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POLITENESS: THE CASE OF APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS

AN INTER-GENERATION CROSS-SEX STUDY IN THE HINDU SECTOR

OF THE

SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN ENGLISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Linguistics, University of Natal, Durban.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is being submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Linguistics, University of Natal, Durban. This dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university. Where use has been made of the results of other authors, they have been duly acknowledged in the text.

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As the candidate's supervisor I have approved this dissertation for submission.

E de Kadt

Professor E. de Kadt

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate politeness phenomena within the Hindu sector of the South African Indian English speaking community. The study focuses on the understanding of politeness within the target community and whether this understanding has changed over the past generation. It also examines if males and females exhibit and value politeness differently. Finally, the study investigates which of the existing Western/non-Western models of politeness are relevant for describing the politeness phenomena in the target community.

This study is conducted through the realizations of the speech acts of requests and apologies, focusing on the variables of age, status and social distance. In order to achieve triangulation, qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used. These comprised interviews with cultural/religious leaders, discourse completion tasks, interviews with families and a ranking scale.

My findings reveal that the understanding of politeness phenomena within the target community is more in keeping with that in other non-Western cultures than in Western cultures. Females are found to exhibit more polite behaviours than males. Further, in general the understanding of politeness over the past generation has remained more or less constant.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I contextualize the topic under study and provide the motivation for choosing it. Thereafter, the problems and issues investigated and the key questions asked in this study are outlined. Finally, an overview of the remaining chapters is presented.

1.1 RATIONALE AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

This study presents an inter-generation cross-sex study of politeness in the Hindu sector of the South African Indian English (SAIE) speaking community using the speech acts of apologies and requests. To the best of my knowledge, there has been no prior investigation of politeness within the SAIE speaking community, which is an integral component of the broader multi-cultural South African society. It is well known that during the recent past, South Africa has experienced significant social and political changes, which immediately raise a number of fascinating questions for my study. One such question is whether the politeness phenomena among the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community have remained constant or have changed over the past generation. Another is whether the politeness strategies of men and women in the target group are similar or different.

On a more theoretical level, this study considers whether, of the politeness models that have been developed, there is one that is particularly appropriate for describing politeness phenomena in the chosen community. In this regard, studies of politeness in the Far East (e.g. Japan, China) have provided results that are different from the Western-based model of Brown and Levinson (1987), thereby suggesting the

inappropriateness of the Brown and Levinson framework as a universal model of politeness. Given the fact that the SAIE speaking community also originates from the Asian continent, it will be interesting to explore whether this (Indian) cultural influence leads to similar conclusions as for the Chinese and Japanese. Also of interest will be the potential effect of the Western value system on the social relationships within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community in South Africa, since it was only the forbears of the subjects under study who originated from India.

Politeness in the target community will be studied through the investigation of two speech acts, apologies and requests. The manner in which persons apologise or make a request enables an evaluation of how polite they are (Holmes, 1995:26). This is further substantiated, for example, by the work of Janney and Arndt (1993:14). According to them, "politeness is viewed as a rational, rule-governed, pragmatic aspect of speech that is rooted in the human need to maintain relationships and avoid conflicts". The manner of one's speech (thoughts and actions) is crucial in maintaining or disrupting social harmony. Speech acts are, therefore, common manifestations of politeness behaviour in human interactions. The speech acts of apologies and requests were selected due to their common occurrence in everyday human interaction.

The selection of the cross-sex focus is based on the fact that while much research has been done on the difference in speech styles of men and women in Western societies, very little is reported in the literature on comparable studies in non-Western cultures. Observations for a particular society cannot be generalized to other societies since the way in which perceived politeness has been seen to relate to gender varies enormously from culture to culture. Investigating the ways in which men and women realise

politeness will also enable me to explore gender relations in the community. To elucidate, if a particular gender is expected to be more polite, it would be interesting to study the expected behavioural patterns from persons of this gender in their interactions with others. It is important to note that in studying politeness, it is necessary to distinguish between community perceptions of politeness, i.e. what is considered polite by those in the community, and observations made from an outsider perspective through theorised research investigations.

Another important aspect worthy of study is the possible influence of the Western value system on the evolution of politeness phenomena within the SAIE speaking community from one generation to the next. In particular, it would be of interest to measure the level of change, if any, that has taken place.

1.2 BRIEF BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIANS

Indians came to South Africa during the period 1860 to 1914. The majority of these immigrants came as indentured labourers to work primarily on the sugar cane and other plantations in the province of Natal. The others came as "free" or "passenger" Indians mainly to start up businesses as traders (Bhana and Pachai, 1984:2).

The indentured labourers were recruited primarily from two areas, namely the South East region of India (present day Tamil Naidu and Andhra Pradesh) and the North East region of India (present day states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh). The main languages spoken by the South Indian migrants were the Dravidian languages, Tamil and Telegu and a Southern form of Urdu known as Dakhini Urdu. The North Indian migrants spoke Hindi. The small population of Muslim immigrants spoke Urdu (Mesthrie, 1992:7).

The 'free' or 'passenger' Indians arrived from 1875 onwards, initially attracted by business opportunities in the growing Indian population in South Africa. Many of them came from Western India. As a result, new languages from this region of India were brought to South Africa. These languages included Gujarati, Marathi, Konkani, and the Meman dialect of Sindhi (Mesthrie, 1992:7)

The majority of the immigrants could not speak English. They were, however, very well versed in their vernacular languages. After their indentures, the labourers were free to remain in South Africa or return to India. Most chose to remain and thus became forbears of the majority of the South African Indians of today. Due to discrimination, the promotion of Indian languages was not encouraged in the past, especially in the schooling systems. As a result, while the Indian community retained its cultural and religious beliefs and practices, over the years there was a significant decrease in the number of people who were able to speak, read and write in their vernacular. Mesthrie (1992) has pointed out the rapid language shift in the Indian home during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Prior to the 1950s the language of the home was an Indian language. With an increase in access to English medium schools a shift began to take place with more English being spoken at home. This is reflected in a study by Bughwan (1970). She investigated the competence in an Indian language among high school students in Durban. Her findings revealed that 91.2% of the sample size of 547 pupils indicated that they were able to speak, read and write better in English than in an Indian language; 0.9% were more proficient in their home language; while 7.8% claimed to be equally proficient in English and an Indian language. Of the sample, 62% indicated that English was the only language used with siblings; 27.1% used more English than 'home' language; 9.9% used both languages equally; and 0.8% used more 'home' language than

English. The scenario has worsened since this study by Bughwan (1970), with the ancestral language dying out in many homes or being restricted to communication between elders. This is confirmed by Mesthrie (1992:31), who states that in the 1990s the Indian language was used tenuously in most homes primarily between the grandparents, and occasionally between parents and grandparents. Also, it is not uncommon for the parents to reply in English to the grandparents' vernacular.

Despite their trying conditions as indentured labourers the Indian community placed great emphasis on education. They, therefore, willingly contributed from their meagre earnings towards the building of schools. Through education over the years, the community has experienced rapid socio-economic development. Members of the community now occupy professional positions in a range of fields. They are also successful in trade and industry as well as business enterprises. Although initially based in Natal, some members of the community moved inland and are now settled in other parts of South Africa. Today, the Indian community in South Africa numbers approximately 1.3 million of a population of more than 40 million – almost 2 percent. They also make up approximately 21% of Durban's cosmopolitan society of 2.4 million, the largest concentration outside India.

The Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community is dominated by people of Hindi, Tamil and Telegu ancestry who share common religious philosophies and cultural practices. Therefore this study focuses on them as a group. In particular, it concentrates on two successive generations (4th and 5th) within a group of selected families. These families are English speaking in the sense that their home language is English and not their vernacular Indian language.

1.3 PROBLEMS INVESTIGATED AND KEY QUESTIONS

This dissertation investigates politeness phenomena within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community within frameworks previously used for studies in Western and non-Western cultures. It also focuses on inter-generational and cross-sex usage patterns.

There has been considerable debate in the literature about politeness phenomena (including the concept of face) in terms of a binary opposition between Western and non-Western cultures, with the former functioning more or less as the assumed norm. The model developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), based on Goffman's (1967) concept of face, describes politeness as showing concern for each other's face. Politeness involves expressing concern for two different types of face needs: negative face and positive face. Negative face refers to the desire not to be imposed upon and positive face refers to the desire to be liked and approved of. Recent research on politeness in non-Western cultures has disputed Brown and Levinson's claim of the universality of the concepts of negative and positive face, as well as the notion that the higher the level of indirectness the greater the degree of politeness. In particular, it has been claimed that the Brown and Levinson model does not appear to adequately address discourse behaviours in non-Western cultures, where the primary interactional focus is not upon individualism but upon group identity (Matsumoto 1988, 1989; Ide 1989) or where politeness signals different moral meanings or normative values (Gu 1990; Mao 1994; Nwoye 1992). In their studies on politeness phenomena in Japanese, both Matsumoto (1988, 1989) and Ide (1989) argue that the social context plays a much larger role in politeness expressions than the face of the individual. In such a culture, it is more important to discern what is appropriate and act accordingly than to use interactional strategies to achieve specific objectives such as pleasing or not displeasing others

(Nwoye, 1992:311). Apart from 'discernment', Ide (1989) also argues that Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework fails to give a proper account of formal linguistic forms such as honorifics.

Politeness cannot be clarified simply by the analysis of individual utterances, but has to be seen within the context of complete interactions between participants. Apart from the verbal exchanges that take place within a cultural context, consideration has to be given to factors such as the status, gender, age and social distance of participants within the particular culture. It is important to note that the cultural value systems operating within different societies also influence the non-verbal aspects of politeness behaviour, e.g. kinesics, proxemics etc. While the focus of this dissertation is on verbal politeness, these latter aspects (non-verbal) will also be briefly discussed.

Bearing these considerations in mind, this study seeks to locate the politeness phenomena observed in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community within the politeness models that have been advocated for both Western and non-Western cultures, and to establish which model can best accommodate these phenomena. It also examines politeness phenomena over two successive generations, in order to determine whether they have remained constant or have changed over time. Furthermore, the study looks at similarities/differences in the politeness strategies of men and women. To achieve this, it firstly examines the community's perceptions of politeness, and secondly, undertakes an empirical investigation of the actual realizations of politeness. In order to address these objectives, some of the key questions to be asked are:

1. What is the background understanding of politeness within the Hindu sector of the SAIE community? How is this understanding evinced through the realization of politeness strategies as manifested in the speech acts of apologies and requests?

2. Is this understanding of politeness, as perceived by the community members, a constant; or has it changed over the past generation? Do the realization patterns of apologies and requests confirm this perception?

3. What is the influence of age, social distance and status on the use of apology and request strategies, both as viewed by the community, and as manifested in the discourse completion tasks (DCTs)?

4. Is politeness gendered? Do men or women value politeness more highly in this community? Are the politeness strategies used by women towards women different from those towards men, and vice versa?

5. Which of the available theoretical framework(s), if any, are most appropriate for analysing politeness phenomena in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community? Do the data from this community support the various universalist claims made for the different theoretical frameworks or sections of these frameworks?

1.4 OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

Chapter 2 contains the literature review. I begin with a discussion on the definition of politeness. I then examine the various models of politeness, particularly focusing on the model of Brown and Levinson (1987), which is a Western-based model. Consideration is given to the debate around the applicability of this model to both Western and non-

Western cultures. I then discuss speech acts, focusing on the speech acts of apologies and requests. This is followed by a discussion on language and gender and, finally, ends with a discussion on the social dimensions of status/power and social distance.

The focus of Chapter 3 is the methodology used in the dissertation. I present the methods of research and the analytical frameworks used in the analysis of apologies and requests. The methods used for data collection include audio-taped focus groups and interviews, and DCTs involving apology and request situations, as well as a ranking scale.

The collected data is then presented and interpreted in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapter 4 deals with the findings from the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders. The results from the DCTs are presented in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, I present the findings from the interviews with the families. Finally, in Chapter 7, conclusions are drawn; limitations of the study are also pointed out, and some recommendations for further study are made.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

An extensive literature review is necessary to develop the research project undertaken in this study. It contextualizes the topic under investigation within the broader field of research undertaken and reported on politeness phenomena. Focus is placed on politeness through the realizations of the speech acts of requests and apologies, as well as on gender. It will be noted that these are fields where considerable research is available for review. The review will assist in further developing the key questions to be asked, as well as the theoretical frameworks which will be used to analyse the collected data.

This study begins with an examination of the definition of politeness as well as the models of politeness. Next I discuss the speech acts of apologies and requests as they form the principal devices for the study undertaken in this dissertation. Particular attention is given to aspects of language and gender and social distance. Accordingly, the literature review is developed along the following themes:

2.2 Definition of politeness

2.3 Models of politeness

2.4 Politeness in non-Western cultures

2.5 The speech acts of:

    2.5.1   Apologies

2.2 THE DEFINITION OF POLITENESS

Two questions that immediately come to mind in any study of politeness are: "Is there a universal definition of politeness?" and "Is politeness an end in itself or is it a means to an end?" These questions are discussed below.

People communicate their feelings, thoughts and ideas, their relationship with others, and other socially meaningful exchanges through their verbal interaction with others. According to Lakoff (1975:64), politeness is something that is "developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction", while Brown and Levinson (1987:1) state that "politeness, like formal diplomatic protocol, presupposes that potential for aggression (in social interactions) as it seeks to disarm it". These notions imply that politeness is a means towards producing harmony in personal (human) relationships.

Despite the viewpoints given above, a review of the relevant literature by Fraser (1990:219) revealed a "lack of consistency among researchers on what politeness is, never mind how it might be accounted for", with many writers failing to explicitly define

what politeness is. As a result of the different notions of the concept of politeness, as well as cultural and idiosyncratic variations, attempts to characterize aspects of politeness have proved to be difficult (Koike, 1989:182). In this regard, Ide (1989:225) gives a working definition of linguistic politeness as the "language usage associated with smooth communication, realised

i)   through the speaker's use of intentional strategies to allow his/her message to be received favourably by the addressee, and

ii)   through the speaker's choice of expressions to conform to the expected and/or prescribed norms of speech appropriate to the contextual situation in individual speech communities."

Drawing from the works of Goffman (1967) (see section 2.3) and Brown and Levinson (1987), Holmes (1995:5) articulates the position that politeness "refers to behaviour which actively expresses positive concern for others, as well as non-imposing distancing behaviour".

The review by Fraser (1990) indicated that there is no generally accepted definition of politeness. For the purpose of this study I shall adopt the working definition of politeness as given above by Ide (1989:225). It is envisaged that this will assist me in addressing my first key question:

*   What is the background understanding of politeness in the Hindu sector of the
SAIE speaking community?

Fraser (1990) identified four major perspectives (models) of politeness in the published
research on linguistic politeness. These models are discussed in the next section.

2.3 MODELS OF POLITENESS

The models of politeness discussed below have been developed through the work of
researchers in both Western and non-Western societies. In some instances the approach
has been a "bottom-up" approach whereby that which is considered to be appropriate
behaviour for a particular society is used to construct a model applicable to that society.
In other cases a particular model has been developed and thereafter claimed to be
universal in application.

The models are discussed in order to get a broader understanding of the development of
politeness theory. They also serve as a forerunner for the current debate between
Western and non-Western perspectives of politeness phenomena which will be discussed
later.

2.3.1 The social norm model

"The social norm view of politeness assumes that each society has a particular set of
social norms consisting of more or less explicit rules that prescribe a certain behaviour, a

state of affairs, or a way of thinking in a context" (Fraser, 1990:220). Ide (1989) was one of the first to express this view in her study of politeness phenomena in the Japanese society. According to Nwoye (1992:312), within the social norm model politeness is "seen as arising from an awareness of one's social obligations to the other members of the group to which one owes primary allegiance." Impoliteness or rudeness on the other hand, arises when one's actions are contrary to the norms of that particular society.

The social norm model may be useful in the analysis of my data as its characteristics seem to be consistent with the behavioural patterns of the target community. This assumption is based on my personal interactions within the target community, as well as the results of the interviews with cultural/religious leaders of the community (to be discussed later). Aspects of the social norm model are further highlighted later in this chapter when politeness phenomena in non-Western societies are discussed.

2.3.2 The conversational-maxim model

The conversational-maxim perspective of politeness relies principally on the work of Grice (1975). Grice argues that "conversationalists are rational individuals who are, all other things being equal, primarily interested in the efficient conveying of messages" (Fraser, 1990:222). To this end, Grice (1975:45) maintains that the overriding principle in conversation is the cooperative principle (CP), that is to "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged." Simply put, the CP

requires one to say that which has to be said, at the time it has to be said, and in the manner in which it has to be said.

Grice lists four maxims that follow from the CP, which he assumes speakers will follow. These are the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. Grice assumes that the CP is always observed and that any violations of the maxims signal conversational implicatures. Furthermore, he suggests that this principle and these maxims characterize ideal exchanges. However, he recognises that such exchanges may also need to observe certain other principles, such as "Be polite".

According to Fraser (1990:223), Lakoff (1973) was among the first to adopt Grice's construct of CP in an attempt to account for politeness. As pointed out earlier, Lakoff (1975) states that "politeness is developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction". According to Lakoff, the speaker can convey politeness in his/her speech by following three rules, thus reflecting his/her attitude towards the social context of the interaction. These rules are:

a) Formality : Don't impose;

b) Deference : Give options;

c) Camaraderie : Make the listener feel good – be friendly.

These three rules are applicable depending on the type of politeness situation as understood by the speaker. However, according to Fraser (1990:224) the reader is not told how the speaker or hearer is to assess what level of politeness is required.

Leech (1983) also adopts the framework set out by Grice (1975). In his theory, Leech makes a distinction between a speaker's illocutionary goals (what speech acts(s) the speaker intends to be conveying by the utterance) and the speaker's social goals (what position the speaker is taking on being truthful, polite, ironic and the like) (Fraser, 1990:224). In this regard, he postulates two sets of conversational principles – Interpersonal Rhetoric and Textual Rhetoric, each constituted by a set of maxims (Brown and Levinson, 1987:4). The Interpersonal Rhetoric includes not only Grice's CP with all the maxims, but also a Politeness Principle (PP) with six maxims. According to Leech (in Fraser, 1990:224) the CP and its maxims are used to explain how an utterance may be interpreted to convey indirect messages, and the PP and its maxims are useful in understanding the reasons for the speaker selecting the particular content and form of what was said. According to Leech (1983) (in Koike, 1989:189) the PP is stated as "Minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs", and the function of the PP is "to maintain the social relationship on friendly terms to enable the speaker to assume that co-operation will follow". However, it must be noted that, as will be discussed later in this chapter, what is considered as polite/impolite behaviour varies from culture to culture.

Leech (1983) further distinguishes between "Relative Politeness" and "Absolute Politeness". The former refers to politeness with respect to a specific situation, while the latter refers to the degree of politeness that is inherent in specific actions of the speaker (Fraser, 1990:226). For example, issuing a directive is considered inherently impolite while compliments are inherently polite. This simplistic view has been the subject of criticism (for example, as discussed below, by Fraser (1990)). The act of minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions is called negative politeness. For example, "When you have some time would you please sweep the driveway". On the other hand, positive politeness refers to maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions. For example, "It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on passing your examinations".

Fraser (1990:227) criticizes Leech's view, especially the position that particular types of illocutions are compartmentalized as being either polite or impolite. As an example, a principal orders a pupil who has won a national speech contest to present the same speech to the school assembly. In terms of Leech's view, this being an order will be seen as an impolite action on the part of the principal. However, in the view of the pupil and others this would be seen as a compliment and therefore as a polite action.

In view of the social behavioural hierarchy assumed to exist within the target community (to be further explored in the interviews with the cultural leaders), the Conversational-maxim model is less likely to be suitable for the analysis of politeness phenomena in the community under investigation.

2.3.3 The conversational-contract model

While adopting Grice's notion of a CP in its general sense, Fraser (1975), and Fraser and Nolen (1981) presented a different model, namely the conversational contract (CC) model. In doing so they recognized the importance of Goffman's (1967) notion of face (see Section 2.3.4). In this (CC) approach, when entering into a conversation, each party "brings an understanding of some initial set of rights and obligations that will determine, at least for the preliminary stages, what the participants can expect from the other(s)" (Fraser, 1990:232). These rights and obligations are based on the parties' social relationships with one another and can be adjusted and readjusted during the course of time or when there is a change in context. This becomes the conversational contract within which speakers operate.

In this model, politeness means operating within the terms and conditions of the existing CC. This is expected of each one of us – it is the socially required norm of behaviour (Fraser, 1990:223). Politeness is therefore an on-going process (Nwoye, 1992:310). If one violates the CC, then one is seen as being impolite or rude. According to the CC model, being polite involves conforming to socially agreed codes of good conduct, as in the "social norm model", but emphasises the existence of "quasi-contractual obligations" (Nwoye, 1992:310), which, as indicated above, can be re-negotiated. In this regard, the CC model differs from the views of Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983) which involves making the hearer "feel good", and from Brown and Levinson's face-saving model (to be discussed later) which involves making the hearer "not feel bad".

Based on my previous personal experience, I expect the conversational-contract model not to be strictly applicable to the target community, as the rights and obligations of parties in social relationships are non-negotiable in the Hindu community. This will be further explored in the interviews with the cultural/religious leaders.

2.3.4 The Brown and Levinson face-saving model of politeness

The "strategic model" of politeness first proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978) has been predominant in the discussion of English and in other Western languages during the past two decades (de Kadt, 1995:59). Central to Brown and Levinson's theory is the concept of "face" which is based on: a) the English folk notion of face and on b) Goffman's (1967) definition of face (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61), both of which have been subjected to much critique (Mao, 1994:454).

The English folk concept of face is linked with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or "losing face" (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61). According to Ho (1975:867) such notions of face seem to be Chinese in origin. He claims that the word "face" is a literal translation of the two Chinese characters *lien* (*lian*) and *mien-tzu* (*mianzi*), which, according to Mao (1994:454), were used by the English community in China to coin the phrase "to save one's face". This aspect will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Goffman (1967:5) defines face as the "positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes." In this light, "face becomes a public image that is on loan to individuals from society, and that will be withdrawn from them if they prove unworthy of it" (1967:10). In order to maintain this public image and in order for societal interaction to function well, people engage in what Goffman calls "face-work" which he interprets as a "subtle style of interpersonal encounter, found in all societies, calculated to avoid personal embarrassment, or loss of poise, and to maintain for others an impression of self-respect" (Ho, 1975:868).

Brown and Levinson account for language usage by constructing a Model Person (MP). Their MP is a fluent speaker of a language who has two special properties – rationality and face. By "rationality" Brown and Levinson means that the MP would be able to use a specific mode of reasoning to choose means that will satisfy his/her ends. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) define "face" as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself". For the MP this means that he/she is endowed with two particular wants or desires that he/she will try to maintain in interaction with others. Brown and Levinson refer to these two wants as positive and negative face. Negative face deals with the desire for autonomy; not to be imposed on by others. Positive face encompasses the desire to be accepted and have what one wants approved by others. While Brown and Levinson argue that the notion of face as constituted by these two basic desires is universal (and that individuals are interested in maintaining the face of others in the interaction so that others will do the same to them), like Lakoff (1973) they

also state that within a specific culture the content of face is culture-specific and subject to much cultural elaboration (Brown and Levinson, 1987:13, 61). In other words, what is regarded as linguistically polite behaviour in one community may not necessarily be regarded as polite in another community. Furthermore, communities may differ in their preferences, i.e. some may show a preference for negative politeness while others have a positive politeness culture (Wessels, 1995:115).

In Brown and Levinson's (1987) face-saving model, Grice's CP is seen as a socially neutral framework within which ordinary conversation occurs. Fraser (1990:228) points out that within this framework the operating assumption according to Brown and Levinson (1987:5) is "no deviation from rational efficiency without a reason". However, considerations of politeness will allow for such deviations. Brown and Levinson argue that face-saving strategies are adopted by the speaker in order to be more polite. Such strategies allow one to violate Grice's CP. For example, the statement "Close the door" is acceptable within Grice's CP but may well be interpreted as impolite by the hearer from the perspective of Brown and Levinson's face-saving view. This view is based on the perspective that politeness "consists of a special way of treating people, saying and doing things in such a way as to take into account the other person's feelings" (Brown, 1980:114). As a result, if one wants to be polite, one's speech would be more complicated and less straight-forward than when one is not taking the other person's feelings into account.

According to the Brown and Levinson model, although when interacting with one another people generally co-operate with each other in order to maintain face, there are, nevertheless, certain acts which are intrinsically face-threatening acts (FTA's), for example, requests, apologies, compliments, offers, etc. When faced with FTA's people would adopt various speech strategies to minimise or eliminate such threats, for example, by softening a request or warning or by expressing them indirectly. In such situations speakers would analyse the level of threat involved, considering factors such as the degree of power that interlocutors have over each other, the social distance and the imposition existing in a given speech act before deciding on an appropriate strategy. Five different levels of direct (strategies) are proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987:60) starting from "don't do it" to "do it", the latter ranging from going "on record" to going "off record". Doing an act "on record" can be performed directly i.e. "baldly, without redressive action" or by "giving face" to the addressee i.e. "with redressive action". "With redressive action" can take the form of positive politeness or negative politeness depending on which aspect of face is being stressed (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 68-73).

Brown and Levinson (1987: 101-202) further identify several positive and negative politeness strategies that speakers may use. The positive strategies are divided into three main types:

a) Claiming common ground by: taking notice and attending to Hearer's (H's) interests, wants, needs and goods; conveying interest, approval and sympathy;

intensifying interest, using in-group identity markers such as address forms, in-group language or dialect, jargon or slang; seeking agreement and avoiding disagreement; presupposing, raising and asserting common ground and joking.

b) Conveying co-operation between Speaker (S) and H by indicating that you know H's wants and are taking them into account; identifying with these wants and claiming reciprocity.

c) Fulfilling the wants of H by giving "gifts" in the form of goods, sympathy, understanding and co-operation.

The negative politeness strategies are divided into five main types:

a) Being direct

b) Avoiding presumptions or assumptions by using questions and hedges.

c) Avoiding coercing H's response by giving H the option not to do the act or by minimizing the threat.

d) Communicating S's want not to impinge on H by apologizing for the infringement and making amends for it or by dissociating either S or H or both from the particular infringement.

e) Offering partial compensation for the face threat in the FTA by redressing other wants of the H by giving deference or by acknowledging that one has incurred a debt by doing the FTA.

The definition of "face" by Brown and Levinson (1987) characterises face as an image that intrinsically belongs to the individual, to the "self" (Mao, 1994:545), i.e. as a "private face". This immediately differs from Goffman's (1967) view, who sees face as a "public property" that is only assigned to individuals depending upon their interactional behaviour (Mao, 1994:454). In Mao's (1994:455) view, "Goffman's face is a public, interpersonal image, while Brown and Levinson's face is an individualistic, 'self'-oriented image".

Brown and Levinson's claim that the notion of positive and negative face is universal is indeed a strong statement. Therefore, it would be interesting to test its validity within the SAIE speaking community. However, before this can be done, it is important to note that recent non-Western politeness research has disputed Brown and Levinson's claim of the universality of the concepts of positive and negative face. In particular, the Brown and Levinson model does not appear to address discourse behaviours in non-Western cultures where the primary interactional focus is not upon individualism but upon group identity (Matsumoto 1988, 1989; Ide 1989) or where politeness signals different moral meanings or normative values (Gu 1990; Mao 1994; Nwoye 1992). Some of the non-Western based criticisms levied against Brown and Levinson's model of politeness will now be discussed in greater detail in the next section, in particular for the Chinese and Japanese cultures.

2.4 POLITENESS IN NON-WESTERN CULTURES

In this section I review politeness studies in non-Western cultures, focusing on aspects which challenge Brown and Levinson's model of politeness. As stated above, much of the research has been done in Chinese and Japanese cultures. These findings could be of significance since the South African Indian English speaking community has its cultural roots in India, a non-Western country. The discourse behavioural patterns for other Asian cultures, for example, China and Japan, could be similar in structure to that of the SAIE speaking community whose forbearers were from India, and therefore of relevance.

