachers, by attending to children’s co-operative speech in the classroom, could reduce the
levels of aggressive behaviour shown by the children in their normal classroom interactions. This finding suggests that at a broad level of analysis there are linkages between children's speech and aggressive behaviour. A study by Bates, and Silvern (1977) looked at the relationship between IQ, social adjustment and comprehension and production of polite speech in preschool children. For each child they:

- administered the Peabody IQ test
- obtained teacher ratings of social adjustment; and
- tested production and comprehension of polite speech in a game situation.

The game required children to "ask" a hand puppet politely (production) or to decide which of two hand puppets "asked" the most politely (comprehension).

Bates and Silvern found that comprehension of politeness was significantly related to individual differences in social adjustment but that production was not. Bates and Silvern concluded that, since production of polite forms was not related to their measure of social adjustment, the politeness indices and the teacher ratings of social adjustment reflected some common underlying difference in the children's social sensitivity.

A study by Becker, Whittaker & Gesten (1992) investigated requests and re-requests in normal and emotionally disturbed children. The primary focus of this study was on differences in the strategies used by the different groups of children who were aged between nine and eleven-years-of-age. The test situation used in
this research was set up in the school and involved the experimenter and a
confederate whom the child was asked to make a request to. A key finding was that
requests by the emotionally disturbed group did not differ from requests by the
normal comparison group on either degree of directness or use of semantic
softeners or aggravators. A couple of issues need to be noted regarding this study,
first the emotionally disturbed group comprised a heterogeneous group of children
who are likely to have had a range of behavioural adjustment problems of varying
severity. Second the authors note that the situation used did not generate a wide
range of variation in the requesting strategies produced. Overall the experimenters
commented that it would be premature to conclude that children's choice of an
appropriate request is unrelated to their social competence. The current research
addressed the methodological issues with this study by using groups of children
with well defined behavioural problems and presenting a range of request
situations.

In order to investigate possible linkages between behaviour problems and
children's linguistic politeness skills the present research explored for children with
and without behaviour problems:

1. How children understand Brown and Levinson's power and distance
dimensions in their social relationships;
2. Children's production of politeness in requests; and
3. Children's evaluations of the effectiveness of requests varying in politeness
in different social contexts.
Following from some of the previous discussion two further broad questions of interest were: 1) the potential effects of motivation on children's performance on the production and evaluation tasks; and 2) the developmental effects of children's social and behavioural adjustment on their production and judgment skills at ten to eleven years of age.

Some of the evidence reviewed previously suggested that differences between the hostile-aggressive group and other groups on the production of requests could potentially be explained by differences in motivation to use politeness rather than any differences in competence. Thus a key question was to directly compare the effect of children's levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems on their performance on the evaluation task and the production task.

As discussed earlier two broad alternative views of the origins of children's production and evaluation skills can be identified. The first suggests that these two areas have a common basis in children's linguistic knowledge and involve children's ability to produce and distinguish between linguistic forms with some lesser contribution from processing of social context. The second suggests that children's production skills reflect a combination of linguistic knowledge and knowledge of social context while their evaluation skills reflect a broader "social sensitivity". The first view suggests that there would be a similar relationship between children's levels of behaviour problems and their production and evaluation of politeness. The second view suggests that children's production skills would show limited relationship to behavioural adjustment whereas their evaluation of politeness would
be strongly related to their behavioural adjustment.

The current research explored the relationship between request form and social context for children with different types of behaviour problems compared to children without behaviour problems. There are, however, a number of individual differences variables other than behavioural adjustment that have been identified as potentially influencing children's politeness skills. Variables emerging from the literature as potentially associated with children's politeness skills include gender, empathy i.e. the child's capacity to understand the other's emotional and cognitive state, as discussed earlier and approaching temperament i.e how the child relates to new individuals and/or situations. Since some of these variables are also known to be linked with children's behavioural adjustment, in trying to develop a picture of the factors influencing children's politeness outcomes at ten and a half years, it was important to explore the effects of these variables.

There has been a continuing debate as to whether female speakers tend in practice to adopt a more deferent style of speaking, particularly in interactions with males (for a review, see Tannen, 1994). This represents a potentially problematic issue in the current research for two separate reasons. First, boys are substantially more likely than girls to show aggressive behaviour problems. Thus differences between children with aggressive behaviour problems and others in the current study could be linked to gender. Second, the interviewer in the current research was male and thus boys and girls would experience a different interaction during the testing session. In summary while the research shows very limited evidence for
a link between politeness and gender there is clear and substantial evidence of a link between gender and behavioural adjustment (see for example Hymel, et al. 1990).

Brown's (1988) proposal that politeness is a means of taking account of the other's feelings through language has parallels with the concept of empathy in individual differences research. Indeed Labov, and Fanshel (1977) discuss empathy in clinical psychology in terms of verbal interactions between the therapist and patient (see also Condon, 1984). The concept of empathy in research on individual differences has been considered as a multidimensional construct with a cognitive component, which is the ability to take the other's perspective, and an affective component, which is an understanding of the feelings of the other (see for example Feshbach, 1978; Eisenberg, & Fabes, 1990). The current research employed a multidimensional empathy scale adapted from Davis (1980). The expectation was that high levels of cognitive and/or affective empathy would predict children's sensitivity to social context in the production and evaluation of politeness in requests.

Bates, Bretherton, and Snyder (1988) reported finding a consistent modest association in a group of young toddlers (mean age twenty months) between sociable temperament (as measured by the Rowe and Plomin temperament inventory, Plomin, 1983) and a wide range of objective measures of the child's verbal output. Temperament is defined as the child's style of behaviour rather than content. More sociable or approaching children tend to interact more easily with
others including unfamiliar others. This suggests that these children may gain a broader experience of social interaction, potentially resulting in more effective politeness skills. Further, if less approaching children are less verbal overall, these children may be likely to make use of less elaborated verbal politeness strategies overall.

The research reviewed thus far has explored parents' or teachers' reports of children's behaviour as predictors of politeness. In their politeness theory Brown and Levinson proposed that the individuals' concern for their own and others' "face" is the basis for the use of politeness in interactions. The concept of face does not have a precise parallel in developmental psychology. However face involves individuals' perceptions of themselves and their behaviour in social interactions. This suggests that in addition to exploring parents' ratings of the children's behaviour problems it may be of particular interest to explore the children's perceptions of their own behaviour. In order to explore this issue children's self report of their levels of aggression and social anxiety were obtained and tested as predictors of their politeness skills.

In summary, in order to explore the relationships between social behavioural adjustment, developmental context and linguistic politeness, the current research explored the following questions:

1. The relationship between children's social behavioural adjustment and their judgments of power and distance relationships between themselves and others
2 The effects of behaviour problems on children's production and evaluation of linguistic politeness in requests

3 The relationships between children's current and prior social behavioural adjustment and their use and evaluation of linguistic politeness in requests.

4 The relationship between children's gender, temperament and empathy, self reported aggression and social anxiety and their use of linguistic politeness in requests.

1.5 Coding requests for politeness

Ervin-Tripp's (1976) paper shows that one important element of the politeness of requests is their overall form. Following Garvey (1984) the request types that Ervin-Tripp identified can be ordered from least to most direct:

1 Hint - e.g. I'm very thirsty

2 Question Directive - e.g. Do you know how to do this sum?

3 Permission Directive - e.g. Could I have a glass of water?

4 Embedded imperative - e.g. Could you get me a glass of water?

5 Need/Want Statement - e.g. I need a drink.

6 Imperative - e.g. Give me the ball

Becker (1986) studied children's understanding of the relationship between request structure and social structure. Becker classified the requests that subjects produced using the classification scheme above. Becker found that 5- and 10-year-olds and
adults systematically differentiated between "bossy" and "nice" requests by means of syntactic directness as well as semantic indicators. That is children instructed to produce "bossy" requests used more direct forms than children instructed to produce "nice" requests. Children also used the level of syntactic directness in judging whether a request they were presented with was "bossy" or "nice". Research by a number of other authors (see, for example, James, 1978) has provided further support for this ordering.

Another very basic strategy to indicate politeness in requests is the use of "please". A number of studies (see for example Gleason, Perlman and Blank, 1984) have confirmed that children begin to use this strategy to indicate politeness around 2-3 years. There is clearly a range of other linguistic and paralinguistic strategies that can be used to indicate politeness in requests, including providing reasons for the request and tone of voice among others. While directness and use of "please" are clearly significant markers of children's politeness it must be acknowledged that this approach may have not taken into account other important variability in the requests.

1.6 Quantitative analysis of linguistic politeness

As reviewed earlier, Craig et al. (1990) found difficulties in developing specific quantifiable predictions from Brown and Levinson's model. In general, research in the domain of politeness in particular and pragmatics generally has made very little use of quantitative methods. Brown (1988) noted this fact and called on
researchers in this area to make informed use of quantitative techniques. While Brown did not specify in detail the advantages of quantitative methods, broadly speaking his argument stressed the need for stronger tests of the theory.

Sheglof (1993) presented an extended critical discussion of the issues involved in quantification in the study of language in social interaction. He argued that in some cases quantification is not appropriate in this area and that a number of conditions must be met for quantification to be appropriate. Sheglof argued that quantification must be undertaken in a well understood domain and where instances of the phenomenon to be studied can be clearly defined. He also noted that it is unclear what advantages quantitative methods offer in the domain of conversation.

It has been argued that for the social sciences the potential of quantitative modelling methods and specifically of loglinear modelling approaches lies not so much in the development of precise quantitative predictions in the first instance as in the ability to explore patterns of relationships in complex multivariate domains (DeMaris, 1991). In politeness research the definition of the relationship between observable measures e.g. usage of different linguistic strategies and theoretical constructs is still relatively vague in many respects e.g. it is unclear how the usage of multiple politeness strategies in the same utterance combines to convey a given politeness to the hearer in the context of the utterance. The potential from the application of modelling techniques to linguistic politeness is to clarify our understanding of the relationships between the complex set of variables in this
domain.

As discussed earlier, a key question for the current research is how the relationship between context and politeness strategies varies in relation to other factors, e.g. the child’s behavioural adjustment. The focus on these questions means that an appropriate analytical strategy for the current research needs to be suitable for categorical data, enable the testing of interaction effects and be able to deal with specified dependent variables, i.e. frequency counts of judgments and politeness strategies, and independent variables, i.e. social context dimensions, way of asking and behavioural group. A methodology that satisfies these criteria is logit analysis which is a class of loglinear modelling suitable for analyses with defined independent and dependent variables. In general loglinear models enable the simultaneous testing of multiple hypotheses in multidimensional contingency table data.

Most research in politeness has made minimal use of quantitative methods. A substantial amount of the research in children’s politeness has used detailed qualitative linguistic analyses of data from small groups of children (see for example Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Garvey, 1984; Blum-Kulka, 1990). Only two studies were located in children’s politeness research which made use of multivariate statistical analyses (Bernicot, 1991; Wilkinson et al., 1984). Bernicot made use of multivariate analysis of variance while Wilkinson et al. employed discriminant function analysis. The current study in some respects extends and enhances the approach presented by Bernicot since logit analysis does not contain the normality
assumptions that analysis of variance does. The current research also extends the
agenda in this domain by using a linguistically based classification system for
coding the request data. Some researchers in politeness have attempted to develop
scoring systems to measure the politeness of utterances by counting the number of
politeness strategies (see for example Metts, & Bryan, 1984). However there is no
theoretical or conceptual basis for how to count different politeness strategies. The
strategy adopted in the current research has been to focus in detail on two
particular strategies, degree of directness, and use of please.

1.7 Overall Research Objectives

The first major objective addressed by the current program of research was the
variation in children’s requests related to politeness as:

1 A conventional or socially normative way of speaking; and
2 Politeness as a means for the strategic avoidance of conflict in social
   interactions.

The second major objective was to explore the relationship between children’s
linguistic politeness skills and their social and behavioural development,
specifically:

1 The relationship between children’s linguistic politeness skills and social
   behavioural adjustment;
2 The relationship between children’s prior and current levels of hostile-aggressive
   and anxious-fearful behaviours and their politeness skills; and
3 Some aspects of children's broader socio-behavioural developmental context that might predict their profile of linguistic politeness skills.

1.8 The current research program

In order to address the research objectives identified in section 1.7, a set of four studies was carried out via home visits to a selected group of children from the Australian Temperament Project subject population (Prior, Sanson, & Oberklaid, 1989).

Study 1, reported in Chapter 3, looked at the use of Brown and Levinson's power and distance dimensions by comparison group children and children with behaviour problems. As discussed earlier, Brown and Levinson assumed the existence of these dimensions and most of the research in children's politeness has followed this assumption. Further, this study explored one potential cause of differences in performance on the politeness tasks between comparison group children and children with behaviour problems, namely that children with behaviour problems may rate others differently on these dimensions compared to comparison group children.

The second study, reported in Chapter 4, had two major objectives. The first was to examine the ways children varied the styles of their requests in relation to the way of speaking (i.e. ordinary speech; "polite" speech; and "rude" speech) and the immediate social context (i.e. the power and distance relationship between the speaker and hearer and the degree of imposition of the request on the hearer). The
second objective was to compare the production of these aspects of politeness by
children with and without behaviour problems. This study also looked at
differences in verbal expressiveness between comparison group children and
children with behaviour problems.

Study 3, reported in Chapter 5, explored judgments of the effectiveness of
request strategies in different context conditions by comparison group children and
children with behaviour problems, and children's understanding of the social
factors involved in using requests appropriately in social interaction. This study had
two major objectives: firstly, to examine the effects of immediate social context and
politeness features on children’s judgments of the effectiveness of requests; and
secondly, to examine differences between the evaluations of the effectiveness of
different requesting strategies by children without behaviour problems and children
with behaviour problems. This study also explored children's explanations for their
judgments of the effectiveness of different strategies.

The fourth study, reported in Chapter 6, had three major objectives. The first
objective was to re-analyse the data gathered in Studies 2 and 3 to enable a direct
comparison of the effects of children's behaviour problems on their production vs
evaluation of politeness in requests. The second objective was to examine the
relative effects of prior compared to current levels of behaviour problems on
children's politeness skills. The third objective was to explore a number of potential
social and behavioural correlates of children’s performance on the production and
judgment tasks. The predictor variables studied were gender, temperament,
empathy, self reported aggression and self reported social anxiety.
Chapter 2: Overall Method

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the groups of children studied in this research program, the criteria for inclusion in the study and the data gathering procedures. Further, the fourth study, reported in Chapter 6, was designed to make use of some existing data on the children in this study which was gathered as a part of the Australian Temperament Project (ATP). A brief description of the overall ATP data set is provided. Detailed descriptions of the individual tasks and the statistical procedures are provided in the chapters describing the separate studies.

2.2 Design

Four groups of children were selected on the basis of parents’, mainly mothers’, ratings of the children, on the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful subscales of the Rutter Childhood Behaviour Questionnaire, parent form (Rutter, Tizard, & Whitmore, 1970) at ages 6.5 years and 8 years. A description of the scales, content, and reliability of this instrument is provided in section 2.5.

The children in this study were drawn from the ATP subject population. The ATP is a large scale longitudinal study of the temperament and behavioural development of a group of Victorian children. (See Sanson, Prior, & Oberklaid, 1985, for details on sampling and measurement and Prior, Sanson & Oberklaid, 1989, for a summary of the project as a whole.) The children were between 10 and
eleven years of age when they were interviewed for this study. The age of the children available for this research was a fixed condition prior to the design of the study which represents an unavoidable limitation of using a pre-existing sample. Based on the research reviewed in section 1.2 children of this age without behaviour problems would be expected to have mastered the majority of aspects of politeness. Since a key focus of this research was on differences between the politeness skills of children with and without behaviour problems the fact that the children in the study would normally be expected to have fully mastered linguistic politeness may increase the likelihood of detecting any differences that do exist between children with and without behaviour problems.

The children in the ATP and their families have been studied since the children were 4-8 months old. A total of 2443 children were selected as a representative sample of Victorian children in 1983. The families of these children have been followed since this time through mail surveys asking about the child's temperament, social-behavioural adjustment and measures of family socio-economic status among a range of other measures by means of questionnaires completed by mostly the mothers, as well as teachers, at approximately eighteen month intervals. At the time this research was conducted approximately 1700 families were still involved in the ATP.
2.3 Subjects

The Child Behaviour Questionnaire scores used for defining the groups in the study were based on population means for the Australian Temperament Study project sample. Since the ATP is a broadly representative sample of Victorian children (Prior et al., 1989) it was considered that these values were reasonable estimates of the overall population values. Thus groups of children selected on this basis would be expected to show elevated scores with respect to the overall population of Victorian children. Comparison group children scored at least half a standard deviation below the ATP population mean on both the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful subscales at ages 6.5 and 7 years. Hostile-aggressive group children scored at least one standard deviation above the mean on the hostile-aggressive subscale, and half a standard deviation below the mean on the anxious fearful subscale, at both ages. Anxious-fearful group children scored at least one standard deviation above the mean on the anxious-fearful subscale and half a standard deviation below the mean on the hostile-aggressive subscale, at both ages. Comorbid group children scored at least one standard deviation above the mean on the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful subscales at both ages. The base selection criteria for each of the behaviour problem groups, i.e. 1 standard deviation above the mean, resulted in the selection of approximately the top 15% of the population on each of the subscales. This percentage is consistent with estimates for the population prevalence of behaviour problems reported by McGee, Silva and Williams (1984) for parent rated behaviour problems.
Eligible families, i.e. where the child met the behavioural selection criteria, and who were still resident in the state of Victoria, were contacted by mail and by telephone follow-up and asked if they wished to take part in the study. For the comparison group a random sample of families where the child met the selection criteria was contacted and asked if they were willing to take part.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Background characteristics of comparison and behaviour problem groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
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<td>Participation rates (%)</td>
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<td>SES(^a)</td>
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<td>Both parents Aust. born</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 or 0 parents Aust. born</td>
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<td>CBQ(^b)</td>
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<td>Host.-aggress.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxious-fearful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note:  
\(^a\) Composite score of parents' education and occupation.  
Range from 1 to 8, with 1 = high SES and 8 = low.  
\(^b\) Parent report measure at the time of interview.
For the behaviour problem groups all of the families where the children met the criteria were contacted.

Table 1 shows the percentage participation rates, the final numbers of children in the four groups, their age, gender, SES, and parents’ ethnic background and scores on the CBQ subscales at the time of interview. There was a significant difference in the sex distribution between groups with more boys in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups $\chi^2(3)=17.72$, $p<.01$. There were no other statistically significant differences between the four groups. There was a trend towards a lower participation rate for the pure hostile-aggressive group compared to the other groups although this was not statistically significant. This finding does however mean that there is some risk that participants from this group may not be characteristic of children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems. However the fact that the groups do not differ on other key characteristics particularly SES suggests that this is not a major concern. The results for the parent report CBQ measure confirm the clear differentiation between the groups on behaviour problems at the time of interview.

2.4 Development of the research method

A number of aspects of the research method used in the four studies were based on the outcomes from the pilot study. A full description of the pilot study is presented in Appendix 1. However to clarify the rationale for some elements of the research this section provides a short summary of some of the key issues and
outcomes from the pilot. It was found during the pilot that it was important to give
the production task first in the sequence to reduce cueing to the child. The use of
this order cannot however rule out the possibility of some prompting to the
participants about the linguistic nature of the task.

It was also noted during the pilot that there seemed to be no consistent overall
effects of age and familiarity of the intended hearer and degree of imposition of the
request. Detailed visual inspection of the individual item data suggested that this
reflected differences in incidental context elements i.e. those not related to age or
familiarity of the intended hearer or degree of imposition of the request. To address
this for the main study, variation in the incidental contextual elements of the
request situations was restricted as much as possible.

The pilot study attempted to validate the empathy and aggression measures by
exploring the correlations with other available data for the children. The results
provided some support for the validity of the measures although the results were
unclear for the empathy measure.

2.5 Procedure

All the children were tested by the experimenter in their own homes. The visits
were scheduled for after school or weekends. Table 2 shows the complete set of
tasks and measures in order of presentation and the chapters where the results are
described. As described in section 2.4 the order of tasks used was in part based on
the outcome of the pilot work (see above and Appendix 1 for details) and was held
constant throughout. Other than as described above the task order was essentially chosen arbitrarily. The task set was designed to fit within a single testing session lasting approximately one hour.

Table 2
Experimental tasks in order of presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task description</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent report Child Behaviour Questionnaire.*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child self report empathy questionnaire.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemble puzzle cards into figures representing people in the child’s world.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production of different request styles</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self report social anxiety questionnaire</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgments of different request styles</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self report aggression questionnaire</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: a - completed by the parents while the testing session was in progress

2.6 Materials and Measures

2.6.1 Child Behaviour Questionnaire

The CBQ, (Rutter et al., 1970), is an 18 item scale with three subscales; Hostile - Aggressive, Anxious-Fearful and Hyperactive-distractible. The hostile-aggressive subscale includes items such as "Frequently fights with other children", and "Bullies other children". The anxious-fearful subscale includes items such as "Often worried, worries about many things", and "Tends to be fearful or afraid of new things or new situations". The hyperactive-distractible subscale includes items such as "Squirmy fidgety child". The response categories are 0 - "doesn’t apply"; 1 - "applies somewhat" and 2 - "certainly applies". A study by Steinhausen, and
Gobel (1987) reported moderate sensitivity in comparing children scoring above 1SD on the Child Behaviour Questionnaire to clinical diagnoses for aggressive and neurotic behaviour disorders in a clinical sample of 1468 early adolescents (63% and 52% respectively). The behaviour problem groups in the current study do not represent clinical groups but represent groups who would be expected to have an increased risk of significant behavioural problems.