2.4.1 The Chinese notion of politeness

Ho (1975) claims that the concept of face is Chinese in origin and the term "face" is a literal translation of the Chinese words *mien-tzu* and *lien*. *Mien-tzu* refers to the kind of prestige one acquires through one's success and reputation. On the other hand, *lien* refers to the respect one commands in society by virtue of one's integrity and good moral character. Ho points out that one may gain prestige (*mien-tzu*) through personally determined objectives without interacting with society, for example, by focusing on one's academic activities towards becoming a successful academic. However, gaining or losing face (*lien*) is determined by one's conduct in society, as well as through the actions of someone else, for example, a close family relative.

Ho (1975:881) points out that the concept of face is a distinctively human concept. For an individual to succeed in society, he/she must claim for himself/herself as well as offer others respect, compliance and deference. While the concept of "face" and the rules governing face behaviour may vary from one culture to another, Ho maintains that the concept "face" is generally universal (Ho, 1975:882). However, he points out that within Western cultures the focus is on the needs of the individual while in the Chinese culture the face of an individual is only meaningful when it is considered in relation to that of others in society.

In his research Gu (1990:241-242) claims to show that Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is not suitable for the Chinese culture and outlines two reasons for this. Firstly, the Chinese notion of negative face seems to differ from that defined by Brown and Levinson. While Brown and Levinson see the speech acts such as offering, inviting, promising etc. as acts that are threatening to the Hearer's (H's) negative face i.e. impeding H's freedom, according to Gu, this is not so for the Chinese. For example, although a Chinese speaker (S) may insist on inviting H to dinner even though H does not want to accept, this is not seen as an imposition but rather as an intrinsically polite act. In such a situation, the Chinese negative face is not threatened but rather S's insistence and the way the act is performed is actually seen as showing S's sincerity. However, in Western cultures, such an invitation would be seen as an imposition and threatening to H's negative face.

Secondly, Gu (1990:242) argues that in interaction, politeness is not just instrumental (as seen by Brown and Levinson) but also has a normative function. The latter places a constraint on individual speech acts and conversational interaction. Failure to adhere to these norms will lead to social sanctions being placed on individuals. Gu (1990) accounts for Brown and Levinson's failure to take into cognisance the normative function of politeness in interaction on the basis that in the construction of their theory, Brown and Levinson assume that the S and the H are two rational and face-caring model persons (MPs). This, he argues, may well work in societies which focus on the individual, like those in the West, but not in a non-Western society like the Chinese, where politeness is a phenomenon that is defined by the normative constraints which society places on each individual.

In conclusion, Gu (1990:256) says that while politeness is a phenomenon that is found in every culture, what actually counts for polite behaviour in the different cultures is language specific and culture specific. He further argues that politeness fulfils normative functions (i.e. the individuals' actions/behaviour are constrained by the societal norms) as well as instrumental functions (by redressing FTA's).

On the other hand, Mao (1994) bases his study in a manner similar to Ho (1975). He is in agreement with Ho (1975) that the word "face" is a literal translation of the two Chinese words *mien-tzu* and *lien*. However, in his discussion of these words he articulates two major differences between Brown and Levinson's concept of "face" and

the Chinese "face". Firstly, Brown and Levinson's definition of face as "the positive self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" tends to privilege the individual in terms of his/her wants or desires. However, the face of an individual in the Chinese culture is determined by the perception/judgement and views of the individual's character and behaviour as assessed by the given community. Therefore, as a public image, the Chinese "face" is determined by the participation of others.

The second difference relates to Brown and Levinson's concepts of positive and negative face. Mao argues that the concept of negative face is irrelevant in Chinese culture as an individual is not concerned with being externally imposed upon but through *mianzi* seeks to obtain public acknowledgement of his/her prestige or reputation. In doing so they respond positively to external impositions.

Using the above arguments and other examples from the Japanese society, Mao (1994) concludes that Brown and Levinson's claim that their concept of face is universal is not justified.

In a recent article, Ji (2000) criticises Mao's (1994) argument. In his view Mao misunderstands the concept of "self-image" within Brown and Levinson's definition of face. According to Ji, a person cares not only about his own self-image but also those of other people. This is achieved if he/she interacts successfully with society and does not

show disregard for society's perceptions and views. Therefore, Mao's interpretation that Brown and Levinson focus their definition of face upon the individual is a very narrow understanding and therefore incorrect, as the individual takes cognisance of society's view in determining his/her public self-image. Further, Ji (2000) disputes Mao's interpretation of the word *mianzi* as being related to prestige or reputation. He suggests that Mao in fact redefines the two words *mianzi* and *lien* by associating *mianzi* with prestige or reputation and *lien* with positive face. According to Ji, in the most authoritative Chinese dictionary presently in use, *Xiandia hanyu cidian* (1993), *mianzi* and *lien* have the common meanings of "face" and "sensibilities", with *mianzi* also meaning prestige or respectability. Ji attributes the notion that the Chinese culture may be more oriented towards positive politeness to the fact that certain polite verbal behaviours in Chinese are associated with maintaining positive face. He also argues that the concept of negative face does in fact exist within the Chinese culture, in opposition to the view expressed by Mao. As an illustration, he claims that the use of the words *qingwen* (excuse me) and *laojia* (excuse me) when asking someone for information is indicative of the speaker's recognition of his/her verbal request acting as a potential threat to the listener's negative face. Ji states that Mao's arguments do not strongly challenge Brown and Levinson's model of positive and negative face. He ends with the statement "the idea of face is both limited and difficult to grasp", thereby motivating for further research into polite verbal behaviours in different cultures (Ji, 2000:1062).

2.4.2 The Japanese notion of politeness

In their study of the Japanese culture and society, both Matsumoto (1988:403-425, 1989: 216-219) and Ide (1988:240-242) question the universality of Brown and Levinson's understanding of "the notion of face as consisting of the desire for approval of wants and the desire for the preservation of one's territory". They argue that such a notion cannot be considered as basic to human relations in Japanese culture and society. According to Matsumoto (1988:405; 1989:218) what is of importance to the Japanese is not one's own territory, but one's position in relation to the others in the group or society, and also becoming and remaining accepted by others. Loss of face is associated with the fact that one has not comprehended or acknowledged the structure and hierarchy of the group. In such a culture, it is more important to discern what is appropriate and act accordingly, i.e. conforming to the norms of expected behaviour, rather than to use interactional strategies to achieve specific objectives such as pleasing or not displeasing others (Nwoye 1992:311).

According to Matsumoto (1988:405) the concept of negative face is most alien to Japanese culture since this concept presupposes that the individual is the basic unit of society. However, in the Japanese culture social interaction is governed by a person's understanding of where he/she stands in relation to other members of the group or society, as well as his/her acknowledgement of his/her dependence on others in the group or society, and not by preserving one's own territory. Matsumoto (1988,1989) further justifies her argument linguistically by using examples from formulaic

expressions, honorifics and the verbs of giving and receiving. She shows that a Japanese speaker cannot help but make morphological or lexical choices based on the given interpersonal relationship. Matsumoto (1988) argues that due to the social and grammatical necessity of using the proper honorific forms at all times in Japanese speech, there is no possibility of rationally distinguishing between face-threatening acts and non-face-threatening acts. In fact, in terms of Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, virtually all utterances in Japanese, even a simple proposition such as "Today is Saturday", can be considered intrinsically face-threatening (Janney & Arndt, 1993:18). As an illustration, Matsumoto (1989:209-210) points out that when saying "Today is Saturday" in Japanese, the speaker has to select a copula with proper honorifics (plain, polite, superpolite), depending on his/her relationship with the addressee, and on the addressee's perception of this relationship, whereas an English speaker can say the sentence in this form to anybody. These linguistic choices become the bulk of Japanese face-work.

Ide (1989:223) also questions the universality of Brown and Levinson's principles from the perspective of languages with honorifics, in particular Japanese. She argues that Brown and Levinson's universal principles neglect two aspects of language and usage which are relevant to linguistic politeness in Japanese. Firstly, the neglected linguistic aspect is the choice of "formal linguistic forms" among varieties with different degrees of formality. For example, Ide (1989:226-227) shows that in Japanese, polite requests can be expressed even in the imperative form, if honorific verb forms are used. She argues that Brown and Levinson incorrectly treat some of the formal forms as

expressions of negative politeness strategies and claims that there are some basic differences between the choice of formal forms and the use of strategies. In the Japanese culture the formal linguistic forms are obligatory, and social conventions (i.e. norms) would dictate the formal forms from which one can choose. Secondly, Ide states that the neglected usage is "discernment", which she defines as "the speaker's use of polite expressions according to social conventions rather than interactional strategy" (Ide, 1989:223). Further, she states that in Japanese, "the practice of polite behaviour according to social conventions is known as *wakimae*. To behave according to *wakimae* is to show verbally and non-verbally one's sense of place or role in a given situation according to social conventions" (Ide:1989:230).

Ide (1989) also distinguishes between discernment and volitional politeness. While discernment is a form of social indexing, i.e. the speaker focuses on the socially prescribed norms of the particular society, with volitional politeness the speaker performs linguistic acts to achieve specific goals. According to Ide, while these appear to be distinctly different systems of language use, in practice they complement each other, with the discernment component observed in the use of non-honorific languages, while the volitional aspect is noticed in the use of honorific languages.

2.4.3 Politeness in Indian English

In a more recent study, Mehrotra (1995) has shown how the verbalization of politeness by native Indian speakers of English (Indian English) differs significantly from British

and American English. His evidence was collected from an analysis of the forms of address, verbalization of gratitude, special politeness phraseology and strategies in the native and non-native varieties of English.

As an illustration, he points out that while it is not uncommon to address a teacher by his/her forename (first name) in Western societies, such an act will be interpreted as rude within the context of Indian English. Similarly, shaking hands with a woman is an accepted form of greeting in the West. However, to an English-speaking Indian woman the offer of a handshake by a male could be embarrassing. A study of the politeness marker "please" shows that what is perceived as a command in British English is generally understood as a request in Indian English.

With regard to forms of address, Mehrotra (1995) points out, as an example, that in American and British English names of some occupations, such as doctor and nurse, are accepted address terms, e.g. Doctor Smith, Nurse Adams. These forms are considered rude in Indian English, where a doctor is addressed with a honorific, e.g. Doctor Sahib or Doctor – ji, and the nurse as Sister, as a show of appropriate respect. An examination of the verbalization of gratitude reveals that in Indian English "thanks" are offered more generally than in their Western counterparts. The difference is due to the fact that while in American and British English "thanks" are normally offered when a favour has been done or assistance given, in Indian English such gratitude is also expressed in advance or in anticipation of a favour or assistance. Finally, Mehrotra (1995) points out the

importance of non-verbal components in politeness behaviour in Indian English. In general, a verbal greeting is accompanied by a non-verbal act or gesture. For example, greeting a person with the word "namaskar", even for communication entirely in English, is less polite than saying it with hands folded as if in prayer.

2.4.4   The Igbo notion of politeness

In his study of the Igbo society of Nigeria, Nwoye (1992:313) finds Fraser's (1990) Conversational Contract model applicable to this society. He argues that it is through socialisation that members of the Igbo society acquire patterns of behaviour, "thus entering as it were, into a type of social contract with other members of the society to do his/her best to keep social contact friction-free" (Nwoye, 1992:313). He sees such a society as being group-oriented which is in contrast to Western societies which are more individual-oriented. The notion of "face" is further divided by him into "individual face" and "group face". The former refers to the individual's desire to focus on his/her personal needs and to place his/her public-self image above those of others, while the latter refers to the individual's desire to conform with culturally expected norms of behaviour (Nwoye, 1992:313). In an egalitarian society such as the Igbo of Nigeria, Nwoye finds that the notion of "group face" is more applicable, since the focus is on the collective other, where the wants and needs of the group are placed ahead of the individual's wants and desires.

Nwoye (1992:316) also states that like the notion of face, the notion of imposition is culture specific. He argues that in an individualistic society i.e. a society in which the primary goal of the individual is to satisfy his/her own personal needs and to maximise his/her personal comfort, almost every act such as requests, offers, thanking, criticisms etc. may be regarded as an imposition or invasion of one's privacy. However, in the Igbo culture stemming from group orientation there is almost a total absence of imposition. These acts are not seen as impositions but as one's obligation and duty to society. Thus, he argues that many acts that are seen as threats to face, and therefore as impositions, in Western societies, are not seen as such in the Igbo society. Hence, Nwoye (1992) questions the universality of Brown and Levinson's notion of face.

2.4.5 The Zulu notion of politeness

In her attempt towards a model for the study of politeness in the Zulu culture, de Kadt (1994) found that politeness plays a positive role in maintaining harmonious relations within society. Age and social distance have an important influence on language usage. There is an emphasis on "group membership" in contrast to the "wants" of the individual. Therefore, one would "lose face" if he/she did not behave in a manner that was appropriate to his/her group.

In further studies on the Zulu language, de Kadt (1995,1998) found that politeness was a "core value" in the Zulu culture, with the direct form "ngiyacela" (I request) being the

standard form for a polite request in a range of contexts. This contradicts the principle of "the more indirect the more polite the request" as initially enunciated by Brown and Levinson (1987). Hence, these findings cast doubt on the universality of the Brown and Levinson model, in particular with regard to their relevance to politeness phenomena in the Zulu culture. However, while de Kadt (1998) found that Brown and Levinson's construct of negative face (i.e. the speaker's desire not to be imposed upon) was questionable in the Zulu culture, the term "face" itself still had validity in the folk sense. De Kadt (1998:175) claims that Zulu-speakers are in agreement that it is possible to lose face in the Zulu culture and that it is the fear of loss of face that constrains people to behave appropriately i.e. with respect and politeness towards others. For this reason, de Kadt does not discount Brown and Levinson's construct totally but rather uses Goffman's (1967) broader construct of face in her analysis of Zulu politeness. In this way she is able to include both volitional and social-indexing aspects of politeness, which are both necessary for a full explanation of politeness, a view also held by Ide (1989).

De Kadt (1998:179) states that while Triandis (1989:207) distinguishes three aspects of the "self" i.e. the private, public and collective self, nonetheless, in his research focussing on America and the Far East, he explores only the private and collective self in great detail and states that the public self is not common. However, de Kadt (1998:179) shows through the exploration of the two Zulu concepts of "hlonipha" (i.e. to pay respect) and "ubuntu" (i.e. humanity) that in the Zulu culture not only are the private self and collective self applicable but also that the public self plays a fairly substantial role.

2.4.6 SUMMARY

From the above discussions one may conclude that the concept of face is not universal in nature but is culture dependent. While the notion of "individual face" appears to characterise the Brown and Levinson (Western) model, the Chinese, Japanese, Igbo (Nigerian) and Zulu cultures tend to conform to a "group face" and / or "public face". Therefore, the studies in this project will be approached with an open mind, seeking to identify which of these types of "face" are found to be relevant in the SAIE speaking community. In doing so, the well articulated Brown and Levinson model will be used as a baseline for a comparative study of politeness phenomena within the target community, consistently noting the concerns raised by studies of politeness in non-Western cultures, as discussed above. This confirms the appropriacy of my first key question:

* What is the background understanding of politeness within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community?

Having discussed the various notions of the concept of politeness, in the next section the focus is on the speech acts of apologies and requests which form the central aspects of the studies undertaken in this dissertation.

2.5 SPEECH ACTS

Speech acts refer to acts we perform when we speak, for example, giving advice, agreeing, complaining, requesting or apologising. According to Brown & Levinson (1987:65), some speech acts may be counter to the "face-wants" of Speaker or Hearer

and are therefore "face-threatening acts" affecting the participants' face wants in different ways. Speech acts may either impose on one party's freedom of action, as in the case of requests, or may damage the positive self-image of one of the parties as in the case of apologies. In this dissertation, the realization of the speech acts of apologies and requests by men and women in the SAIE speaking community is studied in detail to gain an understanding of politeness phenomena in the community.

2.5.1 Apologies

An apology is called for when social norms have been violated; as such, it is generally a post-event act. In any situation requiring an apology there is an apologiser and a recipient of the apology. The apologiser is one who has been responsible for an action or utterance which has offended the other person (Trosborg, 1987:147-148). By apologising he/she attempts to rectify his/her offence so that social harmony and equilibrium can be restored (Holmes, 1990:267b). Although apologies can be seen as polite speech acts since they aim to restore social relations following an offence, the mere act of apologising involves potential loss of face for the speaker and support for the hearer. An apology performed impolitely will defeat the desired purpose. Apologies are generally examples of negative politeness strategies concerned with maintaining or supporting the addressee's negative face (Holmes, 1990b:267).

While the speech act of apologising can be regarded as universal, the conditions which call for an apology are not universal. Cultures may differ in what they regard as an offence, the degree of severity of a particular offence, and the compensation that is appropriate for the particular offence. These factors will in turn be determined by other

factors such as the status, social distance, age and gender of the interlocutors (Maeshiba et al., 1995). In other words, the speaker's decision to apologise and the apology strategy that the speaker chooses will be determined by the above mentioned factors.

It is important to note that in some cultures the typical form of an apology is invoked not only to rectify an offence, but also, for example, to express solidarity and to express gratitude. This is illustrated by the following personal experience. During my visit to Germany in 1986 a Chinese guest, Dr. Yu (raised in the USA), spilled coffee on his pants. I immediately reacted by saying "sorry". His response was "Why are you apologising? It was not your fault."

The pragmatic force associated with the word "sorry" was differently encoded by Dr. Yu and myself. The use of "sorry" by myself was to express dismay or regret at the unfortunate incident experienced by my guest. However, to Dr. Yu the use of the word "sorry" was restricted to the situation where one is making an apology. Therefore, he was not able to understand why I, who had nothing to do with the spilling of the coffee, should apologise to him.

Also, as pointed out by Richards and Sukwiwat (1983:116), in Japanese "thank you" is not considered sincere enough when expressing gratitude, instead the speaker prefers to say "I'm sorry". These aspects are well summarized by the comments of Wolfson, Marmor and Jones (1989:180): "a cross linguistic study of apologies may well reveal

that the notions of offence and obligation are culture specific and must, therefore, become an object of study in themselves".

Although many cross-cultural and inter-language studies have been conducted focusing on the apology strategies used by native and non-native speakers (e.g. Cohen and Olshtain (1981), Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), Trosborg (1987), Garcia (1989), House (1989), Bergman and Kasper (1993) and Maeshiba et al. (1995)), not much research has been conducted on the apology strategies used by men and women in different cultures. One such study was conducted by Holmes (1990a) who looked specifically at the apology strategies used by men and women. She studied a corpus of 183 apologies produced by men and women in New Zealand and found that there were significant differences between the distribution of apologies of New Zealand men and women. Following Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) framework very closely, Holmes used four broad basic categories and a number of sub-categories to classify apology strategies used by respondents. The data were further analysed according to the following factors: type of offence needing remedy, the gender of the subjects, as well as the social relationship between the subjects. She found a number of gender based differences. For example, it was found that women apologised more than men, and that they were also apologised to more frequently than the men. Apologies were also more frequent between women and relatively rare between men. The apologies of men often referred indirectly to the offender and the resulting status imbalance while the apologies of women focussed more on the offended person and in trying to restore harmony. The women also apologised more for space and talk offences and their apologies were more directed to minor offences while men paid more attention to time offences and used

more apologies than women for more serious offences. In terms of status, it was found that while both men and women used more apologies towards power equals, the men used more apologies than women for people of different status and, finally, the women used more apologies to female friends while the men used most apologies to socially distant women (Holmes, 1995:185).

From the above findings Holmes (1990:269b) concludes that "New Zealand women pay more attention to the feelings and 'wants' of their conversational partners than New Zealand men do" and are therefore more "polite". She does not explain these differences between the men and women's speech in New Zealand negatively i.e. as stemming from the subordinate position (lack of power and status) of women in New Zealand but, rather, positively i.e. in terms of women showing more concern for their conversational partners.

It is important to note that while Holmes takes into account factors such as the type of offence needing remedy, the gender of the subjects as well as the social relationship between the subjects, she does not consider the age of participants. This leads one to question whether age is of no significance in Western cultures, given its importance in many non-Western cultures.

Other researchers have also shown that factors such as social distance, status and the severity of the offence need to be considered when studying speech acts. For example, in a study conducted by Bergman and Kasper (1993:93), amongst a group of American

and a group of Thai students, it was shown that with regard to social distance, both the groups were in agreement in perceiving the closest relationship between friends and the most distant relationship between strangers. However, when focusing on the relationship between students and professors (which both groups agreed fell into the intermediate category), the Thais perceived the relationship as being similar to that of distant family members while the Americans saw it as a work relationship between participants who were at different levels of positional hierarchy. With regard to loss of face, a one to one relationship was observed between severity of offence and the degree of face loss in responses from the American students. On the other hand, no such simple relationship was found for the Thai students. Offences ranked as "medium severity" were rated high on face loss. However, the authors make the point that this difference in rating could possibly be due to the conceptual differences between the notions of face in Thai and American cultures.

When offering an apology a Speaker may also do so in several different ways. According to Olshtain and Cohen (1983), in offering an apology the Speaker may provide: an expression of apology, an explanation or account of the situation, an acknowledgement of responsibility, an offer of repair and a promise of forbearance. However, the selection of the different options may vary from culture to culture. For example, Olshtain & Cohen (1983:25) found that Hebrew speakers when using English appeared less apologetic than they may have intended since they often provided an excuse without making a direct expression of apology. The strategies listed above will be discussed further in Chapter 3 (Methodology).

Of the aspects discussed above, my study will focus on social distance, age and status. These aspects will give further information as to the politeness phenomena in the SAIE speaking community. In particular, questions that I shall address include:

* Do males or females use more apology strategies?

* Does the use of more apology strategies by an individual imply that he/she is being more polite?, and

* Do adults and children differ in the use of apology strategies?

2.5.2 Requests

A request may take the form of a command or plea. Unlike apologies which are post-event acts, requests are seen as pre-event acts. By making a request the speaker expresses his/her expectation on the hearer to perform a certain action. Requests are by definition face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson, 1978): by making a request, the speaker encroaches on the hearer's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984:201).

Although requests have been studied from a number of different perspectives (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Hodge, 1990; De Kadt, 1992a, 1992b; Ellis, 1992; and Cohen, 1996a, 1996b), very few studies have focussed on age, gender and requesting behaviour. Part of this dissertation will investigate the requesting behaviour of males and females in the SAIE speaking community. In my analysis, I also focus on the claims of universality made by the proponents of politeness theory i.e. that directness is associated with low politeness and indirectness is associated with high politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and that politeness and indirectness are linked in the case of conventional

indirectness , but not always in the case of non-conventional indirectness (Blum-Kulka, 1989). It would be interesting to note whether these claims hold true for the SAIE speaking community.

Brown & Levinson's work gave rise to considerable research both theoretical and empirical. One such study is the CCSARP project by Blum-Kulka et al (1989), a cross-cultural study that investigated the speech acts of requests and apologies across seven different countries. The CCSARP project framework is based on a universalistic premise that the request strategies of the various languages studied would display three major levels of directness i.e. the most direct, the conventionally indirect level and the non-conventionally indirect level. These three levels are further subdivided into nine mutually exclusive categories, that are said to represent a universally valid scale of indirectness (see page 74 in Chapter 3 below) (Blum-Kulka, 1989:46-47). On analysis of their data by means of this coding scheme, the findings confirmed the cross-linguistic validity of the above coding-scheme.

It is important to note, however, that Blum-Kulka disputes the notion that "more indirect" means "more polite" as postulated by Brown & Levinson and warns against drawing a parallel on degrees of directness and levels of politeness. In her study (1982:45-46) of the Israel culture and the American culture, she found that her Hebrew-speaking subjects used a high level of direct requests as compared to her English-speaking subjects. She therefore argues that in the Israel society directness takes precedence over face wants as compared to the American society. In this regard

Blum-Kulka (1982:30) also refers to the work of Tannen (1979) who found that "Greek social norms require a much higher level of indirectness in social interaction than American ones". The above findings indicate that politeness strategies are culture dependent, and that "more indirect" does not necessarily mean "more polite".

A major critique of Blum-Kulka's work is that by Wierzbicka (1991:88) who argues that there is more than one model of politeness and that most work on politeness merely adopts the terms "directness" and "indirectness" in linguistic descriptions as if they are self-explanatory. She suggests that the distinction made between these two concepts should be abandoned until clear definitions of these terms are provided (1991:88). Wierzbicka illustrates how the understanding of these concepts differs from culture to culture and underlines the need for a "language-independent universal perspective on the meanings expressed in linguistic interaction" (1991:6).

Studies conducted by de Kadt (1994) yielded results that were contrary to Blum-Kulka's findings. Whereas Blum-Kulka argued that conventional indirectness is a linguistic universal, de Kadt found that in Zulu direct strategies were most frequent and had a high politeness rating, whereas conventionally indirect requests were only infrequently used. De Kadt (1994:110) shows that factors such as the age of the participants, the perceived weight of the request and the status of the participants affects the requesting strategy used by participants. She also found that the Zulu term "ngicela" which is a performative with a high directness rating in Blum-Kulka's scale, was rated by her respondents as "most polite" (1992b:103-104). This leads her to question whether the claimed universal link between indirectness and politeness is true for the Zulu culture.

Studies conducted by Nwoye (1992:317) show that speech acts such as requests in the Igbo society and culture are not seen as face-threatening acts as in the western cultures and are rarely regarded as impositions. Nwoye attributes this to the fact that the Igbos tend to care more for the collective image of the group than that of the individual. He also shows that in the Igbo society gregariousness is the norm and that "hospitality and regard for the common good rather than for the self" makes an act such as a request free from any impositions (1992:316). He therefore argues that, like the notions of face, the notions of impositions are culture-specific. Nwoye also demonstrates that in the Igbo society requests are often framed with the absence of politeness markers, such as "please". Therefore, it is not uncommon for one to make a request such as "My car has suddenly stopped, come and help me push it" (1992:317). According to Nwoye (1992:320) such directness is the "preferred and most productive strategy" and "social differentiations like superior/inferior, young/old, male/female etc. do not affect directness as the preferred strategy".

The opposing views discussed above lead to the following questions which I intend addressing in this study:

* Blum-Kulka (1989) claims as a universal behaviour that the majority of request strategies are conventionally indirect. Does this apply to the SAIE speaking community?

* Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that "more indirect" means "more polite" is a universal. Does this hold for the SAIE speaking community?

With regard to politeness phenomena within the specific community under investigation, I shall investigate the following:

* Do males and females differ in their use of request strategies?

* What is the influence of factors such as age, social distance and status on the request strategies used?

* Do adults and children differ in their use of request strategies?

It must be noted that throughout my study I shall be giving consideration to factors such as the social distance, status and gender of the respondents relative to that of the recipients. Research has shown that these are significant aspects in the determination of politeness strategies (see, for example, Maeshiba et al 1995). It is therefore important to provide a background understanding of these variables. This is done in the next two sections where I discuss Language and gender, and Social dimensions and linguistic analysis.

2.6 LANGUAGE AND GENDER

After Lakoff (1975) initiated the study of language and gender in the USA, a spate of research was sparked off in this field, with the focus on the differences in discourse styles between men and women. For example, Thorne and Henley (1975), Thorne, Kramarae and Henley (1983), and Meyerhoff (1987) conducted research on the possible existence of differences between male and female speech mostly in white, middle class, English speaking communities. A variety of explanations have been given for these differences in language use. Some of the main assumptions and arguments that have been made concerning these differences will be discussed below, as these will be taken

into consideration when finding explanations for my results, given that I shall also be undertaking a cross-sex study.

2.6.1   Biological and psychological factors

According to Holmes (1995:7), some researchers argue that innate biological differences account for sex-differentiated rates of language acquisition, as well as for the differences in the psychological make-up or temperament of people. The psychological differences are responsible for males and females interacting differently towards others.   For example, Holmes (1995:7, and references therein) reports that other researchers claim that "women are more concerned with making connections; they seek involvement and focus on the interdependencies between people".   As a result of this concern for others, Holmes argues that women would tend to use linguistic devices that involve others and emphasise the interpersonal nature of talk.   On the other hand, men are more concerned with autonomy and detachment; they seek independence and focus on hierarchical relationships.   Thus they would tend to use linguistic strategies that assert control (Holmes, 1995:7).

2.6.2   Socialisation

Other researchers, for example, Maltz and Borker (1982:204-209), argue that in many societies girls and boys use and interpret language differently as a result of the different patterns of socialisation that they experience while growing up.   For example, in most Western societies girls and boys operate in single-sex peer groups through most of their childhood.   During this time they acquire and develop different styles of interaction.   For

example, in a study in New Zealand, Holmes (1995:7) found that boys' interactions tend to be more competitive and control-orientated, while the girls interact more co-operatively and focus on relative closeness. According to Maltz and Borker (1982:200) men and women grow up and are socialised into different sub-cultures, which serve as the bases for different ideologies. This leads to different perceptions of the characteristics of friendly interaction, rules for engaging in it, and ways of signalling solidarity (du Plessis, 1995:23).

2.6.3 Societal norms

The social norms in many societies are such that power and interactional control is given to men. Women are required to accept and support them without challenging these norms (Maltz and Borker, 1982:199). Lakoff (1975:53-57) claimed that for the American middle class society socialisation reinforces sex roles and societal order. For example, women's societal role required them to avoid offence at all costs. Thus, women were required to use hypercorrect grammar and super-polite forms; avoid the use of swear words; use rising intonation in declarative statements, and to ensure that their message was understood correctly by both intensifying and hedging utterances. Women had to bear in mind that they had to avoid any offence by expressing their views at all. On the other hand, men were free to swear, rough talk, joke and challenge each other thus showing their allegiance or belonging to a particular group. Thus, the speech of women was seen as immature, unassertive and hyper-polite. On the other hand, the speech of men was seen as assertive, adult and correct (du Plessis, 1995:23). This published piece of work by Lakoff (1975) (though not based on empirical research) is probably the source of the linguistic tradition that women are more polite than men.

2.6.4   Power and Dominance

It has been acknowledged by Brown and Levinson (1987:15), as well as other researchers, that power plays an important role in determining the level of politeness which the Speaker would use to an addressee. For example, in societies where women have an inferior role and are vunerable to men, they use predominantly negatively polite speech to men.

According to Holmes (1995:7-8), the greater societal power accorded to men allows them to define and control situations within their communities. In some societies male norms predominate in interaction. Deuchar (1988 in Holmes, 1995:8) argues that in situations where women are powerless members of a subordinate group, they are likely to be more linguistically polite than the men who are in control.

2.6.5 DISCUSSION

The claim that the speech of women is considered more polite than that of men will be looked at in greater detail as it forms an important part of this dissertation, in which I will try to establish through the examination of the speech acts of requests and apologies whether the speech of women or men, in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community, is to be considered more polite within the framework of the understanding of politeness in the target community. The comparison of my findings with similar/different observations in other cultures will be of interest.

According to Freeman and McElhinny (in McKay and Hornberger, 1996:251) in societies where politeness is not acquired through language learning but is seen as a

skill, men are understood as being more polite than women. However, in societies where politeness is perceived as a form of respect (rather than a skill) and where indirectness is valued, women tend to be seen as more polite than men. My study will attempt to establish if either of these two categories apply to the SAIE speaking community.

Studies have shown that characteristics of men's speech in one society might be associated with women's speech in other societies. For example, in Malagasy (Keenan, 1974), while the men use language subtly and try to maintain good communication in their relationships and avoid confrontations, the women openly criticise and confront others. While men prefer indirectness as an expression of respect, the women are more direct. In this society directness is associated with deviation from tradition, and therefore with being less polite. Hence, indirectness is equated with politeness, and as a result the men are considered to be more polite. This is in contrast to the pattern in Western societies. For example, Preisler (1986) found that British women are considered linguistically more polite than British men. The behaviour for the Malagasy society can be accounted for by the different roles that men and women have in this society (Holmes, 1992:324). In this society men are engaged in village to village negotiations, dispute resolution and marriage requests, activities which are conducted through a traditional politeness system. Women on the other hand, spend a lot of time in the market place where transactions take place through a devalued European politeness system. Therefore, from a traditional perspective, women are not as skilful in polite speech as men.

It is reported by Freeman and McElhinny (in McKay and Hornberger, 1996:252) that studies conducted by Smith-Hefner (1988) in the Javanese society showed that men are more skilled in using politeness forms than the women. This is not because women are not polite but because they are too polite. This sometimes stems from the fact that women have to act as role models for their children and therefore tend to overemphasise the use of politeness forms. Also, in situations in which it is not clear which politeness forms to choose, women tend to choose the most polite form. In such instances, the men would remain silent.

According to Wessels (1995:122), Lakoff's (1975) publication on the American middle class society claimed that some politeness markers, such as tag questions, rising intonation and hedges are typical of women's language, thereby illustrating that women have a tendency of being linguistically more polite than men. Other researchers, for example, Brown and Levinson (1987:252) also considered these forms to be politeness devices. Brown and Levinson found that in the Tenejapan society women were overall more polite than men. Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987) found that Tenejapan women use mostly negative politeness strategies when talking to men, and positive politeness strategies when talking to women, while men are relatively brusque to anyone, regardless of sex (Brown and Levinson, 1987:251-252). This is a confirmation of the claim by Brown (1980:119), who argued that the level of politeness one uses would depend on the social relationship one has with the addressee. She found that in Tzeltal, the language spoken by the Tenejapan society, there is a class of particles which operate as adverbs, modifying the force of a speech act by expressing something about the speaker's attitude towards the act being performed (or towards the addressee)

(Brown, 1980:119). In other words, these adverbs either strengthen or weaken what is said. Hedging acts is seen as being negatively polite and emphasising them is seen as being positively polite. Brown (1980:122) found that Tenejapan women used more particles in their (Tzeltal) speech than men did and that their speech is more elaborated than men's speech for both positive politeness (emphasising) and negative politeness (hedging). The data presented by Brown suggests that women in Tenejapa are overall more polite then men. Women tend to use negative politeness towards both men as well as other women because of their sensitivity to face-threatening material in their speech, and they use positive politeness towards men as well as other women because they are more sensitive to positive face wants (Brown, 1980:129).

The findings reported above lead me to the following key questions which I shall address in the SAIE speaking community:

* Are the politeness strategies of women towards women different from those towards men, and vice versa?
* Do men or women value politeness more highly in this community?

It is noted from the above discussion that rules for polite behaviour, or similarly the perception of what is polite and who should be polite, differ from one speech community to another. This raises the question as to what factors determine polite behaviour in a given society.

According to Holmes (1995:11) deciding what is or is not polite in any community involves assessing social relationships along three dimensions: a) the solidarity-social

distance dimension, b) the power dimension, and c) the formality dimension. The first two dimensions will be looked at in greater detail in the next section, as the influence of these variables will be investigated in my study on the SAIE speaking community.

2.7 SOCIAL DIMENSIONS AND LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

2.7.1 Solidarity-social distance

The way in which solidarity or social distance is expressed linguistically will differ from culture to culture. Leech (1983:126) identifies social distance as an important factor in determining politeness behaviour. According to him, the determination of social distance involves not only the roles people assume in relation to one another in a given situation but also how well they know each other. Brown and Levinson (1987) also identify the importance of social distance as a relevant social dimension in all cultures. However, the factors that determine the level of importance will differ from culture to culture. Their model of politeness suggests the greater the social distance between participants, the more politeness is required towards the other person. This implies that one will apologise more often to strangers than to friends and intimates. On the other hand, according to Wolfson (1988:33), we respond in a similar manner (with regard to the use of linguistic politeness) to those at the two extreme ends of social distance i.e. strangers and intimates. With these two groups the relationship is fixed or stable. In these relationships people know what to expect and where they stand with each other. As a result, they do not bother to use a great deal of explicit linguistic politeness. However, with acquaintances and casual friends the social distance is not fixed and the relationship is less certain and more open to negotiation. These relationships would fall

in the middle of the continuum. Such persons would receive more attention in the form of linguistically polite interactions since there is a greater risk to face. Thus, as Figure 1 below illustrates, there is a bulge in the quantity of linguistic politeness paid to people in this category (i.e. acquaintances and casual friends).
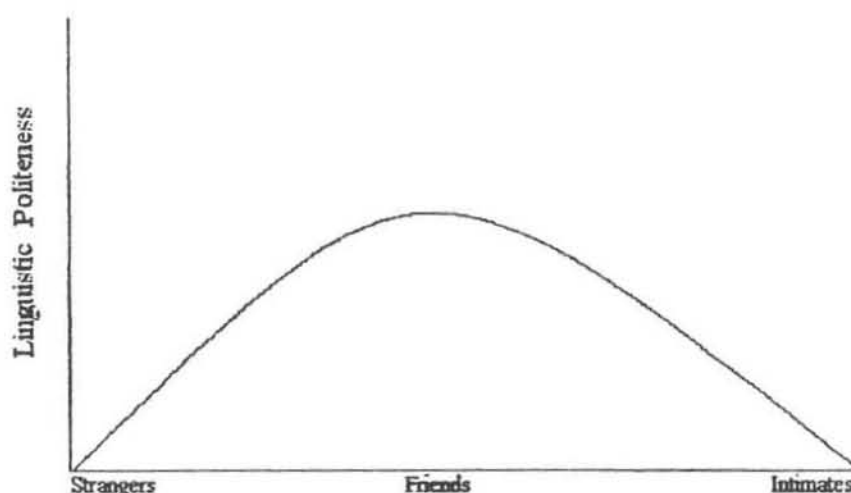
Figure 1: Wolfson's 'Bulge' model
(from Holmes (1995:14))

According to Brown (1980:115), positive politeness is expressed more often to a friend, "a person whose desires and personality traits are known and liked". This reduced social distance or high solidarity often results in the use of positive politeness devices. On the other hand, negative politeness is expressed more often to those one would keep at a distance. Negative politeness avoids intruding, thus stressing the social distance between people. Therefore, as social distance increases so does negative politeness, while reduced social distance or high solidarity often results in the use of positive politeness devices. These views concur with the findings of Holmes (1995:14) within the New Zealand context, who summarized the relationship between social distance and negative/positive politeness as shown in Figure 2 below.

```
Intimate ————————————————— Distant
High Solidarity                   Low Solidarity

  ┌─────────────┐              ┌─────────────┐
  │  POSITIVE   │              │  NEGATIVE   │
  │ POLITENESS  │              │ POLITENESS  │
  └─────────────┘              └─────────────┘
```

Figure 2: Solidarity – social distance dimension
(from Holmes (1995:15))

2.7.2 Power/Status

Power refers to the ability of participants to influence one another's circumstances. Brown and Levinson (1987:77) define the relative power between Hearer and Speaker as the degree to which the Hearer can impose his plans and self-evaluation (face) at the expense of the Speaker's.

Power may be derived from a number of sources, for example, money, knowledge, social prestige, etc. Power may also be culturally constructed, for example, the power of an older person over a younger person or a husband over a wife, etc. According to Holmes (1995:17), power attracts deferential behaviour, including linguistic deference or negative politeness. In other words, people are generally more respectful to people with power and would try not to offend them.

Scollon and Scollon (1995) point out that the dimensions of power and social distance are interlinked. According to them indirectness should increase with social distance and decrease with social power. In other words, one would expect greater indirectness between strangers and in upward speech from persons in relatively lower positions to

their superiors. Holmes (1995:18) is in agreement that power and social distance are interlinked. For, while negative politeness strategies are used to express distance, they also emphasise power distinctions. On the other hand, positive politeness strategies express solidarity and also emphasise equality between participants.

In closing this section, it must be noted that the context in which interaction occurs also plays an important role in determining the level of politeness one would use i.e. politeness is context dependent. This means that the solidarity-social distance dimension and power dimension cannot be considered in isolation but must be looked at in the context in which interaction occurs. For example, two brothers who are attorneys and on opposite sides in a court case, will address each other as "my learned colleague" and not by their first names.

According to Holmes (1995:20), negative politeness strategies are used more often in formal settings and interactions, while positive politeness strategies are used in more intimate and less formal situations. Further, Brown and Levinson (1987:17) place emphasis on the ranking of the FTA i.e. the degree of seriousness of the FTA.

It is important to note that, although the dimensions mentioned above are universal, the weighting assigned to each one may differ quite dramatically from one culture and social group to another (Holmes, 1995:22).

The dimensions of social distance and status will be explored further in my study of the SAIE speaking community. Questions to be addressed are:

* Does the status of the Hearer have any influence on the politeness behaviour of the Speaker?

* Does the social distance between the Speaker and Hearer have an effect on their politeness behaviour?

2.8 CONCLUSION

I have developed this very extensive and rather detailed research overview as my research topic cuts across a number of fields in which research has been extremely prolific. This overview has enabled me to refine my original research questions further. For convenience, I draw together here the set of questions developed.

* What is the background understanding of politeness in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community?

* Is this understanding of politeness a constant; or has it changed over the past generation?

* Are the politeness strategies of women towards women different from those towards men, and vice versa?

* Do men or women value politeness more highly in this community?

* What is the influence of factors such as age, social distance and status on the use of apology and request strategies?

* Is there a relationship between the degree of politeness and the level of directness of a request strategy in the target community?

* Which of the theoretical framework(s), if any, are most appropriate for analysing
   politeness phenomena in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community?

In the next Chapter, I present the methodology that will be used in an attempt to obtain
answers for these key questions.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the theoretical framework of the study and the methods of data collection and analysis are presented. Since this study is a broad investigation of politeness covering several aspects, different methods of data collection are used in an attempt to achieve triangulation. Since each method has its own advantages and limitations, and the limitations of one method could be balanced by the advantages of another, these complementary methods of data collection are adopted in order to enhance the validity of my findings, apart from providing answers to the key questions that are posed.

The methods of data collection used in this study are interviews, discourse completion task questionnaires (DCTs) and a ranking scale. The analysis will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature. It is noted that for both the interviews and the DCTs the answers will be in terms of perceived behaviour and not the actual behaviours of the participants. I decided to use interviews because the nature of this study is such that I firstly had to establish, from a religious and cultural perspective, what the understanding of politeness is in the target community and secondly, through further interviews with different families, to determine if this understanding is constant or whether it has changed over the years. Questionnaires in this regard would have been too restrictive as they would not allow for a development of a discussion, as well as freedom of expression on the part of the respondents. On the other hand, interviews proved advantageous in many ways for a baseline study. I found that since interviews involved direct interaction with the respondents, I was able to motivate them by arousing their interest in my topic. I also found the interview technique to be very flexible and

adaptable, as it also allowed me to probe, follow up, clarify, reflect and get participants to elaborate on certain issues on which I needed more information. The outstanding positive feature for me was the fact that since I had to go to the home of each respondent, I was able to observe them as well as their families. This allowed me to correlate the responses that I obtained from the interviewees with the general behaviour of the entire family. However, one major practical disadvantage of using interviews is that it proved to be very time consuming.

In the second phase of my study, where I looked at politeness through the apologising and requesting behaviour of respondents, I decided that DCTs provided the best method since they allowed me to seek answers to specific situations. Apart from this, they are less time consuming, as well as economical. It must be mentioned that role-playing, was not considered a suitable alternative because from my personal experience the older generation in the target community has not been exposed to drama and freedom of expression and would, therefore, be averse to participating in such an activity. Although DCTs are used, cognisance is taken of their limitations. It is recognised that a disadvantage of the DCTs is that they elicit written responses to short dialogues. As such, they do not allow for continuous verbal interaction and do not cater for the non-verbal aspects of interactions. Nonetheless, DCTs are advantageous in that they allow one to collect a large quantity of data quickly (Wolfson, 1989) and to control variables thereby giving coherence to the findings. Also, as pointed out above, this method is also useful when seeking answers to specific questions (de Kadt, 1992b).

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

As mentioned above, the data were collected through interviews and DCTs. The following discussion is presented in accordance with the sequence in which the data were collected.

3.2.1 INTERVIEWS WITH CULTURAL LEADERS

As discussed in the literature review, there is no generally accepted definition of politeness and while politeness is a universal phenomenon, accepted polite behaviour varies from one culture to another. Therefore, politeness is culturally determined. Hence, the starting point of this study was to first establish what politeness means within the SAIE speaking community, thus providing an answer to the first key question posed, i.e. "What is the background understanding of politeness within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community?"

Within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community cultural practices and religious beliefs in accordance with the teaching of the scriptures are inextricably bound. Therefore, in probing the first key question it was appropriate for me to start by interviewing religious/cultural leaders for their understanding of politeness.

In proceeding, I drew up a set of questions (see Appendix 1) which probed the interviewees' in-depth understanding of the religious/cultural perspective of politeness phenomena in the target community. In drawing up this interview schedule I used both structured as well as semistructured questions. The semistructured questions were open-ended questions designed to allow for individual responses. The reason for using a combination of structured and semistructured questions was to ensure a high degree of

objectivity and uniformity, at the same time allowing for probing and clarification. Care was taken to avoid leading questions. The questions were phrased so as to elicit responses to different aspects pertaining to the understanding of politeness. For example, questions 1 to 4 (Appendix 1) were phrased to obtain the participants' basic understanding of politeness; question 5 examined the impact that age, status and social distance have on the politeness behaviour/strategies that one uses; question 6 focused on the same-sex and cross-sex interactions, and finally questions 7 to 12 were designed to elicit responses to specific request and apology situations. These questions were used as guidelines and were expanded on or probed further depending on the answers that the interviewees had given. Once these questions were drawn up, they were pre-tested on the first interviewee as a check for clarity and (time) length of the interview. The responses of the interviewee were used to modify the questions where necessary. These modifications were of a minor nature.

I then interviewed eight cultural/religious leaders from the target community, of whom four were female. These interviewees, all in the age group 50+, were chosen from different residential areas and come from diverse backgrounds, viz. retired educators involved in cultural/social activities, present day educators who are also religious leaders and a spiritual leader who has renounced the material world and lives in an Ashram. Four of the interviewees (two males and two females) were Hindi speaking, while the remainder were Tamil/Telegu speaking. All the interviews were conducted in English. The interviews took place at the residence of each interviewee and each session lasted approximately one hour. With the permission of the interviewees these sessions were tape-recorded as I felt that this would allow me to collect information more completely

and objectively than hand written notes. Hence, when writing up my analysis, I was able to play back the tape-recorded interview.

Although some of the interviewees requested that they be provided the questions in advance, it is significant to note that the responses of all the interviewees were more of less the same for all the questions, i.e. there were no significant differences in the responses of the interviewees, irrespective of gender and sub-cultural background (i.e. Hindi, Tamil or Telegu).

3.2.2 QUESTIONNAIRES : DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASKS

As mentioned in my literature review, an important aspect of linguistic politeness is the manner in which people express and use different speech acts, for example, requests, compliments and apologies. These are common manifestations of politeness behaviour in interactions between Speaker and Hearer. The two speech acts that I chose are requests and apologies since from my personal experience these are among the most common speech acts that are widely used in the target community. It was also intended that the study of these speech acts through DCTs would assist me in answering two of my key questions i.e. "Are the politeness strategies of women towards women different from those towards men, and vice versa?" and "Do men or women value politeness more highly in this community?"

3.2.2.1 DCTs : Set One

In light of the results of the interviews, I drew up questionnaires in the form of DCTs (see Appendix 2). The DCTs were structured to obtain responses to both request and apology situations. The specific situations in the DCTs reflected potential real-life

occurrences within the target community. They were established after discussions with work colleagues from the said community.

The DCTs comprised three sections and each situation in the DCT varied according to the social factors of social distance, status, age and gender. These variables were chosen on the basis of my reading and my knowledge of the target community as primary factors that may influence politeness behaviour. Participants were expected to read each situation in the DCT and respond in the space provided, by writing in either an apology or a request.

Section A in the DCT (Appendix 2) comprised request situations. All six of these request situations focused on social distance and gender. Age was also included as another variable in some of the situations. In designing the DCTs I used the social distance categories as provided by Holmes (1995) i.e. intimates, colleagues and friends, as discussed in my literature review. For example, situations 2 and 4 involved responses to male and female intimates, respectively. Situation 5 required a response to a female colleague while situation 6 required a response to a male colleague. On the other hand, situation 1 required a response to a male stranger, while situation 3 required a response to a female stranger. Situations 2, 3 and 6 were also structured to elicit responses to persons of different age from that of the requester.

Section B of the DCT (Appendix 2) consisted of apology situations, with all six situations focusing on social distance and gender. For example, situations 1 and 3 required responses to male and female intimates, respectively. Situation 4 required responses to male colleagues, while situation 5 looked at female colleagues. Both

situations 2 and 6 required responses to strangers, with situation 2 focusing on a male stranger and situation 6 on a female stranger. Situations 1, 2 and 5 were also structured to elicit responses to persons of different age from that of the apologiser.

Finally, section C (Appendix 2) was divided into two parts, one to be filled in by the parents and the other by their children. In each part there were two situations, one a request situation and the other an apology situation, each focusing on status (i.e. upwards, equal and lower) as well as gender. Thus, altogether the DCTs comprised a total of 14 situations, 7 of which related to requests and 7 to apologies (Appendix 2). The DCTs just described made up the first set of DCTs that were handed out to respondents.

Once the DCTs were completed they were trialled. For the trial, under my supervision, five first and five fourth year Communication students at the M.L. Sultan Technikon were asked to complete the DCTs during their lesson. The purpose of the trial was to determine whether the completion tasks in the DCTs were clear to all respondents and did elicit request and apology responses as intended. The time that respondents took to complete the DCTs was also monitored so as to give me an indication as to how long I would need to set aside for each family when administering the DCTs to them. The DCTs were then analysed and situations that were not clearly understood contextually were appropriately modified. The modified version was then tested on two families. These two families were required to fill in the DCTs in my presence at their respective homes. Although this method would have been the ideal method to use on all the other families, this was not possible because of the difficulties experienced with the first two "trial" families. At the outset, it was not easy to get all four members of a family at one

sitting. Also, the parents were uncomfortable about completing the questionnaire in my presence and stated that they would be happier if the questionnaires were left with them and collected later. Despite these problems, I found that the participants experienced no difficulties in understanding the DCTs and responding to them. As a result of the above problems experienced, I decided that I would hand out the final (i.e. trialled and modified) DCTs to the selected families and collect them at a later date.

The final DCTs were then handed out to ten families selected from different residential areas and diverse backgrounds. In each family, the parents and two children (male and female) were required to complete the questionnaire. The age of the parents ranged from 40-60 years while those of the children were from 15-25 years. Each situation in the DCT provided a description of the setting, the social distance between the participants, their age, sex and their status relative to each other. Respondents were then required to write down their responses to the various request and apology situations in the space provided. The respondents were also informed that they should fill in the DCTs individually and not discuss their responses with each other. The completed DCTs were then collected a few days later. A total of 40 DCTs were collected.

3.2.2.2 DCTs : Set Two

Since this study is also a cross-sex study, I compiled another set of DCTs (Set Two) exactly the same as the first, except for reversing the gender of the person to whom the apology or request was directed. The reason for two separate sets of DCTs was to clearly distinguish between the responses of the participants to males and females in similar situations. Combining the study into a single set of DCTs would have resulted in a very long and tiresome questionnaire. This approach ensured that participants were

responding to the same situations but to people of different gender, and giving their responses at different times. For, approximately three to four weeks after collecting the first set of DCTs, the second set (a total of 40) was handed out to the same families and collected a few days later. The time interval between handing out the two sets of DCTs prevented an automatic repetition of answers.

3.2.3 INTERVIEWS WITH FAMILIES

Another objective of this study is to determine whether the politeness phenomena among the target community have remained constant or have changed over the past generation. In order to achieve this objective I decided to use interviews, as I considered them as being the best and most reliable of all the methods for this aspect of the study. Since part of this study also focuses on two different generations in the SAIE speaking community, specifically examining whether the phenomena of politeness have changed over generations, it was necessary to first establish what politeness means for the parents in families, as well as for the children in the same families. This allowed me to compare and contrast their responses. Furthermore, since a variable in this study is gender, I had to interview a male and a female child in each family. I decided that the best way to enhance the validity of my findings would be to interview the same set of families that had completed the DCTs as then I would be able to correlate the outcomes of the DCTs with the oral responses of the same set of families. Furthermore, since these interviews were conducted only after the analysis of the DCTs, this approach offered me the opportunity to probe responses that were not clear in the DCTs, as well as to address new questions that arose from my analysis of the DCTs.

Hence, a total of four members were interviewed in each family (i.e. the parents and one male and one female child). My initial plan was to interview the parents and children together at their respective homes so that the interviews could take the form of a focus group and issues could be debated. Hence, this method was used with the first family. However, I observed that the children were not very comfortable in speaking openly in the presence of their parents (although at one stage a discussion did arise stemming from a disagreement between father and daughter). Most of the time though, the parents answered the questions and when I prompted the children for a response their answers were "same as my dad/mum". In view of this, I interviewed the children and parents in the remaining families separately. This method proved to be very successful. Although participants were expected to respond to a set of questions I encouraged them to elaborate as much as possible. A total of eight families were interviewed. Each interview lasted for approximately one and a half hours.

A total of 14 questions were posed to interviewees (see Appendix 3). The questions were structured in such a way as to allow me to obtain an understanding of aspects such as the meaning of politeness within the target community, the role of women and men, the use of apology and request strategies, the notion of directness/indirectness and the notion of imposition.

3.2.4 RANKING SCALE

This was the last piece of study undertaken. My motivation for introducing the ranking scale was to address the following issues:

- To ascertain whether the CCSARP coding scale of directness/indirectness of request patterns is valid for the SAIE speaking community, which is an example of a non-Western culture.

- To probe for a possible relationship between the degrees of politeness and levels of directness/indirectness in request patterns for the target community.

- To obtain information that may assist in providing correlation between the findings of the DCTs and the interviews.

A ranking scale (Appendix 4), consisting of two parts (i.e. ranking scale 1 and ranking scale 2) was handed out to a total of 30 respondents. Some of these respondents included the families that I interviewed while the others consisted of first year students from the target community studying at Technikon Natal.

Both Ranking Scales 1 and 2 consisted of two request situations each (i.e. Situation 1: borrowing a book and Situation 2: requesting a lift). Both situations consisted of nine ways of requesting either a book or a lift which were coded according to Blum-Kulka's (1989) levels of directness/indirectness. In the first ranking scale the respondents had to rank the level of directness with number 1 being the most direct and number 9 being the least direct. Ranking scale 2 required respondents to rank responses in order of the degree of politeness, with number 1 being the most polite and number 9 being the least polite. These were handed out to respondents and they were required to fill them in, in my presence. Respondents took about 10-15 minutes to complete the task.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

3.3.1 REQUESTS

In analysing the data obtained from the DCTs for the request situations, I decided to use the framework and coding scheme devised by Blum-Kulka et. al. (1989: 275-289) in their cross-cultural study of Requests and Apologies (CCSARP). Although this framework and coding scheme is highly sophisticated and allows for the replication of research in any language, it has been widely critiqued, as pointed out in my literature review (Chapter 2, Section 2.4.2). While I was unable to use the specific CCSARP DCT questionnaire as many of their dialogue situations were not applicable to the families that I used in my investigation, it was possible to use their coding scheme. As noted in my literature review, two concerns of my investigation are the claims that there is a link between politeness and indirectness, which has been proposed as a linguistic universal, and the claim that request strategies are universal. In spite of the criticisms levied against Blum-Kulka's work, I decided to use their coding scheme as I felt that it would facilitate the further testing of these claims, and would also help me to identify culture-specific interactional features in a community which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been previously studied.

While it would have been ideal to have also obtained responses in the subjects' native language i.e. Hindi and Tamil/Telegu, this was not possible as the majority of the children do not know how to speak or write in their ancestral language.

The CCSARP coding scheme used in the analysis of my data is discussed below.

In the CCSARP coding scheme, a request sequence is identified as "all the utterance(s) involved in the turn completing the dialogue in the DCT" (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:17). A request sequence may include (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:18):

a) *Alerters*: such as a term of address or an attention getter. They precede the actual request.

b) *Supportive moves*: external modifiers which either aggravate or mitigate the force of the request.

c) *Head Act*: the minimal unit which can realize a request. Head Acts can vary on two dimensions: strategy type and perspective.

d) *Downgraders and upgraders*: internal modifiers i.e. elements within the request utterance proper which are not necessary for the utterance to be understood as a request.