2.6.2 Empathy Questionnaire

This scale was adapted from a measure originally developed by Davis (1980) for adult use. The language was adapted to suit ten to eleven year old children. The measure has a total of 26 items and is comprised of four subscales: empathic concern - empathic response to other's feelings; perspective taking, - ability to take other's point of view; personal distress - feeling distress in response to other's distress; and fantasy - identification with characters. The scales used as predictors in the current analyses were the empathic concern subscale which contains phrases such as "sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when bad things happen to them", "I feel sad when I see a new kid in the group who looks lonely"; and the cognitive perspective taking scale which contained content phrases such as "I find it hard to see things from another kid's point of view". A high score on both scales corresponded to higher levels of empathy. Since this measure was adapted for the current research alpha reliabilities were computed from this data using the responses from all groups. The reliabilities obtained for these scales were: empathic
concern $\alpha = .44$ and perspective taking $\alpha = .52$.

### 2.6.3 Self Report Aggression measure

This scale was adapted from an interview protocol developed by Pitkanen (1969). The adaptation involved mainly some minor changes to the wording to follow Australian English usage. The measure comprised 27 items divided into the following 5 subscales: Direct physical aggression, Direct verbal aggression, Mimicry and teasing, Indirect physical aggression, Indirect verbal aggression. Following the original interview protocol separate forms with gender appropriate wording were created for boys and girls. The direct physical aggression scale was used in study four and contained items such as: "Do you ever fight with a boy/girl or try to hurt him in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?"; "Do you ever try to tease a boy/girl of your size by taking his stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?". A high score on this measure corresponded to a high level of self-reported aggressive behaviour. The reliability for this scale was $\alpha = .91$.

### 2.6.4 Production tasks

These comprised a series of situations where the child had to make a request to either the child’s mother, a named sibling, the child’s teacher, or a named classmate. See Chapter 4 for details of the testing procedure and Appendix 2 for the complete set of tasks. The individual request tasks were presented in random order which was held constant throughout. The only reason for doing so was to
eliminate one source of variability in the data there was no other basis or justification for this aspect of the design.

2.6.5 Social Anxiety Questionnaire

This is a ten item unitary scale tapping children's anxiety in social situations developed by La Greca, Kraslow-Dandes, Wick, Shaw, and Stone (1988). This scale contains items such as "I worry about being teased" and "I feel shy around kids I don't know". A high score on this scale corresponded to high levels of social anxiety. The reliability obtained for this scale was α=.73

2.6.6 Short temperament Scale for Children

The content of this scale includes phrases such as "my child is shy with strange adults" and "not comfortable about joining in". A high score on this scale corresponded to less approaching behavioural style. For details regarding the psychometric properties of this scale see Sanson, Smart, Prior, Oberklaid, & Pedlow (1994).

2.6.7 Judgment tasks

These comprised a set of written vignettes about social situations involving requests. The child had to make judgments about the likely effectiveness of different request styles. See Chapter 5 for a description of the procedure and Appendix 2 for full details of the tasks. Similarly to the production task, the tasks
were presented in random order which was held constant throughout. The only reason for doing so was to eliminate one source of variability in the data there was no other basis or justification for this aspect of the design.

2.6.8 Puzzle-Figures task

The puzzle figures task was based on a popular children’s game of puzzle picture books where pictures of people can be made by combining different legs, torsos and heads. A set of cartoon pictures of children and adults were put onto laminated cards with the heads, torsos and legs separate (see Appendix 3). The children assembled a series of composite figures which they labelled to represent themselves and their mother, their teacher, a chosen sibling and a classmate.

2.6.9 Social dimensions game

In the social dimensions game, reported in Chapter 3, the children placed the figures of themselves and the others, which they had made in the puzzle figures task, on a laminated board (see Appendix 3) to represent the social distance and power relationship between themselves and each of the others
Chapter 3: The use of Brown and Levinson's power and distance dimensions by children with and without behaviour problems

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) proposed that the basis of politeness resides in an individual's ability to modulate their linguistic strategies in response to power relationship between speaker and hearer (P), and the social distance between speaker and hearer (D), and the degree of imposition of the speech act on the hearer, termed rank (R). Brown and Levinson assumed the existence of these variables as universal social dimensions, following from work in social anthropology (Goffman, 1967). The power and distance dimensions are the major dimensions that researchers, following Brown and Levinson's foundational work, have studied in subsequent research.

The dimensions of power and distance/familiarity have considerable face validity in terms of the child's social world. Adults such as parents and teachers typically have direct authority over children and thus power differences are salient, whereas siblings have much less authority, and family members are usually more familiar to the child than school acquaintances. However, there appears to be little direct evidence that children in fact use these dimensions in understanding and operating in their day to day social worlds. One study by Corsaro (1979) looked at this issue in a study of role plays in 3 to 4 year old nursery school children. The children in the study took part in pairs in a role play activity where both children
played individuals of differing status and role, e.g. in one activity one child played a teacher and the other played a student. The results indicated that children did make distinctions in the language forms that they used based on the status of the other. In particular, imperatives were more often addressed by the superior to the subordinate in the role play and information questions were more often addressed by subordinates to superiors. Corsaro also studied children’s understanding through analysis of children’s talk about status. He found that children of this age do have a partial conception of superiors as being entitled to give orders but that their understanding of authority and status is very limited.

The research reviewed in Chapter 1 suggests that there are some key differences between the social worlds of children without behaviour problems compared to children with behaviour problems and between groups of children with different behaviour problems. It was noted in Chapter 1 that current evidence suggests that compared to children without behaviour problems, children with hostile-aggressive and comorbid behaviour problems have more negative and coercive interactions with parents and peers. While, as far as could be determined there is no direct evidence in the literature, the available research suggests that these children may be more likely to view others as more distant compared to children without behaviour problems. Alternatively it may be the case that children who are insensitive to these dimensions are more likely to have behavioural problems. Further it was argued that compared to children without behaviour problems children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems tend to interact less
with unfamiliar others. This suggests that they may view unfamiliar others as more distant compared to children without behaviour problems.

The method used in this study was adapted from work by Funder (1991). Funder’s work explored children’s perceptions of family relationships through the creation of “family sculptures”. These "sculptures" explored among other issues children’s inclusion of different relatives in their family and children’s preferred closeness to different family members.

The first objective of this study was to test whether ten and a half year old children do in fact distinguish mother, teachers, siblings and classmates along the dimensions of power and distance. It was hypothesised that mothers and teachers would be judged as more powerful than siblings and classmates by all children. It was also hypothesised that the child’s teacher and an unfamiliar classmate would be judged as more distant than the mother or a sibling by all children. The second objective was to examine whether children without behaviour problems and children with behaviour problems differed in the ways in which they judged others on the power and distance dimensions. No hypotheses were formulated about group differences on the power dimension. For the distance dimension it was expected that firstly, compared to children in the comparison group, the hostile-aggressive and comorbid group children would judge all others as more distant; and secondly that the anxious-fearful group would judge unfamiliar others as more distant compared to all other groups.
3.2 Method

3.2.1 Materials

The materials used in this study comprised a baseboard with a 5 x 4 checkerboard; a set of figures assembled earlier which were labelled as "self" i.e. child’s own name, mother, teacher, sibling and classmate (see Appendix 3) and a set of three cardboard squares (see Appendix 3).

3.2.2 Procedure

In the figures task (reported in Chapter 4) the children assembled from the separate cards (shown in Appendix 3), cartoon figures to represent themselves, their mother, a chosen sibling (nearest to the child in age and gender), the child’s current teacher and a chosen classmate.

In the current task the child was asked first to position the figures to indicate first how familiar the other person was to the child and second to raise the figure of the other person using the set of squares to indicate the degree to which the child had to do what the other person says. To indicate distance the child placed the figures on the bottom edge of the baseboard using a 4 point scale. The two figures touching was indicated to the child as meaning that the other is very familiar, one square apart a bit familiar, two squares apart fairly unfamiliar and three squares apart very unfamiliar. The child then raised the figure of the other to indicate the power of the other. This used a 4 point scale scored as 0 (no blocks used) "never have to do what the other says"; (one block used) "sometimes have to do what the
other says".2 "often" and 3 "always". The figure representing the child participant was successively compared to the other figures i.e. teacher, sibling, classmate and mother. Thus for example the teacher figure and the child figure could be placed three squares apart, with the teacher figure raised on three blocks indicating that child always had to follow the teacher’s directions and that the teacher was very unfamiliar or the child and sibling figures might be placed touching together and on the same level indicating that the child never has to do what the sibling says and that the sibling is very familiar. Figure 1 below provides a schematic representation of the task materials. The illustrations used for the figures are shown in appendix 3.

The range of figures included male and female adults and children.

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<th>Child</th>
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**Figure 1**: Schematic diagram of the social dimensions game.
3.3 Results and Discussion

The results in Figure 2 show the mean judged power of the other by group and role. A comprehensive Anova was conducted exploring all possible effects and interactions present in children’s judgments of the other’s power i.e. the effects of Power, Distance, Group and all interactions as well as individual contrasts for all speakers.

![Power by other person chart]

Figure 2: Mean judged power of the other by others' role.

Note. Numbers indicate standard deviations for each condition.
Because of the very large number of terms in the analyses only the significant effects are discussed. Comparing the judged power of mothers and teachers combined to siblings and classmates combined, the ANOVA showed a significant overall difference $F(1, 5808) = 8.14, p<.005$. Mothers and teachers were consistently judged as more powerful than siblings and classmates. There was no significant difference between mothers and siblings combined compared to teachers and classmates combined. There was a significant interaction between Power x Group, $F(3, 5808) = 8.27, p<.001$. This reflected a tendency for comorbid group children to judge others as less powerful and for hostile-aggressive group children to judge others as more powerful. This was confirmed by individual contrasts which showed significant overall differences between the comparison and hostile-aggressive groups, $t(1) = 2.44, p<.05$, and the comparison and comorbid groups, $t(1) = 8.48, p<.001$. There were no other significant effects found. In particular there was no significant interaction between Power and Distance on children's judgments of the power of the other.

The results in Figure 3 show the mean judged social distance from the other by other’s role and by group.
Distance by other person

Figure 3: Mean judged distance of the other by other's role.

Note: Numbers indicate standard deviations for each condition.

Similarly to the power data, a comprehensive analysis of variance was conducted exploring all possible effects and interactions in the data. Comparing mothers and siblings combined to teachers and classmates combined showed a significant overall effect for distance, $F(1, 5808) = 6006, p<.001$. Teachers and classmates were judged as more distant compared to mothers and siblings. There were no other significant differences by condition. There was a significant overall effect for group, $F(3, 5808) = 39.8, p<.001$. All the children with behaviour problems judged
others as more distant compared to the comparison group. There was also a significant group by distance interaction $F(3, 5808) = 27, p<.001$. This reflected the fact that there was a larger difference between children with behaviour problems compared to the comparison group's judgements of unfamiliar vs familiar others. Individual contrasts showed significant differences between the comparison group and all three behaviour problem groups on their overall judgments of others distance (Comparison - Hostile-aggressive, $t(1) = 2.88, p<.005$; comparison - anxious-fearful, $t(1) = 5.78, p<.001$; comparison - comorbid, $t(1) = 10.5, p<.001$).

There were no other significant effects of any kind whatsoever in the data. In particular there was no significant interaction between the power and distance factors overall.

Overall the results showed that mothers and teachers were judged to be more powerful than siblings and classmates. Mothers and siblings were judged to be less distant than teachers and classmates. There were significant overall interaction effects by group for power and distance, with all the behaviour problem groups seeing others as more distant compared to the comparison group. Compared to the comparison group the hostile-aggressive group judged others to be significantly more powerful and more distant whereas the anxious-fearful group judged unfamiliar others to be more distant but did not differ significantly from the comparison group in their judgments of others' power. The comorbid group judged others as more powerful and more distant compared to all the other groups. The comorbid group showed the greatest difference from the comparison group on
both power and distance.

Chi-squared analyses were carried out to investigate whether the age of the sibling influenced the child's judgments of their power or distance. There was no evidence for any effect of age on children's judgment of the social distance of the sibling, $\chi^2(10) = 6.9$ ns. There was a non-significant trend for the children to judge older siblings to be more powerful than younger siblings, $\chi^2(4) = 6.6$, $p = .15$.

Overall all four groups judged others on the power and distance dimensions in ways consistent with conventional social expectations, e.g. adults were judged by all groups as more powerful than children. Thus, the results indicate that all four groups share a common basic understanding of the dimensions. This finding supports Brown and Levinson's assumption of the existence and universality of these dimensions.

The results also showed evidence that children with behaviour problems rated others on these dimensions differently compared to children without behaviour problems although the differences were not numerically large. This finding in the context of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory offers one potential explanation for differences in politeness strategies used by the different groups. To the extent that children with behaviour problems perceive the power and distance relationships between themselves and others differently than children without behaviour problems, according to the politeness theory they would judge the face threat involved in making requests as different and hence would make use of different politeness strategies.
Chapter 4: The production of politeness strategies in requests by children with and without behaviour problems

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, a number of major studies (see for example Becker, 1986; Wilkinson et al., 1984) have explored, following Brown and Levinson’s model, children’s ability to vary the politeness of their requests in response to a) the power and distance relationship between the speaker and hearer, and b) the degree of imposition of the request on the hearer. The current study began from this point, exploring children’s ability to vary their requests in response to the immediate social context. This study also extended the research agenda in two major areas, namely the "everyday" concept of politeness and the link between politeness and social behavioural adjustment. In summary this study had three major aims; 1) To investigate politeness variation in children’s requests in relation to the power and distance relationships between the speaker and the intended hearer and the degree of imposition of the request on the hearer;

2) To investigate politeness variation in children’s requests in relation to the degree of conventional politeness; and

3) To investigate differences between comparison group children and children with behaviour problems and between groups of children with different behaviour problems, in their use of politeness in the conditions listed in 1) and 2) above.
The current study began from existing research examining the effects of immediate social context on children’s requesting strategies. From the previous research in children’s politeness and Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory a general hypothesis was developed about the relationship between social context and requesting strategies. The hypothesis was that more indirect, less obvious forms would be used in requests to more powerful and/or distant others and for requests that made a greater imposition on the other.

The research reviewed in Chapter 1 concerning children with developmental behaviour problems indicated that these children experience many difficulties in their ordinary day-to-day social interactions (see for example Hymel, Rubin, Rowden, & LeMare, 1990). Further, relatively little attention has been given to the linguistic detail of these children’s social interactions and how this compares with children without behaviour problems. One of the few studies of politeness skills of children with behaviour problems is that by Bates, and Silvern (1977). They compared children without behaviour problems with children with externalising behaviour problems and found that comprehension of politeness was significantly related to teacher-rated differences in externalising behaviour problems. Bates and Silvern found no evidence of differences in the production of politeness strategies. Becker, et. al. (1992) found that requests by a group of emotionally disturbed children did not differ from requests by a normal comparison group on either degree of directness or use of semantic softeners or aggravators. Becker et. al.'s study did not distinguish between types of emotional disturbance in the children.
studied. No research was located specifically on the politeness skills of children with internalising or comorbid behaviour problems. As discussed in Chapter 1, a range of research evidence suggests that children with aggressive behaviour problems may show differences in their ability to use and understand linguistic politeness. The potential causal factors identified were: the tendency for children with aggressive behaviour problems to show lower levels of empathy for others; problems with social information processing; and a pattern of problematic relationships with parents and peers.

For the current study the children were presented with two different production tasks: producing appropriate requests in different social contexts, and producing requests with varying levels of everyday politeness. Varying requesting strategies according to the characteristics of the intended hearer entails a set of knowledge and experience about social interactions with others. On the other hand, producing requests with differing levels of everyday politeness represents a simpler task (see for example the research reviewed in Chapter 1 by Becker and others indicating that parents explicitly teach some politeness routines). Thus it was hypothesised that the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups would be less likely to vary their use of politeness strategies in requests in relation to the social context conditions compared to the comparison and anxious-fearful groups, and that the four groups would not differ in their production of everyday politeness.

In order to address the features of social and everyday politeness and the relationship between linguistic politeness and behaviour problems, the design of
this study included five independent variables: group, power of the hearer, familiarity of the hearer, degree of imposition on the hearer and manner of the request (i.e. usual, polite or rude). Following the results reported in Chapter 3, power was operationalised in terms of age with adults defined as more powerful and children as less powerful. Again following the results in Chapter 3, familiar others were defined as mother and a sibling and less familiar others as teachers and classmates. Garvey (1984) reported that requests to others to do something for you, i.e. requests for action, were seen to be more imposing and were marked for politeness, compared to requests to others to allow the speaker to have an object, i.e. what she called requests for permission referred to hereafter as requests for objects. Following Garvey, for the purpose of the current research requests for action were defined as more imposing than requests for objects. Further, in the current research the requests for action were selected as requests which the other might comply with but is not expected to whereas the requests for objects were selected as requests for everyday objects that the other would normally comply with, e.g. part of mother's role is supplying food and drinks for children. Thus in the present study requests for another to help or to take part in an activity were defined as representing a greater imposition on the other than requests for everyday objects. The conventional or "everyday" politeness of the requests was conceptualised as a socially influenced manner distinction similar to speaking loudly, for example. This was operationalised by asking the children to produce requests "as you would usually ask", "in a really polite way"; and in a "rude way".
For outcome measures, this study looked at both the overall requesting strategy and the use of "please". The approach adopted for categorisation of requests is based on the approach presented by Ervin-Tripp (1976). She proposed a set of categories of request types approximately ordered on directness; 1) need/want statements, 2) imperatives, 3) embedded imperatives, 4) permission directives, 5) question directives and 6) hints. This approach to the categorisation of request forms has been adopted by a number of other researchers (e.g. Nippold, Leonard, & Anastopoulos, 1982; James, 1978; Bernicot, 1991). For the current study a more explicit category was added before need/want statements which are referred to as assertions. This was based on an initial visual review of the transcripts which showed a small number of requests which all took the form "I am using ...". Both request form and use of "please" were considered to be general indicators of politeness. The analytical strategy adopted was to explore how these two indicators of politeness varied with the experimental manipulation of the strategic vs everyday aspects of politeness.

The first series of analyses in this study were based on the categorisation of the requests into these seven categories, i.e. from 1) assertions to 7) hints. These analyses examined differences in the frequency of use of these request types for requests for objects vs actions to each of the four hearers i.e. mother, sibling, teacher and a classmate. These were followed by analyses which focused on the distinction between request types 1 to 5, i.e. assertions to permission directives, and request types 6 to 7, i.e. question directives and hints. One problem for quantitative
research in politeness, as discussed in Chapter 1, is the absence of any strong theoretical basis for quantification. The approach adopted here, distinguishing between these two groups of requests, is based on a conceptual difference between these types of requests. The first group, i.e. assertions to permission directives, contain in the request form an explicitly stated request for a stated object. Question directives are by definition requests for information, eg. "Do you know what time it is?", which may in practice be a request for the correct time, whereas hints are not explicit requests of any kind eg. "It's getting cold in here", as a request for the hearer to close the window (Ervin-Tripp, 1976).

One further potential cause of differences in performance between comparison and aggressive group children on the current task is that children with aggressive behaviour problems seem to show generally lower levels of verbal expressiveness in their interactions with others (Keltikangas-Jarvinen, & Kangas, 1988). This would be expected to result in these children producing shorter less complex forms in the structured politeness tasks. In order to assess this issue, the present study also examined the children's verbal production in a semi-structured task involving free verbal interaction with the experimenter. No research was located on how children's level of verbal expressiveness could be directly assessed from the properties of their speech. For the current research two separate characteristics were selected which seemed to have face validity as indicators of children's level of verbal expressiveness namely for a defined period of interaction, how many words the child produced in total and during the same period how many times the child
responded verbally to an utterance by the experimenter. These were taken as coarse measures of respectively how much the child used language and how much the child engaged in verbal interaction with the experimenter.

The requirements for a statistical analysis method for this study included the capacity to analyse multidimensional categorical data, the ability to test interaction effects in categorical data and to be able to include explicit dependent and independent variables. Logit analysis is a specific type of loglinear analysis which satisfies these requirements. This method is appropriate categorical data such as frequency counts of linguistic strategies since it does not assume normality and unlike other categorical methods, eg. $\chi^2$, logit analysis enables the analysis of complex interactions.

In summary the hypotheses investigated in this study were:

1) That all children's use of different types of requests would vary as a function of the power and distance relationship between speaker and hearer and the degree of imposition on the hearer, with less obvious requests used to more powerful and, or more distant others and for more imposing requests.

2) That the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups would be less likely to vary the form of their requests in relation to the social context compared to comparison group and anxious-fearful group children.

3) That use of "please" would not vary in relation to social context.

4) That request form would vary in relation to the normative politeness level of requests, with the more indirect/less obvious forms used most frequently in
"polite" requests, less frequently in "usual" requests, and very infrequently in "rude" requests.

5) That the different groups would not vary in the ways that they modulated the form of their requests in relation to level of normative politeness.

6) That all children's use of "please" would vary in relation to the normative politeness level of requests with "please" used most frequently in "polite" requests, less frequently in "usual" requests, and very infrequently in "rude" requests.

7) Children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were expected to be less verbally expressive than children without behaviour problems.

4.2 Method

4.2.1 Procedure

As described in Chapter 2, the children were tested individually in their own homes. The set of tasks in the present study were given as part of the larger series of tasks which took about one hour to complete. At the beginning of the set of tasks for the present study the children were read the following instructions:

"Now I am going to read you some descriptions of situations where you need to ask other people for things. Some of these situations may not have happened to you exactly but I'd like you to pretend. For each situation I would like you to tell me how you would usually ask. Then I'd like you to tell me a really polite way to ask. Then I'd like you to tell me a really rude way to
ask."

During this part of the testing sessions the children wore a clip on lapel microphone. The experimenter then read the child each of the situations in random order, prompting when necessary:

"How would you usually ask?

What would be a polite way of asking?

What would be a rude way of asking?"

4.2.2 Materials

The set of tasks consisted of eight hypothetical situations where the child had to make a request to a specified other. The tasks were presented in random order which was held constant throughout. The complete set of tasks used is shown in Appendix 2. The intended hearer in each case was an actual person (the mother; a sibling (chosen by the child); the child’s current teacher; a classmate chosen by the child). The situations requiring requests to mother or sibling were set in the home whilst the situations requiring requests to the teacher or classmate were set in the classroom. For each hearer the child made two requests, one for a specified object and the other asking the hearer to do something. Two examples are given below:

"You’ve got a new board game and you want [name of sibling] to play it with you.

How would you ask [name of sibling] to play it with you?

Mum’s just come home with some shopping and you see that she’s got some
sweet biscuits and you think that you'd like to have one. How would you ask your mum for a biscuit?"

As described in Chapter 2 the task set was piloted before this study was conducted (for full details of the pilot see Appendix 1). One difficulty in constructing the tasks was that the need to present face valid tasks constrained the kinds of request to different hearers i.e. in children's everyday interactions some types of requests are directed to particular hearers often parents who control children's access to many resources in the house. Specifically children in the course of their day-to-day social interactions ask parents, siblings, teachers and classmates for somewhat different items and to do somewhat different actions. However, the basis on which politeness theory rests is that the relevant features are: the power and distance relationship between speaker and hearer and the extent to which the request made imposes on the other's resources. The work reported in Study 1 indicates that children can in fact place these others on common metrics for power and distance. Scaling the degree of imposition of requests across different contexts was not specifically tested in the current research.

4.2.3 Transcription, parsing and Coding

The tape recorded sessions with each child were transcribed verbatim by the experimenter. Since the focus of the study was in the linguistic variation in the requests, no attempt was made to transcribe the prosodic characteristics of the
requests although these clearly convey some significant politeness information. The requests were coded into seven categories based primarily on those presented by Ervin-Tripp (1976). Since in practice the great majority of the responses (approx. 95% including hesitations and mis-starts) overall, produced by the children for each item consisted only of a single clearly identifiable request relatively little systematic effort went into defining the parsing process. For hesitations and mis-starts the final version was coded as the request. For the balance the entire verbal sequence produced for that item was considered and coded as the request. Table 3 shows a complete description of the request coding categories used.

The results of the pilot study indicated that these categories gave a comprehensive description of the requesting strategies the children were using with the exceptions of some requests of the form "I am + verb" (see Appendix 1 for details). The requests were also coded for whether they included "please". To address the question of inter-rater reliability a random sample of 25% of the data was coded using the rules set out above by a second rater. The second rater was provided with the coding rules and the data but was blind with respect to the experimental conditions and the research hypotheses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Request category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assertions</td>
<td>These had the general form I am + using x, e.g. &quot;I am using your game.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Need/want statements</td>
<td>Example of requests classified in this category were: &quot;I wanna a pencil&quot;; &quot;I need the answer to the problem&quot;; &quot;Mum, I want a biscuit.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Imperatives</td>
<td>These generally include a verb a verb an object and sometimes a beneficiary. Examples of requests included in this category were:  &quot;Gimmee the computer now, so that I can play it&quot;; &quot;Tell me the sum right now; help me now.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Embedded imperatives</td>
<td>These are imperatives in which the agent and object are explicit. Examples of requests included in this category were: &quot;Can you play this game with me?&quot;; &quot;Could you come and play the board game with me?&quot;; &quot;Could you please help me work this sum out?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Permission directives</td>
<td>These are directives of the form Modal + Beneficiary + Have/verb +? Examples of requests included in this category were:  &quot;Excuse me Mrs [Name], Could I please have that pencil?&quot;; &quot;Could we please have some of that to eat?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Question directives</td>
<td>These request forms give listeners who do not wish to comply an alternative option of treating the request as an information question. Examples of requests included in this category were:  &quot;Would you like to play my new board game?&quot; &quot;Would I be able to have a red pencil?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hints</td>
<td>These include a wide range of forms which on the surface are not requests. Examples of responses included in this category were:  &quot;Mrs [Name], I don’t really understand this work&quot;; &quot;I don’t know this sum.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The disagreements between raters when reviewed reflected either errors or inconsistent applications of the coding rules by one or other of the raters. The inter-rater reliability was computed using the kappa statistic ($K=0.83$, $p<.001$). This suggests that the coding scheme is reliably classifying a high percentage of the requests produced.

### 4.2.4 Statistical analysis

The data from this study were analysed via logit modelling using the LOGLINEAR procedure in SPSS (Norusis, 1988). Using logit analysis the objective is to find the best fitting, most parsimonious model that describes the data. This is accomplished by finding the model with the minimum number of terms that gives a non significant $\chi^2$ goodness of fit index (GFI).

The model fitting phase of the analysis involved finding the significant effects present in the data. The model fitting method used was partial Chi square analysis. This technique involves comparing a set of related models each containing all of the effects except for one. The $\chi^2$ difference between the models is obtained and if it is significant this indicates that this term makes a significant contribution to the overall model $\chi^2$. This is known to be a conservative technique and represents a relatively stringent modelling strategy (Kennedy, 1983).

In order to fully interpret the results of logit analysis it is necessary to consider the logit model parameters as well as the terms in the model. The parameters indicate the size and direction of effects. An important distinction is that model
parameters relate to the relative odds not to raw cell frequencies. A significant parameter value indicates that the relative odds of category 1/category 2 of the dependent variable are significantly different for the two categories of the independent variable that are compared (DeMaris, 1991).

A further feature of logit analysis is that "item" and "subject" variables are effectively equivalent. In the present study all subjects produced equal numbers of requests in every cell of the design. The requests produced in a given design cell were then categorised as either type 1 or type 2 requests. Thus differences in the relative odds of type 1 vs type 2 requests linked to factors in the design are in a strict sense necessarily valid for subjects. An important distinction between logit analysis and the parametric equivalent, i.e. a multivariate Anova, is that logit analysis does not require the assumption of independent observations that is required for the F test (Haberman, 1978). In summary, from the current research it is appropriate to draw conclusions about differences between children in terms of relative odds with the same strengths and limitations that would apply to a multivariate test of differences between group means.

4.2.5 Experimental Design and Analysis strategy

The overall design of this study consisted of the following factors:

Behaviour group x

Power (age of the hearer: child/adult)

Distance (familiarity of the hearer: family member/other)
Request type (request for action/object) x

Manner (usual/polite/rude)

The children produced one request token within each cell of the design. Because there was one token per cell it was not feasible to analyse the resulting data matrix completely in a single analysis. To address this problem two separate analyses were conducted aggregating over manner and power, distance and rank respectively. A potential risk of this analysis strategy was that it was not possible to rule out apparently valid effects in each of the separate analyses having been caused by small numbers of children producing all of the responses in some conditions. To rule out this possibility completely two separate supplementary analyses were conducted. First, a series of preliminary analyses were carried out to determine whether there were any significant interactions between the manner dimension and the power, distance and rank (degree of imposition) dimensions. No significant interactions were found between these dimensions. Second, as shown in Figures 5a-5d a set of "subjectwise" percentages were calculated for this data. It needs to be emphasised that the object of the "subjectwise" figures is to verify that the same overall effects are present when compared to the "itemwise" data. Due to the way that the percentages are obtained in the two cases there must be a number of differences in specific relationships in the two sets of figures.

4.2.6 Verbal Expressiveness Task

To assess children's level of verbal expressiveness the children were tape recorded
for approximately five to seven minutes while completing the puzzle figures task which required verbal interaction with the experimenter. The child’s task was to assemble a set of puzzle cards which had pictures showing heads, bodies and legs, into complete figures representing people in the child’s world, i.e. mother, teacher, a sibling, a classmate, and the child her/himself. At the start of the task the cards were spread out on the experimenter's side of the table and the child was instructed about the task thus "We’re going to make some pictures of people who you know". The child was also told to ask the experimenter for the pieces s/he wanted to use.

During this task the child wore a lapel microphone and the tapes were subsequently transcribed verbatim. To produce a measure of verbal expressiveness two statistics were calculated from the transcripts. The two statistics calculated were, the number of turns defined as the number of separate occasions when the child started speaking following an utterance by the experimenter and the number of distinct words spoken by the child. Turns were operationalized in the transcripts as the number of times when the child started any utterance after the experimenter had spoken. This definition involved no subjective judgment of any kind in order to score the number of turns from the transcript. The number of words spoken by the child was defined as the number of distinct words in the transcript including "um" and "er". Since this was scored from the typed transcripts the scoring at this stage did not involve any subjective judgement.
4.3 Results

The results presented in Tables 4a to 4d show the frequencies for request for object vs request for action for requests directed to mother, sibling teacher and classmate respectively by request type collapsed over behaviour group with $\chi^2$ statistics.

**Table 4a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>R. Object</th>
<th>R. Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/want statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imbedded imperative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission directive</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question directive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(6) = 135.3 \ p < .001$ (cell n < 5; 10/14)

**Table 4b**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>R. Object</th>
<th>R. Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/want statement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imbedded imperative</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission directive</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question directive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(6) = 151.2 \ p < .001$ (cell n < 5; 10/14)
Table 4c
Request types used for requests to mother for object or action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>R. Object</th>
<th>R. Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/want statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imbedded imperative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission directive</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question directive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(6) = 147.8 \ p < .001$  (cell n < 5; 10/14)

Table 4d
Request types used for requests to teacher for object or action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>R. Object</th>
<th>R. Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/want statement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imbedded imperative</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission directive</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question directive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(6) = 114.9 \ p < .001$  (cell n < 5; 6/14)

Since the data is collapsed over subjects only this analysis strategy does not violate the independence assumption for $\chi^2$. The results shown in Table 4a indicate that the children most often used one type of request, i.e. permission directives, to
request objects from a sibling. For requests for action directed to a sibling the children used imbedded imperatives and question directives most frequently. The difference in frequencies of request types is highly statistically significant \(\chi^2(6)=135.3\) \(p<0.001\). Given the high numbers of cells with \(n\) less than 5 considerable caution is required in interpreting significant \(\chi^2\) statistics. However, comparing the findings across all four tables i.e. for the same types of request directed to classmates, mothers and teachers, the same broad pattern of finding is shown. It is notable however that for requests to teachers there is a tendency for the more indirect request types to be used more frequently.

It is not possible to fully investigate the patterns of effects present in this data using the univariate analysis strategy employed above. For example it is not possible to test whether there are any interactions between the experimental variables using univariate analysis. Given the cell frequencies in the data set, to enable use of a multivariate analysis strategy, i.e. logit modelling, the seven request categories were collapsed into two types based on their overall structural characteristics. The first type comprised categories 1 to 5 (see Table 3 for a description or the categories). Requests in categories 1 to 5 can readily be understood as requests without taking into account the context of the requests. The second type was made up of categories six and seven. Requests in these categories cannot be unambiguously interpreted as requests without taking into account the context, e.g. a hint such as "that's a really nice game" may function as a request in an appropriate social context and be easily understood as such by both participants.

The results presented in Figures 4a to 4d show the percentages of type 1
responses i.e. requests categories 1 to 5 compared to type 2 responses, i.e. request
categories 6 and 7, by the social context of the request and group. The percentages
shown in each column of the Figures are based on frequencies summed over
subjects and manner of the request. The percentages shown have been calculated
for response type within group, i.e. the type 1 responses sum to 100% and type 2
responses sum to 100% across all the columns within each type. The maximum
total n for each group, i.e. Type 1 + type 2 responses, is equal to the number of
subjects times the number of responses. The differing n’s reflect differences in the
numbers of subjects in each group and a small amount (less than 2% of responses)
of missing data where subjects responses were inaudible on the tape. Preliminary
screening showed that missing data were randomly distributed and this issue was
not analysed further.

The data shown in Figures 4a to 4d were subjected to logit analysis in order to
explore the following questions:

1) The interaction between request types used and the social context of the request
i.e. the power and distance relationship between the speaker and the intended
hearer and the degree of imposition on the hearer; and 2) Differences between
groups on the interaction between social context and request types used.

The most parsimonious model of the data in Figures 4a to 4d comprised the
following terms: Request type; Request type x Group; Request type x Distance;
Request type x Degree of imposition on the hearer; Request type x Distance x
Group, GFI $\chi^2(22)=36.72$, p=.27. The non significant p value for the GFI
indicated a good fit of the model to the data.
Chapter 4: Children’s production of politeness strategies in requests

Comparison Group

Hostile-aggressive Group

Figure 4a & 4b. Comparison and hostile-aggressive group children's percentages of requests by type and social context.

Notes. Type 1. Assertions to permission directives: Type 2, question directives and hints. RO - Request for object; RA - Request for action; Child, same power; Adult, unequal power. Family member, close other; Teacher or classmate, unfamiliar other
Figure 4c & 4d. Anxious-fearful and comorbid group children's percentages of requests by type and social context. Notes: Type 1, assertions to permission directives; Type 2, question directives and hints. RO - Requests for object; RA - Request for action; Child, same power; Adult, unequal power Family member, close other; Teacher or classmate, unfamiliar other.
The model parameters\(^1\) for Request type x Group were: -3.68 (hostile-aggressive group vs comparison group); -2.22, (anxious-fearful vs comparison group); and 1.16 (comorbid vs comparison). The modelling results indicated that the relative odds of using type 2 compared to type 1 requests were significantly less overall for children in the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful groups compared to comparison children. The model parameters for Request type x Distance -5.58, and for Request type x Degree of imposition on the hearer 10.54, indicated that the relative odds of children in all groups using type 2 vs type 1 requests were significantly less for unfamiliar hearers compared to familiar hearers and that the relative odds of children in all groups using type2 vs type 1 requests were significantly greater for requests to others to do something compared to requests for objects.

\(^1\)The logit model parameters reflect the relative odds of type 2 to type 1 in the different levels of the independent variables. A statistically significant parameter value indicates that the relative odds of type 2 to type 1 requests differs significantly between levels of the independent variable. The parameters follow an approximately normal distribution, thus parameters greater than +/-2 are statistically significant. It is also important to appreciate that the parameter values reflect the relative odds controlling for the effects of other variables in the model. As a consequence of these factors care is required in relating the model back to the values in Table 3. A positive parameter value in this model indicates that the relative odds of type 2 compared to type 1 requests in the second level of the independent variable are greater than in the first level, a negative value indicates that the reverse is true.
The model parameters for the three way interaction term were (host.-aggress/comparison x distance x req. type) .80, (anxious-fearful/comparison x distance x req. type) 0.32, and (comorbid/comparison x distance x req. type) 2.72. These results showed that the comorbid group showed significantly greater odds of using type 2/type 1 requests for requests to unfamiliar others compared to the comparison group. Thus compared to the comparison group children the comorbid group showed evidence of preferring a more deferent less obvious style with unfamiliar others whereas the hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful groups did not.

Given the complexity of the design it was conceptually possible to represent the data from this study graphically in a very large number of different ways. The method used in figures 4a to 4d, i.e. percentages of each request type x design cell, was intended to give a visual analog of the relative odds of type 2 vs type 1 requests in each cell. Figures 5a to 5d show an alternative representation of the data in Figure 4a to 4d by subjects rather than items. Since the data is collapsed over manner the possible percentage of subjects in each column of the figure is equal to 100 whereas for the itemwise analyses, shown in 4a to 4d the percentages summed to one hundred within request type. Considering the first two columns in figure 5a, the results show that all comparison group children produced type 1 requests in this condition whereas only about 10% of comparison group children produced type 2 requests in this condition.
Figure 5a. (top) and 5b (bottom) Percentages of comparison and hostile-aggressive group children producing type 1 and type 2 requests in each condition.
Figure 5c. (top) and 5d (bottom) Percentages of anxious-fearful and comorbid group children producing type 1 and type 2 requests in each condition.
Chapter 4: Children's production of politeness strategies in requests

It is important to keep in mind in comparing figures 4a-d with figures 5a-d that the different methods of calculating the percentages means that there must be differences in some of the relationships observed in the two sets of figures i.e. with the calculations done correctly it would be impossible to have identical relationships in the two sets of figures. For example comparing Figures 4a and 5a the two discrepancies observed principally reflect the fact that the percentages in column 2 are calculated differently in the two cases. However the key fact to note is that the subjectwise figures show the same basic pattern of findings as do the itemwise figures i.e. 1) the subjectwise figures indicate that overall more children use type 1 than type 2 requests; 2) more children use type 2 requests for requests for action vs request for objects; and 3) more children use type 1 requests to close vs distant others. All of these directions are consistent with the results from the itemwise analyses e.g. 1) above matches the itemwise finding that there were more type 1 than type 2 requests overall. This analytical strategy is intentionally analogous to the Min F method widely used in psycholinguistic research. The finding that the same basic set of effects emerges in both "itemwise" and "subjectwise" views of the data supports the conclusion that these constitute real effects.

In summary the results of the analyses showed only very limited support for the first hypothesis. Thus, there was no significant effect of power relationship between the speaker and intended hearer on request type, there was a significant effect of social distance on request form in the reverse direction i.e. more indirect forms were used more frequently to more familiar others, and finally there was a
significant effect of degree of imposition of the request on the other. The results indicated partial support for the second hypothesis. Children in the comorbid group were significantly less likely to vary the form of their requests in relation to the distance between speaker and hearer compared to the other groups.

Figure 6: Percentage use of please by social context and group (collapsed over manner) Note 1 - Variation in group n's reflects the difference in subject numbers between groups and a small amount of missing response data.

Figure 6 shows the percentage use of "please" by social context and group. The percentages in each column are based on frequencies summed over subject and
manner of the request. The percentages sum to 100% within each group. The data shown in Figure 6 were subjected to logit analysis in order to explore the distribution of the use of "please" by the social context of the request and group. The best fitting model of the data in Figure 6 comprised the following terms: Please, Please x Distance, Please by degree of imposition and included manner of the request as covariate, GFI, $\chi^2(26) = 16.28, p=.96$ The model parameters were Please x Distance (1.1), and Please x Type (-.8) with manner (-4.6). Because the covariate was the only term with a significant model parameter value, i.e. parameter value greater than 2.0, these results suggest that when covariance with manner of the request is controlled for, use of please does not vary significantly with social context. That is, the results showed that use of please covaried with whether the request was made in a usual, polite or rude manner. There was no evidence that use of please varied with power or distance relationships between the speaker and hearer or with the degree of imposition of the request on the hearer or the child's group.
Figure 7. Percentages of requests by overall request type, group and manner (collapsed over social context conditions) 
Note. Type 1 - assertions to permission directives; Type 2 - question directives & hints. Varying n’s reflect group n’s and missing responses.

Since use of please did not vary with the immediate social context of the requests the results supported hypothesis three.

Figure 7 shows the percentages of type 1 compared to type 2 requests by group and manner of the request. The percentages shown in each column in Figure 7 are based on frequencies summed over subject and social context condition. The results in Figure 7 suggest that across all four groups, type 2 requests were produced most frequently for the "usual" manner, less frequently for the "polite" manner and very rarely for the "rude" manner. Overall, the comparison group children showed the most frequent use of type 2 requests in all except the rude condition. These findings were confirmed by the results of logit analysis of these
data. The best fitting most parsimonious model of the data in Figure 7 comprised
the following terms: Requests type, Request type x Group, Request type x Manner,
GFI $\chi^2(6) = 4.09, p=.663$. The parameter values for Request type x Group were -
4.1, -2.4 and -1.6. These showed that hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful groups
were significantly less likely to use type 2 compared to type 1 requests. The
parameter values for Request type x Manner were -2.5 and -8.1. These results
showed that type 2 requests were significantly less likely to be used by all groups in
the "polite" and "rude" conditions compared to the "usual" condition. These results
showed that hypothesis 4 was not supported i.e. the more indirect less obvious
request forms were used less often in polite as compared to usual requests. This is
a notable result in that it indicated that the less direct, more complex and more
potentially ambiguous request forms were not being used to signal explicit
politeness, nor explicit rudeness. There was no significant interaction between
manner and group which indicated that the fifth hypothesis was not supported by
the data.
Figure 8. Percentage use of please by group and manner, (collapsed over social context conditions)

Figure 8 shows use of "please" in requests by manner of the request and group. There was a consistent pattern in these data with "please" used most frequently in the polite condition, less often in the usual condition and infrequently in the rude condition. Although there is some difference in the frequency overall of use of please by group the variation by manner did not show any evidence of interaction with group.

The best fitting model of the data in Figure 8 comprised the following terms:
Please and Please x Manner GFI $\chi^2(9) = 10.33, p=.324$. The parameter values for Please x Manner were 10.6 and -15.4, which showed that please was significantly more likely to be used in the polite compared to usual manner requests, and was significantly less likely to be used in the rude compared to usual manner. The results supported hypothesis 6 suggesting that all groups of children used please to mark conventional or "everyday" politeness.