As an illustration, consider the following utterance:

"Nirvana, I am so busy today. Can I take you to the library tomorrow, please?"

This utterance can be segmented in the following way:

Alerter: Nirvana

Supportive move: I am so busy today

Head Act: Can I take you to the library tomorrow

Downgrader: Please

Since the Head Act is the core of a request sequence, the two dimensions of variation of the Head Act (strategy and perspective) will be discussed below in greater detail (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:18).

a) **Strategy Type**: The CCSARP coding scheme identifies nine possible Request Strategies. The strategies are listed according to decreasing level of directness, i.e. "the degree to which the speaker's illocutionary intent is apparent from the locution" (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:278). They are the following:

1) *mood derivable*: utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals the illocutionary force ('Close the window').

2) *performatives*: utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named ('I am asking you to close the window').

3) *hedged performatives*: utterances in which the naming of the illocutionary force is modified by hedging expressions ('I would like you to.....').

4) *obligation statements*: utterances which state the obligation of the hearer to carry out the act ('You'll have to.....').

5) *want statements*: utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act ('I want you to.....').

6) *suggestory formulae*: utterances which contain a suggestion to do X ('How about.....').

7) *query preparatory*: utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions as conventionalized in any specific language ('Can you/Could you/Would you.....').

8) *strong hints*: utterances containing partial reference to the object or element needed for the implementation of the act ('You have left the window open').

9) mild hints: utterances that make no reference to the request proper ('It's very cold in here').

The nine strategies listed above are further grouped by Blum-Kulka into three major level of directness, which are thought to be manifested universally. The three levels are:

i)   *direct strategies* - strategy 1) to strategy 5)

ii)   *conventionally indirect strategies* - strategy 6) and strategy 7)

iii)   *non-conventionally indirect strategies* - strategy 8) and strategy 9)

b) **Perspective**: Requests can emphasize the role of the agent and can be:

Speaker oriented ('Can I.....')

Hearer oriented ('Can you.....')

Speaker and Hearer oriented ('Can we.....') or

Impersonal ('Can one.....').

In analysing the data, the responses of the participants will be examined for the characteristics of supportive moves, head acts, downgraders and upgraders. In the case of head acts, the strategy type as well as the perspective will be investigated. The responses will also be sub-categorised according to the three main levels of directness identified by Blum-Kulka. Once these have been identified and categorised, the respondents' choices for each situation will be totalled to provide frequency of occurrences and converted to percentages, thereby allowing for comparisons and contrasts.

3.3.2 APOLOGIES

As stated in the literature review (Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2), while requests are pre-event acts and may involve loss of face for both interlocutors, apologies on the other hand, are post-event acts and potentially involve loss of face for the Speaker and support for the Hearer (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984:206). Thus, apologies are analysed differently from requests.

In my analysis of the realization of apologies in the DCTs, I will be using the framework proposed by Olshtain and Cohen (1983). This framework is based on the supposition of an apology speech act set which has been supported by many studies examining native and non-native speakers' apologising patterns. This framework was modified and used by the CCSARP team. According to Olshtain and Cohen (1983), the speech act set encompasses a range of apology strategies consisting of explicit and conventional patterns, as well as the more implicit and indirect strategies. They refer to these strategies as semantic formulas. The apology speech act set includes five potential semantic formulas (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983:22) as listed below:

1. *An expression of an apology;*

2. *An explanation or account of the situation* e.g. *"I accidently knocked it over";*

3. *An acknowledgement of responsibility* e.g. *"It's my fault";*

4. *An offer of repair* e.g. *"I'll replace your camera";*

5. *A promise of forbearance* e.g. *"It won't happen again".*

Olshtain and Cohen (1983:22) recognize that while these formulas may be non-language specific, the subformulas (listed below) and their "appropriateness to certain discourse situations would vary from language to language".

"An expression of an apology" is further divided into the following subformulas (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983:22):

    a. **An expression of regret** e.g. *"I'm sorry"*;

    b. **An offer of apology** e.g. *"I apologize"*;

    c. **A request for forgiveness** e.g. *"Excuse me"*, *"Please forgive me"* or *"Pardon me"*.

The above sub-categories together constitute explicit illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) used to signal regret, thereby serving to placate the Hearer.

In focusing on "an expression of apology", I also assessed the intensity of regret (e.g. "I'm very sorry" (high intensity) vs "I'm sorry" (low intensity)).

As in requests, the unit of analysis for apologies is the sequence of utterances used to complete the DCT. Each unit will be analysed by asking questions such as: a) does the utterance in question contain an IFID? b) does it reflect the Speaker's responsibility for the offence? c) does it offer an explanation for the cause of the offence? d) does it convey an offer of repair from the Speaker? and e) does it articulate a promise of forbearance on the Speaker's part? If the answer to any of these questions is affirmative then the utterance is assigned to that particular category. These sub-categories will then be totalled thus allowing me to make contrasts and comparisons. For example, the total number of IFIDs used by male and female adults as well as male and female children,

when responding to both males and females, will be analysed to see if any significant patterns emerge and to provide a possible reason for these patterns. The rest of the semantic formulas will be interpreted in a similar manner.

3.3.3 RANKING SCALE

The data in the completed set of ranking scales were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain position of highest frequency, median, etc.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter my methods of data collection as well as data analysis are presented. Although initially the results from each part of this study (i.e. the interviews with cultural/religious leaders, the DCTs, the interviews with the families and the ranking scales) will be analysed and interpreted independently, eventually (in my discussion in Chapter 7) they will be correlated to establish relationships, thereby giving a holistic picture of the phenomena of politeness within the SAIE speaking community.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH
RELIGIOUS/CULTURAL LEADERS

In Chapter 3, Section 3.1, I indicated that my study begins by first establishing the understanding of politeness in the target community from a religious/cultural perspective. The data for this aspect of the study were accumulated by interviewing religious/cultural leaders within the target community.

4.1 RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL VALUE SYSTEMS OF THE HINDU SECTOR OF THE SAIE SPEAKING COMMUNITY

The rationale for selecting the religious/cultural leaders is that such persons are held in very high esteem within the target community. These individuals are generally well versed in the religious scriptures and cultural practices. In addition, in their day-to-day lives they reflect the religious/cultural value systems of the target community.

This chapter discusses the religious and cultural value systems within which interactions between participants take place in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community. The discussion that follows is based on the interviews with 8 cultural/religious leaders (see page 64 in Chapter 3). Each interview was based around a (common) set of questions (see Appendix 1), which probed the interviewees' in-depth understanding of the religious/cultural values influencing politeness phenomena in the target community. It is significant to note that the interviewees were not only able to articulate from a religious perspective, but also discussed the cultural aspects relating to what traditionally occurs in practice.

4.1.1 RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

From the responses of the interviewees one may summarise that politeness within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community is seen as an all encompassing phenomenon, comprising gratitude, kindness, courtesy, love and good manners. These virtues determine the character of a person. According to the scriptures, politeness, the Sanskrit word for which is *Namrata*, is fundamental to the relationship between two people. In dealing with a fellow human being one should always do so with nobility. This is expressed by the Sanskrit word *Manavata* which describes an honourable person who fully respects his/her fellow human beings. In this sense *Manavata* plays a similar role to the Zulu word *Ubuntu* meaning humanity: a deeply felt respect and belief in the equal value of life of human beings (Pundit M. Misra) However, another cultural leader, Mr. S. Rambharos, President of the Aryan Benevolent Home, stated that he used the word *Arya* in several of his speeches to represent the word humanity. In this dissertation I shall use the word *Manavata* as it was also expressed by Professor V.K. Tripathi of the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, India, who is a respected scholar in Hinduism. According to Pundit Misra, the state of *Manavata* is achieved through the divine laws called *Dharma*, by which the whole of creation functions. The four pillars of *Dharma* are Satya (truth), Saucha (purity), Daya (compassion) and Dana (charity). Consequently, great emphasis is placed on sharing whatever one has with the greater community, irrespective of one's own particular situation. According to the scriptures, one receives greater *darshan/ashirvad* (blessing) the more one shares. As a result, hospitality also plays an important role within the Hindu religion. One is expected to welcome and entertain one's guests with open arms without ever considering this to be an imposition. Therefore, it is not uncommon for the host to insist that the guest partake in a meal even though he/she was not expected.

Within this framework the scriptures emphasise the importance of respecting one's elders. In order to respect God one has to first learn to respect one's parents, one's teachers and other elders. According to the scriptures the elders also have an important role to play since it is their responsibility to instil good morals and values in their children. In doing so they have to be the role models, leading by example.

4.1.2 CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

From the cultural perspective, the interviewees confirmed that age played a significant structuring role, establishing age groups which should be maintained throughout one's life. For example, a child is not allowed to backchat his/her parents; the latter, in turn, are not allowed to backchat their parents. The authority given to elders is such that a child is not permitted to correct or oppose their views. Children are also not permitted to participate in discussions among adults. If a child participates in such discussions without formally being asked to do so by an adult, he/she is considered to be exhibiting rude behaviour. This is seen as an indictment not only against the child's character, but also on the parents for not properly raising the child. Moreover, children are not permitted to address elders simply by their forenames, but have to prefix or suffix it (the name) by the terms aunt or uncle. For example, in Hindi: "Bimla Mausi" with the word Mausi referring to mother's sister and in Tamil: "Perimaa" refers to mother's older sister and "Sinammaa" is used for a younger sister. Traditionally, the use of personal names is not common; rather group names such a "bhaiji/anna" (brother) and "bahinji/akka" (sister) are regularly used in practice in both Hindi and Tamil, respectively. It is important to note that such address terms are also transferred to discourse in English.

For example, "Bhaiji, please join us for dinner?" or "Bimla Mausi, mum wants to speak to you".

Associated with the above is the importance that Hindus place on preserving the image of the family name. The first or given name of an individual belongs to him or her. However, it is the family name or surname which is shared by others that is used to identify or locate the individual in his or her community. Thus, one has to be guarded in engaging in wrong-doings as this would tarnish the family name, thereby embarrassing all those associated with it. For example, in a situation in which an action of a child brings disgrace to the family name, it is not uncommon for the embarrassed mother to respond with the words "mujhe sharmindha lagthie hai panch ke sammne apne mugk dhiklane ke" (in Hindi) and " mansaalay yeppadi vizhipern" (in Tamil) meaning "how am I going to face the people", or "samaj log kaya kahenge" (in Hindi) and "ooraar yenna solluvaangar" (in Tamil) meaning "what will the people say". This illustrates the importance of preserving one's good community or group image.

Within the Hindu families, males play a dominant role, with the husbands generally making all major decisions. Out of respect for their husbands the wives do not address them by their names. Instead, they would use indirect methods to refer to them. An example provided by the Hindu cultural leader, Mr. T.S. Maharaj, is that his mother would refer to his father as Mala's father (Mala being his eldest sister) when engaging in a conversation with others. One of the interviewees, a Tamil cultural leader, Mrs. Murugan, indicated that she does not address her husband by his name but uses the Tamil address term "enaango" which is a term showing respect. This term, according to the Tamil cultural leader, Prof. K.G. Moodley, is also used to address one's teacher or

guru. This is not uncommon for other sub-sectors of the target community, for example, the equivalent word for "enaango" in Hindi is "Ji". One would address one's father as "pitaji" and one's mother as "mataji". This level of respect for the husband is due to the fact that in most families the husbands were the sole breadwinners. They were seen as the ones providing food, clothing etc. that were necessary for the upkeep of the family. On the other hand, the women were responsible for the day-to-day household matters. This differentiation is an indication of very specific gender roles and expectations.

Within the target community there are certain taboo topics, for example, one cannot ask how much one earns as this would be considered rude. The Hindus are also sensitive to the use of certain words, such as the direct reference to the sexual acts and the female/male sex organs. Other examples are to refer to a lady as being "in the family way" rather than directly stating that she is pregnant; and to refer to a lady who is menstruating as "she's not clean" or "she is unwell" or "she's got it".

The interviewees were also asked to discuss the significance of social status in the target community. They were unanimous that from a religious perspective there is no differentiation as according to the scriptures all human beings should be treated equally. However, within the cultural value system there is a divide. Professionals such as doctors and lawyers are generally accorded a higher status than persons holding a lower occupation, for example, administrative clerk, factory worker, etc. A doctor is held in such high esteem that it is the wish of the majority of parents that their child should grow up to become a doctor regardless of the child's ability or potential. Interestingly, some 15-20 years ago teachers were also part of the higher status profession. However, in recent times their ranking has dropped significantly. The Hindus also tend to credit

material success: for example, successful business persons are also accorded high status because of the affluence that they display. However, the impact is less significant if the person is a woman who has succeeded outside her customary domain, for example, as the owner of a bottlestore as compared to being a hairdresser. This is as a result of the preconceived notion of the roles and expectations of women. Generally, the moral character of the individual has little influence on the high status accorded to him/her.

Within the cultural value system, social distance also influences people's interaction with one another. One tends to be less formal, often ignoring good manners, when interacting with one's intimates (e.g. persons from one's immediate family or close friends). Associated with social distance are formal and informal address terms. For example, in Hindi the words "tum" and "ap" mean "you". The word "tum" is used when addressing a person of equal or lower status or a much younger person. When addressing a person of a higher social standing, one uses the word "ap". These words are equivalent to the German words "du" (informal) and "Sie" (formal). "If one uses "ap" when addressing even a menial servant it would be taken as an extra polite expression. But if one uses "tum" when he (sic) should use "ap" the slip would be considered highly rude" (Ojha, 1990:216). For further comparison, in French "tu" – also known as the T form (singular you) is sometimes described as the familiar form while "vous" – V form (plural you) is described as the "polite" form (Wardhaugh, 1992:258).

Within the extended family system there are prescribed norms of behaviour, for example, the daughter-in-law in a home should not engage in an informal discussion with her father-in-law. At dinner the men of the home would eat together before the women of the home.

Cultural practices have reinforced the teaching of the scriptures with regard to hospitality. One does not feel burdened by doing favours for members in the community. For example, if one borrows a few onions from one's neighbour, the act is not considered as an imposition by the neighbour nor as a source of embarrassment for the borrower. The reason for this is that by virtue of mutual hospitality the situation could well be reversed a few days later.

From my discussions with the religious/cultural leaders it emanated that although the background understanding of politeness in the target community has remained constant in most aspects, some changes are noticeable. For example, present day children are granted more freedom of speech and in decision-making in comparison to their parents in their youth.

4.2. IMPLICATIONS OF THESE VALUES ON POLITENESS AND ON THE CONCEPT OF 'FACE' AMONGST THE HINDUS

On the basis of *Manavata*, being polite should be a natural part of one's overall good character. There should be no intent behind one's polite behaviour, meaning one should not be polite to achieve personal goals. This has overlapped into the traditional cultural value system where it is considered an honour to do favours for others. It is also considered as part of one's duty to mankind. This is part of a system in which there is mutual hospitality and sharing of what one has. Therefore, for example, requests are not treated as impositions.

This basic notion of being noble towards others has to be seen in parallel with the concepts of status and social distance discussed earlier. Since the higher the status, the more the power associated with the individual, *Manavata* places a responsibility on such persons to be caring and sensitive to the needs of others.

What implications does the above discussion have for Brown and Levinson's (1987) concept of face? It is clear from the religious perspective that the concept of face is irrelevant as the concept of *Manavata* eliminates within politeness behaviour the desire to be liked/approved of (positive face) and the desire not to be imposed upon (negative face).

However, from a cultural perspective, the interviewees were unanimous of the need to maintain one's face in the broader community. The Hindi speaking respondents spoke of the word *ijath* which means dignity. If a person behaves in a manner which is not in keeping with the norms of his/her group/community (i.e. causing embarrassment or disgrace) this is referred to in Hindi as "ijath utharna" meaning his dignity has been lowered. Several phrases in the Hindu languages are used to describe such persons. Two of the most common are:

"having no face" - in Hindi : muh nahi hai

in Tamil : moonji illai

"face became small" – in Hindi : muh chhota hogaya

in Tamil : moonji sinnathaai irttathu

The above discussions appear to imply that the concept of face in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community is significantly different to that in Western societies, in the

sense that greater emphasis is placed on the face associated with the collective image of the group than that associated with the image of the individual. Therefore, in order to maintain face one has to conform to the norms of behaviour of the group/society rather than to live up to one's own expectations.

4.3 SUMMARY

It can be concluded from the discussion thus far that the factors that make a profound contribution to the understanding and management of the politeness phenomena in the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community are:

a) The age, social status and distance, and gender of the participants;

b) The context in which interaction occurs;

c) The topic of conversation.

These aspects were useful in the designing of the DCTs for the next phase of the study.

My analysis of the phenomenon of politeness for Hindus will be taking the following two aspects into consideration: the perspective of members of the community, and a theorised analysis of actual manifestations of politeness.

The next step, therefore will be to establish whether the value system articulated by the religious/ cultural leaders' holds in practice. The analysis of the data collected from the families through DCTs and interviews with the families (presented in the following two chapters) will assist in addressing this issue.

In the next chapter, the data obtained through the DCTs are analysed.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS FROM THE DISCOURSE COMPLETION

TASK QUESTIONNAIRES

As indicated in Chapter 3 (Methodology), the DCTs were used to study politeness through the realizations of the speech acts of apologies and requests. In this chapter, the accumulated data are presented and analysed. I begin by examining the apology situations, initially focusing on status, followed by social distance. A similar approach is then adopted for the request situations.

5.1 DCTs: APOLOGIES

5.1.1 STATUS

Section C of DCTs 1 and 2 was designed to examine the effect of status on politeness strategies. It consists of two parts, one filled in by the adults and the other by the children. Each part has one apology situation and one request situation. The relevant apology situation for the children was Situation 2 (You accidentally spill curry on a book that you have borrowed from a person. Write down your response if the person from whom you borrowed the book is: a female teacher / your classmate / a person who is junior to you) and that for the adults was Situation 1 (You are a senior administration officer in an organisation. How would you apologise if you spill coffee on the table of: your boss / another senior administration officer / a junior administration officer) (see Appendix 2).

In these two apology situations (one for the children, the other for the adults), the relative status or power of the apologiser and the person offended was taken into

account. The following three categories were used to classify apologies according to the relative status of the people involved:

1. Upwards (Higher-H): i.e. apology to a superior or person of greater power.

2. Equal (E): i.e. apology to a person of equal power.

3. Downwards (Lower-L): i.e. apology to a subordinate or person of lesser power.

Since this study is also a generational cross-sex study, the DCTs were designed to elicit responses between participants of the same sex, as well as to study cross-sex interactions of both adults and children in the selected families.

According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984:206) the linguistic realization of the act of apologising can take two basic forms, or a combination of both. Firstly, an apology may be performed directly by means of an explicit illocutionary force indicating device (IFID), "which selects a routinized, formulaic expression of regret (a performative verb) such as: (be) sorry; apologize, regret; excuse me", etc. (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1884:206). Earlier findings by Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1983) seem to indicate that for each language there is a scale of conventionality of IFID realizations. For example, they found that the word "sorry" is the most common form used in English, while the word "slixa" meaning forgiveness is the most common form used in Hebrew.

Secondly, an apology can be performed indirectly by taking on responsibility, minimizing the degree of the offence or giving explanations. Sometimes these strategies are not felt to be sufficient to restore social harmony and therefore an offer of repair is made (Trosborg, 1987:164). The apologiser may also use a strategy such as a promise of forbearance which relates to future behaviour in order to placate the Hearer.

As mentioned in my Methodology (Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2), I used the framework proposed by Olshtain and Cohen (1983) to analyse the above data on apologies. According to these authors (1983:21) an apology has a speech act set which will consist of a number of semantic formulas. They discuss five such potential formulas that may emerge when an offender is making an apology. These are

1. An expression of an apology

2. An explanation or account of the situation

3. An acknowledgement of responsibility

4. An offer of repair

5. A promise of forbearance

An expression of apology is further divided into a number of subformulas:

a. An expression of regret

b. An offer of apology

c. A request for forgiveness

Using the above semantic formulas I shall now present and analyse my data.

5.1.1.1 AN EXPRESSION OF APOLOGY (IFID)

When a speaker uses an IFID, he/she recognizes that some norm has been violated and asks forgiveness, for example, by saying "sorry", "excuse me", "forgive me", "I apologize" etc. This is done in order to placate the Hearer. Thus, the IFID has a function of signaling regret. Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of IFIDs i.e. an "expression of apology" which is subdivided into an expression of regret, an offer of apology and a request for forgiveness - used by both female and male adults and children when responding to females and males of different status. The intensity of the "expression of

regret" was also studied, for example, "I'm sorry" – low intensity and "I'm very sorry" – high intensity.

The total number of participants for each of the four categories of respondents was 10. In some cases more than 10 responses were recorded because respondents used more than one "expression of apology" as evident in quotation 4 from the recorded data.

From the data in Table 1 below, it is observed that an expression of regret i.e. "I'm sorry" was the most commonly used form of IFID by all four categories of respondents. This pattern is consistent with the findings of Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1983) who found that the word "sorry" was the most common form of IFID used in English. The other forms of IFIDs used, much less frequently, were an offer of apology and a request for forgiveness. An example of an offer of apology recorded in my data is

(1) *"I apologise for the spillage. It will be cleaned up right now"*,

and of a request for forgiveness is

(2) *"Please excuse me for being so clumsy, I am sorry I messed up your table"*.

From Table 1 below it is seen that for the female adult respondents, while the difference between the three status categories is small, the largest number of IFIDs is used when addressing persons of higher status.

As for the female children, when responding to females, persons of higher status receive the most number of IFIDs. In contrast, it is persons of equal status who were addressed with the maximum number of IFIDs when responding to males.

TABLE 1: IFIDs

	STATUS	An Expression of regret Low Intensity	High	An offer of Apology	A request for Forgiveness	TOTAL		STATUS	An Expression of regret Low Intensity	High	An offer of Apology	A request for Forgiveness	TOTAL
FA↓ Female	H	5	4	1	2	12	FC↓ Female	H	2	9	0	1	12
	E	6	1	1	1	9		E	4	5	0	1	10
	L	8	1	1	1	11		L	5	5	0	0	10
FA↓ Male	H	5	5	3	0	13	FC↓ Male	H	4	6	0	0	10
	E	6	3	2	0	11		E	5	4	0	2	11
	L	8	1	1	0	10		L	6	2	0	1	9
MA↓ Female	H	5	2	2	0	9	MC↓ Female	H	5	4	1	0	10
	E	7	2	0	0	9		E	5	4	1	0	10
	L	7	1	0	0	8		L	5	4	0	0	9
MA↓ Male	H	5	5	0	1	11	MC↓ Male	H	5	5	1	0	11
	E	7	2	0	1	10		E	7	3	0	0	10
	L	7	2	0	1	10		L	6	2	0	0	8

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

The distribution pattern for the male adults when responding to both males and females is found to be more or less equal for the three status categories.

For the male children respondents, the distribution when responding to females is almost identical in pattern to that of the male adults. When responding to males, persons of higher status receive the most number of IFIDs. For both females and males, persons of lower status are addressed with the least number of IFIDs.

In summary, the data in Table 1 reveals that:

* The status of the recipient does not seem to play a significant role in the distribution of IFIDs used by the respondents. If anything, in general, the largest number of

IFIDs is used for persons of higher status and the least number for those of lower status.

* "I am sorry" (an expression of regret) was the most common form of IFID used by all the respondents.

5.1.1.2 INTENSITY OF APOLOGY

A study of the deviations with respect to the intensity of apology, in particular, intensity of regret (i.e. low and high intensity) is now presented. An example of a low intensity regret is

(3) *"I'm sorry, it was an accident"*

while an example of a high intensity regret is

(4) *"I am so sorry, Mrs. Venten, please forgive me for being so clumsy. I promise to be more careful in the future".*

The data in Table 1 above yielded the following results:

Adult females used approximately an equal number of high and low intensity regrets when addressing males and females of higher status. For persons of equal and lower status a significantly larger number of low intensity expressions of regret were used.

In measuring the responses of the female children, it was found that a much larger proportion of high intensity regrets were used when addressing females of higher status, as compared to when responding to males of higher status. An approximately equal number of high and low intensity regrets were used for both males and females of equal status. A similar behaviour was observed when addressing females of lower status.

However, for males of lower status, a larger proportion of low intensity regrets were used.

The intensity distribution was found to be the same for male adults when responding to males and females of equal and lower status, dominated by a larger number of low intensity regrets. However, when responding to males of higher status, the adult males used an equal number of low and high intensity regrets while, a larger number of low intensity regrets were used when addressing females.

Male children were found to use an approximately equal number of low and high intensity regrets when addressing females of all three status categories. In responding to males, an equal number of high and low intensity regrets were used when addressing persons of higher status. A larger number of low intensity regrets were used when addressing males of equal and lower status.

The above distribution of low and high intensity expressions of regret appear to indicate the following:

* Female adults do not differentiate when responding to males and females.

* Male adults treat persons of equal and lower status equally, but use a proportionally larger number of high intensity regrets for males of higher status as compared to females of higher status.

* Male children treat females of different status equally, but when responding to males use a proportionally larger number of high intensity regrets when addressing those of higher status.

* Female children treat males and females of equal status equally and use a proportionally larger number of high intensity regrets for females of higher and lower status in comparison to males of the same status.

A simple count of the total number of high intensity regrets (for the data in Table 1) when responding to persons of all three status categories is given in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2: TOTAL OF HIGH INTENSITY REGRETS

RESPONDENTS		RECIPIENTS	
		MALES	FEMALES
Adult	Female	9	6
	Male	9	5
Children	Female	12	19
	Male	10	12

Table 2 indicates that:

* while adult males and females use a proportionally larger number of high intensity regrets when addressing males, the opposite behaviour is seen for the male and female children who use a larger number of high intensity regrets when addressing females.

A possible explanation for this difference may be that the adults still perceive the males as having a more dominant role in the target community. This arises from the traditional view that the males were breadwinners and the females were the housekeepers. With the changing home scenario of many women from the target community now also becoming educated, working and re-defining their role as home executives, it is possible that their children now see them as playing major roles in the home and society at large.

5.1.1.3 OTHER SEMANTIC FORMULAS

The data for other forms of apology strategies, apart from IFIDs, that were used by the respondents is shown in Table 3 below. Each of these are discussed separately.

TABLE 3: OTHER SEMANTIC FORMULAS

	STATUS	An explanation or account	Acknow. of Responsibility	Offer of Repair	Promise of Forbearance	TOTAL		STATUS	An explanation or account	Acknow. of Responsibility	Offer of Repair	Promise of forbearance	TOTAL
FA↓ Female	H	3	6	4	1	14	FC↓ Female	H	6	2	6	1	15
	E	3	3	6	0	12		E	5	1	4	0	10
	L	3	2	3	0	8		L	4	2	4	0	10
FA↓ Male	H	4	3	6	0	13	FC↓ Male	H	4	3	6	0	13
	E	3	4	5	0	12		E	3	2	3	0	8
	L	4	2	5	0	11		L	3	0	3	0	6
MA↓ Female	H	1	7	6	0	14	MC↓ Female	H	2	4	4	0	10
	E	0	3	7	0	10		E	3	2	3	0	8
	L	0	3	5	0	8		L	2	1	4	0	7
MA↓ Male	H	1	1	8	0	10	MC↓ Male	H	6	1	4	0	11
	E	0	1	6	0	7		E	3	1	4	0	8
	L	0	1	4	0	5		L	2	1	4	0	7

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

5.1.1.3.1 AN EXPLANATION OR ACCOUNT

This formula which is an indirect result of the offence can be offered in addition to or together with "an expression of apology" as illustrated in the examples below:

(5) *"Mrs Chetty, I'm terribly sorry about this book which was in the kitchen and some curry spilled onto it. Please accept my apologies"*, and

(6) *"I'm so sorry about the curry stain on the book. My little cousin was eating at my desk and she spilled some on that page. I am really so sorry"*

A study of the use of "an explanation or account" of the situation yielded the following. When responding to both males and females, the adult females offered more or less an equal number of explanations to persons of the three different status categories. This pattern was also found for the female children when addressing males. However, when they responded to females, two differences were observed. Firstly, the total number of explanations offered to females was significantly larger than that offered to males [15 for females, 10 for males]. Secondly, the largest number of explanations were offered to females of higher status and the least number to those of lower status.