4.3.1 Verbal Expressiveness Task Results

One potential explanation for the observed differences in performance on the production task, between comparison group children and children with behaviour problems was that children with behaviour problems may have tended to show lower levels of verbal expressiveness overall compared to comparison group children. In order to explore this possibility two indicators of verbal expressiveness were obtained from the tape recorded period of interaction with the experimenter during construction of the figures used in study 1. The measures were the total numbers of turns taken by the child and the total number of words produced by the child during the task. Turns were defined as the number of times the child spoke, between the prompts produced by the experimenter. The number of words included any discrete unit on the transcript including um's and ah's. Both of these measures were coded from the tape by the experimenter. Since both measures were defined completely by rules about the transcripts inter-rater reliability was not obtained.

The results shown in Table 5 were subjected to analysis of variance. The results
indicated that there were no significant differences between groups on either measure. The only clear pattern in these data was that children with behaviour problems showed lower levels of variability compared to children without behaviour problems, providing some indication that these children may exhibit more restricted styles of interaction with others.

Table 5

Verbal expressiveness by group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison</td>
<td>Host-agress.</td>
<td>Anx-fear.</td>
<td>Comorbid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group N</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of this analysis need to be treated with some caution due to the level of missing data. Approximately 10% of cases could not be analysed due to difficulties with the tape recording of this section. However the results do not support the hypothesis of lower level of verbal expressiveness for children with hostile-aggressive behavioural problems compared to children without behaviour problems.

4.4 Discussion
The research reported in this study explored several key questions in politeness in children’s requests. First, this study explored politeness variation in requests to others of varying power and social distance, and for requests which varied in the degree of imposition on the other. Second, this study explored the politeness variation in request due to manner of the request. Finally, the study compared the politeness skills of children without behaviour problems and children with behaviour problems in order to explore the contribution of social and behavioural factors to children’s linguistic politeness skills.

The first major issue explored in this study was the use of different request types and use of "please" in response to the social context of requests by comparison group children and children with behaviour problems. The results showed that requesting strategies used varied with social distance of the hearer and degree of imposition on the hearer. There were no differences for requesting strategy by power of the hearer which is not consistent with the predictions of politeness theory. This may reflect the fact that for mothers and teachers who were the high power hearers in this research there is a strong conventional or role based expectation that they will assist children. The effect for requesting strategy by social distance of the hearer, was in the opposite direction to that predicted by politeness theory i.e the more indirect, less obvious forms such as question directives and hints were used more frequently for requests to familiar others. Thus more indirect forms were not more likely to be used for requests to distant others as politeness theory would predict but rather were more likely to be used for requests made to close others. One possible interpretation of this finding relates to the fact that the
close others were the child's mother and a sibling. Between individuals with extended familiarity with one another's style of communicating even a hint may in effect be a very clear direct communication The use of "please" showed little or no variation with the social context of the request.

In summary these findings do not support a simple interpretation of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. However they do indicate that children of this age are capable of varying their request strategies in response to the immediate social context. Overall the findings suggest a style of requests to family members which relied less on "formal" politeness, i.e. "please" is used less often, but uses requests that acknowledge the rights and status of the other and give the other options, e.g. "would it be alright if ...", "Would you like to ..". This finding is consistent with work by Blum-Kulka (1990). She suggested that relationships within the family are "special". She proposed that due to their history and affective content for relationships within the family individuals place a higher priority on maintaining the relationship than on other goals in the interaction. Further, the results indicate that some children with behaviour problems and particularly the comorbid group are less likely to use these strategies in their requests. Thus these children may be less skilled in the effective use of some of the basic language skills for developing and maintaining positive interactions with others.

Another issue that clearly influences children's requesting strategies is the "situatedness" of requests in everyday social interactions (Andersen, 1984). That is requesting strategies show some evidence of being linked to particular types of social setting. This was not specifically explored in the current research and in
indeed in order to present face valid tasks the requests made were confounded with who was being asked and the social setting. It is suggested that future research needs to investigate the effect of social setting along with the general social context dimensions.

The second major issue explored in this study was the use of different request strategies in requests varying in manner by comparison group children and children with behaviour problems. The results showed that use of please varied with manner of the request, with please being used very frequently in conventionally polite requests and being used very infrequently in rude requests. The results also showed that the interaction between use of please and manner of the request did not differ for comparison group children compared to children with behaviour problems. Saying "please" in requests seems to be associated for these children with their everyday understanding of asking "politely". The results suggest that both comparison group children and children with behaviour problems in this age group have mastered this conversational rule. The results also showed that the more indirect request strategies were used less frequently in conventionally polite requests. Overall the strategy that the children used to convey conventional politeness could be described as more directly expressing the object of the request while indicating formal politeness through the use of "please".

These findings show that for these ten to eleven year old children variation in requesting style associated with conventional or everyday politeness differs from the variation in requesting style associated with social context. This finding suggests that theories of politeness such as Brown and Levinson’s model which explains
politeness in terms of the immediate social context may not fully describe the way
politeness functions in children's everyday interactions. It is notable that the results
show that the different groups of children appear to differ on their use of politeness
strategies in relation to social context but not in relation to manner of the request.
Labov and Fanshel (1977) suggested that for the speaker, selection of a particular
request strategy in a given situation involves some consideration of the hearer's role
in the situation. By contrast there is evidence that the use of "please" in requests is
an indicator of "everyday" politeness (e.g. Gleason et al., 1984). The current
findings offer some evidence that children employ these strategies differentially to
indicate everyday and strategic politeness.

Finally the findings indicated that on two indicator measures the groups of
children did not show differences in their levels of verbal expressiveness in their
interactions with others. In combination with the other findings this suggests that
the behaviour problem groups use politeness strategies differently in their
interactions with others rather than being less verbal overall.
Chapter 5: Evaluations of the effectiveness of 
politeness strategies in requests by children with 
and without behaviour problems

5.1 Introduction

The first overall objective of this study was to explore the factors influencing 
children's evaluations of the effectiveness of different request strategies. As 
reviewed in Chapter 1, several major studies have explored children's judgments of 
the politeness of requests (Becker, 1986; Wilkinson et al., 1984). This research has 
shown that children use a number of the features of requests such as indirectness 
and use of "please" to judge whether a given request is polite. The results of this 
work have also shown that children take account of aspects of the context such as 
the age of the intended hearer in judging the politeness of different requests. The 
current study modified this research agenda to explore children's judgments of the 
effectiveness of politeness as a social strategy in request situations. Based on the 
work by Ervin-Tripp et al. (1987) and Bernicot (1991), reviewed in Chapter 1, a 
key question here was whether children primarily relied on the form or the social 
context of requests to judge the effectiveness of different strategies.

In Chapter 1, two methods were suggested that children may employ to judge 
the expected effectiveness of different request strategies. It was hypothesised that 
the expected effectiveness of a request could be judged based on either the 
presence of politeness strategies in isolation or the relationship between the request 
form and the social context. The first rule would correspond to the conversational
maxim "be polite". Following this rule in a given context children would judge a request containing politeness features as more likely to be effective, than a request not containing politeness features. The second rule corresponds to Brown and Levinson's basic assumption "respect the other's face". Following this rule, in a given context children would judge requests that provided enough face redress in the situation to minimise the threat to the other's face as more likely to be effective than requests which did not.

The second major objective of this research was to compare judgments of the effectiveness of different request strategies by children with and without behaviour problems. The research by Rubin, and Borwick (1984), reviewed in Chapter 1, suggested the possibility of an association between social adjustment and children's knowledge of the effectiveness of different social strategies. Broadly speaking, the findings suggested that better adjusted children are more sensitive to differences in social situations compared to less well adjusted children. It was hypothesised that this may result in children with behaviour problems being less likely than children without behaviour problems to take the social context into account when judging the effectiveness of different request strategies.

The potential association between children's behavioural adjustment and their judgments of the effectiveness of different request strategies was further explored by eliciting children's explanations for the effectiveness of different strategies. It was hypothesised that children with aggressive behaviour problems would primarily explain the effectiveness of requesting strategies in terms of compliance or non-
compliance with "everyday" politeness. By contrast it was hypothesised that children without behaviour problems and children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems would explain the effectiveness of different strategies based on the extent to which they take account of the other person's perspective.

The specific hypotheses tested in this study were:

1) That requests containing polite features would be more likely to be judged to be effective than requests without polite features.

2) That the presence, as compared to absence, of polite features in requests would result in a greater increase in the likelihood of children judging requests to be effective:
   a) when directed to more powerful vs less powerful others: and/or
   b) when directed to close vs distant others: and/or
   c) for more vs less imposing requests.

3) That children in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups would be more likely to judge the effectiveness of requests based solely on the form without taking into account the context compared to children in the comparison and anxious-fearful groups.

4) That children in the comparison and anxious-fearful groups would use more explanations for the effectiveness of requesting strategies that made reference to other person compared to children in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups.

5) Conversely, that children in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups
would use more explanations that made reference to whether the request was conventionally polite or rude.

5.2 Method

5.2.1 Materials

The materials comprised a set of requests in context, varying on the same dimensions as described in Study 2; i.e. power, distance, and degree of imposition of the request. For each combination two request forms were presented, a "polite" and a "non polite" form. Polite forms used a variety of features associated with polite styles of speaking, e.g. using "please", indirect forms, etc. Non polite forms used more obvious direct requests with no politeness features. Two examples of the situations and requests are shown below, a request to a sibling and a request to a classmate. (see Appendix 2 for full details). The requests presented are shown in Table 6. The requests were presented in a random order which was held constant across all subjects. The basis for using a constant random order was to remove one potential source of variability in the data.

"Your older brother/sister has a [football/basketball] which he/she doesn’t use much but which you’d like to use. So you say to him/her,

Would it be OK if I used your [football/basketball]?
You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school.

So you say to your friend,

Give me your pen."

**Table 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request Type</th>
<th>Request</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Have you got a spare pen I could use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-polite</td>
<td>Give me that pen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Hi that looks good, could I have a go?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-polite</td>
<td>Give me a go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Mum, could I have a drink?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-polite</td>
<td>I want a drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Could I see that one, my friend said it is really good?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-polite</td>
<td>I want to see that one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Would it be okay if I used that football/basketball?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-polite</td>
<td>I'm going to use your football/basketball now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.2.2 Procedure**

The children were read each of the situations followed by the requests. The situations systematically varied the age and familiarity of the other and the degree of imposition of the requests on the other. The child’s task was to judge whether the request would be an effective way of asking, i.e. whether the other person would be likely to do what was asked or give the child what they were asking for. The children were also asked to explain their judgments.
5.2.3 Data Analysis

The classification system for explanations was developed during the pilot study, as described in Appendix 1. From an initial inspection of the content of the children’s responses and on the basis of the politeness literature, a preliminary set of categories were developed. This was an only partially formalised process and was based on a judgement by the experimenter of the major theme of the child’s explanation.

Two independent raters used the scheme to classify the pilot data. The results showed an initial 81% agreement between raters averaged over all categories. After discussion between the raters the last four sub-types within reference to the other person, (i.e. respect for other's activities, shared activities, degree of friendship and other's usual behaviour) were added at this point giving a final average inter rater agreement of 91%. The remaining cases of disagreement were discussed to resolve the appropriate classifications or the category definitions were modified as required. The final set of categories used is shown in Table 7.

For the main study the categories from "rights of the other" to "other's usual behaviour" were collapsed into one category called reference to the other. This grouping reflects the strong thematic similarity between these categories. To validate the final set of categories (20%) of the main study data was re-coded by a second rater using the categories shown in Table 7. The second rater was blind with respect to the experimental conditions and hypotheses for the research. Interrater reliability was computed using the kappa statistic.
(K=81, P<.001). This showed that the category scheme reliably classified a high percentage of the explanations the children produced.

**Table 7**

**Types of explanations for the effectiveness of requests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Explanations that describe the request as polite or using manners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude</td>
<td>Explanations that describe the request as rude or lacking in manners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>Explanations that describe the request as asking the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Explanations that describe the request as telling or ordering the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>Explanations that relate to how the request was produced rather than what was said. Often expressions such as &quot;nicely&quot; or &quot;meanly&quot; were used to describe manner, e.g. &quot;cos you said it in a nice way&quot;. Explanations that referred to the wording of the request.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to the other person's point of view</th>
<th>Explanations that refer to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rights of the other to possessions, e.g. &quot;it's his stuff&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feelings of the other, e.g. &quot;she'd feel OK if you asked like that&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The other as making different choices from time to time, e.g. &quot;Depends on what mood she's in.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The basic idea that others are due consideration, e.g. &quot;that's not the way to treat your sister.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respect for other’s time, e.g. &quot;then he wouldn't have to wait till you've (I've) finished.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7 contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of explanations for the effectiveness of requests</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reference to the other person's point of view (contd.)  | - The other's right for their activities not to be interrupted, e.g. "Mum doesn't like to be interrupted when she's looking at dresses."

| Please +/- | Explanations that refer to including or excluding "please" from the request, e.g. "you didn't say please", "it'd be better with a please in there". |
5.3 Results

Figures 9a and 9b show the percentages of non-polite and polite requests judged to be effective by immediate social context and group.

**Non-polite request forms**

![Non-polite request forms chart]

**Polite request forms**

![Polite request forms chart]

Figure 9a (top) & 9b (bottom) Percentages of request forms judged effective by politeness, context and group.

Note RA, Request for action; RO, Request for object.
Visually comparing Figures 9a and 9b the results suggested that requests using politeness strategies were consistently judged as more effective than requests which did not include politeness strategies. The results in Figure 9a suggested that the comparison group tended to judge non-polite requests as more effective compared to all the behaviour problem groups. Also overall, requests for objects tended to be judged as more effective than requests for actions and there was some suggestion of an interaction between age of intended hearer and group. Further, there is a tendency for children in the comorbid group to judge polite requests as less effective compared to children in the other groups.

The results in Figure 9b showed some evidence of ceiling effects although it should be emphasised that this is likely to reflect social reality. The request situations presented were intentionally selected to represent everyday events and it is likely that polite requests would normally be successful in these situations.

To explore the factors significantly influencing children's judgements the results shown in Figures 9a and 9b were subjected to logit analysis. The best fitting most parsimonious model of the data is shown in Table 7. (For a detailed description of logit analysis see Section 4.2.4). The statistically significant overall goodness of fit index ($\chi^2(52) = 97, p < .001$) indicated that the model did not provide a comprehensive description of the variation in the data and thus some caution is required in interpretation of the findings.

The first term in Table 8 is a main effect term indicating that overall more requests were judged to be effective than not effective. The second term in Table 8
indicated that polite requests were judged as more effective than non polite requests overall, which supported the first hypothesis.

Table 8
Logit model of children's judgments of the effectiveness of different request styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Terms</th>
<th>Model Parameters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>-12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Form(^a)</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Group x Form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggress-comparison</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear-comparison</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comorbid-comparison</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Power x Form</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Distance x Form</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Req. type(^b) x Form</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Distance x Power x Req. type</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment x Power x Form x Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aggress-comparison</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear-comparison</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comorbid-comparison</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(GFI: $\chi^2(52) = 97$, p < .001)

Note: a - Form included politeness features/ no politeness features.
      b - request for object/ request for action

The third term showed that hostile-aggressive and comorbid group children judged non-polite requests overall as significantly less likely to be effective compared to the comparison and anxious-fearful groups. The direction of this finding was unexpected. This result suggests that children without behaviour problems and children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems may judge the use of politeness features in requests to be less important in gaining others compliance compared to children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems. This provides
some support for hypothesis 3 since it suggests that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems may rely more on the form of the request, i.e. whether the request contains politeness features, in judging whether it will be effective compared to the other groups.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth terms in Table 8 indicated that power, social distance and request type all influenced the relationship between the request form and children's judgments of the effectiveness of the request strategies. Specifically non-polite requests to more powerful others were judged as more likely to be effective than non-polite requests to less powerful others; non-polite requests to close others were judged as more likely to be successful compared to non-polite requests to more distant others; and less imposing non-polite requests (i.e. requests for objects) were judged as more likely to be successful compared to more imposing (i.e. request for action) non-polite requests. These results provided partial support for the second hypothesis. However the effect for power is in the opposite direction to that predicted by politeness theory. Given the relatively limited fit of the model to the data the remaining higher order terms were not interpreted.

To further explore differences in the understanding of linguistic politeness in requests by children with and without behaviour problems the children were asked to explain their effectiveness judgments. The explanations that the children produced were classified using the categories shown in Table 7.

The results of the classification, with $\chi^2$ analyses, are shown in Table 9.
Table 9

Frequencies of explanations for the effectiveness of requests by group with \( \chi^2 \) statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation Type</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Host-agg</th>
<th>Anx-fear</th>
<th>Comorbid</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other person</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please +/-</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicated that the hostile-aggressive group used more explanations which described the request as polite or rude compared to the other groups. The comorbid group used significantly more explanations which described the request as asking or telling the other. The comparison group produced more explanations that made reference to the other person's feelings, compared to the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups, and they were also more likely to produce explanations which referred to the need to say please.

The results can be interpreted as showing that their judgment as to whether the request form is polite or rude represents a key aspect for all children in deciding whether a request strategy is likely to be effective. However, there is evidence that children may employ a range of other "social reasoning" strategies focussing on aspects of the social context. It is notable that explanations which related to the
other's emotional state and to involvement with the other (i.e. feelings, 
consideration, respect for others, degree of friendship) were more often used by 
children in the comparison and anxious-fearful groups than by children in the 
hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups. This finding suggests that children with 
aggressive behaviour problems may as a group be less likely to employ these "other 
oriented" social reasoning strategies.

In order to explore how children's explanations related to the request form, the 
explanations were also classified by request form. The results presented in Table 10 
showed that children's judgments that requests were polite or rude substantially 
corresponded to whether or not the requests included politeness features. It is 
notable, however, that the relationship is not perfect, suggesting that there is not an 
exact correspondence between the form of requests and children's judgments of 
the requests. The results indicated that a number of requests that were constructed 
as polite forms were judged as rude by the children because the explanations 
referred to these requests as rude. Explanations referring to telling-ordering the 
other corresponded predominantly to rude forms whereas explanations referring to 
asking the other were produced for polite and rude requests equally.
Table 10
Frequencies of children’s explanations for effectiveness judgments by request form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Polite</th>
<th>Non-polite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone or wording</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the other</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of please</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Discussion

The first overall objective of this study was to explore the factors influencing children's judgments of the effectiveness of requests. The results showed that children’s judgments of the effectiveness of requests were primarily influenced by the request form, i.e. whether the request contained politeness features, with a smaller effect from the social context, i.e. the power and distance relationship between the speaker and hearer and the degree of imposition of the request on the hearer. The results also showed that requests containing politeness features were judged to be more effective regardless of the social context.

In evaluating the broader significance of this finding it is necessary to take account of the presence of ceiling effects for the polite request condition. The request situations were intentionally chosen to be representative of children’s everyday experience. The possibility that this has resulted in a limited range of
variation in the task performance cannot be ruled out. However, given that there was little prior research in this area, it was appropriate to begin by investigating everyday situations.

Overall, it is quite challenging to attempt to compare the findings to previous research since on detailed examination most studies seem to use somewhat different methods. The finding that children appear to primarily rely on the form of the request in judging whether a request will be effective is consistent with the findings of Bernicot (1991). Looking at the effect for age of the intended hearer, this can be compared to Garton & Pratt (1990). They reported no effect for age of intended hearer on children's judgements of effectiveness. Considering the familiarity dimension Baron and Axia (1989) reported a significant effect for familiarity of the hearer in children's attributions of polite and impolite requests. The explanations that children produced for their judgments provided additional support for the conclusion that request form is a major factor that the children used in deciding whether a particular request would be effective. However the explanations that the children produced showed that they took into account a range of contextual factors in judging the effectiveness of requests.

The second overall objective of this study was to investigate the differences between the judgments of the effectiveness of different requests by comparison group children and children with behaviour problems. The results showed that the comparison and anxious-fearful group children judged non polite requests to be more effective than children in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups. The
direction of this finding may reflect the fact that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems often have a history of negative interactions with others in the family. As reviewed in Chapter 1, work by Blum-Kulka (1990) indicates that in family interactions a high level of directness and relatively little use of formal politeness may be seen as normal and appropriate by the participants. However Blum Kulka's findings may reflect a history of positive relationships and interactions within the families she studied. Her description suggests that the family groups she studied did not include children with behavioural problems. The present research suggests that there may be a difference in the politeness styles used in interactions within the family involving children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems compared to family interactions involving children who do not have these behaviour problems.

There was a notable difference between the explanations that the different groups produced for the effectiveness of their requests. While children without behaviour problems and children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems used both explanations in terms of politeness or rudeness and explanations that refer to the other's feelings or to involvement with the other, children in the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups principally made use of explanations referring to the request as polite or rude. It is necessary to be cautious in drawing strong inferences from this finding, that fact that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems do not use explanations that refer to the others' feelings does not mean they are unaware of them. What this finding does suggest is that these
children do not see concern for others feelings as a reason to modify their own behaviour. Indeed, while this issue was not explored in the current research, it is quite possible that for some of these children hurting others feelings may be perceived by them as a positive outcome from their own impolite or aggressive behaviour.