It is interesting to note that the adult males did not see the need to offer an explanation when responding to both males and females irrespective of their status. For, in both the cases just one "offer of explanation" was recorded and in each case to a person of higher status.

In offering explanations to females, the male children responded with more or less an equal number to persons of all three status categories. However, when responding to males, two important differences were observed. Firstly, the total number of explanations to males was much larger than that offered to females [11 for males, 7 for females]. Secondly, the largest number of explanations were offered to males of higher status and the smallest number to those of lower status. This behaviour is opposite to that recorded for the female children.

From the above discussion it would appear that:

* Female adults do not distinguish between male and female when offering an explanation, and persons in the three status categories are treated almost equally.

* In addition, they make a significantly larger number of "offers of explanation" in comparison to the adult males [total offered by male adults to males and females = 2, total offered by female adults to males and females = 20].

A possible explanation for this is that the men see apologising as an act that they have to perform. Its impact on the recipient is irrelevant. On the other hand, apologies may be regarded by women as ways of restoring social relationships. Therefore, greater emphasis is placed by them on ensuring that the apology is accepted. Also, it may be that the men regard apologies as an admission of weakness or inadequacy. Therefore, when apologising they focus on the fact that the action serves as a loss of face for them, and not on the impact that the apology has on the hearer. Consequently, the apology is as brief as possible.

The above results have also shown that:

* the female children offer more explanations to females while it is the males who receive the largest number of explanations from the male children.

A possible explanation for this pattern is that the children express greater solidarity with persons of the same gender. This behaviour could stem from their cultural upbringing in which cross-sex interaction/association is not encouraged and where freedom of association with the opposite sex is frowned upon even for teenagers.

5.1.1.3.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

This formula is used by the Speaker when he/she recognizes that he/she is responsible for the offence. Such recognition of one's fault is face-threatening to S and is intended to appease H as illustrated by the examples below:

(7) *"Oh! I'm so sorry. That's so careless of me, here's a towel. Let me help you"*, and

(8) *"Sorry Jim. My fault"*.

I refer again to Table 3 on page 9. For female adults when responding to females, persons of higher status received the largest number of "acknowledgement of responsibility", whereas for responses to males, it is persons of equal status who received the largest number. When responding to both males and females, the least number of "acknowledgement of responsibility" was given to persons of lower status.

In comparison to the female adults, the female children used a small number of "acknowledgement of responsibility" when responding to both females and males with a total of five in each case. The results show that there is no outstanding pattern in the behaviour exhibited by female adults and children, expect for the point mentioned above.

The results for the male adults make interesting reading. A total of 13 "acknowledgement of responsibility" are used when responding to females, with the largest number [i.e. 7] for persons of higher status and an equal number for persons of equal and lower status. In contrast, only a total of 3 "acknowledgement of responsibility" are used when responding to males, divided equally between the three status categories.

The data for the male children is in some respect similar to that for the male adults. A total of seven [4 high, 2 equal, 1 low] "acknowledgement of responsibility" (with the largest number for persons for higher status) are used when responding to females, while

in responding to the males, a total of three "acknowledgement of responsibility" (equally divided between the three categories) are used.

The above results indicate that:

* the males (both adult and children) place a greater emphasis on acknowledging responsibility when responding to females than to males.

A possible interpretation for this finding is that males find it easier to apologise to females, even if they are of higher status, than to males. If one may regard "acknowledging responsibility" as an inadequacy or failure then it may be easier for males to "lose face" by using them (i.e. acknowledgement of responsibility) to females who are perceived to constitute a socially less powerful sector of the target community. On the other hand, a male acknowledging responsibility to another male may be seen as an uncomfortable experience.

5.1.1.3.3 OFFER OF REPAIR

This formula is more situation specific and would be relevant if some injury or damage has been caused. By offering to "put things right" the speaker may hope to save face. An offer of repair is illustrated below

(9) *"Sorry about that but I will clean it up for you immediately"*.

A study of the use of "an offer of repair" (in Table 3) has shown the following: Adult females make slightly more "offers of repair" to males than to females (16 for males, 13 for females). In responding to females, the female adults offer the largest number to persons of equal status. Male adults use an equal number of total "offers of repair" to

both males and females (a total of 18), of these the largest number is offered to males of higher status.

In the case of the responses of the children, a noteworthy difference is that, in the case of the male children, the proportional distribution is the same for persons of the three status categories, while for the female children it is persons of higher status who receive the largest number of "offers of repair", with an equal number given to persons of equal and lower status.

The above results indicate that:

* in total, adults make more "offers of repair" than the children [female adults: 29, male adults: 36; female children: 26, male children: 23].

A possible explanation for this is that in the case of an "offer of repair" adults place greater emphasis on rectifying the situation in comparison to children. It is also interesting to note that of the adults, it is the males who make the most "offers of repair". Earlier it was found that the adult males provided the least number of "explanations or account". The above two points appear to indicate that the adult males regard apologies as more often superfluous, face-threatening acts which are admissions of weakness, inadequacy or failure. Hence, since they perceive the situation as being rectified by an "offer of repair", the need for an explanation or account does not arise. In contrast, the female adults make sufficient use of all the semantic formulas. Thus they provide laboured apology responses. This could be attributed to the fact that they regard apologies as ways of restoring social harmony and expressing their concern for the

offended. To them loss of face or admission of inadequacy/failure is of lesser importance than restoring social harmony.

5.1.1.3.4 PROMISE OF FORBEARANCE

As in an "offer of repair" this formula is also situation specific. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:125) a promise is another way a Speaker may choose to stress his/her cooperation with Hearer in order to redress the potential threat of some FTAs. Making a promise demonstrates Speaker's good intentions in satisfying Hearer's positive face wants.

This is illustrated in the example below

(10) *"Mam, I had mistakenly spilled curry on the book you had lent me. I'm so sorry about this and I can assure you it will never happen again".*

The very limited use of a promise of forbearance by all the respondents (total of 2) in Table 3, could be attributed to the fact that the situations were not perceived as being repetitive occurrences, thereby eliminating the need for a promise of forbearance.

5.1.1.4 USE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF SEMANTIC FORMULAS

Finally, a study is conducted of the total number of semantic formulas (data from Tables 1 and 3) employed by the four sets of respondents. The object of this exercise is to look for some emerging pattern which may be correlated with the findings obtained from the interviews with the cultural/religious leaders, as well as the individual families. The distribution is given in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4: TOTAL NO. OF SEMANTIC FORMULAS FOR STATUS

CATEGORIES (accumulated data from Table 1 and Table 3)

RECIPIENTS		RESPONDENTS			
		Female Adult	Male Adult	Female Child	Male Child
MALES	Higher	26	21	23	22
	Equal	23	17	19	18
	Lower	21	15	15	15
FE-MALES	Higher	26	23	27	20
	Equal	21	19	20	18
	Lower	19	16	20	16
	TOTAL	136	111	124	109

The general pattern emanating from the above table is that:

* the largest number of semantic formulas are used when apologising to persons of

    higher status and the least number to persons of lower status.

These findings are consistent with the outcome of the interviews with the cultural/religious leaders who pointed out that from a cultural perspective there was a status divide within the target community. People of higher status are accorded greater power.

The overall total number of semantic formulas used by male and female adults and children is also shown in Table 4 above. It is seen from the above data that:

* the female adults and children use more semantic formulas than the male adults and

    children, respectively.

The implications of the data presented in Table 4 above are now considered. Questions that can be immediately asked are:

* When a person uses a large number of semantic formulas is he/she being more polite? Therefore, are members of the target community more polite to persons of higher status (as per the data in Table 4)?

* Are female members of the community more polite than the male members by virtue of the fact that they use a larger number of semantic formulas than their male counterparts?

* Is there a change in the behaviour patterns of children in comparison to the adults?

Answers to these questions will be sought when the above results are correlated with the outcomes of the interviews with the cultural/religious leaders and the selected families.

It is important to note that although the females (adults and children) use more semantic formulas than the males, there is no clear pattern in the distribution of the semantic formulas for females responding to males and females responding to females, and vice versa.

The data presented on apologies in this section, focused on the status of the recipients relative to the respondents. In the next section the role of the social distance of the recipients relative to the respondent will be the subject of study.

5.1.2 SOCIAL DISTANCE

The relative social distance between the respondent and the recipient is recognized by many researchers, for example, Leech (1983), Brown and Levinson (1987), Wolfson (1988) etc., as one of the most basic factors determining the appropriate politeness behaviour in societies.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) more politeness is shown to persons when the social distance is greater. In other words, one would apologize more to a stranger than to an intimate or colleague. Wolfson (1988), on the other hand, suggests that with strangers and intimates the relationship is clear-cut. However, relationships with friends are more 'dynamic and open to negotiation' (Wolfson, 1988:33) and therefore need regular redefinition and reassurance.

As stated before (in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.2), Section B of the DCTs was designed to elicit apology responses between participants of the same sex, as well as to examine cross-sex interactions of adults and children in the selected families. Since a variable in this study is the social distance between the participants, the situations in Section B were also designed to elicit responses to the following three social categories:

1. Intimates e.g. brother, sister, etc.:

> Situation B1: You borrowed a video camera from a close relative. While the camera is in your possession, it is damaged. A few days later your relative pays you a visit to collect the camera. How would you apologize to him if he is: much older than you / of the same age group as yourself / much younger than you?

and:

Situation B3: You agreed to pay a long overdue account for your sister. She handed you the money but you failed to pay the account. Sister: Did you pay my account? You:...

2. Friends or colleagues:

Situation B4: You arranged to meet your colleague at the shopping mall but failed to do so. Later than evening your colleague comes home. Colleague: I waited for your for an entire hour! You:...

and:

Situation B5: You are having a party at home. You borrow music tapes and CDs from a colleague. She lends them to you on condition they are returned the day after the party. After the party you discover that one of the CDs is missing. How would you apologize for the missing CD if your colleague is: much older than you / the same age group as yourself / much younger than you.

3. Strangers or distant acquaintances:

Situation B2: While rushing in a crowded supermarket your trolley bumps into a person. How would you apologize if he is: much older than you / the same age group as yourself / much younger than you.

and:

Situation B6: You owe an acquaintance money for some work done. You meet her at the shopping centre. You apologize for non-payment. You:...

In addition, Situations B1, B2 and B5 in the DCTs also investigate the participants' response to persons of different age groups i.e. older, same age and younger. It is

recalled that the DCTs were administered to a set of ten families. In each family there were four participants: a Female Adult and a Male Adult (i.e. the parents), a Female Child and a Male Child (two children). A presentation of the data obtained for apologies through the DCTs, as well as interpretations, is given below. The analysis of the effect of social distance on the speech act of apology begins with an examination of the data for Situations B3, B4 and B6, as presented in Tables 5a, 5b and 5c, respectively.

5.1.2.1 AN EXPRESSION OF APOLOGY (IFID)

First I consider the IFIDs corresponding to Situations B3, B4 and B6 in DCTs 1 and DCTs 2 (Appendix 2), as reflected in Tables 5a, 5b and 5c. Since each of the situations corresponds to a particular social distance, all aspects of the data in each of Tables 5a, 5b and 5c for IFIDs will be discussed fully, before moving to the next Table. Thereafter, a summary discussion is presented of the other semantic formulas in all three tables. A similar approach is adopted when studying the effect of both social distance and age.

The data recorded for intimates in Table 5a reveals that:

* the vast majority of IFIDs are in the form of an expression of regret. Very few instances of an offer of apology and a request for forgiveness are recorded.

With regard to the intensity distribution for an expression of regret, more lower intensity regrets are used when responding to both males and females, except for the responses of the male adults. The latter use more high intensity regrets when addressing males and an

equal number of high and low intensity expressions of regret when responding to females.

TABLE 5a: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: INTIMATES (B3)

SOCIAL DISTANCE: INTIMATE		An expression of apology (IFID)							
		Expression of regret							
RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	Low Intensity	High Intensity	An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
FA	Female	4	3	2	0	10	0	4	0
	Male	6	1	1	0	9	0	6	0
FC	Female	7	4	0	0	10	0	7	0
	Male	6	2	0	0	10	0	7	1
MA	Female	2	2	2	1	9	1	6	0
	Male	3	5	0	0	9	0	5	0
MC	Female	3	2	0	1	10	0	6	0
	Male	5	1	0	0	6	0	7	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

It is also seen that

* the vast majority of expression of regrets are of low intensity.

One may expect such a situation i.e. non-payment of an overdue account, to elicit high intensity regrets. However, this was found not to be the case. A possible explanation for this behaviour is that because of the close social distance with intimates the respondents do not see the need for expressing high intensity regrets. This agrees, somewhat, with

the findings of the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders. The intensity of the responses may well be different when responding to a colleague.

TABLE 5b: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: COLLEAGUES (B4)

SOCIAL DISTANCE: COLLEAGUES		An expression of apology (IFID)							
		Expression of regret		An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	Low Intensity	High Intensity						
FA	Female	5	5	4	0	9	0	4	0
	Male	5	2	3	1	9	0	1	0
FC	Female	1	7	0	0	9	0	2	0
	Male	3	6	1	0	10	0	4	1
MA	Female	3	5	1	1	9	0	1	0
	Male	6	2	1	2	9	0	4	0
MC	Female	4	4	0	1	8	0	2	0
	Male	3	3	1	2	10	1	4	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

The IFID distribution when responding to colleagues (Table 5b above) shows no consistent pattern. The responses of the participants are quite different. For example, while the female children use a majority of high intensity regrets when addressing both males and females, the male children use an equal number of high and low intensity regrets for both genders. Here also, as for the intimates, the frequency of an offer of apology and a request for forgiveness are comparatively low.

From Table 5c below it is seen that:

* the IFID distribution pattern when responding to strangers is remarkably similar to

  that for intimates (Table 5a), with all participants using a majority of low intensity

  regrets, with the exception of male adults when responding to males.

TABLE 5c: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: STRANGERS (B6)

SOCIAL DISTANCE: STRANGERS		An expression of apology							
		Expression of Regret		An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	Low Intensity	High Intensity						
FA	Female	6	2	0	1	8	0	8	0
	Male	4	2	0	1	5	0	8	0
FC	Female	7	0	1	0	7	0	7	0
	Male	6	1	0	1	7	0	9	0
MA	Female	4	1	2	1	8	0	7	0
	Male	3	3	2	1	9	0	5	0
MC	Female	3	1	2	1	8	0	6	0
	Male	4	1	1	0	8	0	7	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

Furthermore, very few instances of an offer of apology and a request for forgiveness are

recorded. The distribution of the total number of IFIDs for the data in Tables 5a to 5c is

shown in Table 6 below.

* In the majority of cases colleagues receive the largest number of IFIDs with "I'm

  sorry" being the most common form of IFID used.

* The distribution pattern for the intimates and strangers are more or less equal.

TABLE 6: IFIDs BY SOCIAL DISTANCE AND GENDER OF PARTICIPANT

Relative Distance	RECIPIENT GENDER	Apologiser Gender			
		ADULT		CHILDREN	
		FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
Intimates	Female	9	7	11	6
	Male	8	8	8	6
Colleagues	Female	14	10	8	9
	Male	11	11	10	9
Strangers	Female	9	8	8	7
	Male	7	9	8	6

5.1.2.2 OTHER SEMANTIC FORMULAS (social distance only)

In this sub-section I analyse the data in Tables 5a, 5b and 5c for the other semantic formulas, apart from IFIDs. A comparison of the three tables shows that the frequency of an explanation or account and an offer of repair is very high for intimates and strangers. In the case of colleagues, while the frequency of an explanation or account is very high, that for an offer of repair is significant but not as large as the other two cases. In all three cases (intimates, colleagues and strangers) the recorded data for acknowledgement of responsibility and promise of forbearance is negligible.

In summary, the above results for the distribution of the IFIDs and the other semantic formulas indicate:

* Colleagues receive the largest number of IFIDs.

* The participants respond in a very similar manner towards intimates and strangers.

This behaviour is consistent with Wolfson's (1989) Bulge Model in which more attention is paid to politeness towards colleagues/friends than to strangers and intimates.

5.1.2.3 IFID AND AGE

The data in Tables 7a to 7c below correspond to situations B1, B5 and B2 where consideration has been given to the age of the recipient i.e. Older – O; Same Age – SA; and Younger – Y. In these tables the IFIDs are dominated by an expression of regret, which is consistent with the data in Tables 5a to 5c. Comparatively, a smaller number of offers of apology and requests for forgiveness are recorded in all three status groups. In the case of intimates (Table 7a) more high intensity regrets are expressed by all four groups of respondents. The largest difference is recorded for the female children where there are twice as many high intensity regrets. It is interesting to note that this behaviour is opposite to that reflected in 5a where the majority of low intensity regrets were recorded for intimates. A possible reason for this is that the situation B1 (damage to a video camera) may be perceived as more serious than situation B3 (non-payment of overdue account). Therefore the former warrants high intensity expressions of regret. The implication of this is that:

* the intensity of an expression of regret is situation dependent.

TABLE 7a: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: SOCIAL DISTANCE AND AGE (INTIMATES): SITUATION B 1

| SOCIAL DISTANCE: INTIMATE | | | An expression of apology | | | | | | | |
| | | | Expression of regret | | | | | | | |
RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	AGE OF ADDRESSEE	Low Intensity	High Intensity	An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
FA	Female	O	2	5	2	1	0	0	9	0
		SA	3	5	1	0	0	2	8	0
		Y	3	5	1	0	0	0	9	0
	Male	O	2	2	4	0	2	2	8	0
		SA	4	3	1	0	2	1	8	0
		Y	5	2	2	0	2	0	8	0
FC	Female	O	3	7	0	0	1	1	8	0
		SA	4	4	0	2	1	0	8	0
		Y	3	3	0	1	0	1	8	0
	Male	O	2	7	1	0	2	2	9	0
		SA	2	6	0	1	2	2	8	0
		Y	2	5	0	0	1	2	8	0
MA	Female	O	3	3	2	2	1	0	9	0
		SA	2	4	2	2	2	0	9	0
		Y	2	5	2	2	1	0	10	0
	Male	O	1	4	3	1	0	0	9	0
		SA	3	1	1	3	1	0	8	0
		Y	4	2	2	1	0	0	8	0
MC	Female	O	4	4	0	1	0	0	8	0
		SA	3	2	0	0	0	1	6	0
		Y	3	3	0	0	0	2	6	0
	Male	O	3	7	1	1	1	1	8	0
		SA	4	4	0	1	2	1	9	0
		Y	4	7	0	1	1	1	9	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

TABLE 7b: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: SOCIAL DISTANCE AND AGE (COLLEAGUES): SITUATION B5

SOCIAL DISTANCE: COLLEAGUES			An expression of apology		An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or Account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
			Expression of regret							
RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	AGE OF ADDRESSEE	Low Intensity	High Intensity						
FA	Female	O	4	3	1	0	0	0	9	0
		SA	7	1	0	0	0	0	8	0
		Y	5	1	0	1	0	0	8	0
	Male	O	3	4	0	0	0	0	8	0
		SA	2	2	0	0	0	1	6	0
		Y	4	1	0	0	0	0	7	0
FC	Female	O	4	5	0	0	1	0	9	1
		SA	4	4	0	1	1	1	9	0
		Y	6	1	0	0	1	0	9	0
	Male	O	3	5	0	1	0	0	8	0
		SA	2	2	0	0	1	1	6	0
		Y	3	2	0	1	1	2	7	0
MA	Female	O	5	1	1	0	2	1	9	0
		SA	4	1	0	1	2	1	9	0
		Y	5	0	0	1	1	1	7	0
	Male	O	4	2	2	1	0	2	10	0
		SA	3	2	2	1	0	1	9	0
		Y	4	2	2	1	0	1	8	0
MC	Female	O	5	3	2	0	0	1	9	0
		SA	4	1	0	0	2	1	8	0
		Y	6	1	0	1	2	1	7	0
	Male	O	3	5	0	2	2	0	9	0
		SA	3	3	0	1	1	1	8	0
		Y	3	3	0	1	0	1	6	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

TABLE 7c: SEMANTIC FORMULAS: SOCIAL DISTANCE AND AGE (STRANGERS): SITUATION B2

RESPONDENTS	RECIPIENTS	AGE OF ADDRESSEE	An expression of apology		An offer of apology	A request for forgiveness	An explanation or account	Acknowledgement of responsibility	Offer of repair	Promise of forbearance
			Expression of regret							
			Low Intensity	High Intensity						
FA	Female	O	5	5	0	1	0	5	0	0
		SA	9	1	0	0	1	5	1	0
		Y	10	1	0	0	1	6	0	0
	Male	O	3	5	1	1	0	4	0	0
		SA	8	3	0	0	0	5	0	0
		Y	7	3	0	0	0	4	0	0
FC	Female	O	5	5	0	0	0	4	0	0
		SA	9	0	0	1	0	5	0	0
		Y	7	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Male	O	4	7	0	0	1	3	0	0
		SA	6	5	0	1	0	2	0	0
		Y	8	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
MA	Female	O	3	6	0	2	1	1	0	0
		SA	4	5	0	2	1	2	0	0
		Y	4	5	0	2	0	1	0	0
	Male	O	3	6	1	1	2	4	0	0
		SA	4	5	0	2	0	1	0	0
		Y	5	5	0	2	0	2	0	0
MC	Female	O	5	5	0	1	0	2	0	0
		SA	9	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
		Y	8	1	0	0	0	5	0	0
	Male	O	7	3	0	0	0	3	0	0
		SA	7	1	1	1	0	2	0	0
		Y	7	2	0	0	0	1	0	0

FA – Female adult   FC – Female child   MA – Male adult   MC – Male Child

Towards colleagues (7b) and strangers (7c) more low intensity regrets are used. The only exception for strangers is recorded by male adults, where in responding to both males and females a larger number of high intensity regrets are used. Towards colleagues the exceptions are the responses of the female and male children to males, where they employ almost an equal number of high and low intensity regrets.

From the data in Tables 7a, 7b and 7c,

* the age of the recipient appears to have no significant effect on the use of the semantic formulas for all 4 categories of respondents.

The total number of IFIDs for the data in Tables 7a, 7b and 7c is shown in Table 8 below. It is seen that

* the general pattern is that strangers receive the highest number of IFIDs while colleagues receive the least.

This appears to be consistent with Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness, which suggests that respondents show more politeness when there is a greater social distance between participants. In other words, one would apologise more often to strangers than to friends. It is noted that this behaviour is not consistent with that observed for the data in Tables 6 which was found to correspond to Wolfson's Bulge model. This raises the question: "what is the reason for this difference?" A possible explanation is offered by examining the two situations in the DCTs where participants had to respond to colleagues (Situations B4 and B5 – see Appendix 2) and which were the sources for the data in Tables 6 and 8.

TABLE 8: IFIDs BY SOCIAL DISTANCE, AGE AND GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS

Recipient Gender	Age	Apologiser Gender							
		FEMALE ADULTS				MALE ADULTS			
		Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total	Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total
FEMALE	O	10	8	11	29	10	7	11	28
	SA	9	8	10	27	10	6	11	27
	Y	9	7	11	27	11	6	11	28
MALE	O	8	7	10	25	9	9	11	29
	SA	9	4	11	24	8	8	11	27
	Y	9	5	10	24	9	9	12	30

Recipient Gender	Age	Apologiser Gender							
		FEMALE CHILDREN				MALE CHILDREN			
		Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total	Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total
FEMALE	O	10	9	10	29	9	10	11	30
	SA	10	9	10	29	5	5	10	20
	Y	7	7	8	22	6	7	9	22
MALE	O	10	9	11	30	12	10	10	32
	SA	9	4	12	25	9	7	10	26
	Y	7	6	12	25	12	7	9	28

Situation B5, corresponding to Table 8 above, is easier to rectify by making an "offer of repair" (i.e. replacing the missing CD) in comparison to Situation B4 (which corresponds to the data in Table 6), where the colleague's time has already been wasted and cannot be replaced/repaired. In this case an "offer of repair" would not be as meaningful as in Situation B5. This is supported by the number of "offers of repairs"

that were recorded for the two situations (for Situation B4 ranging from 1 to 4, for Situation B5 ranging from 6 to 10). It is possible that a person who makes an "offer of repair" will not see the need for an explicit apology and therefore in such a case the number of IFIDs will be reduced.

The responses offered to strangers by the male and female adults may also be analysed in a similar manner. The lowest number of IFIDs to strangers in Table 6 and the largest number in Table 8 may be due to the fact that in the former case, the situation (i.e. B6 in Appendix 2) more readily allows for an "offer of repair", as well as "an explanation" and therefore reduces the need for explicit apologies. On the other hand, Situation B2 (in Appendix 2) is much more restrictive in respect of an "offer of repair" and "an explanation", thereby promoting the use of explicit apologies.

The above results suggest that one cannot generalise that either Wolfson's "Bulge" model or Brown and Levinson's model would be appropriate for describing the responses of a particular community. The particularities of the situation for which the apology is required strongly influence the apology strategies used.

This is further supported by the inconsistent behaviour displayed by the female and male children, in particular, for the female children responding to a female in Tables 6 and 8 and the male children responding to males and females in Table 8.

5.1.2.4 OTHER SEMANTIC FORMULAS (social distance and age)

In Tables 7a (intimates) and 7b (colleagues) the frequency of an offer of repair is seen to be very high since both situations B1 (damage to a borrowed video camera) and B5 (loss of a borrowed CD) necessitate an offer of repair. As a result, there are very few instances of an explanation or account and acknowledgement of responsibility. In the case of Situation B2, the situation (bumping into a stranger) does not call for an offer of repair but leads rather to an acknowledgement of responsibility. This is reflected in Table 7c.

5.1.2.5 TOTAL APOLOGY STRATEGIES

The data for the total apology strategies used by the respondents (for the data in Tables 7a to 7c) to persons of different age groups are shown in Table 9 below. It is seen that no uniform pattern is revealed. The female adults use a larger number of total strategies when addressing females (155 for females; 141 for males). In the case of the male adults, approximately an equal number of overall total strategies are used when addressing males and females (154 for females; 152 for males). A similar behaviour is shown by the female children (151 for females; 149 for males). The pattern for the male children is found to be different from those above. The total number of strategies towards the females is found to be significantly lower than that to males (136 for females; 153 for males).

TABLE 9: TOTAL APOLOGY STRATEGIES BY SOCIAL DISTANCE, AGE AND GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS

Recipient Gender	Age	Apologiser Gender							
		FEMALE ADULTS				MALE ADULTS			
		Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total	Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total
FEMALE	O	19	17	16	52	20	19	13	52
	SA	19	16	17	52	21	18	14	53
	Y	18	15	18	51	22	15	12	49
MALE	O	20	15	14	49	18	21	17	56
	SA	20	11	16	47	17	18	12	47
	Y	19	12	14	45	17	18	14	49

Recipient Gender	Age	Apologiser Gender							
		FEMALE CHILDREN				MALE CHILDREN			
		Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total	Intimates	Colleagues	Strangers	Total
FEMALE	O	20	20	14	54	17	20	13	50
	SA	19	20	15	54	12	16	13	41
	Y	16	17	10	43	14	17	14	45
MALE	O	23	17	15	55	22	21	13	56
	SA	21	12	14	47	21	17	12	50
	Y	18	16	13	47	23	14	10	47

In summing up, I highlight the important findings of this section:

* One cannot generalise that either Wolfson's Bulge model or Brown and Levinson's model would be appropriate for describing the politeness responses of a particular community. The particularities of the situation for which the apology is required strongly influence the apology strategies used.

* The age of the recipients does not have a significant impact on the distribution of semantic formulas.

In the next section I present my data for the request situations in the DCTs, starting with status and then social distance.