Overall this study suggested that all children can use both form and context in judging whether a particular request strategy is likely to gain the other's compliance although request form appears to play a primary role. The results also indicated that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems may be less likely than other children to take account of the social context in judging the effectiveness of different request strategies. This may be one factor associated with these children experiencing fewer successful interactions compared to other children. However from the current research it seems most likely that there are bi-directional influences between language and non-linguistic social interaction.
Chapter 6: Developmental predictors of children’s production and evaluation of politeness strategies in requests

6.1 Introduction

The first major objective of Study 4 was to compare the relationships between children’s current levels of hostile-aggressive behaviours problems and their ability to produce and evaluate politeness in requests. As discussed in Chapter 1, one potential explanation for differences between the performance of children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems compared to other children in producing polite requests lies in the children's motivation to use politeness. Children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems may be less motivated to avoid conflict in their interactions with others and/or to produce socially appropriate language for the experimenter in the context of a testing session. By comparison performance on the evaluation task was expected to be less influenced by motivation since this did not involve actual production of different request forms. The current study re-analysed the data from Studies 2 and 3 (see Chapters 4 and 5) using logistic regression to enable a direct comparison of the effects of children's levels of behaviour problems on their performance in the two tasks.

The second objective of the current study was to undertake an initial exploration of two alternative views of the developmental origins of children's production and evaluation skills, i.e. children's capacity to produce language varying in relation to the social context and to reflect on the pragmatic qualities of utterances. The two views were outlined in some detail in section 1.3. Briefly the
first view was that children's performance on these tasks primarily reflects their knowledge of different linguistic forms and their usage. This view suggests that children's behavioural adjustment during childhood would show the same relationship to their sensitivity to social context in the production task and the evaluation task. Further, this view suggests that children's behavioural adjustment would influence their politeness skills indirectly through the range of social interactions the children experienced. This would be expected because children's social interactions represent a key source of input for them to learn the appropriate social usage of different linguistic forms. Clearly children with a history of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems experience a different range of social interactions compared to other children and moreover these children may have less opportunities to learn the appropriate social usage of different linguistic forms. Following this argument, children's behavioural adjustment would be expected to influence their sensitivity to all aspects of social context. If this model is correct we could expect that children with a longer history of behaviour problems would show an increasingly strong relationship between their behavioural adjustment and their sensitivity to social context. Further Axia and Baroni's (1985) study suggests that children's skills around 3 to 5 years of age are more limited and do not develop fully till about 9 to 10 years. Thus for the current work a pattern of findings that would be consistent would be relatively weak relationships between behavioural adjustment at 5 years and politeness with a stronger relationship appearing at around nine years and remaining the same at eleven years.
The second view was that children's production skills reflect their knowledge of linguistic forms and their usage, while their evaluation skills reflect a broader social sensitivity. That is tasks requiring judgments about the politeness of utterances such as the evaluation task used in this research are indicative of an underlying dimension of social sensitivity closely linked to concepts such as empathy. This view suggests that children's behavioural adjustment during childhood would be expected to show the same relationship to their sensitivity to context on the production task as outlined previously. However for the judgment task we would expect a stronger more consistent relationship across all ages. Although the expectation here would depend on the stability of children's sensitivity to others during development. There seems to be little or no data directly on this issue although some of Feshbach's (1978) work does suggest that empathy for others is at least in part learned.

In certain key respects the series of analyses conducted to address this objective must be seen as exploratory in nature. The objective of this aspect of the research was to extend the initial associational analyses to undertake a comparative analysis of the effects of children's behavioural adjustment during childhood on their production vs evaluation skills at ten to eleven years of age. The age range for the comparison was chosen following the research discussed in Chapter 1 concerning developmental changes in children's politeness skills from around 4 to 9 years of age. However, there was no basis in either the empirical or theoretical literature on which to formulate hypotheses about the contribution of children's behavioural
adjustment at specific ages to their resulting politeness skills at ten to eleven years.

In summary, the analyses undertaken compare the effects of children's levels of
hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems at 5, 7, 9 and 11 years
on their sensitivity to context in the production compared to the evaluation tasks at
ten to eleven years.

The third overall objective of this study was to examine the relationships
between children's performance on the politeness tasks and the following individual
differences: gender, approaching temperament, empathy and self reported
aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour. The literature reviewed in Section 1.3
indicated that these individual differences show evidence of being related to
linguistic politeness skills as well as being related to hostile-aggressive behaviour
problems, e.g. there is evidence that gender is related to both behavioural
adjustment and linguistic politeness. Thus it is likely that these factors may in part
influence observed differences between groups in the current research. Further,
some of these factors may be independently related to children's politeness skills. In
this respect this set of analyses was also related to the second objective. Following
the views of children's production and evaluation skills outlined earlier it was
expected that if children's evaluation skills were related to an underlying dimension
of social sensitivity, then their evaluation skills but not their production skills would
also be related to other variables linked to social sensitivity and particularly
empathy.

In addition to the variables discussed earlier, Brown and Levinson's politeness
theory suggests that individuals' perceptions of their behaviour in social interaction
plays an important role in the use of linguistic politeness. Thus for the current
research it was of interest to investigate the relationship of children's self report of
their levels of aggression and social anxiety to their performance on the production
and evaluation tasks.

In summary this study explored the following hypotheses:

1a That children's levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems would
   predict their sensitivity to social context in the production and evaluation tasks.

1b That children's levels of anxious-fearful behaviour problems would not
   predict their sensitivity to social context in the production and evaluation
   tasks.

2a That children's levels of current and prior hostile-aggressive behaviour
   problems would show different patterns of relationships to their sensitivity to
   social context in the production compared to the evaluation tasks.

3a That female gender compared to male gender would predict greater likelihood
   of modulating request forms in response to the social context on the
   production task.

3b That more approaching temperament (i.e. low numerical scores on the
   approach dimension) would predict greater likelihood of modulating requests in
   response to the social context than less approaching temperament.

3c That higher empathy would predict greater likelihood of modulating requests
   in response to the social context on the evaluation task, but not on the
production task.

3d That self reported aggression and social anxiety would predict children's sensitivity to social context on the evaluation task, but not on the production task.

6.2 Method

6.2.1 Measures

Between child variables

Full descriptions of all the measures used are provided in Chapter 2 and complete copies of the measures collected for this study are provided in Appendix 3.

Gender: The child's gender was included as a predictor variable in these analyses.

Approaching Temperament: This measure was taken from the Australian Temperament Project data set. The measure used was the Short Temperament Scale for Children (Prior, Sanson, & Oberklaid, 1989).

Empathy: The measure of empathy employed in this study was adapted from a self report measure of empathy developed by Davis (1980). See Appendix 3 for full details of the measure.

Social Anxiety: The measure used was the Social Anxiety Scale for children (La Greca et al., 1988).

Self Report Aggression: This measure was adapted from an interview protocol developed by Pitkanen (1969). This is a twenty six item measure with scales measuring: direct physical aggression, destruction of possessions, verbal aggression
and teasing.

Within child variables:

Power: Power of the intended hearer was defined in terms of the age of the intended hearer. The possible values were 0 = sibling or classmate and 1 = teacher or mother.

Distance: Social distance was defined in terms of the familiarity of the intended hearer. Possible values were 0 = family member (mother or sibling) and 1 = school acquaintance (teacher or classmate).

Rank (degree of imposition on the other): Degree of imposition on the other was defined in terms of the nature of the request. Low degree of imposition requests were defined as requests for everyday objects. High degree of imposition requests were defined as requests for the other to do an action. Possible values were 0 = requests for object and 1 = requests for action.

Request form (evaluation task only): The request forms used took two values, 0 = polite and 1 = rude.

Outcome variables:

Request group (production task): This variable was defined in detail in Chapter 4. Group 1 requests were defined as assertions to permission directives and group 2 requests were question directives and hints. The possible values were group 1=1 and group 2=2.
Judgment (evaluation task): This variable was defined in Chapter 5. The measure was the child's response as to whether the request strategy would be effective. The possible values were yes=1 and no=2.

6.2.2 Statistical Analysis

The unit of analysis throughout this program of research including the current study was the individual utterance rather than by subject as would normally be the case in individual differences research. The reason for this strategy was that the definition of politeness is in terms of the relationship between the form of the utterance and the context. The basic question that was addressed throughout this series of analyses was how this relationship between form and context varies in relation to "contextual" variables that vary from one child to another. Logistic regression analysis was used to explore predictors of children's production of and judgments about requests. The background variables were treated as continuous variables and the analytical question in each case was whether the significant effects found in the production and judgment studies showed significant interactions with the background variables. Thus the children's levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems at early and concurrent times were treated as continuous variables and their effect on the interaction between social context and request form produced, or evaluation, was examined. The interpretation of a significant interaction using this analysis strategy was that the relationship between the context factor and the outcome measure varied with the
score on the background factor, e.g. variation in request strategy used in relation to the familiarity of the hearer might vary with the child's gender.

For the first series of analyses the set of variables included all the first order variables and interactions between level of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour and each of the social context dimensions. The analyses were carried out separately for each age level of the data. The analysis method used a forward step likelihood ratio test to establish significant terms in the model. Comparative tests using other entry methods yielded similar results.

Two statistics are reported for the logistic regression analyses, the Odds Ratio or (OR) and the Wald statistic. The OR provides a measure of effect magnitude and direction while the Wald statistic provides another estimate of effect magnitude. The OR is comparable across all analyses but care is required with interpretation due to the asymmetric shape of the statistical distribution which has a maximum at 2, and extreme tails at zero and infinity. Thus differences between OR values do not have the same meaning at every point on the scale, e.g. the difference between an OR of 1 and 2 is not the same as the difference between an OR value of 10 and 11.

The Wald statistic is a generalised form of the $\chi^2$ statistic. It provides a test that the particular effect is significantly different to zero and an estimate of the magnitude of the effect. As a form of the $\chi^2$ statistic it is influenced by the analysis n and thus cannot be directly compared across analyses. However, within analyses it provides a directly interpretable measure of effect size and statistical significance.
As discussed earlier one of the major aspects of the analyses presented in this chapter explored possible relationships between children's prior behavioural adjustment and current politeness skills. To a substantial extent these analyses, were necessarily exploratory in nature. Since an exhaustive analysis of the data was not feasible this meant that there was a significant possibility that the overall pattern of findings may not truly reflect the relationships in this data-set. Thus any broader theoretical interpretation of these findings needs to be seen as highly tentative. For these analyses specifically, the results section presents only a very limited explication of the statistical findings. The discussion sets out a possible view of the causal relationships that may be involved here.

6.3 Results

The analyses summarised in Table 11 examined the effects of children's prior and current levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour on their production of different request styles.
Table 11
Effects of children’s early and current levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour on their production of different request styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariates/age</th>
<th>Logistic regression term</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>36.34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>126.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td>79.61</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>79.44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host-agress</td>
<td>No covariate terms sig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 yrs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anx-fear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7 yrs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host-agress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anx-fear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>127.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>48.30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anx-Fear x Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 contd.

Effects of children's early and current levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour on their production of different request styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariates/age</th>
<th>Logistic regression term</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(9 yrs) Host-aggress</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>32.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear</td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td>12.23</td>
<td>114.92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>80.82</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>80.68</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Host-aggress x distance</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Host-aggress x RA/RO</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>10.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 yrs - current)</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>44.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host-aggress Anx-fear</td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td>8.13</td>
<td>128.24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mode</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>80.75</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td>80.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anxious-fearful x power</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>host.-agg. x distance</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>10.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the first analysis reported in Table 11 showed that the social context factors influencing children's production of politeness were: social distance of the other, request for action vs request for object and manner i.e. whether the child was instructed to use a usual, polite or rude way of asking. These results replicate the findings of Study 4 and are reported here to show that this analysis directly parallels Study 4. The results of the second and subsequent analyses reported in Table 11 showed that:

1) there was no significant effect of levels of behaviour problems at five years of
age on children's production of politeness

2) high levels of anxious-fearful behaviour at seven years of age predicted more use of politeness strategies for "polite" manner requests.

3) high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour at nine and eleven years predicted significantly less likelihood of using more indirect request strategies in response to the social distance of the intended hearer.

4) high levels of anxious-fearful behaviour at eleven years of age predicted a significantly higher likelihood of modulating request strategies in response to the power of the intended hearer.

Overall the findings from these analyses are consistent with the results reported in Study 2 in terms of the associations found between behavioural adjustment and politeness skills. The finding that there were significant effects of children's prior as well as current behaviour adjustment on their politeness skills suggests that prior behavioural adjustment is one factor contributing to children's adeptness in using politeness at eleven years of age.

The analyses reported in Table 12 explored the effect of children's prior and current levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour on their sensitivity to social context in their evaluations of different politeness strategies.
### Table 12

Effects of children’s early and current levels of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour on their evaluation of the effectiveness of different request strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariates</th>
<th>Logistic Regression Term</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>353.83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>covariates</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>15.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5 yrs.)

Host-aggress. No covariate terms sig.

Anx-fear.

| (7 yrs.)       | Form                     | 0.03 | 353.78| 1  | .00 |
| Host-aggress.  | Power                    | 1.53 | 9.09  | 1  | .00 |
| Anx-fear       | RA/RO                    | 0.57 | 15.27 | 1  | .00 |
|                | Distance*host-agg        | 1.32 | 9.44  | 1  | .00 |

(9 yrs.)

Host-aggress. Power 1.53 9.06 1 .00

Anx-fear RA/RO 0.57 15.18 1 .00

Distance*host-agg 1.25 6.50 1 .01

Current (11 yrs)

| Form                     | 0.03 | 354.00| 1  | .00 |
| host-aggress. | Power                    | 1.53 | 9.05  | 1  | .00 |
| Anx-fear       | RA/RO                    | 0.57 | 15.19 | 1  | .00 |
|                | Distance*host-agg        | 1.25 | 6.12  | 1  | .01 |
The results of the first analysis reported in Table 12 showed that the context factors influencing children’s judgments were the presence or absence of politeness features in the request, whether the other was an adult or a child and whether the request was for an object or for the other to do something. The results of the second and subsequent analyses summarised in Table 12 showed that there was no effect of children’s levels of behaviour problems at five years of age on their evaluation of politeness and that high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour at seven, nine and eleven years of age predicted greater likelihood of requests to distant others being judged as not effective.

Comparing the results in Tables 11 and 12 suggested that overall, requests made to close vs distant others were more likely to use the more indirect request forms. However the findings also indicate that children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to show this response pattern. The findings further show that requests to close others were judged as more likely to be effective than requests to more distant others. Children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely than children with lower levels to show this pattern of judgments. Overall, this suggests that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems used request strategies that differed from those used by children without behaviour problems and they believed that their requests were less likely to be effective compared to children without behaviour problems. Since there were effects of levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems on both children’s production and evaluation this suggests that motivation
was not the primary factor influencing the performance of children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems on the production task. The expectation was that if children's performance was being influenced by motivation that this would be primarily evident on the production task which involved the children producing requests of varying social desirability. By comparison the evaluation task required the children to make a judgment about the effectiveness of different request strategies and it was argued that this task was likely to be less influenced by motivational factors.

Comparing the results of the analyses for the effects of children's levels of behaviour problems at 5, 7 and 9 years to those at eleven years on their production and evaluation skills the results for children's production of requests indicated that:

5 years: there was no effect for levels of behaviour problems

7 years: children with higher levels of anxious-fearful behaviour problems were less likely than those with lower levels to use more direct than indirect forms in the non polite condition;

9 years: children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to use more indirect forms to close vs distant others; and they were less likely to use more indirect forms for requests for action vs requests for objects;

11 years: children with high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to use more indirect forms to close vs distant others;
and they were more likely to use the more indirect forms for requests to adults vs children.

The available data set from the ATP data base meant that it was infeasible to conduct an analysis including all the separate data waves in the same analysis. This was because there were insufficient numbers of subjects with complete data from every year/data wave for the analysis to be viable. This means that for the current research we cannot rule out the interpretation that the observed effects of prior behaviour problems on current politeness skills reflect to some extent the stability of behaviour problems over time.

Considering the parallel findings to those above, for children's evaluation of requests the results showed that:

5 years: there was no effect for levels of behaviour problems

7,9 & 11 years: children with high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were more likely to judge requests without politeness features as not effective when directed to close others.

An initial point of similarity between results of the production and evaluation analyses was that children's levels of behaviour problems at five years had no effect on their performance on production or evaluation tasks at ten and a half years. This finding may reflect either the limiting stability of behaviour problems and production and evaluation skills themselves over this period i.e. the upper limit of the inter-correlation is limited by the auto-correlation's of these variables over this period, or this finding might reflect developmental changes in children's politeness
skills before seven years of age.

One clear difference between the results of the production and evaluation analyses was that while children's levels of anxious-fearful behaviour across all the age points analysed showed no effects on children's evaluation of the effectiveness of requests, anxious fearful behaviour did show some effect on their production of politeness strategies. The findings suggested that children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems tended to produce more formally "polite" requests but that their judgements of the effectiveness of different strategies were similar to those of children with no behaviour problems.

In comparing the results of these analyses to those in Chapters 4 and 5 it is important to note that the method used here is likely to be somewhat more sensitive. Thus treating the children's levels of behaviour problems as continuous variables, rather than reducing them to groups may account for these analyses showing some effects that were not detected in the previous analyses. Essentially by using all of the variance in the behaviour problem measures, unlike the previous analyses which to enable investigation of additional issues reduced these measures to categories, the current set of analyses may be more likely to detect some weaker effects that could not be detected using the categorical approach.

As discussed previously, one possible explanation for some of the findings reported thus far was that they may reflect the stability of behaviour problems over the age range investigated i.e. the possible predictive effect of BP's at an earlier age on current politeness skills is limited by the stability of behaviour problems over the
same age/year range. Thus the findings of an absence of any effects of children's levels of behaviour problems at five years on their politeness skills at ten and a half years, and the apparently greater effects of children's hostile-aggressive compared to anxious-fearful behaviour problems on their politeness skills, could both reflect the stability of behaviour problems. The analyses reported in Tables 13a and 13b show the stability correlations for children's levels of anxious-fearful and hostile-aggressive behaviour problems from 5 to 11 years of age.

Table 13a

Correlations between children's early and current levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5yrs</th>
<th>7yrs</th>
<th>9yrs</th>
<th>11yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5yrs</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7yrs</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9yrs</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11yrs</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13b

Correlations between children's early and current levels of anxious-fearful behaviour problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5yrs</th>
<th>7yrs</th>
<th>9yrs</th>
<th>11yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5yrs</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7yrs</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9yrs</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11yrs</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - all correlations in Tables 13a and 13b sig. at p<.01
Since the correlations reported in Tables 13a and 13b are based on the sample used in the current research some caution needs to be used in interpreting the findings since the total variation was reduced by the subject selection method used.

The results in Table 13a showed that there is a decrease in the correlation between children's levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems at 7 and 9 years and 11 years vs 5 years to 11 years although it is relatively small. However this finding could potentially explain the absence of any effect of the levels of behaviour problems at five years on children's politeness skills at ten and a half years. Comparing the results in Tables 13a and 13b there is very little difference in the stability of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems over five to eleven years of age for this group. This suggests that the difference in the effects of levels of anxious-fearful vs hostile aggressive behaviour problems on children's politeness skills is not likely to be due to differences in their stability over time.

The last major issue investigated in this study concerned the effects of the following additional individual differences: gender, approaching temperament, empathic concern, perspective taking, direct physical aggression, and self reported social anxiety, on children's politeness skills. There were two major questions of interest in these analyses. First a number of these variables have shown evidence of being associated with behavioural adjustment and politeness skills. Thus differences on these variables could potentially account for some of the observed differences in performance on the politeness tasks rather than children's behavioural adjustment per se. Second, following on from the second major objective of this study, if
children's ability to make judgments about politeness is related to their broader social sensitivity some of these individual differences (empathy and social anxiety) would be expected to influence children's performance on the evaluation task more than the production task. By comparison, if children's production and evaluation skills have similar developmental origins then these variables would be expected to have similar effects on children's performance on both tasks.

Table 14a
Correlations between approaching temperament, empathy, self reported aggressive behaviour and social anxiety and parent report hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>---</th>
<th>---</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empathic concern</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspective taking</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self rep. aggress</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Rep. anxiety</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-A</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-F</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - bold correlations sig p < .005 ; A-F - anxious-fearful behaviour problems at 10.5 years; H-A - hostile-aggressive behaviour problems at 10.5 years
Table 14b
Relationship between gender and group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Host-agg.</th>
<th>Anx-fear</th>
<th>Comorbid</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a first step in investigating these questions the analyses summarised in Tables 14a and 14b explored the relationships between gender, approaching temperament, empathic concern, perspective taking, direct physical aggression, and self reported social anxiety. The results in Table 14a showed that there were significant negative correlations between children's self reported empathy, and both their self reported aggressive behaviour and parent reported hostile-aggressive behaviour. The results also show a significant positive correlation between children's self reported social anxiety and parent reported level of approaching temperament indicating that less approaching children report higher levels of social anxiety. The results in Table 14b show an association between gender and behavioural adjustment with more boys in the groups with high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems. Overall these findings suggested that the differences in performance on the politeness tasks previously identified for children with and without behaviour problems may in part be linked to gender, empathy and approaching temperament.

The analyses reported in Table 15 investigated the effects of gender, approaching temperament, self reported aggression and social anxiety on children’s sensitivity to social context in their production of requests. For both this analysis and the analysis reported in Table 16 the different covariates were tested within the same analysis.
The analysis strategy addressed the correlation between the predictor variables by testing the analysis with several different entry methods.

**Table 15**

**Individual differences predicting children's production of different request styles.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covariates:</th>
<th>Logistic Regression Term</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No covariates</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>36.34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA/RO Mode</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>126.81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>79.44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>no sig. effects for gender.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaching tempt. at 11 years</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-polite</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usual-rude</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>77.96</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA/RO</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>123.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach*Distance</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Empathy**

Empathic concern  no sig effects

Cognitive Perspective taking  no sig effects

Self reported aggress  no sig effects

Self reported anxiety  no sig effects

The results were closely comparable suggesting that the regression is identifying the important predictors amongst the variables tested. The results showed that more
approaching temperament predicted a greater likelihood of modulating requests with respect to the social distance of the intended hearer. None of the other individual differences tested showed significant interactions with children’s modulation of the requests they produced in response to social context or way of asking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 16</th>
<th>Individual differences predicting children’s evaluation of the effectiveness of different request styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates:</td>
<td>Logistic Regression Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No covariates</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>no sig effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approaching tempt.</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power*approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perspective taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power*empathic concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self reported aggression</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO * self report aggress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self reported anxiety</td>
<td>Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA/RO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power*self report anxiety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analyses reported in Table 16 investigated the effects of the same set of
individual differences on children's sensitivity to social context in evaluating the effectiveness of different requesting strategies. The results showed that higher scores on the approach dimension predicted increased sensitivity to the power of the other, i.e. less approaching children were more likely to vary their effectiveness judgments in response to the power of the other. Children who self reported higher levels of social anxiety were also more likely to vary their judgments in response to the power of the other. Children who self reported high levels of aggressive behaviour showed reduced modulation of their judgments in response to the degree of imposition of the request on the other.

Comparing the analyses summarised in Tables 15 and 16 the results gave no evidence of a gender effect on children's politeness. Previous research shows some rather ambiguous evidence of a gender effect for politeness in adults suggesting that women may tend to use polite strategies than men. By extension it could be hypothesised that girls would use polite strategies more than boys (see also Becker & Smenner, 1986) It is possible that Australian children of this age do not show gender differences in their use of politeness or alternatively it may be that the measures of politeness skills used in the current research were not sufficiently detailed to detect gender differences. The lack of any effect of gender here also confirms that the different ratios of males to females in the groups is not influencing the observed politeness results.

The results showed that approaching temperament was related to children's sensitivity to the social distance of the hearer on the production task and age of the
hearer on the evaluation task. The results also showed that affective empathy, self reported aggression and self reported social anxiety were related to children's sensitivity to social context in evaluating the effectiveness of different request strategies. In summary the results indicated that, except for the effect of approaching temperament, children's performance on the production task was not associated with other individual differences. The results tended to support the hypothesis that children's performance on the evaluation task is related to their broader social sensitivity.

6.4 Discussion

The first major objective of the current study was to compare the effects of children's level of behavioural adjustment on their performance on the production and evaluation tasks. These analyses explored the hypothesis that observed differences between these groups' performance on the production task could reflect lower motivation of children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems to use politeness in the test situation, e.g. to please the experimenter. The results reflected the findings of Studies 2 and 3 that children's levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were associated with their performance on the production and evaluation tasks. Specifically children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to vary the requests they produced in response to the social context and they were more likely to judge non-polite requests to close others as ineffective, compared to other children. Since there were also differences
between the groups on the evaluation task which did not involve overt production of polite language, these findings did not support the hypothesis that the effect of higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems on performance on the production task were due to motivation. Rather these findings suggest that children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems may be less sensitive to social context in their interactions with others resulting in their being less adept in producing and evaluating polite strategies in requests. The analytical strategy used to explore this question was relatively indirect due to both the available data and the design of the data set. First no direct measure of children's motivation to use politeness was collected. Second given the type of data collected, i.e. categorical data, as far as could be determined no statistical methods exist that enable the comparison within one analysis of the effects of one set of predictor variables on multiple categorical outcome variables. Thus given the tools and data available it was impossible to compare within the same analysis, the effects of children's behavioural adjustment on their production vs evaluation skills. It would have been preferable to have directly explored the relationship between children's production and judgement skills. However this was not feasible due to the fact that only one response was collected in each cell of the production study data set in the current research.

The second question addressed by this study was to compare two alternative views of the relationship between children's production and evaluation skills and how they are shaped by children's non-linguistic social adjustment:
1) that children's production and evaluation of politeness are closely related capabilities drawing on the same underlying knowledge and sensitivity to linguistic forms and their usage:

2) that children's ability to make judgments about politeness reflects a broader social sensitivity, whereas their ability to produce polite requests reflects their underlying knowledge and sensitivity to linguistic forms and their usage.

The results of the analyses offered some partial support for the second view. Thus children's levels of behaviour problems from five to nine years had different effects on their sensitivity to social context in the production vs evaluation tasks and children's performance on the evaluation task was related to a range of factors (such as their level of empathy) which were not associated with their performance on the production task. The change in the relationship of children's behavioural adjustment at 5 years to their sensitivity to context on the production and evaluation tasks as compared to the relationships at 7, 9 and 11 years suggests that this sensitivity may reflects the social learning processes associated with children's broader behavioural adjustment. Once again the analysis strategy used to explore this question was relatively indirect. It would have been preferable to collect a range of measures of children's underlying social sensitivity as well as their knowledge and sensitivity to linguistic forms. However this was infeasible since it was only possible to carry out one round of testing due to the wide geographic distribution of the sample. While these findings are preliminary in nature, they present a challenge to what seems to be an underlying assumption in much of the
research on children's politeness that these tasks tap the same set of underlying knowledge and capabilities (see for example Becker, 1986).

The conclusions drawn concerning the relationship between children's production and evaluation skills and their social adjustment, are necessarily somewhat more tentative than those from the remainder of Study 4. The analyses undertaken represented an initial investigation of the complex set of developmental pathways leading to children's politeness skills at ten to eleven years of age. A key requirement to further explicate the factors contributing to children's politeness skills will be to gather longitudinal data on children's linguistic politeness skills as well as their social development and behavioural adjustment.

The last section of this study examined the relationships between gender, empathy, temperament, self-report aggression, self-report social anxiety and children's levels of behaviour problems and their performance on the politeness tasks. The first question of interest was whether these variables may account for the observed association between children's politeness skills and their levels of behaviour problems. There were no individual differences associated with children's levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems that were also related to their performance on the production task. Children's level of approaching temperament was associated with both their level of anxious-fearful behaviour problems and their sensitivity to social distance on the production task. This finding suggests that more anxious, less approaching children, may show some differences to other children in how they make requests to more familiar compared to less
familiar others.

Children's level of empathic concern was associated with their level of hostile aggressive behaviour problems and their evaluations of the effectiveness of different request strategies. The findings suggest that children with higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems report less empathy for others and are less sensitive to social context in evaluating the effectiveness of different request strategies. This supports the argument that children's evaluation skills are indicative of a broad social sensitivity related to the constructs such as empathy.

Children's level of approaching temperament was associated with their level of anxious-fearful behaviour problems and their sensitivity to the age of the other. This latter finding suggests that more anxious, less approaching children are more sensitive to the other's age in judging the effectiveness of different request strategies compared to other children.

In conclusion the findings of this study supported and extended the results of the previous studies. The findings suggested that not only is there a concurrent association between children's behavioural adjustment and their politeness skills but that children's behavioural adjustment at seven and nine years of age influences their resulting politeness skills at eleven years. Further research gathering longitudinal politeness and behavioural data is recommended to explore this issue in more depth.
Chapter 7: Overall Conclusions

7.1 The research objectives

This overall program of research addressed two major theoretical objectives in the context of ten to eleven year old children’s requesting skills. The first was to compare the face saving view of linguistic politeness described in Brown and Levinson’s model with the everyday or "folk" view of linguistic politeness as a normative or conventional way of speaking. The second objective was to explore the relationship between children’s non-linguistic social and behavioural adjustment and their linguistic politeness skills.

As discussed in Chapter 1, relatively little research has investigated the relationship between children’s linguistic politeness skills and their broader non-linguistic social behaviour. There is some evidence in the politeness literature that linguistic politeness is related to a larger set of "polite behaviour" (e.g. Haveskate, 1988). In Chapter 1, it was proposed that a number of the characteristics of children with aggressive behaviour problems mean that they are likely to be less skilled in the use of linguistic politeness. The characteristics identified were capacity for empathy, social cognitive skills and patterns of interaction with parents. There is a very substantial body of research on social competence and its associations with social and behavioural adjustment. Attili (1990) noted that one central problem with research on social competence was the wide variety of definitions of the concept. She proposed an approach to social competence from
an evolutionary perspective focusing on the skilled management of social interactions. Her approach has notable conceptual parallels with Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and also with the conversational contract model of politeness. In Attili's model social competence is constructed through social interactions in a similar way to the construction of face in politeness theory.

Kasper (1990) suggested that, despite Brown and Levinson's claim for the universality of their politeness dimensions, the use of politeness is linked to a variety of social and psychological variables including gender. The current research investigated the relationships between children's politeness skills and their gender, approaching temperament, empathy, self-reported aggression, and social anxiety. These variables were seen as potentially forming part of a constellation of variables related to skilled social interaction. In summary, the current research on the links between linguistic politeness and behavioural adjustment can be seen in context as part of the broader research agenda of identifying the processes by which children become competent social individuals.

7.2 Research Findings

The results of the first study supported one of the key assumptions of Brown and Levinson's politeness model, namely the validity of the power and distance dimensions, for all the groups of children studied. That is children with and without behaviour problems judged adults to be more powerful than children, and members of their family to be closer than teachers and classmates. This study also showed
that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems and children with both hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems, i.e. comorbid children, judged all others as more distant and that children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems judged unfamiliar others as more distant. Overall the findings suggested that children without behaviour problems see themselves as having more equal and closer relationships to others in their social world compared to children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems who see unfamiliar others as more distant, and children with comorbid behaviour problems and children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems who see others as both more powerful and more distant.

To interpret the findings of this study further it is necessary to revisit the way in which Brown and Levinson used the concepts of power and distance in politeness theory. According to Brown and Levinson "we are interested in D distance, P power, and R rank, only to the extent that actors think it is mutual knowledge between them that these variables have particular values." (Brown, & Levinson, 1978: p 76). [words in italics added for clarity]. Thus what is of particular interest here is that children with behaviour problems rate others on these dimensions in ways which differ from their peers without behaviour problems. The critical consideration from a politeness theory perspective is that these children's perceptions differ from those of other children rather than the direction of the difference per se. Following politeness theory we would expect that these children would have less successful interactions with others because the strategies they are likely to adopt may not match others expectations. An interesting corollary of this
finding is that we would expect that children with behaviour problems would be able to interact more readily and/or successfully with other children with behaviour problems. There is no direct evidence from this study but in principle this could be implicated in the formation of aggressive sub-groups in schools for example.

The second study showed that there was no significant difference in request forms used to older and younger others, less direct request forms were used more often in requests to close others compared to more distant others, and less direct forms were used more often in requests for action compared to requests for objects. The results also indicated that use of please did not vary with any of these context dimensions. The results of Study 2 showed that children varied request form and use of "please" with manner of the request, with the less direct forms being used more often for "usual" requests, less often for "polite" requests and very infrequently for "rude" requests, and "please" being used most frequently in "polite" requests, less frequently in "usual" requests, and very infrequently in "rude" requests. This combined with the finding that use of please did not vary with the relationship between speaker and intended hearer suggests that "please" may be being used to signal explicit or conventional politeness. By comparison indirectness was used more frequently for "usual" requests and for requests to close others which suggested that the children may be using the more indirect forms to indicate familiarity and/or intimacy with the other. These findings suggest that children of this age distinguish between conventional or explicit politeness in requests and politeness associated with the social context of the request. Overall
then these findings show that children's modifications of their request strategies in response to their power and distance relationships to the intended hearer do not follow Brown & Levinson's model. The findings also show that children's modification of their request strategies to indicate explicit or conventional politeness are not the same as the modifications they produce in response to social context. While these findings do not prove that children use these distinct patterns of modifications in their actual day-to-day interactions they do show that children of this age can distinguish these aspects of politeness.

Further, Study 2 showed that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems differed from the other children in their use of politeness in response to the social context of the requests. Specifically children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to use more indirect forms in requests to close compared to distant others and/or when making requests for action compared to requests for objects. This finding suggests that these children may be either less aware of, or less inclined to acknowledge these social context factors in their use of language in interactions. By comparison the groups of children studied did not differ in their use of different politeness features in requests where the children were asked to explicitly vary the "everyday" politeness of the requests.

There is a significant body of previous research examining children's ability to vary the requests they produce in relation to the social context. A number of studies (Axia, & Argenti, 1989; Axia, McGurk, & Glachan, 1987; Gordon, Budwig, Strage, & Carrel, 1990; James, 1978; and Wilkinson et al., 1984 ) have
investigated how children vary their requests in relation to the age, social status, and familiarity of the hearer.

Regarding the direction of the effect for indirectness, Blum-Kulka (1987) argued, that contrary to prior research in this area, indirectness does not parallel politeness. She found that the most indirect request forms were not rated as the most polite. Blum-Kulka argued that politeness implies a concern with pragmatic clarity and that the most indirect forms were not sufficiently clear to the hearer to qualify as polite. She concluded that selection of appropriate forms required a compromise between clarity and face considerations. The current findings provide some support for her view. Specifically when children are asked to make their requests explicitly polite they use more direct, obvious forms consistent with Blum-Kulka's argument about the value of clarity.

The findings of Study 2 supported the argument for a distinction between everyday and strategic or face saving politeness in children's requests. As already discussed in detail children used different combinations of strategies to signal explicit politeness as compared to the combinations of strategies they used for requests to different others. This finding is within a single domain i.e. requests, and with only two politeness strategies and as such some caution needs to be used in generalising to all politeness. However this result is broadly consistent with other research reviewed earlier (Kasper, 1991; Fraser, 1990; Ervin-Tripp, 1991) suggesting a distinction between strategic politeness and politeness as social indexing. There seems to be very limited theoretical work in English that is relevant
to this distinction. Very approximately the distinction seems to be on the one hand between "formal" and "informal" ways of speaking and interacting which are not specifically bound to the social context, although they are recognised as appropriate for some contexts as distinct to others, versus the strategic usage of different linguistic forms in response to very specific aspects of the immediate social context. The current research suggests that these ten-to-eleven year old children are aware of a distinction of this kind in their use of language in requests.

It is of some interest that there is evidence from other research that children's knowledge and use of politeness routines such as the use of please in requests is associated with explicit socialisation by parents (Gleason et al., 1984). It could be the case that the findings in the current study indicate that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems receive this explicit socialisation from parents but do not have the range and types of social interactions that would enable them to learn the more complex socially modulated forms of politeness in requests. If this is the case we would expect that children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems would also show limited skills in some situations, e.g. interacting with a completely unfamiliar other for the first time, compared to children with no behavioural problems. This was not tested in the current study which focussed on "everyday" situations that for the most part may not present problems for children with anxious-fearful behaviour problems.

The first two studies showed that there were associations between:
1) children's use of politeness strategies in requests and their levels of hostile-
aggressive behaviour problems; and

2) children's perceptions of the other's social distance from themselves and their levels of hostile aggressive behaviour problems.

Together these findings suggest that while children's perception of their social relationships with others did influence their use of politeness in requests directed to those others, the relationship between children's perceptions of others and their modulation of requests to those others was not consistent with Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Rather the results suggest that somewhat different rules govern appropriate use of politeness in requests in the family setting compared to the school setting. This is likely to reflect some of the key features of these settings:

1) the strong expectation that parents will provide for children's everyday needs in the family; and

2) the importance attached to maintenance of positive affective relationships between family members.

However, it should be noted here that both of these situational beliefs and expectations may be less likely to apply for children with a history of hostile aggressive behaviour problems, e.g. Study 3 suggests that overall children with hostile aggressive behaviour problems expect their requests to be less effective than do other children. By comparison to the family context, in the school setting other practical and "conventional" considerations are likely to be more important. It may be the case that differences between children with hostile-aggressive behaviour
problems and other children's use of politeness reflect differences in their knowledge of the particular social rules applying in different settings and their expectations about interactions in these settings.

The third study showed that for all children, requests containing polite features were generally judged to be more effective than requests which did not. This may indicate that the children understood the use of polite strategies in requests to be the socially approved way of requesting. The results also showed that non-polite requests to adults were judged as more likely to be effective than non-polite requests to other children. This finding may reflect the children's expectation that parents and teachers will normally comply with requests consistent with their social role, e.g. parents provide food for children. Non-polite requests to close others were judged as more likely to be effective than non-polite requests to distant others. This finding was consistent with politeness theory which would predict that non-polite requests to close vs distant others have less potential to threaten the other's face. Finally non-polite requests for objects were judged as more likely to be effective than non-polite requests for action. This finding was also consistent with politeness theory since requests for objects were less imposing on the other than requests for action.

The third study also showed that the comparison group children judged non-polite requests as more likely to be effective compared to children in all the behaviour problem groups. This finding suggested that children without behaviour problems may have a higher expectation of gaining others' compliance, possibly
reflecting these children's more positive interactions with others.

The third study also found that the hostile-aggressive and comorbid groups produced more explanations for the effectiveness of their requests which referred to the requests being "polite" or "rude" while children in the normal-comparison and anxious-fearful groups produced more explanations referring to "the other's feelings". This finding suggests that children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems primarily refer to the form of the request in evaluating the effectiveness of different strategies whereas children in the other groups also made use of a of social considerations i.e. "the feelings of the other".

A number of studies have examined children's judgments of the politeness of requests and their explanations for their judgments (Axia, & Baroni, 1985; Baroni, & Axia, 1989; Wilkinson, Wilkinson, Spinelli, & Chiang, 1984). Wilkinson et al. (1984) examined ten year old children's judgments of the appropriateness of varying request forms in different social contexts. They found that the major factors resulting in requests being judged as appropriate were indirectness, being a request for information rather than for action and presence of please. These findings are broadly consistent with the findings of the current research. Bernicot (1991) explored five, seven and ten year old French children's judgments of the effectiveness of different request strategies. She found significant effects for form of the request, good vs poor co-operation between speaker and hearer, and age of the child. The effect for form of the request was broadly consistent with the current findings, with requests containing politeness strategies being judged as
more likely to be effective. The other two factors have no comparison in the current study.

Bernicot (1991) identified five types of explanations, non explanation; context related - the physical situation; content of the request - what was said; politeness of the request - that the request was polite and how clearly the intent was conveyed. The explanation type referring to politeness of the request was similar to that produced in the current study however the other explanation types produced by the children in Bernicot's study did not occur in the current research. It seems likely that the differences in the kinds of explanations that the children produced may be related to the difference between the tasks in the two studies. Bernicot asked the children to explain why the request was or was not polite whereas in the current study the child's task was to explain whether the request would be effective.

Considering the findings of this study in relation to Study 1 the research has shown that the children distinguished between adults and children on the power dimension in both studies but their judgments of the effectiveness of different requests strategies did not correspond to the predictions from politeness theory. This suggests that role expectations may play an important role in determining what is seen as appropriate politeness in social interactions. The children also distinguished between family members vs others in terms of social distance in the first study and differed in their judgments of the effectiveness of polite vs non-polite request strategies to these two groups.

Considering the findings of this study in relation to Study 2, the research has
shown that there was an effect for age of the other in children's evaluation of different politeness strategies, i.e. they expected non-polite requests to adults to be more effective than non-polite requests to other children, however there was no effect for age in children's production of requests. The research has also shown that the children used more indirect strategies in requests to close vs distant others and they were more likely to judge non-polite requests to close vs distant others as effective. Finally the results indicate that there was a significant effect for request for action vs request for object in both studies such that the children used more indirect forms for requests for action vs requests for objects and they were more likely to judge non-polite requests for objects compared to requests for actions to be effective.

Overall these findings suggest that the children showed different responses to social context in the production as compared to the evaluation task. The first finding above suggests that, while the children had different expectations about the effectiveness of requests directed to adults compared to children they did not change the request strategies they produced in these settings. It may be that children here are showing an understanding that it may be appropriate for adults who are in a position of authority to not comply with a children's requests on some occasions. In these situations for the child to be more polite in an attempt to gain the adult's compliance might in fact not be appropriate behaviour. For example in the case of child out with a parent on a hot day asking for a drink, if it is pragmatically difficult for the parent to comply, asking very politely might well be
perceived as in-appropriate behaviour, e.g. as trying to manipulate the parent. The second finding suggests that the children believed that requests to close others were more likely to be effective, even without any politeness features, but that children were more likely to use indirectness in requests to close others. It may be that the use of indirectness here is aligned with "intimacy" rather than politeness as such.

The fourth study confirmed that children with high levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems were less likely to use indirect forms to close vs more distant others on the production task and that children judged requests not containing polite features as less likely to be effective. These findings suggest that higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems are associated with less skilled use and understanding of language in managing relationships with close vs distant others. This is not consistent with the results reported by Bates, and Silvern (1977) who found that social adjustment was associated with children's judgments but not their production of politeness. One potentially relevant factor is that Bates and Silvern used tasks where "the other" was not specified whereas in the current research the tasks referred to others who were known to the child. This is likely to result in the findings of the current research more strongly reflecting qualities of the child's relationships with the others specified in the tasks i.e. parents, siblings, teachers and classmates. These findings also speak to the question of whether children's motivation is influencing their performance on the politeness tasks. The fact that the children's behavioural adjustment is related to both their production and evaluation skills suggests that motivation is not the major factor.
The second overall objective of this study was to explore the relationships between children's prior levels of behaviour problems and their linguistic politeness skills at eleven years. This set of analyses were largely exploratory since this issue has received little or no prior research effort. The results for the production task data showed a mixed pattern of effects of hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful behaviour problems at seven, nine and eleven years on children's sensitivity to social context. The results for the evaluation task data showed that higher levels of hostile-aggressive behaviour problems at seven, nine and eleven resulted in children being less likely to vary their judgment of the effectiveness of different requests in relation to the degree of familiarity of the other. From these analyses it can be concluded that children's prior levels of behavioural adjustment influence their politeness skills at ten to eleven years. However it is not possible from this limited set of analyses to draw any firm conclusions about the overall relationship between children's politeness and their behavioural adjustment.