5.2 DCTs: REQUESTS

5.2.1 STATUS

As stated above, Sections C1 and C2 of the DCTs were also designed to elicit request responses in interactions between participants of the same sex, as well as to examine cross-sex interactions of adults and children in the selected families. Since a variable in this study is status, it is recalled, these situations were also designed to elicit responses to the following three status categories:

1. Higher (H)

2. Equal (E)

3. Lower (L)

The relevant request situation for the children was Situation 1 (You wish to borrow a book. How would you request it from the following people: a male teacher / a classmate/ a person who is junior to you?) and for the adults was Situation 2 (You wish to borrow a ream of paper that is urgently required. How would you request the paper from the following persons: your boss / another senior administration officer / a junior administration officer?) – (See Appendix 2)

The CCSARP coding scheme (as outlined in Chapter 3: Methodology) was used to analyse the data for the responses to the various request situations.

5.2.1.1 USE OF ALERTERS

According to the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:277) "an alerter is an element whose function is to alert the hearer's attention to the ensuing speech act". Blum-Kulka has identified nine possible sub-categories of alerters that may be used in utterances. In this study it was found that the respondents made use of only the following sub-categories of alerters: first name; surname; title/role; attention getter and a combination of these as, shown in Table 10 below.

From the totals in Table 10 it is seen that:

* for the adults the dominant categories are first name, surname and a combination of alerters, while the corresponding categories for the children are first name, title/role and a combination of alerters.

The sub-category of title/role was found to be used primarily by the children when requesting a book from their teacher (see Section C, situation 1a of DCTs 1 and 2 in Appendix 2), for example,

(11) *"Mam, could I please borrow a book from you?"*, or

(12) *"Sir, could you please lend me your book?"*

TABLE 10: ALERTERS

ALERTERS	Status	First Name	Surname	Title/Role	Attention Getter	Endearment term	Combination		Status	First Name	Surname	Title/Role	Attention Getter	Endearment term	Combinatioin
FA ↓ Male	U	0	2	1	0	0	2	FC ↓ Male	U	0	1	3	1	0	1
	E	1	2	1	0	0	0		E	2	0	0	1	0	1
	L	3	0	0	0	0	0		L	0	0	0	1	0	2
TOTAL		4	4	2	0	0	2	TOTAL		2	1	3	3	0	4
FA ↓ Female	U	0	2	1	0	0	2	FC ↓ Female	U	0	1	3	0	0	1
	E	1	0	1	0	0	2		E	1	0	0	0	0	1
	L	3	1	0	0	0	0		L	1	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL		4	3	2	0	0	4	TOTAL		2	1	3	0	1	3
MA ↓ Male	U	0	0	0	1	0	2	MC ↓ Male	U	0	0	2	0	0	3
	E	0	0	0	0	0	1		E	0	0	0	1	0	1
	L	0	0	0	0	0	1		L	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL		0	0	0	1	0	4	TOTAL		0	0	2	1	0	5
MA ↓ Female	U	0	1	1	0	0	2	MC ↓ Female	U	0	2	3	0	0	1
	E	1	1	0	0	0	1		E	2	0	0	0	0	0
	L	2	1	0	0	0	1		L	2	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		3	3	1	0	0	4	TOTAL		4	2	3	0	0	1

FA: Female Adult   MA: Male Adult   FC: Female Child   MC: Male Child

↓: Responding to

The use of "Sir" or "Mam" is, according to Brown and Levinson (1987:178), a show of greater respect. It includes a level of formality when interacting with a person of higher status. For the target community, it is an act of showing deference for a person of higher authority in accordance with cultural norms. Such a behaviour was also observed by de Kadt (1995) in her study on the Zulu community. The few adults who used the alerter of title/role also addressed the Hearer as either "Sir" or "Mam".

A comparison of the responses of the adults and the children for the categories of surname and title/role shows that the children gave a greater preference to title/role, while the adults used the surname much more than the title/role, in particular, for persons of equal or higher status. This behaviour on the part of the adults for the particular situation i.e. requesting a ream of paper from their boss or a person of equal status is expected, as it is common practice in a work environment to address such persons by their surnames. On the other hand, the situation for the children required them to borrow a book from a teacher. In the target community teachers are treated with a high degree of respect. Hence, addressing them as "Sir" or "Mam" instead of their surnames is seen as being more respectful.

It is interesting to note that:

*   none of the participants (both adults and children) used the first name when addressing persons of higher status.

This is consistent with the level of deference shown to persons of higher status within the target community, as articulated by the religious/cultural leaders (see findings in the previous chapter).

A relatively small number of attention-getters was used by the recipients. In all five cases the request utterance started with either *"Hi... "* or *"Hey... ".*

Most respondents, both adults and children used a combination of alerters such as

(13) *"I'm really sorry Mrs Logan, but may I please borrow a ream of paper?"*

(14) *"Excuse me Sir, could I please borrow your book?",* and

(15) *"Hey Jen, sorry to disturb you, but can you please lend me a ream of paper?"*

The combinations of alerters above indicate the speaker's desire not to impose on the Hearer having taken cognisance of the negative face (i.e. the desire not to be imposed upon) of the Hearer (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Such combinations are used to soften the imposition.

For both the adults and the children, the females used the highest number of alerters. It is worthy of note that the male adults did not make use of any first names, surnames or title/role when addressing males, also the male children did not use any first names or surnames when addressing males.

5.2.1.2 REQUEST PERSPECTIVE

In Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1, it was pointed out that a request can be articulated from the viewpoint of the Hearer, Speaker, or both participants, or through an avoidance of mentioning the Speaker and the Hearer. Therefore, the emphasis placed by the Speaker could result in Hearer dominance (e.g. Could *you* close the window?), Speaker dominance (e.g. Could *I* have this chair?), Speaker and Hearer dominance (Could *we* leave for home now?) or impersonal (Does *one* have to stop now?).

Table 11 below shows the distribution of request perspectives that were recorded. There are instances in which the total does not reach a 100 percent because some participants did not respond appropriately to the situation. For example, for the situation "You wish to borrow a ream of paper that is urgently required. How would you request the paper from the following persons: a) Your boss (male)?", a response written was "Ask" which was vague and not helpful.

From the data in Table 11 it is seen that:

* in all situations, the vast majority of the requests are Speaker dominant in style.

Corresponding common utterances were:

(16) *"Could I borrow............"*

(17) *"Can I borrow.............."*

(18) *"May I borrow............"*

(19) *"I wish to borrow........."*

(20) *"Is it possible for me to borrow............"*, and

(21) *"I was wondering if I could borrow.........."*.

TABLE 11: REQUEST PERSPECTIVE

REQUEST PERSPECTIVE	Status	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer/Speaker Dominance	Impersonal		Status	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer/Speaker Dominance	Impersonal
FA ↓ Female	U	2	8	0	0	FC ↓ Female	U	0	9	0	0
	E	0	10	0	0		E	0	9	0	0
	L	1	9	0	0		L	0	9	0	0
FA ↓ Male	U	2	7	0	0	FC ↓ Male	U	0	9	0	0
	E	3	6	0	0		E	1	8	0	0
	L	3	6	0	0		L	1	7	0	0
TOTAL		11	46	0	0	TOTAL		2	51	0	0
MA ↓ Female	U	0	10	0	0	MC ↓ Female	U	1	9	0	0
	E	0	10	0	0		E	1	9	0	0
	L	0	10	0	0		L	0	10	0	0
MA ↓ Male	U	0	10	0	0	MC ↓ Male	U	1	8	0	0
	E	1	9	0	0		E	1	8	0	0
	L	0	10	0	0		L	2	7	0	0
TOTAL		1	59	0	0	TOTAL		6	51	0	0

FA: Female Adult   MA: Male Adult   FC: Female Child   MC: Male Child
↓: Responding to

My findings are different from the results of Blum-Kulka (1989:59) who found that in the four languages which were researched, most conventional requests are Hearer dominant in nature. It is interesting to note that the distribution pattern in Table 11 is more or less the same for all three status groups, implying that

* the status of the Hearer has no influence on the request perspective one chooses to use.

For the case of Hearer dominance, the largest number, although small, was recorded for female adults when addressing males. The most common utterances recorded were:

(22) *"Can you lend me…………"*

(23) *"Would you please lend me…………"*

Since according to Brown and Levinson (1987), a request is seen as an imposition, the Hearer may respond either negatively or positively. The actual response depends on the particular strategy adopted by the Speaker. This is determined by the request perspective used to make the request. Hence, a possible explanation for the large number of "Speaker dominant" requests is that the Speaker realizes that he/she is imposing on the Hearer when making the request. Therefore, it is perceived that the imposition is lessened if it is Speaker dominant rather than Hearer dominant. For example, *"Please may I borrow the book?"* (Speaker dominant) is seen as less of an imposition than *"Could you please lend me the book?"* (Hearer dominant). The latter situation places a greater onus on the Hearer when considering the request.

The data in Table 11 show that there were no "Speaker and Hearer" dominant responses or "impersonal" request perspectives recorded.

5.2.1.3 REQUEST STRATEGIES : HEAD ACTS

As indicated in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1, a Head Act can be realised through strategies of varying degrees of directness. Blum-Kulka (1989:278-281) discusses nine such strategies in the CCSARP coding scheme. These different request strategies, starting from mood derivable to mild hints are also discussed in the same section of Chapter 3.

Table 12 below shows the distribution of requests in terms of the nine possible request strategies for the data collected through DCTs 1 and 2, allowing for the status of the recipients. It is seen that:

* the majority of the requests fall within the category of conventionally indirect requests (75.2%) and the remaining are direct requests (24.4%), except for one record of a non-conventionally indirect request (0.4%), viz. a strong hint.

* Moreover, the conventionally indirect category was dominated by query preparatory requests. Some typical forms of these used were:-

by the adults:

(24) *"Please can I borrow a ream of paper?"*

(25) *"May I borrow a ream of paper please?"*

(26) *"Would you please lend me a ream of paper?"*, and

by the children:

(27) *"Mr Naidoo, could I please borrow a copy of ....?"*, and

(28) *"I was wondering if I could borrow a book from you please?"*.

TABLE 12: REQUEST STRATEGIES

Respondents	Status	Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint	Respondents	Status	Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint
FA→ Male	U	0	0	0	0	2	0	6	1	0	FC→ Male	U	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	0	0
	E	1	0	0	0	1	0	7	0	0		E	1	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0
	L	2	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	0		L	1	0	0	0	2	0	7	0	0
FA→ Fe-Male	U	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	FC→ Fe-Male	U	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	0	0
	E	0	0	0	0	2	0	7	0	0		E	1	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0
	L	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0		L	1	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0
TOTAL		4	0	0	0	6	0	43	1	0	TOTAL		4	0	0	0	9	0	47	0	0
%AGE		18.5					79.6		1.9		%AGE		21.7					78.3		0	
MA→ Male	U	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	MC→ Male	U	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0
	E	1	0	0	0	2	0	6	0	0		E	1	0	0	0	2	1	5	0	0
	L	1	0	0	0	3	1	4	0	0		L	1	0	0	0	2	1	6	0	0
MA→ Fe-Male	U	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	MC→ Fe-male	U	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
	E	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0		E	4	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0
	L	1	0	0	0	2	0	6	0	0		L	4	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
TOTAL		6	0	0	0	8	1	39	0	0	TOTAL		11	0	0	0	7	4	35	0	0
%AGE		26.4					73.6		0		%AGE		31.6					68.4		0	

* In general there is no significant difference in the distribution in accordance with the social status of the recipient. What little difference exists, indicates that in most cases the persons of higher status receive the largest number of query preparatory requests. This is in agreement with the results for the similar study on apologies (Section 5.1.1), and is consistent with the views expressed by the religious/cultural leaders.

The few recorded instances of requests within the category of suggestory formula were all from male respondents (1 adult and 4 children) to persons of either equal or lower status. In all four cases the request began with *"How about lending me ....?"*.

The direct requests are dominated by mood derivable strategies (11.11%) and want statements (13%). An example of a mood derivable response is

(29) *"Amar, lend me some paper to run out some worksheets"*, and

(30) *"Please give me a ream of paper"*.

It is seen in the first example that an attention getter (Amar) is used to soften the mood derivable strategy. An example of a want statement used by respondents is

(31) *"I wish to borrow a ...."*

A comparison of the overall total of the different request strategies used by the adults and the children shows that for both the males and females, the children use slightly more strategies than the adults (Female adult: 54; Female children: 60; Male adult: 53; Male child: 59). Also, it is seen from Table 12 that the males use proportionally more direct strategies than the females.

The total distribution of the data in Table 12 (24.4% direct requests, 75.2% conventionally indirect requests and 0.4% non-conventionally indirect requests) is in contrast to that found by de Kadt (1995:48) in a study of requests as speech acts for South African Zulu speakers responding in English (42% direct requests; 27.6% conventionally indirect requests and 30.5% non-conventionally indirect requests). On

the other hand, the distribution in Table 12 is more in line with those obtained by de Kadt (1995:48) for request patterns in South African English (32% direct requests; 55.1% conventionally indirect requests and 12.8% non-conventionally indirect requests) and Blum Kulka's CCSARP study of request strategies in Australian English (9.8% direct requests; 82.4% conventionally indirect request and 7.8% non-conventionally indirect requests) (Blum-Kulka, 1989:47). It is interesting to note that in my data hints were hardly used.

5.2.1.4 DOWNGRADERS

5.2.1.4.1 Syntactic Downgraders

According to the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:281) syntactic downgraders "modify the Head Act internally by mitigating the impositive force of the request by means of syntactic choices". The structural properties of a given language determine the categories of syntactic downgraders that are appropriate to that particular language. In the CCSARP coding manual Blum-Kulka discusses eight possible categories of syntactic downgraders which are applicable to the English, German and French languages. Here, I shall focus only on those categories that were observed in the collected data. In this regard only two categories of syntactic downgraders were recorded, viz. interrogative and tense.

From the data in Table 13 below, it is seen that apart from three instances of a tense syntactic downgrader (used by the female children), all others recorded were of the

interrogative type, used more frequently by the males than the females. Some examples

of interrogatives from my data are

(32) *"May I borrow a ream of paper from you please?"* and

(33) *"Can I borrow a ream of paper from you please?"*

TABLE 13: SYNTACTIC DOWNGRADERS

SYNTACTIC DOWN-GRADERS	Status	Interrogative	Tense		Status	Interrogative	Tense
FA ↓ Male	U	0	0	FC ↓ Male	U	0	0
	E	0	0		E	0	1
	L	0	0		L	0	1
FA ↓ Female	U	0	0	FC ↓ Female	U	0	0
	E	1	0		E	1	1
	L	1	0		L	1	0
TOTAL		2	0	TOTAL		2	3
MA ↓ Male	U	0	0	MC ↓ Male	U	0	0
	E	0	0		E	0	0
	L	1	0		L	1	0
MA ↓ Female	U	2	0	MC ↓ Female	U	1	0
	E	2	0		E	4	0
	L	2	0		L	5	0
TOTAL		7	0	TOTAL		11	0

FA: Female Adult   MA: Male Adult   FC: Female Child

MC: Male Child   ↓: Responding to

5.2.1.4.2 Lexical and Phrasal Downgraders

TABLE 14: LEXICAL AND PHRASAL DOWNGRADERS

LEXICAL AND PHRASAL DOWN-GRADERS	Status	Politeness Marker	Hedge	Downtoner	Cajoler		Status	Politeness Marker	Hedge	Downtoner	Cajoler
FA ↓ Male	U	6	0	3	0	FC ↓ Male	U	7	1	1	0
	E	7	0	1	0		E	7	1	0	0
	L	5	0	2	0		L	7	1	2	0
FA ↓ Female	U	7	0	0	0	FC ↓ Female	U	9	0	0	0
	E	2	0	2	0		E	5	2	0	0
	L	3	0	0	0		L	6	0	0	1
TOTAL		30	0	8	0	TOTAL		41	5	3	1
MA ↓ Male	U	5	1	0	0	MC ↓ Male	U	5	0	0	0
	E	6	1	0	0		E	2	0	0	1
	L	4	0	0	0		L	2	0	1	0
MA ↓ Female	U	8	0	1	0	MC ↓ Female	U	8	0	0	0
	E	8	0	0	0		E	4	0	0	0
	L	8	0	0	0		L	4	0	0	0
TOTAL		39	2	1	0	TOTAL		25	0	1	1

FA: Female Adult   MA: Male Adult   FC: Female Child   MC: Male Child

↓: responding to

The impositive force of a request may also be softened by modifying the Head Act internally through lexical and phrasal downgraders. In the CCSARP coding manual (1989:283) Blum-Kulka has presented eight different categories of such downgraders. An analysis of my data (presented in Table 14 above) reveals that

*   the respondents used only four types of lexical and phrasal downgraders, viz. politeness marker, hedge, downtoner and cajoler. Of these the dominant category (87.1%) is "politeness marker".

By definition the politeness marker is "an optional element added to a request to bid for cooperative behaviour" (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:283). An example of such a downgrader in my data is

(34) *"Please may I borrow a ream of paper?"*

The politeness marker "please" was found to be the only form used by respondents. Recipients in all three status categories are addressed with a significant number of such politeness markers. This pattern concurs with the findings from the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders that according to the scriptures, politeness is fundamental for human interactions.

The next most frequently used downgrader was the downtoner (8.4%) which, it is recalled, is a sentential or propositional modifier used to modulate the impact of a request on the hearer (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:284). Examples from my data are

(35) *"Please allow me to borrow a ream of paper if possible"* and

(36) *"Would you mind if I borrow a ream of paper?"*

In these examples the words "if possible" and "would you mind" reduce the impact of the request. In the first example the imposition is further softened by the use of the politeness marker "please". Of the small number of downtoners recorded, most were used by the female adults and female children when addressing males.

The downtoner was followed by the hedge (3.2%) as the next most frequent downgrader. The hedge is an adverbial used by a speaker to avoid potential provocation. Examples of hedges in my data are

(37) *"I would really like to borrow a book from you please?"* and

(38) *"Is it okay if I borrow that ream of paper?"*

The hedges in the above examples are used to avoid a precise communication of the Speaker's request thereby softening the impositive force of the request which is a FTA. Hedges can be used in both positive and negative politeness strategies, but mostly in the latter (Brown and Levinson, 1987:116, 146).

Only two instances of a cajoler downgrader were recorded by a male and a female child, respectively. Cajolers are used to establish, increase or restore harmony between the interlocutors, which harmony may be threatened through the request. An example of a cajoler in my data is

(39) *"Hey, Cuzzi, organise that book for me, man!"*,

which was used by a male child when addressing a person of equal status. The word "Cuzzi" is a slang word for cousin. It is an in group identity marker. By using a slang term, the Speaker attempts to evoke common associations and attitudes that he and the Hearer both have toward the object (i.e. the book). As such, it is used as a FTA redress (Brown and Levinson, 1987:111).

A comparison of Tables 13 and 14 shows that lexical and phrasal downgraders are used much more frequently than the syntactic downgraders by all respondents.

5.2.1.5 UPGRADERS

Upgraders are modifiers (internal to the Head Act) which are used to increase the impact of the request. With the use of upgraders the impositive force of the request is enhanced. However, this may be articulated in a more or less polite manner depending on the tone of voice of the Speaker. In the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:285), Blum-Kulka distinguishes between ten different categories of upgraders. In my data I found evidence of only one such upgrader, namely, time intensifier. Four instances of time intensifiers were recorded. Two such examples are

(40) *"Janet, I need a ream of paper, now!"*, and

(41) *"Lee-Anne, I need a ream of paper on the double, please"*

Three of the time intensifiers were used when addressing persons of lower status and one for a person of an equal status. In the above examples, "now" and "on the double" are used to enhance the impact of the request, and as such could also imply the urgency of the need.

5.2.1.6 SUPPORTIVE MOVES

Supportive moves are external to the Head Act and occur either before or after it. Such moves are used by a Speaker to aggravate or mitigate his/her request. The CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:287) distinguishes between six different categories of mitigating supportive moves and three different categories of aggravating supportive moves. In my data no aggravating supportive moves were found but five categories of mitigating supportive moves were used by respondents, viz. grounder, imposition minimizer, preparator, getting a pre-commitment and promise of reward.

Getting a pre-commitment and promise of reward were used by just one respondent and will not be discussed further.

From the data in Table 15 below,

* it is observed that the grounder and the imposition minimizer are most frequently used followed by the preparator.

In the case of a grounder the Speaker provides reasons, explanations or justifications for his/her request. The data reveal that grounders are used much more frequently by the male and female adults than by the children. Two examples of grounders used by respondents are given below:

(42) *"Please Mrs......, our department has run out of paper, whilst we did place an order for replacement timeously the suppliers are out of stock. Please could we urgently borrow a ream from your office?"*, and

(43) *"Mr Reddy, I urgently require paper to run out worksheets for my class"*.

The above examples illustrate that the grounder may either precede or follow the request. It is used to mitigate the imposition. A comparison of the two examples above shows that the grounder in the former is much more elaborate. Such elaborateness could be perceived as irrelevant and might weaken the force of the speech act.

In the case of the imposition minimizer, the Speaker attempts to reduce the imposition placed on the Hearer by his/her request. It must be noted that the children use more imposition minimizers than grounders. The opposite is the case for the adults. While the

male and female children make use of an equal number of imposition minimizers, the adult males use a much larger number than the females. Examples of imposition minimizers in my data are

(44) *"Hi Moose! Can I borrow your copy of the pediatrics text. I'll give it back to you today"*, and

(45) *"Mr......... I need to borrow paper for an urgent meeting. I promise to return it first thing tomorrow morning"*.

In these examples the imposition minimizers (underlined text) are used to reduce the impositive force of the request. The Hearer is being assured of the date/time by which the borrowed item will be returned. This guarantee of return is intended to make it easier for the Hearer to accede to the request.

In using the preparator, the Speaker prepares the Hearer for the forthcoming request by enquiring about the availability of the Hearer to comply with the request or by asking the Hearer's permission to make the request (Blum-Kulka et. al., 1989:287). My data in Table 15 reveal that the female adults and children use a larger number of preparators than their male counterparts. An example of a preparator from my data is reflected in the following utterance

(46) *"I am sorry to bother you, but may I please borrow some paper? It is rather urgent"*.

In preparing the Hearer for the request by the use of "I am sorry to bother you" the Speaker is attempting to reduce the impact of the request. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:142), a request of this nature may serve to reduce the directness of the

request and thereby could make it a more polite request.

TABLE 15: MITIGATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES

MITIGATUBG SUPPORTIVE MOVES	Status	Preparator	Getting a pre-commitment	Grounder	Promise of reward	Imposition Minimizer		Status	Preparator	Getting a pre-commitment	Grounder	Promise of reward	Imposition Minimizer
FA ↓ Male	U	2	0	4	0	2	FC ↓ Male	U	2	0	2	0	3
	E	1	0	3	0	2		E	1	0	1	0	2
	L	1	0	3	0	2		L	1	0	1	0	3
FA ↓ Female	U	2	1	5	0	3	FC ↓ Female	U	1	0	2	0	2
	E	0	0	4	0	2		E	1	0	1	0	2
	L	1	0	3	0	3		L	1	0	2	0	2
TOTAL		7	1	22	0	14			7	0	9	0	14
MA ↓ Male	U	0	0	6	0	4	MC ↓ Male	U	1	0	3	0	1
	E	0	0	5	0	4		E	1	0	1	0	3
	L	0	0	2	0	4		L	1	0	2	0	4
MA ↓ Female	U	1	0	3	0	4	MC ↓ Female	U	1	0	0	0	3
	E	1	0	5	0	2		E	0	0	1	0	2
	L	0	0	3	0	3		L	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL		2	0	24	0	21	TOTAL		4	0	7	1	14

FA: Female Adult   MA: Male Adult   FC: Female Child   MC: Male Child

↓: Responding to

Moreover,

* the status of the recipients (as seen in Table 15) did not have a significant impact on the distribution of the mitigating supportive moves.

In the next section, the impact of social distance on request strategies is examined.

5.2.2 SOCIAL DISTANCE

5.2.2.1 REQUEST PERSPECTIVES

As discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1, a request can be realised from the viewpoint or perspective of the Hearer, the Speaker or both participants or in an impersonal manner (not mentioning any of the participants). A distribution of request perspectives for the sample population is analysed from the data in Tables 16 and 17, where in the latter set the age of the participants is also considered. These data correspond to Section A of DCTs 1 and 2 (see Appendix 2) for the three social categories of intimates, colleagues and strangers.

In responding to intimates and strangers (Table 16 below) the majority of the requests (if not all) are clearly Hearer dominant in nature. This pattern is also observed for the male adults and the children (both male and female) when responding to colleagues although the difference between Hearer dominant and Speaker dominant request perspectives is not that large (Table 16). However, here the female adults are found to use an equal number of Hearer dominant and Speaker dominant request perspectives. It is most striking to note that both for the adults and children only Hearer dominant requests are used towards intimates.

TABLE 16: REQUEST PERSPECTIVE

	Intimate		Colleague		Stranger			Intimate		Colleague		Stranger	
	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance		Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance
FA ↓ Male	10	0	4	5	6	2	FC ↓ Male	10	0	7	3	7	4
FA ↓ Female	10	0	5	4	6	3	FC ↓ Female	10	0	5	5	5	4
Total	20	0	9	9	12	5	Total	20	0	12	8	12	8
MA ↓ Male	9	0	6	2	6	3	MC ↓ Male	10	0	7	1	6	3
MA ↓ Female	8	0	4	4	8	2	MC Female	10	0	7	3	6	2
Total	17	0	10	6	14	5	Total	20	0	14	4	12	5

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

The general pattern in Table 17 below shows that

* The age of the recipients has little influence on the responses of the speaker. This is in keeping with the view expressed by the religious/cultural leaders that proper human interactions require that one should be polite to all persons.

* In most instances the requests are Speaker dominant in nature. A notable exception is in the case of the male children who, when responding to male and female colleagues of an older age, make use of more Speaker dominant request perspectives, whereas for persons of the same age and younger, either an equal number of Hearer dominant and Speaker dominant or more Hearer dominant request perspectives are used.

TABLE 17: REQUEST PERSPECTIVE AND AGE

		Intimate		Colleague		Stranger				Intimate		Colleague		Stranger	
		Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance			Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance	Hearer Dominance	Speaker Dominance
FA ↓ Male	O	2	6	1	7	4	5	FC ↓ Male	O	1	9	2	8	1	9
	SA	3	6	3	6	3	6		SA	3	7	3	6	1	9
	Y	3	5	3	6	3	6		Y	2	7	3	6	1	7
FA ↓ Female	O	4	6	3	6	3	6	FC ↓ Female	O	3	7	3	7	1	8
	SA	3	7	3	6	2	7		SA	3	7	8	2	2	8
	Y	5	5	4	5	6	4		Y	2	8	4	6	2	8
Total		20	35	17	36	21	34	Total		14	45	23	35	8	49
MA ↓ Male	O	3	6	4	5	4	6	MC ↓ Male	O	3	7	3	7	2	8
	SA	4	5	6	3	4	6		SA	1	8	6	4	4	6
	Y	3	7	5	4	5	4		Y	2	6	6	4	2	5
MA ↓ Female	O	4	6	2	8	5	4	MC ↓ Female	O	3	7	4	6	4	6
	SA	5	5	3	7	3	5		SA	5	5	5	5	4	6
	Y	6	4	3	7	5	3		Y	3	6	6	4	2	6
Total		25	33	23	34	26	28	Total		17	39	30	30	18	37

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

It is interesting to note that while the majority of the requests in Table 16 are of a Hearer dominant type, those (that is the majority) in Table 17 are Speaker dominant in nature. This difference can be attributed to the nature of the situations in the DCTs. This is illustrated with the following examples.

Example 1: In Situation 4 where the Speaker requests an intimate (brother or sister) to pay an account, one is restricted in framing the request so that it has a Hearer dominant perspective as can be seen in the following example in my data

(47) *"I would really appreciate it if you could please pay my account on your way to town?"*

It is noted that the above request is accompanied by an imposition minimizer *"I would really appreciate it"* as well as a politeness marker *"please"*. Similarly, in other responses in DCTs 1 and 2 other forms of downgraders and mitigating supportive moves were used. Presumably these were used to reduce the impact of the imposition.

Example 2: In Situation 2 the Speaker had to borrow a video camera from a close relative. Here, the request could be framed as either a Speaker dominant request, for example,

(48) *"Hi, I was wondering if I could borrow your camera?"*,

or as a Hearer dominant request, for example,

(49) *"Could you lend me your video camera as I have a function to be taped. I will care for it"*.

The majority of the respondents used the Speaker dominant approach. Presumably, as discussed in the previous section, the Speaker dominant request perspective (Could I borrow...?) was seen as less of an imposition and gave the Hearer the option to deny the request, in comparison to the Hearer dominant approach (Could you lend...?).

In my data there was just one example of a Speaker and Hearer dominant request perspective as shown below:

(50) *"Lets make use of your camera"*,

used by a male child to a female of a younger age.

From an examination of the data for request perspective, the following responses were obtained from a few male and female children when responding to a stranger of a younger age when requesting to cut the queue

(51) Female child: *"Just push him out of the way"*,

(52) Male child: *"Excuse me boy, but you're standing in the wrong line, this line is only for card payers so you need to go to the line there"*,

(53) Male child: *"Listen young man your mum is back there, and she is calling you. I think she wants to buy you a chocolate"* ,

(54) Female child: *"Since I am older than you I feel that I should stand in front of you"*, and

(55) Male child: *"Move one side, let the big people pass"*.

None of these types of responses were obtained from the adults. This raises the questions: were the children possibly not taking the DCTs seriously?, or do these responses reflect ways in which young people "manage" queues?

5.2.2.2 REQUEST STRATEGIES: HEAD ACTS

TABLE 18a: REQUEST STRATEGIES: INTIMATES

INTIMATE	Direct — Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Conv. In-direct — Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Non-conv. In-Direct — Strong Hint	Mild Hint		Direct — Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Conv. In-Direct — Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Non-Conv. In-Direct — Strong Hint	Mild Hint
FA→Male	1						9			FC→Male	2				1		7		
FA→Female							9	·		FC→Female	2				1		7		
TOTAL	1						18				4				2		14		
%AGE		5.26				94.74		0		%AGE		30				70		0	
MA→Male	5						4			MC→Male	2						8		
MA→Female	4						3			MC→Female	2					1	6	1	
TOTAL	9						7			TOTAL	4					1	14	1	
%AGE		56.25				43.75		0				20				75		5	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

→ responding to

TABLE 18b: REQUEST STRATEGIES: COLLEAGUES

COLLEAGUES	Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. In-Direct			Direct					Conv. In-Direct		Non-Conv. In-Direct	
	Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint		Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint
FA→ Male							9			FC→ Male					1		9		
FA→ Fe-Male					1		9			FC→ Fe-Male	1						9		
TOTAL					1		18			TOTAL	1				1		18		
%AGE			5.26			94.74		0		%AGE			10			90		0	
MA→ Male						2	8			MC→ Male	1				1	2	6		
MA→ Fe-Male						1	8			MC→ Fe-Male					3		7		
TOTAL						3	16			TOTAL	1				4	2	13		
%AGE			0			100		0		%AGE			25			75		0	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

→ responding to

TABLE 18c: REQUEST STRATEGIES: STRANGERS

STRANGERS	Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint		Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint
	Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. In-Direct			Direct					Conv. In-Direct		Non-Conv. In-Direct	
FA→Male	1						4	2		FC→Male					1		5	4	
FA→Female	1				2		6	1		FC→Female	1				2		6		
TOTAL	2				2		10	3		TOTAL	1				3		11	4	
%AGE	23.5					58.8		17.7		%AGE	21.05					57.90		21.05	
MA→Male	2						5			MC→Male	1				1		4	3	1
MA→Female	4						3	2		MC→Female	2				3	1	2	3	
TOTAL	6						8	2		TOTAL	3				4	1	6	6	1
%AGE	37.5					50		12.5		%AGE	33.33					33.33		33.33	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

→ responding to

The data for the study of the influence of social distance on request strategies are shown in Tables 18a to 18c above and Tables 19a to 19c below for the three social categories. The former set focused simply on the social distance of the recipient, while the latter set also considered the age of the recipient.

The percentage distribution patterns of the direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect strategies in Tables 18a to 18c are in most instances similar to

that found in the study of the effect of status in the previous section. It is also seen that in most cases query preparatory (QP) is clearly the dominant request strategy, as found in the precious section. Mood derivable, want statement or strong hint are the next popular strategies.

In the case of the responses of the adults to intimates, it is interesting to note that while for the females query preparatory is the dominant strategy, in the case of the male, query preparatory and mood derivable are almost of equal proportion. Examples of query preparatory used are:

(56) Intimates: *"Would you please pay ....",*

(57) Colleagues: *"Can you please............",* and

(58) Strangers: *"Can I please have the money...........".*

It is noted that QP is a conventionalised indirect strategy in partially satisfying the Hearer's negative face. This indicates that in most instances most respondents preferred a compromise position between an "on record" direct request and an "off record" avoidance of imposition. In the example "Can I please have my money...." the Speaker gives Hearer an "out" option in the sense that Hearer is not expected to say "yes" unless he/she wants to. This minimizes the mutual face loss that occurs if the Hearer says "no" (Brown and Levinson, 1987:72).

The distribution pattern for strangers (Table 18c) is different from that for colleagues and intimates in the sense that there is a larger proportional use of strong hints particularly by the children. However, the dominant request strategy is still QP.

In examining the total number of each strategy for the adults, mood derivable is the second most frequent request strategy used while in the case of the children it is strong hints. An example of a strong hint from my data is

(59) *"Sorry, I have to remind you that you owe me some money (saying it humorously).*

I'm still charging you interest for the money you owe me, ha ha".

The more frequent use of strong hints when addressing strangers could be associated with the sensitivity of the particular situation, namely, one is trying to get back money that is owed. Therefore, the request tends to be "off record" as per the Brown and Levinson model. In this case a Speaker uses hints to communicate what he/she wants to "without doing so directly, so that the meaning is to some degree negotiable" (Brown and Levinson, 1987:69). The data indicates that the children use more strong hints than the adults.

The few instances of suggestory formula that were recorded were used either by the male adults or male children mostly when addressing colleagues, for example,

(60) *"How about............ ".*

* None of the female respondents used any suggestory formulas in all three social categories.

Such a response is not a style of speech that is used by women in the target community as it is perceived as a form of slang. This claim is strengthened by the observation that an identical pattern was recorded in the study of the influence of status on request strategies in the previous section. This pattern concurs with the findings from the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders, who pointed out that the prescribed norms of behaviour within the target community placed the demand of "politeness" on women.

The data in Tables 19a to 19c (below) represent the responses of the participants to persons of different age groups, in addition to their social distance. As found in Tables 18a to 18c, the dominant request strategy in Tables 19a, 19b and 19c is query preparatory. This is followed by want statement and mood derivable.

The female adults and children appear not to distinguish between persons of different age groups since there is no significant difference in their response patterns when responding to both males and females. The only exceptions occur for female adults responding to males of a younger age in the categories of intimates and colleagues, in both of which cases an equal number of conventionally indirect (QP) and direct strategies (mood derivable and want statement) are used.

* From the percentage distribution of the three classes of request strategies, viz. direct, conventionally indirect and non-conventionally indirect, it is seen that most of the strategies are conventionally indirect in nature, as found in the last section.

For the male adult respondents, of the total request strategies used a larger percentage is made up of direct request strategies when compared to the responses of the female adults and female children. In most instances when responding to persons of younger age the total number of direct strategies exceeds the conventionally indirect strategies. A similar pattern is observed for the male child. It is interesting to note that when addressing female strangers of younger age, both male adults and male children use a much larger number of conventionally indirect strategies than direct strategies.

It is observed from Tables 18a, b and c (above) and Tables 19a, b and c (below) that the males generally use proportionally more direct request strategies than the females, as was the case in the study on the influence of status.

TABLE 19a: REQUEST STRATEGIES AND AGE: INTIMATES

INTIMATES		Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. In-direct				Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. In-direct	
		Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint			Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint
FA↓ Male	O	1				1		7			FC↓ Male	O					2		8		
	SA	1				2		7				SA	3				1		7		
	Y	3				2		5				Y	2				1		7		
FA↓ Fe-Male	O					2		8			FC↓ Fe-Male	O							10		
	SA					2		8				SA	1						9		
	Y	2				1		7				Y		1					9		
TOTAL		7				10		42			TOTAL		6	1			4		50		
%AGE		28.81					71.19		0		%AGE		18.03					81.97		0	
MA↓ Male	O	1				3		4			MC↓ Male	O					1		9		
	SA	1				2		5				SA					4		6		
	Y	2				4		2				Y					5		3		
MA↓ Fe-Male	O	1				3		6			MC↓ Fe-Male	O							10		
	SA	2				2		6				SA	2				1	3	4		
	Y	3				2		5				Y	3	1	1				4	1	
TOTAL		10				16		28			TOTAL		5	1	1		11	3	36	1	
%AGE		48.15					51.85		0		%AGE		31.04					67.24		1.72	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ responding to

TABLE 19b: REQUEST STRATEGIES AND AGE: COLLEAGUES

COLLEAGUES		Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. In-direct		COLLEAGUES		Direct					Conv. In-direct		Non-conv. Indirect	
		Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint			Mood Derivable	Explicit Performative	Hedged Performative	Locution Derivable	Want Statement	Suggestory Formula	Query Preparatory	Strong Hint	Mild Hint
FA↓ Male	O	1				2		6			FC↓ Male	O					1		9		
	SA	2						7				SA	1				2	1	6		
	Y	2				2		4				Y	2				1		7		
FA↓ Fe-Male	O	1				1		7			FC↓ Fe-Male	O					1		9		
	SA	1						7				SA					1	2	8		
	Y	2						6				Y	1				2		7		
TOTAL		9				5		37			TOTAL		4				8	3	46		
%AGE		27.45					72.55		0		%AGE		19.67					80.33		0	
MA↓ Male	O	1						8			MC↓ Male	O	2				3		6		
	SA	2				1		6				SA	2				3	2	3		
	Y	3				3		4				Y	3				3		4		
MA↓ Fe-Male	O	1				2		7			MC↓ Fe-Male	O	2				1		7		
	SA	2				3		4				SA	1				2	3	4		
	Y	4				3	1	4				Y	4				2		3		
TOTAL		13				12	1	33			TOTAL		14				14	5	27		
%AGE		42.37					57.63		0		%AGE		46.67					53.33		0	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child MC – Male Child

↓ responding to

TABLE 19c: REQUEST STRATEGIES AND AGE: STRANGERS

STRANGERS		Direct (Mood Derivable)	Direct (Explicit Performative)	Direct (Hedged Performative)	Direct (Locution Derivable)	Direct (Want statement)	Conv. In-direct (Suggestory Formula)	Conv. In-direct (Query Preparatory)	Non-conv. In-direct (Strong Hint)	Non-conv. In-direct (Mild Hint)	STRANGERS		Direct (Mood Derivable)	Direct (Explicit Performative)	Direct (Hedged Performative)	Direct (Locution Derivable)	Direct (Want Statement)	Conv. In-direct (Suggestory Formula)	Conv. In-direct (Query Preparatory)	Non-conv. Indirect (Strong Hint)	Non-conv. Indirect (Mild Hint)
FA↓ Male	O							9			FC↓ Male	O							10		
	SA	1						8				SA						1	9		
	Y	2						7				Y	1						7		
FA↓ Fe-Male	O							9			FC↓ Fe-Male	O							9		
	SA							9				SA							10		
	Y	1	1					8				Y							10		
TOTAL		4	1					50			TOTAL		1					1	55		
%AGE				9.09				90.91		0	%AGE				1.75				98.25		0
MA↓ Male	O	1						6	1		MC↓ Male	O	1						8		
	SA	2						6				SA	1					2	7		
	Y	4						3				Y	1					1	5		
MA↓ Fe-Male	O	2						7			MC↓ Fe-Male	O							10		
	SA	2						6				SA	1						8		
	Y	1		1		1		4				Y		1			1		7		
TOTAL		12		1		1		32	1		TOTAL		4	1			1	3	45		
%AGE				29.79				68.08		2.13	%AGE				11.11				88.89		0

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ responding to

5.2.2.3 DOWNGRADERS

Tables 20 and 21 and Tables 22 and 23 show the use of syntactic, and of lexical and phrasal downgraders used by the participants, respectively.

5.2.2.3.1   SYNTACTIC DOWNGRADERS

TABLE 20: SYNTACTIC DOWNGRADERS

	Intimate			Colleague			Stranger				Intimate			Colleague			Stranger		
	Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause	Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause	Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause		Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause	Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause	Interrogative	Tense	Conditional Clause
FA ↓ Male										FC ↓ Male					1		1		
FA ↓ Female							1			FC ↓ Female					2		1		1
Total							1			Total					3		2		1
MA ↓ Male										MC ↓ Male					1		1		
MA ↓ Female										MC Female		1			1				
Total										Total		1			2		1		

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

The data reveal that very few syntactic downgraders were used by the respondents. Of these there was just one record of an interrogative used by an adult and one of a conditional clause used by a child. The balance were tense downgraders used mostly by the children. The very small record of the total number of syntactic downgraders does not allow for an analysis in terms of the social distance and age of the respondents, as can be seen from Tables 20 and 21.

TABLE 21: SYNTACTIC DOWNGRADERS

	Age	Intimate Tense	Colleague Tense	Stranger Tense		Age	Intimate Tense	Colleague Tense	Stranger Tense
FA↓ Male	O				FC↓ Male	O	1	2	
	SA	1				SA	3	1	1
	Y					Y	1	1	
FA↓ Female	O		1	1	FC↓ Female	O	2	1	1
	SA	1				SA	1	1	
	Y					Y			
Total		2	1	1	Total		8	6	2
MA↓ Male	O		1		MC↓ Male	O		2	
	SA		2			SA			
	Y		1			Y	1	1	
MA↓ Female	O				MC Female	O	1		1
	SA					SA			
	Y					Y			
Total			4		Total		2	3	1

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

5.2.2.3.2 PHRASAL AND LEXICAL DOWNGRADERS

The recorded data for lexical and phrasal downgraders are presented in Tables 22 and 23. The results in Table 21 were obtained from the responses to DCTs 1 and 2, Section A, Situation 5, while the information in Tables 22 and 23 which not only studies social distance but also the age of the recipient relative to that of the respondent was obtained from Section A, Situation 3 of DCTs 1 and 2.

TABLE 22: LEXICAL AND PHRASAL DOWNGRADERS

	Intimate		Colleague		Stranger				Intimate		Colleague		Stranger		
	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Hedge		Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Politeness Marker	Downtoner	Subjectivizer
FA ↓ Male	7	3	7	2	2	1		FC ↓ Male	7	1	8	1	1	1	
FA ↓ Female	7	3	4	5	2	3		FC ↓ Female	10	5	7	2	3	1	
Total	14	6	11	7	4	4		Total	17	6	15	3	4	2	
MA ↓ Male	7	3	4	1	4	1		MC ↓ Male	7		6	1	2		
MA ↓ Female	6	2	6	4	4	0	1	MC Female	8	1	4	4	4		1
Total	13	5	10	5	8	1	1	Total	15	1	10	5	6	2	1

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

Out of the set of eight lexical and phrasal downgraders coded in the CCSARP manual, only five were recorded in my data. Of these, the cajoler (in Table 23) and subjectiver (in Table 22 and 23) were each used twice and the hedge just once. Examples of these from my data of these are given below:

(61) Cajoler: *"You know what I need to borrow your camera desperately"*.

(62) Subjectivizer: *"Hello, How are you? I believe you owe me some money"*, and

(63) *"I wondered if I could borrow your camera. I really need to videotape a special function"*

(64) Hedge: *"Hi Babes. Long time no see. I'm in financial problems. I will be very grateful if you <u>could sort the</u> money you owe me".*

TABLE 23: LEXICAL AND PHRASAL DOWNGRADERS

	Age	Intimate Politeness Marker	Intimate Downtoner	Colleague Politeness Marker	Colleague Downtoner	Stranger Politeness Marker	Stranger Downtoner		Age	Intimate Politeness Marker	Intimate Downtoner	Cajoler	Subjectivizer	Colleague Politeness Marker	Colleague Downtoner	Stranger Politeness Marker	Stranger Downtoner
FA ↓ Male	O	4	2	4	3	7	2	FC ↓ Male	O	7	1			6	1	7	1
	SA	5	3	6	1	7	3		SA	7				5	2	4	2
	Y	5	2	3	1	5			Y	7				3	2	5	0
FA ↓ Female	O	5	6	6		4	3	FC ↓ Female	O	7	3			6	3	7	2
	SA	5	2	6		4	3		SA	7	1			7	1	7	4
	Y	6	3	5	1	5	1		Y	6				6	1	8	
Total		30	18	30	6	32	12	Total		34	5			33	10	33	9
MA ↓ Male	O	3	2	6	1	6	1	MC ↓ Male	O	4	3		1	3	1	4	
	SA	3		6		6	1		SA	2	2	1		2		4	
	Y	3		5		5			Y	2	1	1		2	2		
MA ↓ Female	O	6	1	5	4	6	2	MC Female	O	8	1			5		8	1
	SA	7		4	2	6	2		SA	5				1	1	6	3
	Y	6		5	3	6	1		Y	6				3		6	0
Total		28	3	31	10	35	7	Total		27	7	2	1	16	4	28	4

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

It is found that the lexical and phrasal downgraders are used much more frequently than syntactic downgraders by all respondents, as in the study of the influence of status. This

is consistent with the results of de Kadt (1994:111) who found that lexical and phrasal downgraders were used more often than syntactic downgraders by speakers of Zulu.

From the totals displayed in Tables 22 and 23,

*   the politeness marker was by far the most frequently recorded downgrader followed by the downtoner, as found in the study of the influence of status.

Tables 22 and 23 show that

*   there is no significant distinction made by the respondents with respect to the ages (older, same age, younger) of the persons whom they are addressing. A noticeable feature is that the male child consistently uses a smaller number of politeness markers, especially when addressing males.

*   the adult males use far fewer downtoners overall.

5.2.2.4 UPGRADERS

In Section 3.3.1 (Methodology) it was pointed out that an upgrader increases the impact of a request. The data from DCTs 1 and 2 revealed that upgraders were used by the respondents only when addressing strangers, and as such, on very few occasions (see Table 24 below). It is seen that four instances of time intensifiers were recorded by female adults responding to females and one by a male adult when responding to a male. Also, a total of six repetitions of request were recorded, all by the children. Examples of time intensifiers in the data were

(65) *"Sorry to ask you Mel, but do you have the money that you borrowed from me. I really need it now"* and

(66) *"I am sorry to do this to you – you might have forgotten that you owe me some*

money. I really need it <u>now</u>. Could you please try and give it to <u>me before Friday,</u>

<u>*this week*</u>*", and an example of a repetition of request is*

(67) *"It's been ages since we last met. Things are not like they used to be.<u> I need the</u>*

<u>*money you borrowed from me cause I really need it*</u> *otherwise I would not have*

asked you for it".

TABLE 24: UPGRADERS

	Intimate		Colleague		Stranger			Intimate		Colleague		Stranger	
	Repetition of request	Time Intensifier	Repetition of request	Time Intensifier	Repetition of request	Time Intensifier		Repetition of request	Time Intensifier	Repetition of request	Time Intensifier	Repetition of request	Time Intensifier
FA ↓ Male							FC ↓ Male						
FA ↓ Female						4	FC ↓ Female					1	
Total						4	Total					1	
MA ↓ Male						1	MC ↓ Male						
MA ↓ Female							MC Female					5	
Total						1	Total					5	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

5.2.2.5 SUPPORTIVE MOVES

According to the CCSARP coding manual supportive moves can be either mitigating or aggravating. Both of these were evident in my data, although only one type of aggravating supportive move was used and only by a few respondents.

5.2.2.5.1 MITIGATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES

The distribution of the mitigating supportive moves in the data (Table 25) makes very interesting reading. In the case of responses to intimates and colleagues the following four mitigating supportive moves were recorded, viz. grounder, getting a pre-commitment, imposition minimizer and a promise of reward. Of these the grounder was by far the most frequently used in all cases except for the responses of the children when responding to intimate males and females, in which situations the imposition minimizer becomes prominent. An example of each from my data will be given below:

(68) Grounder: *"Hi Kumarie, could you please pay my telephone account for me. We have a staff meeting this afternoon and my account is long overdue"*

(69) Getting a pre-commitment: *"Lets (name of person), if its not too much trouble, could you please do me the favour of stopping of at the Telkom office deposit this money, which is actually due tomorrow"*,

and

(70) Promise of reward: *"Hi Robin, can I ask a favour of you. I have this account to pay and don't have the time. Could you please pay it for me. Gee thanks, I owe you one"*

The difference in the responses of adults and children (Table 25 below) in the case of intimates could easily lead one to conclude that there is a "generational gap" in

responses. However, this is contradicted by the distributions for colleagues and strangers, where the responses of the adults and the children display similar patterns.

The unusual shift in pattern in Table 25 for intimates, from the adults to the children, may be associated with the particular situation to which the adults and children had to respond (i.e. requesting an account to be paid by either a brother or sister). In this situation the parents are relating to a brother/sister who lives external to their own household and therefore see the need for an explanation or the need to give reasons for the request (i.e. the use of a grounder). On the other hand, the children are relating to a brother/sister who lives in the same house. Therefore, the need for a grounder falls away because of the close proximity and preference is given to the imposition minimizer. For example,

(71) *"Would you be so kind as to pay my account for me, it is on your way afterall"*

where the underlined words are used to reduce the imposition placed on the hearer by the request.

In the case of responding to strangers just two types of mitigating supportive moves are used by both adults and children, namely, the grounder and the preparator, in approximately equal proportion.

The use of a significant number of preparators when responding to strangers, could be due to the particular situation, viz. requesting money that is long overdue from an acquaintance. The Speaker prepares the Hearer for the request by first jogging the

Hearer's memory on the subject matter, i.e. the money that is long overdue. For example,

(72) *"Remember the money you borrowed from me. I'm in some debts and I need it as as soon as possible"* and

(73) *"Hey there, I hate to do this to you but remember the money you owe me? Well, I really need it now".*

TABLE 25: – MITIGATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES

	Intimate				Colleague				Stranger			Intimate				Colleague				Stranger	
	Grounder	Getting a recommitment	Imposition minimizer	Promise of reward	Grounder	Getting a recommitment	Imposition minimizer	Promise of reward	Grounder	Preparator		Grounder	Getting a recommitment	Imposition minimizer	Promise of reward	Grounder	Getting a recommitment	Imposition minimizer	Promise of reward	Grounder	Preparator
FA ↓ Male	5	1	1	1	5	1			2	3	FC ↓ Male	3	1	4	1	5	2			3	4
FA ↓ Female	6	3	1	1	4	1	2		3	3	FC ↓ Female	2	3	6	0	6		1	1	4	1
Total	11	4	2	2	9	2	2		5	6	Total	5	4	10	1	11	2	1	1	7	5
MA ↓ Male	3	1	1	1	5			1	3	2	MC ↓ Male	1	1	3		4	1			4	6
MA ↓ Female	4	1	4		3				6	3	MC Female	4	5	2		2	2		1	6	4
Total	7	2	5	1	8			1	9	5	Total	5	6	5		6	3		1	10	10

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

The data in Table 26 below, that look at the social distance as well as the age grouping of the Hearer, display no distinguishable pattern.

* In all three social categories (intimates, colleagues and strangers) the grounder was by far the most frequently used mitigating supportive move.

However, there was a distinct increase in the use of grounders when addressing strangers, as compared to the responses towards intimates and colleagues. This increase in the number of grounders used for strangers could be attributed to the nature of the situation i.e. asking for permission to cut the queue. In such a situation an explanation would generally be necessary before the request is imposed on the Hearer.

TABLE 26: MITIGATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES AND AGE

Adults (FA – Female Adult, MA – Male Adult)

Group	AGE	Intimate Grounder	Intimate Getting a precommitment	Intimate Imposition Minimizer	Intimate Preparator	Colleague Grounder	Colleague Imposition Minimizer	Colleague Preparator	Stranger Grounder	Stranger Getting a precommitment	Stranger Promise of reward	Stranger Preparator
FA↓Male	O	4	1	1	1	2	1	4	7			
FA↓Male	SA	2			1	2		6	8			
FA↓Male	Y	1	1	1	1	3		1	8			1
FA↓Female	O	5	1	1		7	1	3	8	1		
FA↓Female	SA	5			1	6	1	4	7			
FA↓Female	Y	5	1			7	1	2	7			1
Total		22	4	3	4	27	4	20	45	1		2
MA↓Male	O	5	1			4	1	1	8			1
MA↓Male	SA	5				2	1		8			1
MA↓Male	Y	4		1		5	1		5			1
MA↓Female	O	7	1			8		2	8			
MA↓Female	SA	7	1			6	1	2	6			
MA↓Female	Y	5	1	1		6	4	2	6	1		
Total		33	4	2		31		6	41	1		3

Children (FC – Female Child, MC – Male Child)

Group	AGE	Intimate Grounder	Intimate Getting a precommitment	Intimate Imposition Minimizer	Intimate Promise of reward	Intimate Preparator	Colleague Grounder	Colleague Imposition Minimizer	Colleague Preparator	Stranger Grounder	Stranger Promise of reward	Stranger Preparator
FC↓Male	O	8					7	1	1	6		1
FC↓Male	SA	8					8		2	5		
FC↓Male	Y	5		1			6		2	5		
FC↓Female	O	3		1			6		3	9		
FC↓Female	SA	2					6		1	8		
FC↓Female	Y	2		1			6			10		
Total		28		3			39	1	9	43		1
MC↓Male	O	8	1	1			6		1	10		
MC↓Male	SA	4	1	2			4	1	1	9		
MC↓Male	Y	3			1		6		2	5		
MC Fe-male	O	5		1		1	8		3	10		
MC Fe-male	SA	2	1				6		2	8		
MC Fe-male	Y	3				1	5		1	5	2	
Total		25	3	4	1	2	35	1	10	47	2	

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

When responding to intimates both the adults and children generally use the least number of grounders when addressing persons of younger age. However, such a pattern is not observed when addressing colleagues. Here, the distribution pattern is more or less proportionally the same for responses to persons of older, the same and younger ages. For the colleagues, the preparator is the second frequent mitigating supporting move used by both adults and children, primarily by the female adults. A comparison shows that a much larger number of preparators were used when addressing colleagues than intimates.

The finding that the grounder was the most popular mitigating supportive move is consistent with the results obtained in the study of the influence of status. Moreover, the liberal use of mitigating supportive moves, especially the grounder which was most popular, appears to concur with the views of the religious/cultural leaders that according to the scriptures politeness is fundamental to human interactions.

5.2.2.5.2 AGGRAVATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES

Although the CCSARP coding scheme has three types of aggravating supportive moves viz. insult, threat and moralizing, in my data (Table 27) only a few instances of threats were used, in particular, by the male adults and male children when responding to strangers. For example

(74) *"Hi Mary, when are you going to pay my money. If not soon then I must revert to alternate forms of getting the money from you"*,

(75) *"Hello, please come to my house and give me my money or else I will take you to court"*, and

(76) *"You must make arrangements of paying me back my money that you owe me if not*

I will tell your wife about it or I will take the law into my hands".

TABLE 27: AGGRAVATING SUPPORTIVE MOVES

	Intimate	Colleague	Stranger		Intimate	Colleague	Stranger
	Threat	Threat	Threat		Threat	Threat	Threat
FA ↓ Male				FC ↓ Male			
FA ↓ Female				FC ↓ Female			
Total				Total			
MA ↓ Male			3	MC ↓ Male			
MA ↓ Female			1	MC Female			1
Total			4	Total			1

FA – Female Adult   MA – Male Adult   FC – Female Child   MC – Male Child

↓ - responding to

The fact that no aggravating supportive moves were recorded in the responses of the female adults and female children, both here and in the study of the influence of status, could imply that they are less aggressive than the males.

This discussion brings this section to an end. In the next section I examine the results of the ranking scales designed to investigate, among others, possible relationships between the degree of politeness and the level of directness of a request strategy.

5.2.3 RANKING SCALES

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4, the purpose of this ranking scale was to i) determine the applicability of the CCSARP coding scheme in terms of directness/indirectness of request patterns to the target community, ii) to examine a possible relationship between the degrees of politeness and levels of directness/indirectness in request patterns for the target community, and iii) to obtain information that may assist in providing correlation between the findings of the DCTs and the interviews.