One possibility is that children's behavioural adjustment influences the range of social experiences that children have and hence their opportunities to develop politeness skills. Another is that children with limited politeness skills may be more inclined to use aggressive behaviour to achieve desired social goals. A third possibility is that skilled social behaviour and the use of linguistic politeness may both reflect a common set of underlying knowledge of the rules and norms of social interaction. The current study is not able to distinguish between these possibilities although there is some suggestion that children's evaluation skills may
be linked to a broader social sensitivity which is consistent with the third option.

The third overall objective of this study was to explore the effects of children’s gender, empathy, temperament and self reported aggression and anxiety on children's production and evaluation of politeness in requests. The findings indicated that none of the individual differences were associated with hostile aggressive behaviour problems or children's production of politeness in requests. It is of some interest that affective empathy was linked to hostile-aggressive behaviour problems and to children's sensitivity to context in evaluating the effectiveness of different request strategies. This provides some partial support for the argument outlined in Chapter 1 that use of linguistic politeness in managing social interactions is closely related to the concept of empathy. Further, this finding provides some support for the argument that children's ability to make judgements about the pragmatic qualities of utterances may be indicative of a broader social sensitivity.

7.3 Methodological Issues

Before considering the broader implications of the findings of the overall series of studies it is necessary to review the strengths and limitations of the methodology used in this research. An initial issue was the selection and grouping of subjects. As discussed, the groups of children with behaviour problems selected for this research did not constitute clinical groups. However these children were substantially above average on behavioural problems compared to other Victorian children of the same age. Further, these groups differed to some extent on several
characteristics, e.g. gender and SES. While the differences between groups were not statistically significant except for gender it cannot be ruled out that these may have contributed to the observed relationships between behaviour problems and children's politeness skills. However no effects of gender were detected in the analyses carried out in Study 4 suggesting that this is unlikely.

A further issue concerned the testing process used in this research. The data for this study were based exclusively on children's responses to hypothetical situations. In order to maximise the validity of the procedure the request situations were developed to have face validity for children's everyday experience. Thus for the request situations the names of the appropriate people were inserted, e.g. the child's brother or sister, and situations were constructed that were consistent with children's everyday experience. However it is clear that the test situation which involved interacting with a male experimenter was to some extent an artificial situation. Thus with this research as with other politeness studies using elicited data it is necessary to be cautious about making any strong generalisations to children's behaviour outside of the test situation.

A related issue concerns the test protocol which involved giving the children the production and evaluation tasks in the same test situation although separated by other tasks. This may have provided a cue to the children to attend to the linguistic aspect of the tasks. Thus while it is clear that the findings of this research provide some indication of the extent of children's knowledge of these different linguistic forms it cannot be assumed that these findings directly reflect children's actual
performance in real interactions. A further factor which may have impacted on children's performance in the judgement task was order in which the tasks were presented. The children all completed the production task first which may have had the effect of making the linguistic qualities of the requests more salient than would otherwise have been the case. This could have influenced the kinds of explanations the children gave for their judgements by causing them to focus on the features of the requests rather than the context.

The data reduction strategy used had particular implications for the second and fourth studies. The linguistic data were reduced substantially as a consequence of the coding strategy adopted which excluded a number of potentially relevant aspects of the variation in the children's responses. Thus for example in the production study no attempt was made to analyse tone of voice or other potentially relevant characteristics. This was a practical constraint of the current research since the children were tested in their homes and it was not feasible to obtain high quality voice recordings. The coding strategy adopted was based on the approach developed by Ervin-Tripp (1976) which is similar to that used by other authors (e.g. Garvey, 1984). Most of the approaches to quantitative analyses in this area (see for example Metts & Bryan, 1984) have used approaches based on aggregating different politeness strategies used. It is a significant problem with Brown and Levinson's model that it offers no clear way of relating politeness strategies used to the model. The approach adopted in the present study has been to focus on two well defined aspects of politeness in requests and systematically
explore their relationships to context. This made possible a comprehensive analysis of the relationships between context and the use of these strategies. The logistic regression method employed in Study 4 enabled the exploration of the effects of individual differences between children on their performance on the politeness tasks. No previous research was located that had attempted to address this question using a statistical framework.

7.4 The nature of linguistic politeness - implications of these findings for theories of politeness

Overall the findings of this research did not support key elements of Brown and Levinson's model of linguistic politeness. Although the children were readily able to distinguish between others on the social context dimensions in Brown and Levinson's model, the ways they modified their requests in response to these dimensions did not for the most part correspond to what Brown and Levinson's theory would predict. Specifically there was no effect for distance of the hearer, contrary to one of the basic predictions of Brown and Levinson's computational model. It is notable, however, that other researchers have found similar results regarding the lack of an effect for distance in children's requests (see Meier, 1995).

Interestingly, children's judgements of the effectiveness of request strategies in different social context conditions matched somewhat more closely the predictions of Brown and Levinson's model. The apparent difference between children's responses to social context in these two tasks needs further investigation. It may be that this finding reflects the types of knowledge tapped by the two tasks, i.e. the
production task may tap knowledge of actual requests used in similar situations whereas evaluation task performance may more strongly reflect knowledge of social norms of approved politeness.

In summary the findings of this research indicate that Brown and Levinson's theory has significant problems in accounting for children's production of politeness in requests. It may be, as other writers have suggested (e.g. see Brown, 1988), that the major problem with Brown and Levinson's model lies in the lack of a clear structure for deriving testable predictions. It is also clear, however, that some elements of the computational model are not supported by this and other studies.

One question regarding the current research and similar studies in the literature is the extent to which these type of politeness studies speak to the broader issue of children's pragmatic and meta-pragmatic development respectively. In their discussion of children's meta-pragmatic skills Pratt and Nesdale (1984) noted that the term meta-pragmatic refers to children's awareness of pragmatic features of language. It is clearly the case, that while the evaluation task in the current research was more specifically designed to elicit children's reflection on the pragmatic aspects of the utterances, both tasks to some extent involved conscious reflection on the use of language in context. With this qualification, however, it seems likely that the evaluation task used in the current research relates more specifically to the children's ability to reflect on their social experience in a way that is not tapped by the production task. This is supported by the findings of Study 4, where a range of
variables related to children's knowledge and experience of social interaction, e.g. self reported empathy, aggression and social anxiety, were related to the ability to make judgments about politeness in requests but not to their ability to produce politeness in requests.

A further question raised by this research concerns the distinction between first order politeness and second order politeness as it is typically conceptualised in models such as Brown and Levinson's theory among others. There is relatively little previous research in the area of "everyday" politeness. Ferguson (1975) reviewed a body of work on politeness formulas (e.g. "thank you") which he described as conversation rituals associated with specific events such as greetings among others. The use of these formulae seems likely to be an important part of what children (and adults for that matter) understand as "everyday" politeness. Notably the current research has shown that there seem to be other elements to "everyday" politeness as well as the use of formulae, e.g. the emphasis on pragmatic clarity. Using "please" in requests would seem to fit in the category of a politeness ritual and was clearly seen by all the children as a key feature of "everyday" politeness in requests.

This discussion touches on a very basic issue common to many theoretical domains in psychology. A great many psychological constructs including intelligence and temperament began as lay concepts that have been refined and elaborated into theoretical entities. The findings of the present research suggest that for the concept of politeness the distinction between the everyday and theoretical
construct may be problematic. Specifically the theoretical concept of politeness as elaborated in Brown & Levinson's model does not seem to describe some aspects of the way that politeness "works" in these ten year old children's use of language in their day-to-day interactions.

7.5 Linguistic politeness and children's social and behavioural adjustment

The second overall objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between children’s behavioural adjustment and their linguistic politeness skills. The studies reviewed in section 1.3 suggest that children's linguistic politeness skills are not fully developed until around 7 to 9 years of age. By comparison there is evidence for very high levels of stability of aggressive behaviour problems from two to three years of age onwards (see for example Olwens, 1979). The current research suggests that children's sensitivity to context in producing polite strategies in requests may to some extent reflect their behavioural adjustment and hence their range of social experiences. By contrast children's sensitivity to context in making judgments about politeness seems to be indicative of their social sensitivity as measured by variables such as empathy. Further, children's social sensitivity was negatively associated with their levels of hostile aggressive behaviour problems. Overall these findings suggest that children's behavioural development has different effects on their production vs evaluation of politeness. These findings suggest that children's production of politeness may be directly influenced by their social experiences during development whereas their evaluation skills may be indicative of
a broader social sensitivity factor. Further longitudinal research on politeness and behavioural adjustment is suggested to explore this issue further.

One issue that should be noted is that while theories of aggression (see for example Crick, & Dodge, 1994) deal in the first instance with individuals, theories of politeness focus on the inter-individual use of language in social context. The research presented here does not address aggression per se, rather it points towards a theory of social interaction along the same direction as the work by Attiti (1991) described earlier. Thus the current research suggests the potential for a theory of the use of language in social context incorporating individual differences in social knowledge and skills (Vuchinich et. al., 1992).

In considering politeness as a component of socially competent behaviour it is important to look at its relationship to other individual differences. One of the key findings from the current research was that individual differences in empathy, self reported aggression and social anxiety were related to children's performance on the evaluation task only. It cannot be ruled out that this may reflect the relatively limited indicators analysed for the production data. Alternatively however as suggested earlier this finding may suggest that the evaluation task taps social sensitivity rather than knowledge of politeness specifically.

The findings of these studies do not have direct implications for intervention with children with developmental behavioural problems but rather suggest directions for research and development of intervention strategies. Becker (1988: page 45) noted that "Pragmatic skills such as knowing how to make polite requests, take turns in a
conversation, greet others, and make apologies are important not just for communicative competence but because it leads to them being more favourably perceived by their parents." Although further research is required the present results support Putullaz and Gottman's (1981) suggestion that limited pragmatic language skills may result in and/or reinforce negative outcomes for children with developmental behaviour problems.

7.6 Directions for Future Research

The results of the four studies suggest several areas for further research. The current findings are consistent with research summarised by (Meier 1991) which found that Brown & Levinson's politeness theory does not describe how children vary the linguistic forms they use in response to the social context. Further, this research has shown evidence that children's politeness as well as being related to social context is influenced by a "conventional" or everyday concept of politeness which is realised in distinct ways in their requesting strategies. The development of an adequate theoretical understanding of politeness will require further data on whether and how this distinction is realised in other aspects of children's language. The results of this research also provide some evidence of differences between children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problems and other children in their use of politeness in requests. Further research is needed to investigate the extent to which this difference between groups is a general characteristic of children's pragmatic language skills. Further, it may be appropriate to evaluate training in
politeness skills, and specifically in requesting, given its centrality in interaction, as one element of intervention with children with behavioural adjustment problems.

In conclusion this research suggests that a full account of children's use of politeness in social interaction needs to deal with the "everyday" concept of politeness as well the use of politeness in the management of social interactions. Further, this research has shown evidence that children's politeness skills are linked to their broader non-linguistic social behaviour. Continuing research in this area has the potential to provide insight into the ways that children's ability to use language to manage social interactions emerges as part of their overall social and behavioural development.
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Appendix 1 - Pilot Study

A1.1 - Introduction

The pilot study addressed a number of design and analysis issues in preparation for the full research study. The first objective of this work concerned how to effectively operationalise politeness differences for the production task.

Reviewing the literature suggested two approaches:

1. Present vignettes differing systematically on the relevant social context variables i.e. power and distance of the other and degree of imposition of the request.

2. Ask the children to explicitly vary the politeness level of their requests.

To explore this issue it was decided to investigate both strategies by presenting a range of scenarios differing on the social context dimensions and also asking the children to explicitly vary the politeness of their responses.

The second objective concerned an appropriate method of coding the politeness strategies used in the requests. The approach tested in this pilot study was adapted from Ervin-Tripp (1976). The key issue addressed in this pilot work was whether the scheme proposed by Ervin-Tripp provided a complete description of the request types produced by the different groups and in the different conditions to be tested in this research.

The third objective of the pilot study was to develop a coding scheme for children's explanations of the effectiveness of different requesting strategies. The
key issue here was to develop a coding scheme which minimised the number of unclassified responses.

The fourth objective was to develop the evaluation tasks. The key issue was to ensure that the draft tasks showed a spread of yes and no responses for all conditions. The fifth objective was to obtain some basic validity information on the self report measures of empathy and aggression that were adapted for this work from existing measures (Davis, 1980; Pitkanen, 1969). This research endeavoured to cross validate these measures against related measures.

A1.2 Method

A1.2.1 Subjects

The subjects for this research were drawn from the Australian Temperament Project subject set (see section 2.5 for more details). Two groups of subjects were selected based on parents ratings on the Rutter Child Behaviour Questionnaire (Rutter, Tizard, & Whitmore, 1970) hostile-aggressive subscale at 6.5 and 8 years of age. The comparison group comprised 10 children, 4 boys and 6 girls who scored below the mean, of the overall sample, on the CBQ hostile-aggressive subscale at both ages. The hostile-aggressive group comprised 10 children, 5 boys and 5 girls, who scored above the mean of the overall sample at seven years and above the mean plus one standard deviation at nine years. Four of the hostile-aggressive group were identified after the completion of the data gathering as comorbid due to their scoring at least one standard deviation above the mean on the
anxious-fearful subscale at nine years of age.

### A1.2.2 Politeness Tasks

The design of the production tasks had four major dimensions:

1 - Manner of the request i.e. way of asking (Polite/ Usual/ Rude)

2 - Request context

   Power - operationalised as adult vs child

   Distance - family member - not family member

   Rank - large or small request.

The child's task was to produce requests for each of the situations presented.

The design for the evaluation task had four major dimensions:

1 - Request context

   Power - operationalised as adult vs child

   Distance - family member - not family member

   Rank - large or small request

2 - Request Form ("Polite"/"Non polite")

The first part of the evaluation task required the children to make a judgement as to whether the forms given would be effective ways of asking in the give situation.

The children were also asked to explain their judgments.
A1.2.3 Self Report Questionnaires

Empathy Questionnaire

This scale was adapted from a measure originally developed by Davis (1980) for adult use. The language was adapted to suit ten to eleven year old children. The measure had a total of 26 items and comprised four subscales: Empathic concern, empathic response to the other’s feelings: Perspective taking, the ability to take the other’s point of view; Personal distress, feeling distress in response to the other’s distress; and Fantasy, identification with characters in stories or films. Full details of this measure are shown in Appendix 3.

Self report Aggression measure

This scale was adapted from an interview protocol developed by Pitkanen (1969). The adaptation involved mainly some minor changes to the wording to follow Australian English usage. Further a 3 point response scale, never, sometimes, often, was added. The measure comprised 27 items divided into 5 subscales: Direct physical aggression, Direct verbal aggression, Mimicry and teasing, Indirect physical aggression, Indirect verbal aggression. Full details of this measure are shown in Appendix 3.

A1.2.4 Procedure

The children were tested individually in their own homes. The families who took part were all members of the ATP. Parents were contacted and asked if they
wished to take part in the present study, involving a home visit. The children's verbal consent was obtained at the start of the testing sessions. For the politeness tasks the children wore a lapel microphone. The tasks were read by the experimenter and the children responded orally. The tapes were transcribed verbatim.

A1.2.5 Data Analysis

The coding scheme that was developed for the request data is shown in Table 17. Selection of an appropriate coding scheme for the request data presented several complex problems. It was important that the scheme used was able to reasonably comprehensively classify the variability in the data, i.e. to minimise the number of unclassified responses. The coding scheme described in Table 17 was derived in part from Ervin-Tripp (1976) and also from (Garvey 1984).

Table 17

Coding system for requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need/want statements</td>
<td>These are all statements of the form, I want / need...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requests coded in this category had the form I need a... or:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I want a... ,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These forms were used infrequently overall and were only produced as 'rude' ways of asking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 17 contd.**

**Coding system for requests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperatives</td>
<td>Agent action and object are explicitly stated. The forms classified as imperatives were: Go and get . . . Let me /use it/have a try/ . . . Give me a go/Give me it/ . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded imperatives</td>
<td>In these cases agent, action and object are as explicit as in direct imperatives, though they are embedded in a frame with other semantic and syntactic properties. The forms classified as embedded imperatives were: Could you /go and / get . . . Can you /go and / get . . . Would you /go and / get . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission directives</td>
<td>These requests in general have the form modal + beneficiary + have/verb + .?. The modals used (Ervin- Trip 1976) can include, can, could &amp; may. The forms classified as permission directives were: Can I /have /... Could I /have/ . .</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17 contd.

**Coding system for requests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Question directives | These forms have a valid interpretation as an informational request rather than a request to do. The forms classified as question directives were: May I . . . *  
Is it alright if . . .  
If you / . . / then I'll / . . / **  
*The two ** types were provisional classifications. The first could possibly have been classed as a permission directive. The /If you ../ form was a more complicated case. These were all produced by one child. There were a large number of children in this family and a reciprocity/bargaining system seemed to be a family 'convention'. |
| Hints              | Hints are not on the surface directive forms at all.  
*This form was only used in the 'rude' condition and the actual forms used were variable. The references appear to have a 'sarcastic' or complaining overtone, e.g. You never let me have a go with your toys. Which was produced as a rude way of asking a sibling to have a go with the sibling's new game.* |
A1.3 Results

A1.3.1 Production task results/

The outcome variable analysed for this task was the overall request form which was coded as described in Table 17. The results of the analyses are summarised in Tables 18 through 20.

Table 18
Usage of different request forms by group and face threat condition (usual way of asking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request form</th>
<th>High face threat 1</th>
<th>Low face threat 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparison Host- Agg</td>
<td>Comparison Host-Agg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/Want</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperat.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>0*+</td>
<td>6.9*+</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im. Imper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perm. D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest. D.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>10.4*+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall $\chi^2(9)=10.47, ns$

Notes
* cell frequencies sig. different from chance expectation
+ frequency higher than chance - frequency less than chance
1 - responses summed over high power, distance & degree of imposition
2 - responses summed over low power, distance & degree of imposition
Table 19
Usage of different request forms by group and face threat condition (polite way of asking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High face threat</th>
<th></th>
<th>Low face threat</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>H-A</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>H-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/Want</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im. Imper.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perm.D.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest. D.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>5.9*</td>
<td>21.3*+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall $\chi^2(9)=8.57$, ns
Table 20
Usage of different request forms by group and face threat condition (rude way of asking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High face threat</th>
<th>Low face threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comp. H-A</td>
<td>Comp. H-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need/Want %</td>
<td>13.7 6.5*</td>
<td>22.0*+ 13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>7 3</td>
<td>11 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperat. %</td>
<td>58.8 65.2</td>
<td>70.0 60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>30 30</td>
<td>35 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im. Imper. %</td>
<td>0 2.2</td>
<td>0 4.4*+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>0 1</td>
<td>0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perm. D. %</td>
<td>9.8 23.9*+</td>
<td>2.0* 11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>5 11</td>
<td>1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest. D. %</td>
<td>3.9 2.2</td>
<td>0* 8.9*+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>0 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hint %</td>
<td>13.7*+ 0*</td>
<td>8.2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>7 0</td>
<td>4 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall $\chi^2(15)=30.87, p<.005$

The approach used to code the requests was an extension of the method presented by Ervin-Tripp (1976). It is well known that any finite coding scheme necessarily results in some reduction of information relative to the uncoded data. One example of this in the present case was a general pattern that appeared to be present in the shift from the "usual" to the "polite" form. This could be broadly described as a process of "elaboration" i.e. generally making the requests more wordy along with the structural shifts observed. This is not coded specifically in these analyses since there seemed to be no clear way to conceptually specify this property. Adopting a linguistically motivated coding scheme seemed to represent
the best available solution to the coding problem by connecting this research with previous work based on a well considered structural analysis of requests Ervin-Tripp (1976).

A1.3.2 Evaluation task results

Table 21 shows comparison group and children with hostile-aggressive behaviour problem's judgements of the effectiveness of polite and non polite forms. Tables 22, and 23 report the preliminary results on the development and validation of the coding system for children's explanations about why requests are likely to be effective or not.

The results in Table 21 show that for the "polite" forms comparison group children were more likely than hostile-aggressive group children to judge these requests as effective. The co-morbid group showed a similar pattern to that of the comparison group. For the "rude" condition there were no group differences.
Table 21
Effectiveness judgments by Request form and group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judgement</th>
<th>Polite</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Request Form</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>Host-agg.</td>
<td>Comorbid</td>
<td>Comp</td>
<td>Host-agg.</td>
<td>Comorbid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No %</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure %</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2(4)=11.10$ p<.05

$\chi^2(4)=1.92$, ns.
Table 22
Coding system for explanation data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>These are any reference to it being polite, or a polite way to ask or &quot;using manners&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude</td>
<td>These are any reference to it being rude, a rude way to ask or not polite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>These are explanations which refer to asking, e.g. &quot;Cause you're asking&quot; etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Explanations referring to telling or ordering the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone of voice</td>
<td>Explanations such as &quot;It's how you said it&quot; or &quot;cause you said it in a nice way&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References to the other's point of view

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rights to possessions</th>
<th>These are explanations that refer to the other person being entitled to decide what is done with their possessions, e.g. &quot;it's his stuff and he doesn't hafta let you&quot;.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other's feelings</td>
<td>These are explanations such as &quot;little kids get easily&quot; etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consideration for others</td>
<td>Explanation that refer to the other person being entitled to consideration - e.g. you shouldn't treat your sister like that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't interrupt others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't barge in on games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shared activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>degree of friendship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22 contd.
Coding system for explanation data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Say please</td>
<td>References to needing to say please</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing/unclassified</td>
<td>don't know or no response: item not intelligible unclassified response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23
Percentage agreement between raters by explanation category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>Agreement %</th>
<th>Agreement n</th>
<th>Disagreement %</th>
<th>Disagreement n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polite/Rude</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask/Tell</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone of voice</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the other person</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to say Please</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing/Unclassified</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second rater developed an additional category in the process of completing the coding task. This category accounted for most of the disagreements on the Missing/unclassified category. The preliminary results suggest that the coding system was moderately successful in accounting for variation in the requesting strategies used.

A1.3.3 Self report questionnaire results

This section summarises the analyses of the questionnaire data, i.e. the self report measures and the parent questionnaire. The self report aggression questionnaire referred specifically to aggressive behaviour towards other children outside the family, i.e. non sibs. Thus the primary source for validation of this questionnaire was from the ATP teacher data. Further, a high level of stability over time is a basic characteristic of aggression. Table 24 therefore, presents correlations between self report aggression and all available ATP parent and teacher behaviour problem rating data.

The choice of appropriate data to validate the self report empathy questionnaire against presented some complex questions. The major predicted correlate of empathy is the level of aggression. There are also some grounds to suggest that empathy may be associated with temperament. Table 24 therefore presents the correlations between self report empathy and the most recent ATP parent behaviour problem and temperament data.
Table 24

Correlations between self reported aggression and parent and teacher reported behaviour problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBQ parent scale</th>
<th>Direct physical</th>
<th>Direct verbal</th>
<th>Mimicry</th>
<th>Indirect physical</th>
<th>Indirect verbal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988 Had-a.</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>-.31</td>
<td>-.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 Had-a</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear</td>
<td>-.36</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.60</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>-.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992 Had-a</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anx-fear</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>-.51</td>
<td>-.32</td>
<td>-.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| CBQ teacher scale | | | | |
| 1988 Host-agg.   | .18             | .00           | -.17    | -.20             | -.14            |
| Anx-Fear.        | .00             | -.30          | -.41    | -.44             | -.37            |
| 1990 Host-agg.   | .50             | .32           | .39     | .52              | .38             |
| Anx-Fear         | -.27            | -.17          | -.14    | -.25             | -.23            |

**bold** correlations p < .05

The correlations summarised in Table 25 suggest that self report aggression is related to teacher reported behaviour problems but only relatively weakly if at all to maternal report behaviour problems. Thus there are relatively weak and inconsistent correlations with the maternal report data. Looking at the correlations...
with the teacher data there are strong positive correlations between self report
aggression and teacher report aggression over a three year time span. There is also
a consistent pattern of negative correlations between self report aggression and
teacher report anxious-fearful behaviour. Thus the results suggest a situational view
of aggression consistent with the fact that the self report measure specifically taps
aggression towards non-sibs. In general the results provide some limited support for
the validity of this measure.

Table 25
Correlations between self reported empathy, and parent report behaviour
problems and temperament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent report measures</th>
<th>Empathic concern</th>
<th>Perspective taking</th>
<th>Personal distress</th>
<th>Fantasy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent (Bp's: 1992)</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host-Agg</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anx-Fear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Tempt: 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Empathic concern</th>
<th>Perspective taking</th>
<th>Personal distress</th>
<th>Fantasy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emot.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activ.</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**bold** correlations - p < .05

The correlations summarised in Table 26 are somewhat ambiguous. The positive
correlation between the personal distress scale on the empathy measure and
maternal rating of anxious-fearful behaviour is consistent with the idea that anxious
children may be highly sensitive to emotional messages from others. The
associations between perspective taking, personal distress and maternal temperament rating on the sociability dimension are suggestive of a link between empathy and temperament which is consistent with some of Bryant's work.

Empathy is generally conceptualized as a response towards strange others. The strongest external validation is the relationship between empathy and aggression. Also since there is good reason to believe that empathy at this age may not show great long term stability the critical case here is to look at self rated empathy with concurrent teacher rated aggression.

A1.3.4 Methodology issues noted

One qualitative observation made during the testing process was that when the evaluation task was presented before the production task children tended to remember the requests presented and reproduce them in the production task. With either order it was clear that children did to some degree focus on the linguistic nature of the task. However based on incidental remarks during the testing sessions, e.g. "I'd ask my brother like that" it was also clear that the tasks had some degree of face validity for the children.

A1.4 Discussion

The production task explored the interrelationships between mode or register, level of face threat and the child's behaviour problem status. The results suggested that there are clear differences in the requests produced as a function of mode and
the child's behaviour problem status and there is evidence of an interaction between
mode and behaviour problem status. There is relatively little evidence for any
differences as a function of face threat. Inspection of the raw data suggests that
there was considerable variation with respect to situational factors. That is
judgments of the effectiveness of individual requests within each face condition
appeared to vary due to incidental situational features in the vignettes.

One objective for this work was to develop an appropriate coding strategy for
the request data. The structural coding scheme effectively captures a substantial
amount of the variability in the data. However as noted there is some evidence of
additional variation that could not be effectively coded in this scheme. It would
seem desirable to supplement the conceptually driven approach presented here with
an empirically based strategy.

The judgement task results suggested that comparison group children were less
inclined than hostile-aggressive or co-morbid children to believe that "polite"
request forms would be effective. The judgements for non-polite forms did not
distinguish between groups. It seems plausible that the results for the non-polite
forms were a consequence of having used mainly need/want statements as the rude
form. The production study results showed that need/want forms were only ever
produced as a rude way of asking. Thus it seems likely that the non-polite forms
were simply too easy for the children.

The interrater agreement levels for the explanations suggests that the
classification scheme was reasonably successful. By factoring the explanations
against the judgements it should be possible to develop a picture of the children's understanding of the social variables determining the effectiveness of their requesting strategies.

For the self report questionnaires, the aggression questionnaire showed some evidence of external validity. The results for the empathy questionnaire were ambiguous although as noted the most relevant data to validate this measure against were not available.

Overall the findings of the pilot study suggested a number of key design issues:

1. The need to include the anxious fearful dimension in the design
2. The need to significantly clarify the situational distinctions in the politeness tasks; and
3. For the evaluation task to change the linguistic forms used for the non-polite condition.

The first issue was addressed for the main study by changing the sampling design to select subjects based on the parents ratings on both hostile-aggressive and anxious-fearful subscales. The second issue was addressed by refining the task set to focus on the context dimensions of interest and analysing the results separately for each context dimensions rather than aggregating over the dimensions. The final issue was addressed by using a number of different forms for the evaluation task.
A1.5 Production of Politeness: Interview Script

Now I am going to read you some descriptions of situations where you need to ask other people for things. Some of these situations may not have happened to you, but I’d like you to pretend. I would like you to tell me what you think would be the best thing to say in each situation. No-one else will know what you said, so you can say whatever you think would be best.

You’re playing catch with your older brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence.

You don’t feel like going to get it?

What would you say to your older brother/sister?

You’re playing catch with your younger brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence.

You don’t feel like going to get it?

What would you say to your younger brother/sister?

You want to buy your lunch from the school tuckshop,

What would you say to your mum?

You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school.

What would you say to your friend,
Another kid in your class who you don't know very well has a new game which you'd like to have a go with.

What would you say to him/her,

Your best friend has a new game which you'd like to have a go with.

What would you say to him/her,

You want to ask your friend to lend you his/her computer game, and you don't think your friend is going to agree

What would you say to your friend?

You want to ask your brother/sister to lend you their new game and you don't think your brother/sister is going to agree.

What would you say to your brother/sister

Your older brother/sister has a computer game and you want to try it.

What would you say to your brother/sister

Your older brother/sister has a football/basketball which he/she doesn't use any more but which you'd like to use. What would you say to him/her?
You want to see a particular movie, which you don't think your mother/father will agree to.

What would you say to your mother/father?

You're out with your mother/father on a really hot day and you want to get a drink.

What would you say to your mother/father?

A1.6 Comprehension of Politeness Interview

Now I am going to read you some ways of asking other people for things in different situations. Some of these situations may never have happened to you but I'd like you to pretend. I'd like you to tell me if you think that the way I read out would be a good way to ask in that situation. Some of the situations that I will read out are pretty similar but they're all a little bit different.

You're playing catch with your younger brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence. You don't feel like going to get it. What would you say to your brother/sister

Chuck me the ball would ya?

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N [if not sure which do you think more, yes or no]

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?
You're playing catch with your younger brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence.

You don't feel like going to get it. What would you say to your brother/sister

Get me the ball.

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N [if not sure which do you think more, yes or no]

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school. So you say to your friend,

Have you got a spare pen I could use?

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school. So you say to your friend,

Give me that pen.

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N
Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

Your friend has a new computer and you'd like to have a go with it. So you say to your friend,

Hi that looks good, could I have a go?

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

Your friend has a new computer and you'd like to have a go with it. So you say to your friend,

Give me a go.

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?
You're out with your mum on a really hot day and you want to get a drink?

Mum, could I have a drink?

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

You're out with your mum on a really hot day and you want to get a drink?

I want a drink.

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?

Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?

What are they?

You want to see a particular video which you don't think your parents will agree to.

So you say to your parents

I want to see that one.

Would that be a good way to ask?

Y/N

Why is that?
Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?
What are they?

You want to see a particular video which you don't think your parents will agree to
So you say to your parents:
Could I see that one, my friend said it's really good?
Would that be a good way to ask?
Y/N
Why is that?
Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?
What are they?

Your older brother/sister has a [football/basketball] which he/she doesn't use much but which you'd like to use. So you say to him/her, would it be OK if I used that......?
Would that be a good way to ask?
Y/N
Why is that?
Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?
What are they?

Your older brother/sister has a [football/basketball] which he/she doesn't use much
but which you'd like to use. So you say to him/her
I'm going to use your football/basketball now.
Would that be a good way to ask?
Y/N
Why is that?
Are there any [other] ways that it would be OK to ask?
What are they?
Appendix 2

A2.1 Production of Politeness Interview - Used in Study 2

Now I am going to read you some descriptions of situations where you need to ask other people for things. Some of these situations may not have happened to you exactly but I’d like you to pretend.

For each situation I would like you to tell me how you would usually ask. Then I’d like you to tell me a really polite way to ask. Then I’d like you to tell me a really rude way to ask.

1: You’ve got a new board game and you want [name of sibling] to play it with you.

How would you ask [name of sibling] to play it with you?

[prompt as needed]

How would you usually ask?

What would be a polite way of asking?

What would be a rude way of asking?

2: You’re working on a maths problem in class and you can’t do it. You see [name of classmate] who knows how to do it. How would you ask him/her for help with the problem?
Appendix 2:

3: You’ve got a new board game and you want your mum to play it with you. How would you ask your mum to play the game with you?

4: You’re working on a maths problem in class and you need some help with it. How would you ask the teacher for help with the problem?

5: You’re doing some drawing in class and you need another colour texta for your drawing. How would you ask the teacher for another texta?

6: Mum’s just come home with some shopping and you see that she’s got some sweet biscuits and you think that you’d like to have one. How would you ask your mum for a biscuit?

7: Your pen’s run out at school and you need another one to do some writing. You see [name of classmate] who’s got a couple of pens. How would you ask him/her if you can borrow a pen?

8: You happen to see that [name of sibling] has got a new computer game that you like. How would you ask [name of sibling] if you could borrow it?
Appendix 2:

Your friend has a new computer game that you’d like to have a go with.

So you say to your friend,

Hi that looks good, could I have a go?

You’re out with your mum on a really hot day and you want to get a drink?

So you say to your mum,

Mum, could I have a drink? [careful with intonation]

You want to see a particular video which you don’t think your parents will agree to. So you say to your parents

I want to see that one.

Your older brother/sister has a [football/basketball] which he/she doesn’t use much but which you’d like to use. So you say to him/her,

Would it be OK if I used your [football/basketball]?

You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school.

So you say to your friend,

Give me your pen.
Appendix 2:

A2.2 Comprehension Interview used in Study 3

[sound level check]

Now I am going to read you some ways of asking other people for things in different situations. Some of these situations may never have happened to you but I’d like you to pretend. I’d like you to tell me if you think that the way I read out would be a effective way to ask in that situation. By effective what I mean is do you think that if you asked that way, that the person you were asking would be likely to do what you asked or to give you what you were asking for.

[check tape is running]

You’re playing catch with your younger brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence. You don’t feel like going to get it. So you say to your brother/sister Go get me the ball would ya? [be careful with intonation]

After each say:

Would that be a effective way to ask?

Y/N [if not sure which do you think more, yes or no]

Why is that?

You want to borrow a pen from your friend at school.

So you say to your friend,

Have you got a spare pen I could use?
Appendix 2:

You're playing catch with your younger brother/sister and the ball goes over the fence. You don't feel like going to get it. So you say to your younger brother/sister,

Get me the ball. [careful with intonation]

Your friend has a new computer game that you'd like to have a go with. So you say to your friend,

Give me a go. [careful with intonation]

You're out with your mum on a really hot day and you want to get a drink? So you say to your mum,

I want a drink.

You want to see a particular video [movie on TV if no video] which you don't think your parents will agree to. So you say to your parents,

Could I see that one, my friend said its really good?

Your older brother/sister has a [football/basketball] which he/she doesn't use much but which you'd like to use. So you say to him/her,

I want to use your football/basketball
Appendix 3

This appendix contains the three self report measures adapted specifically for the current research and the figures task materials.

A3.1 Self report aggression measure

id: ______ (G)

Here are some questions about times when you may have fights with other kids (not your brothers or sisters) or grownups, or get angry with them. For each question mark whether you never, sometimes or often do that. No one else will know what you say for any of the questions, so you can say whatever you want. If there is any question which you don’t want to answer, you don’t have to.

Do you ever fight with a girl your size or try to hurt her in any way, even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with a bigger girl or try to hurt her in any way, even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever fight with a smaller boy or try to hurt him in any way, even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with a boy or try to hurt him in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to push or trip your parents?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a girl your size by calling her rude names even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a bigger girl by calling her rude names even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a smaller girl by calling her rude names even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever tease a boy by calling him rude names even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never   Sometimes   Often

Do you ever shout at your teacher?

Never   Sometimes   Often

Do you ever shout at your parents?

Never   Sometimes   Often

Do you ever tease a girl of your size by making rude gestures at her even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never   Sometimes   Often

Do you ever tease a bigger girl by making rude gestures at her even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never   Sometimes   Often

Do you ever tease a smaller girl by making rude gestures at her even if she hasn’t done anything to you?

Never   Sometimes   Often
Do you ever tease a boy by making rude gestures at him even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to annoy the teacher by making rude gestures at him/her?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to annoy your parents by making rude gestures at them?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to tease a girl of your size by taking her stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to tease a bigger girl by taking her stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to tease a smaller girl by taking her stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever try to tease a boy by taking his stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever try to annoy the teacher by mucking around in class?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever deliberately do something when your mum or dad has told you not to?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever make up stories about a girl your size to make her look bad?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever make up stories about a bigger girl to make her look bad?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever make up stories about a smaller girl to make her look bad?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever make up stories about boy to make him look bad?

Never    Sometimes    Often
(boys form)

id: ______

(B)

Here are some questions about times when you may have fights with other kids (not your brothers and sisters) or grownups, or get angry with them. For each question mark whether you never, sometimes or often do that. No one else will know what you say for any of the questions, so you can say whatever you want. If there is any question which you don’t want to answer, you don’t have to.

Do you ever fight with a boy your size or try to hurt him in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with a bigger boy or try to hurt him in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with a smaller boy or try to hurt him in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever fight with a girl your size or try to hurt her in any way, even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to push or trip your parents?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a boy your size by calling him rude names even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a bigger boy by calling him rude names even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a smaller boy by calling him rude names even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease a girl your size by calling her rude names even if he hasn’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever shout at your teacher?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever shout at your parents?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever tease a boy your size by making rude gestures at him even if he hasn't done anything to you?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever tease a bigger boy by making rude gestures at him even if he hasn't done anything to you?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever tease a smaller boy by making rude gestures at him even if he hasn't done anything to you?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever tease a girl your size by making rude gestures at her even if he hasn't done anything to you?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever annoy the teacher by making rude gestures at him/her?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever annoy your parents by making rude gestures at them?

Never    Sometimes    Often

Do you ever try to tease a boy of your size by taking his stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never    Sometimes    Often
Do you ever try to tease a bigger boy by taking his stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to tease a smaller boy by taking his stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever try to tease a girl of your size by taking her stuff, or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you try and annoy the teacher by mucking around in class?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever deliberately do something when your mum or dad has told you not to?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever make up stories about a boy your size to make him look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever make up stories about a bigger boy to make him look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever make up stories about a smaller boy to make him look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever make up stories about a girl your size to make her look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with your brother(s) or sister(s) or try to hurt them in any way even if they haven’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease your brother(s) or sister(s) by calling them rude names even if they haven’t done anything to you?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease your brother(s) or sister(s) by taking their stuff or breaking it or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever make up stories about your brother(s) or sister(s) to make them look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever fight with your brother(s) or sister(s) or try to hurt them in any way?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever tease your brother(s) or sister(s) by calling them rude names?

Never  Sometimes  Often
Do you ever try to tease your brother(s) or sister(s) by taking their stuff or breaking it, or something like that?

Never  Sometimes  Often

Do you ever make up stores about your brother(s) or sister(s) to make them look bad?

Never  Sometimes  Often
A3.2 Empathy Questionnaire

Instructions

In this section I'd like you to look at this list of sentences which are about how children feel about other people in various situations. For each sentence I'd like you to tell me by circling a number to the right whether it

0: Doesn't describe me at all
1: Describes me a little.
2: Describes me fairly well.
3: Describes me very well.

There are no right or wrong answers because everybody is different. You don't need to spend much time thinking, just put down what you first think. To get you started here are two sentences to practise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doesn't Describe me at all</th>
<th>Describes me a little</th>
<th>Describes me fairly well</th>
<th>Describes me very well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: When I see somebody crying I feel sad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: When I see somebody being mean to another kid I feel angry.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now that you've tried these two, turn to the next page and start.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Doesn’t Describe me at all</th>
<th>Describes me a little</th>
<th>Describes me fairly well</th>
<th>Describes me very well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I quite often daydream things that might happen to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I often feel sorry for people who don’t have very much (say people in other countries who don’t have enough to eat).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find it hard to see things from another kid’s point of view.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sometimes I don’t feel very sorry for other people when bad things happen to them</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. When I read a story I feel the same way that the characters in the story feel.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When I see another kid get hurt in the playground I feel scared.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When I’m watching a movie or a video that’s really exciting or really scary, I don’t usually get excited or scared even if other kids do.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If I’m with a group of kids and we’re trying to decide what to do, I try and think about what the other kids want as well as what I want.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doesn't Describe me at all</td>
<td>Describes me a little</td>
<td>Describes me fairly well</td>
<td>Describes me very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>When I see another kid being bullied or teased I feel as though I'd like to help them.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>When I'm around other people who are mad at each other I feel like I can't do anything and that makes me feel unhappy.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Sometimes when I'm with my friends I try and think about how they might see things.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I hardly ever get so interested in a book that I ignore other things that are going on around me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>When I see another kid get hurt in the playground it doesn't upset me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>When I hear about bad things happening to other people it doesn't usually bother me very much.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>If I'm sure I'm right, I usually don't listen to what other people say.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. After I've seen a movie I sometimes pretend that I'm one of the characters.

17. Being around when other people are really mad at each other scares me.

18. When I see another kid being teased or bullied I don't usually feel very sorry for them.

19. When I see people being nice to each other it makes me feel good too.

20. I think that there is usually more than one way to look at things.

21. I am a soft hearted person

22. When I watch a good movie I often pretend that I'm the hero.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Doesn’t Describe me at all</th>
<th>Describes me a little</th>
<th>Describes me fairly well</th>
<th>Describes me very well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. When I’m upset at someone, I usually try to see how they feel</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. When I’m reading a story I pretend that the things in the story are happening to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. When I see another kid get hurt in the playground I get very upset.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Before I tell somebody they’ve done something the wrong way I think about how I’d feel if it was me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A3.3 Figures task and social dimensions study materials

The following pages show the illustrations used for the figures task. These illustrations were mounted on firm plastic covered cardboard. Each illustration was cut in three sections with the head, torso and legs each on separate cards. The cards were shuffled and laid out for the children who then made up figures to represent themselves, their mother, teacher, a chosen sibling and a chosen classmate. The made up figures were stuck together with Sellotape which could be removed so the cards could be re-used.

For the dimensions task the children positioned these figures on a 5x4 board to represent the power and distance relationships successively between themselves and each of the others. The illustrations used for the figures are shown on the following pages. The range of figures included male and female adults and children.
Author/s: 
Pedlow, Robert

Title: 
Linguistic politeness in middle childhood: its social functions, and relationships to behaviour and development

Date: 
1997-07

Citation: 

Publication Status: 
Unpublished

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