The investigation involved the completing of a ranking scale questionnaire by 30 participants. As can be seen from Appendix 4, the first ranking scale focused on the level of directness of the request strategy, while the second ranking scale explored the degree of politeness. It must be noted that the sequence 1 to 9 in which the nine different responses are listed, is in accordance with the CCSARP coding scheme from direct to indirect, for both situations in the ranking scales. As such the responses 1-5 fall in the category of direct requests, 6-7 are conventionally indirect requests and 8-9 are non-conventionally indirect request strategies.

I begin the analysis by examining the responses for Ranking Scale 1 in Appendix 4. The results are summarized in Table 28 below for Situations 1 and 2.

Table 28 below provides in the first column the original listing of the nine possible responses as presented on the questionnaire, followed by the value or placing allocated by the participants together with the frequency of occurrence and the corresponding

percentage of the total population of participants. As an illustration, for Situation 1 in Ranking Scale 1, response 1 ("Lend me the book") is ranked 1 by 20 of the 30 participants. Therefore, the percentage (%) is 20/30 = 66.7%. The mean value and the median are also provided in Table 28, as they are relevant for the analysis.

TABLE 28: STATISTICAL DATA FOR RANKING SCALE 1: LEVEL OF DIRECTNESS

		SITUATION ONE						SITUATION TWO			
S	Value	Highest frequency	%age	Mean	Median	T	Value	Highest Frequency	%age	Mean	Median
1	1	20	66.7	1.967	1.000	1	1	17	56.7	1.967	1.000
2	2	11	36.7	3.667	3.500	2	2	9	30.0	3.400	3.000
3	5	9	30.0	4.867	5.000	3	6	9	30.0	5.533	6.000
4	4	10	33.3	3.500	3.500	4	3	8	26.7	3.967	3.000
5	5	9	30.0	4.633	5.000	5	4	8	26.7	4.267	4.000
6	6	10	33.3	5.467	6.000	6	4	8	26.7	4.767	4.500
7	1/6/7	5	16.7	4.233	4.500	7	6	6	20.0	4.300	5.000
8	8	25	83.3	8.100	8.000	8	8	24	80.0	8.200	8.000
9	9	26	8.87	8.867	9.000	9	9	24	80.0	8.567	9.000

n = 30

A study of either the mean or the median in Table 28 reveals the following:

* The ranking of the participants is in agreement with the CCSARP coding scheme at the extreme ends of the spectrum.

To expand, "Lend me a book" (S1) is ranked as the most direct request. "This would be an interesting book to read" (S8) is ranked as second least direct, and "I do enjoy reading" (S9) as the least direct.

* The region between the extreme ends, from S2 to S7 is a "grey area" with no well defined pattern. Although here there is no direct agreement with the ranking of the CCSARP coding scheme, it is interesting to note that of the five direct requests as per the CCSARP coding scheme (S1-S5), most of them have the lowest means/ medians, implying that they are considered more direct request strategies.

The above discussion is also valid for Situation 2 in Ranking Scale 1, since the statistical data (see Table 28) are very similar for both situations, in particular, the agreement with the CCSARP coding scheme at the ends of the spectrum and the "grey area" in between.

The statistical data for Ranking Scale 2 (Appendix 4), which examined the degree of politeness, is shown in Table 29 below. It is seen that the pattern of the data for Situations 1 and 2 are very similar. The responses of the participants for Situation 1 indicate that the direct request Q4 ("You'll have to lend me your book") is considered to be the least polite request by virtue of its high mean/median. This is followed, in decreasing order of impoliteness by the direct requests Q1 ("Lend me the book") and Q2 ("I am asking you to lend me your book").

It is interesting to note that the participants consider the request Q7 ("Can I borrow your book?" – conventionally indirect as per the CCSARP coding scheme) as the most polite request strategy, followed by Q5 ("I'd like to borrow your book?" – a direct request strategy).

The arguments presented above are also valid for the Situation 2 in Ranking Scale 2 because of the similarity of the distribution of the statistical data for Situations 1 and 2.

TABLE 29: STATISTICAL DATA FOR RANKING SCALE 2:
DEGREE OF POLITENESS

	SITUATION ONE						SITUATION TWO				
Q	Value	Highest frequency	%age	Mean	Median	R	Value	Highest Frequency	%age	Mean	Median
1	8	8	26.7	6.800	7.500	1	7/8	8	26.7	6.967	7.000
2	7/8	7	23.3	6.500	7.000	2	8	10	33.3	6.900	7.000
3	5/6	8	26.7	4.667	5.000	3	1/5/6	6	20.0	3.867	4.000
4	9	12	40.0	7.933	8.000	4	9	14	46.7	7.867	8.000
5	2	14	46.7	2.433	2.000	5	2	10	33.3	2.833	3.000
6	3/4	8	26.7	4.300	4.000	6·	6	8	26.7	3.900	4.000
7	1	19	63.3	1.900	1.000	7	1	15	50.0	2.200	1.500
8	3/7	6	20.0	4.733	4.500	8	4	9	30.0	4.667	4.000
9	9	7	23.3	5.833	6.000	9	5/9	5	16.7	5.700	5.500

n = 30

From the above analysis and a comparison of Tables 28 and 29 one may conclude that

* there is no clear relationship between the level of directness of a request strategy and the degree of politeness. This is in agreement with the results from the interviews with the families.

This brings to an end my analysis of the data from the ranking scale. In the next chapter I focus on the interviews with the families.

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

WITH THE FAMILIES

As indicated in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3, a total of eight of the families that completed the DCTs were interviewed at their respective homes for their views/understanding of politeness. It was also pointed out in Chapter 3 in Section 3.2.3 that the interview schedule (Appendix 3) was drawn up after an analysis of the data from the DCTs. In addition, the questions focused on those aspects of politeness phenomena that were relevant for my study, for example, the role of women and men in the target community.

6.1 THE UNDERSTANDING OF POLITENESS

An analysis of the recorded data reveals that

*   the families (both adults and children) are consistent in their understanding of the phenomenon of politeness.

This understanding is best summarized by the following recorded statements:

"The way that you respect somebody else's space – showing respect for their principles and beliefs"; "speaking in a caring, respectful manner – saying please, thank you and not making demands". In addition, interviewees also emphasized using the appropriate *"tone of voice – don't speak harshly, loudly".* Such behaviour was considered to be consistent with cultural norms.

The importance of being polite at all times was recognized as not only reflecting *"the kind of person you are"* but also as portraying the *"image of one's family".* Moreover, in the case of the children it reflects their upbringing.

*   The above factors indicate that from a cultural perspective the concept of "face-work" exists within the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community in order to prevent or remedy a loss of face (Goffman, 1967:11-12). However, the conception of face is not identical to that of Brown and Levinson (1987).

The politeness behaviour displayed by an individual is associated with the *"impression that he/she creates"* (individual face), the image of his/her family (group face), as well as the image perceived by the community at large (public face). It is important that these three concepts of face are maintained at all times, so as not to 'lose face'. This fear of loss of face forces one to behave in a respectful and polite manner towards others. A similar observation was made by de Kadt (1998:175) in her study of the concept of face and its applicability to the Zulu language.

In probing the relationship between culture and politeness all interviewees expressed the view that politeness is a feature in every culture. However, on further probing it became evident that

*   while the majority of the children were aware that politeness may manifest itself in different ways in different cultures, this was not the case for most of the adults.
*   the adults hold the more simplistic view that politeness is universal and therefore should be practiced in the same manner by all cultures.

In my discussion with one of the adult interviewees, I presented the scenario that within the Zulu culture it is disrespectful to look an elder directly in the eye when conversing. The response from the interviewee was that this was not a cultural practice but arose from years of oppression.

6.2 POLITENESS ASSOCIATED WITH REQUESTS AND APOLOGIES

All interviewees (children and adults) were unanimous that it was necessary to be polite when making a request or apologizing. A request that is not polite may not elicit the desired response from the hearer. On the other hand when apologizing, if one is not polite then the apology will be meaningless and could therefore be rejected by the hearer. With regard to a request, one of the younger interviewees stated

"ask politely – say why needed and for how long etc. Saying that you would return it makes the other person trust in you. Don't let them ask when you are going to return it".

It is interesting to note that this statement covers aspects of requests as per the CCSARP coding scheme. For example, "say why needed" is a category of a downgrader, namely a grounder (which provides an explanation/reason for making the request). This is used to reduce the impositive force of the request. The views expressed here concur with the findings from the DCTs where mitigating supportive moves, dominated by the downgrader, were freely used.

In investigating the role of directness/indirectness when making a request, all interviewees expressed the view that they would prefer to be asked directly when a request is made to them. However, most of them did not perceive an indirect request as being impolite. Some associated such a request with the character of the individual, as in *"not a person who can come out upfront and ask directly"*. A direct request was seen as requiring an immediate answer while an indirect request gives the hearer an option to ponder over the request, as illustrated in the following quotation

"if you ask indirectly this gives the person a chance to debate whether to lend or not to do the favour".

When making a request, preference was given to a direct request strategy. However, it was pointed out that in some situations it would be more appropriate to make an indirect request. A minority position was that an indirect request was impolite as it implies that the speaker is being dishonest or cagey.

From the above discussion one may conclude that:

* there is no clear awareness, in the target community, of a relationship between directness and indirectness in requesting, and the level of politeness. While preference is given to direct requests, indirectness will be more appropriate in some circumstances. The directness/indirectness of a request does not necessarily reflect the degree of politeness of the request.

6.3 THE EFFECT OF AGE, SOCIAL DISTANCE, GENDER AND STATUS

The study also investigated the influence of factors such as the age, social distance, gender and status of the person to whom the apology or request was directed. These are discussed below.

6.3.1 Age

* While from a religious perspective the interviewees were in agreement that all persons should be treated equally, in reality cultural practice dictates otherwise, and greater respect is expected to be shown towards elders.

This is illustrated by the following words by one of the interviewees:

"Not religious teaching to be more polite to an older person, but rather cultural upbringing. Within the Indian community much more respect is shown towards older people".

Younger persons are expected to treat elders with more respect than their peers because the elders are credited with more knowledge, expertise and experience. This allows them to act in an advisory capacity in guiding younger persons. The high respect shown to elders is such that they are consulted when major decisions have to be made within their families, for example, when purchasing a new home. Also, for special family functions, for example, the wedding of a grandchild, they will be the first recipients of the invitation. Such an action is seen as ensuring that the blessings of the grandparents are received. The interviewees also pointed out that the address terms used within the target community highlight the respect shown towards elders. For instance, children are not allowed to address the elders by their forenames, but instead would use respectful terms such as "ma" (mother), "nannie" (maternal grandmother), "nana" (maternal grandfather), "kaka" (uncle), etc. On the other hand, it is acceptable for the elders to call the children by their forenames. In turn, the elders, as role models, are expected to show love, compassion, understanding and equal respect to all those around them. The views articulated here are consistent with those expressed by the religious/cultural leaders and also evidenced in the responses to the DCTs. A similar relationship between children and adults has been noted by de Kadt (1998:182) in her study of the concept of face in the Zulu language.

Despite the prescribed norms of behaviour for the children in the target community, it is important to note that some of the parents pointed out that their children are not raised strictly in accordance with the manner in which they themselves were raised. Today,

children are allowed greater participation in adult discussions as well as in expressing their views.

6.3.2 Status

Interviewees were of the opinion that

* the status of a person should not influence the respect shown to him/her.

For example, as one of the interviewees said

"You should respect them and likewise they should respect you".

* However, they agreed that this was not the case in practice.

According to one of the interviewees, *"society makes people behave in a particular way – for example, put doctors on a pedestal"*. In general, persons with higher educational qualifications are shown greater respect. However, for interviewees from the older generation, persons with high qualifications in certain fields, for example, law, medicine and science are accorded much higher respect than those in other fields, for example, a doctorate in Psychology. In contrast, the children perceive fields such as Engineering and Commerce as equally attractive career opportunities. Therefore, they tend to accord respect to all persons of higher educational qualifications. Another issue raised, was that people generally look up to persons who are financially well off, without regard for their moral character. Such persons are therefore accorded higher status because of their material wealth. This holds true for some religious organizations as well. In such instances one tends to *"forget the people who do the ground work"*.

The views expressed here on status agree with those of the religious/cultural leaders and have also been observed in the findings from the DCTs.

6.3.3 Social Distance

With regard to the influence of social distance, the male and female adults expressed differing views. The former saw a need for being more polite to intimates and colleagues. The primary reason was that one associates regularly with such persons. Hence, to maintain this close relationship one had to be more polite by consistently offering reasons, explanations, etc. This is not necessary in the case of a stranger as *"with a stranger, we don't know that person"*. Therefore short responses would be appropriate. The female adults, however, felt *"more relaxed"* in the presence of colleagues and intimates and therefore did not see the need to be over-polite when apologizing or requesting. They instead would be more polite to a stranger as this was an unknown person. According to one of the female adult interviewees

"With strangers – you want to create an impression as they don't know you and will go all out to be polite. With colleagues/intimates – we are familiar with them and would treat them in an 'everyday' manner".

A possible reason for this is that the female adults see a greater need to maintain social harmony. As for the male and female children, those who responded expressed the same view as the female adults, viz., they would be more polite to strangers than to intimates and colleagues.

6.3.4 Gender: The role of women

* The majority of the interviewees were of the opinion that women are required to be more polite than men.

This position concurs with the views of the religious/cultural leaders that the prescribed norms of behaviour placed greater demands on women, and as already indicated, has been observed in some responses to the DCTs.

The respondents recognized that

* the role of women in Hindu families has changed over time.

Previously women were perceived by the men as occupying less important roles despite having responsibilities. As such, they were dominated by men in major decision making. However, the emergence of women, through education, into major professional positions and occupations, coupled with the increase in gender awareness, has seen a dramatic shift in position. This is expressed in the following quote by one of the children

"Previously men were more powerful but now women are working – taking on more responsibilities. Therefore they are treated equally".

Therefore,

* in present day society there appears to be a shift towards power sharing between men and women within families.

The question "Is it more important for a man or woman to be more polite?" led to some interesting debate among the adults and children as illustrated in the following discussion:

Female Child: *"Generally females are more polite – society expects women to behave in a certain way, for example, sit in a certain way whereas a male can sit anyhow. Females have to hold up a greater standard in terms of politeness, overall behaviour.*

Female Adult: *"Society expects more politeness from women"*

Male Adult: *"This was in the past"*

Female Child: *"No, it still exists – will be surprised at what criticism you have to go*

through when you are a women. Lots more pressure on women to be

role models and to adhere to all the old fashioned ways. What people

expect us to be - to react in a particular way".

Male Adult: *"Well..............*

If a lady has to do something wrong there will be more talk about it

than if a man has to do something wrong – with man gets brushed off.

Ladies are labeled – good not talked about".

It is interesting to note that after the child contradicted the father and went to great lengths in explaining the reasons why women are expected to be more polite, the father, on reflection, changed his view.

Most of the respondents were of the view that

* the gender of the receiver will not make a difference when an apology or request is made.

However, a few of the respondents felt that because women are more sensitive by nature they needed to be treated more politely.

6.4 USE OF APOLOGY/REQUEST STRATEGIES

In investigating whether men or women use more apology strategies,

* the majority of the interviewees concurred that women used more.

This is evidenced in the results from the DCTs (Table 4) for both the female adults and children.

Some reasons given for this behaviour are:

Female Adult: *"If men feel that they had to use strategies then this belittles them in some way. Men tend not to want to say sorry. Women would say sorry and show it in different ways"* ;

Male Adult: *"Ladies like to win you over. Ladies like to give elaborate explanations. Men will just say too busy, full stop";*

Male Child: *"Women use more strategies because they tend to apologize more often than men. Women are emotional".*

The majority of the respondents were of the view that when someone uses more apology strategies he/she is being more polite since when one is apologizing it is expected that he/she *"will not simply say 'I'm sorry' but will give something more, for example, a reason as the hearer needs to understand exactly what happened".* On the other hand, a minority view was expressed that the use of more strategies was not necessarily being more polite, but the person was *"just taking advantage of the situation"* and *"trying to suck up".*

There were differing views as to whether one can judge how polite someone is, according to the way he/she makes a request/apology. Some of the respondents articulated the position that the tone of a person's voice and the way they presented what they were trying to say would enable one to judge his/her character. On the other hand, others felt that one "should not judge a book by its cover" as *"lots of people hide behind their 'please' and 'thank you's'".* Therefore, the outward manifestation did not necessarily reflect the inner nature of the person.

Interviewees were also asked if they saw a request made upon them as an imposition.

* Interviewees agreed that they did not see a request as an imposition. They expressed the view that one must always be willing to do things for others, as *"service to society is service to God"*. Also, one *"must do things out of your own will – goodness of your heart – and not in the hope of gaining anything"*.

This is consistent with the findings from the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders.

On the question of which of the two requesting phrases interviewees considered most polite, viz. "Can I borrow....." or "Can you lend....", they were divided in their responses. The majority of the children felt that the former would be more polite since when asking in this manner one allows the hearer an option to refuse. One adult male agreed with this as he felt that with "Can you lend....", it seems as though the item is already borrowed and the hearer just has to hand it over. The remainder of the respondents felt that both were polite forms of speech and it was left to individual choice. However, it must be noted that all respondents emphasized the need for the word "please" when making the request.

Finally, it must be noted that while the views of the adults and children on politeness behaviour in the community more or less concurred, the adults pointed out that the children of today are slowly becoming more assertive than they were in their youth. For example, present day children are beginning to engage in debate and discussion with their parents. Also, when given an instruction, a few of the children expressed the need to be provided with reasons, explanations etc. During the interviews the children pointed out that this shift in behavioural pattern could be due to exposure to Western

cultures on television and external peer pressure. Therefore the above factors could influence politeness behaviour in the target community in future years.

This brings to an end the discussion of my findings. In the next chapter conclusions are drawn. Limitations of my study are pointed out and recommendations for further research are made.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I summarize and discuss the findings obtained in this study. Detailed results were presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. In this chapter, the focus is on finding answers to the key questions that were posed. The results obtained through the different methods of data collection are triangulated. I attempt to correlate the perspectives on politeness offered by community members in the various interviews with the results of my investigations from an outsider perspective. The limitations of the study undertaken in this dissertation are then pointed out. This is followed by some recommendations for further study.

7.1 BACKGROUND UNDERSTANDING OF POLITENESS

Interviews with the religious/cultural leaders and the families revealed a commonality in the background understanding of politeness in the target community. The central theme of this understanding was that, both according to the scriptures and from a cultural perspective, politeness is fundamental to human relationships. The more one is willing to serve and share with humanity, the more blessings he/she will receive. This is encapsulated in the Sanskrit word *Manavata* which means humanity: respect for the equality of all human beings. Another key aspect was the importance of hospitality in the sense that a guest should always be made welcome irrespective of the circumstances. Further, both the religious/cultural leaders and the families emphasized the use of appropriate politeness strategies, for example, the politeness marker "please" when apologizing or making a request. It was also noted in both sets of interviews that the non-verbal norms of behaviour are essential for displaying overall politeness.

Some aspects of the above understandings, as expressed by the religious/cultural leaders and families, were evinced in the findings of the DCTs through the realization of the speech acts of apologies and requests. The responses to the DCTs show free use of politeness markers and mitigating supporting moves. In addition, the distribution of the politeness strategies used by the respondents was the same in most instances for recipients of the different age groups, thereby confirming that older, equal age and younger persons are treated equally. Very limited use was made of upgraders (all of which were found to be time intensifiers) to enhance the impositive force of the request. Of the mitigating supportive moves that were used, the grounder was found to be the most popular both in the study of social distance and status. This is consistent with the results from the interviews with the families where participants emphasised the importance of explaining why a request is being made, as well as in instances in which an item is borrowed to indicate when it will be returned. This makes it easier for the Hearer to accede to the request.

Therefore, the findings from the DCTs are generally consistent with the results found from the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders and the families, in that they reflect the importance of politeness in human interactions in the community under investigation. However, it should be noted that the DCTs were not able to reflect the usage of non- verbal strategies.

7.2 THE INFLUENCE OF AGE, SOCIAL DISTANCE AND STATUS

7.2.1 AGE

From a religious perspective, the religious/cultural leaders and the families were in agreement that all persons should be treated equally. However, they acknowledged that

this was not culturally practiced, in that younger persons are expected to show more respect towards elders than towards their peers. For example, cultural norms do not allow one to address an elder by his or her forename, nor backchat/oppose an elder in a discussion.

Interestingly, the DCTs did not confirm this expectation of greater respect towards elders. In the studies of both requests and apologies, the age of the recipients was found to have little or no influence on the responses of both adults and children. In other words, equal politeness was shown towards elders, persons of equal and lower ages.

7.2.2 SOCIAL DISTANCE

In the interviews with the families the male adults indicated that they would be more polite towards intimates and colleagues than to strangers. This contrasts with the female adults and the male and female children, who all expressed the view that they would be more polite towards strangers than to intimates and colleagues.

Similar contradictions and differences are also reflected in the study of the influence of social distance through the DCTs. A study of my first set of data (Tables 5a, 5b and 5c) showed that the participants responded in a very similar manner towards intimates and strangers, whereas colleagues received the largest number of IFIDs. As indicated in section 5.1.2.2, this behaviour is consistent with Wolfson's Bulge model, according to which more attention would be paid to expressing linguistic politeness towards colleagues/friends rather than towards strangers or intimates. On the other hand, the data from my second set of results (Tables 7a, 7b and 7c) reveal a pattern in which strangers receive the highest number of IFIDs. This appears to be consistent with Brown

and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness, according to which respondents show more politeness when there is greater social distance between participants. A detailed examination of the situations corresponding to the two sets of data has led me to conclude that one cannot generalize that either Wolfson's Bulge Model or the Brown and Levinson's model would always be appropriate for describing the apology responses of a particular community. The particularities of the situation for which the apology is required strongly influence the strategies that are used.

7.2.3 STATUS

From a cultural perspective both groups of interviewees concurred that greater respect is shown to persons of higher status, not only in terms of professional positions but also in terms of material wealth. Higher status also used to be accorded to men; however it is important to note that in the interviews with the families participants acknowledged that women are beginning to play a more powerful role in the society. While the children more readily accept gender equality, many of the adults are reluctant to accept the change and still operate within the old frame of male dominance.

The study of apology strategies through the DCTs has revealed that the largest number of IFIDs (although the differences were small) were used for persons of higher status, which confirm that greater deference is shown to persons of higher status.

The use of alerters yielded two interesting results. Firstly, the children gave greater preference to title and/or role than the adults. Most popular forms were "Sir"/"Mam". According to Brown and Levinson (1987:178) the use of a title shows greater respect when formally interacting with a person of higher status. Secondly, none of the

participants (neither adults nor children) used the first name when addressing persons of higher status. This level of deference shown to persons of higher status within the target community is consistent with the views expressed by the religious/cultural leaders and the families.

The DCTs also showed that the adults, both males and females, used a proportionally larger number of high intensity regrets when addressing males. The opposite was found for the male and female children. This difference in pattern can possibly be explained in that adults still perceive males as having a more dominant role in the given community. Children, on the other hand, are more aware of the changing role of the women within the community and therefore see them as playing major roles in and out of the home.

7.3 THE VALUE PLACED ON POLITENESS BY MEN AND WOMEN IN THE TARGET COMMUNITY

Interviews with the religious/cultural leaders reveal that from a cultural perspective there was a greater demand on women to display polite behaviour. The gender role defined for them requires that they display greater politeness. This was confirmed by the interviews with the families in which it was pointed out that women are expected to behave in particular ways, with society expecting more politeness from women. Women are expected to carry themselves in a particular manner. As such, it is not in keeping with the cultural norms for women to resort to aggressive behaviour and use vulgar or slang language. Interviewees expressed the view that men feel belittled when they make apologies, while women do so using a number of strategies as they are more concerned with maintaining social harmony. Therefore, according to the interviewees, the latter were more polite in that they used more apology strategies.

In a number of ways, the DCTs supported this perception of women as "more polite". For instance, the females were found to use more semantic formulas than the males when apologising. I interpreted my results as indicating that the adult males tend to regard apologies as superfluous, face-threatening acts which are admissions of weakness, inadequacy or failure. On the other hand, the female adults make considerable use of all the semantic formulas as they regard apologies as tools for restoring social harmony. A further example is that the few instances of the conventionally indirect request strategies of suggestory formula that were recorded were used only by the males, in investigating both social distance and status. The finding that none of the female respondents used any suggestory formulas may be attributed to the fact that such a style of speech (e.g. "How about .....") is uncharacteristic of women in the target community as it is perceived as a form of slang.

In addition, aggravating supportive moves were found to be used on a few occasions, but only by males. The fact that the female adults and children used no aggravating supportive moves could imply that they display less aggressive behaviour than the males. This is in keeping with the positions articulated by the religious/cultural leaders and the families during the interviews.

The findings from the DCTs and the interviews with the religious/cultural leaders and the families show that women are required to value politeness more highly than men in the community under investigation.

The data accumulated through DCTs did not reveal many differences in the politeness strategies of women towards women and of women to men and vice versa. The two

notable differences were i) with regard to requests, the male adults and children were found to use more direct strategies than the female adults and children, and ii) with regard to apologies, the female children were found to offer more explanations to females, while it was the males who received the largest number of explanations from the male children. The latter behaviour could arise through children expressing greater solidarity with persons of the same gender. This in turn could stem from their cultural upbringing in that, as pointed out in the interviews with the families, socializing with the opposite sex is not encouraged. It would therefore appear that women and men grow up within an environment consisting of different sets of social norms which lead to different sets of rules for friendly interaction and ways of signaling solidarity, as discussed by Maltz and Borker (1982:200).

One further difference is that the males place a greater emphasis on acknowledging responsibility when apologizing to females than to males. A possible reason for this is that the males feel less threatened by the females. Therefore they find it is easier to "lose face" to a female (by acknowledging responsibility), irrespective of status, than to another male.

7.4 CONSTANCY OR CHANGE IN THE BACKGROUND UNDER-
STANDING OF POLITENESS?

The interviews with the religious/cultural leaders suggested that in most aspects the background understanding of politeness within the target community has remained constant over the past generation. An area in which notable change has begun to take place is one in which greater freedom in decision making is accorded to the children of today, as compared to when their respective parents were young. This view concurred

with the findings from the interviews with the families, where the parents acknowledged that their relationships with their children could not be developed with the same degree of strictness that applied to them in their youth. Greater freedom has to be allowed in order to cater for the changing environment in which their children are growing, for example, the change in the education system, peer pressure, etc. Interestingly, the children agreed with the claim made by their parents. They (the children) noted that they were given more privileges than their parents in their youth. This was attributed to Western influence through the medium of, for example, the television. It is noted that the DCTs were not able to elicit information on this particular aspect.

However, the responses to the DCTs did show that the adults and the children displayed similar politeness behaviour and hence confirmed that the understanding of politeness has remained constant. For example, i) both the adults and the children do not address elders by their first names, and ii) neither the female adults nor the female children use suggestory formulas and aggressive supportive moves. The only notable difference is that the children appear to be taking note of the changing role of women in the society. From being just housekeepers many women from the target community have acquired a certain level of independence and now occupy professional positions in education, commerce, etc. As a result of this re-defined role, the children see them as now having equal power to the men, both in the home and in the broader society.

7.5 THEORIES OF POLITENESS AND THE HINDU SECTOR OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY

7.5.1 THE CONCEPT OF FACE

Interviews with the religious/cultural leaders suggested that from a religious perspective the concept of face is irrelevant. The reason for this is that the concept of *Manavata* which means humanity and respect for the equality of all human beings, eliminates within politeness behaviour the desire to be liked/approved of (positive face) and the desire not to be imposed upon (negative face). As such *Manavata* plays a similar role to *Ubuntu* within the Zulu culture. However, from a cultural perspective, the religious/cultural leaders emphasized that, contrary to the religious teachings, in practice the concept of face does exist. They were unanimous as to the need to maintain one's face in the wider community. Interviews with the families emphasised the importance of being polite at all times as one was not only reflecting an impression of one's self but also the image of one's family. The face of an individual is only meaningful when it is considered in relation to one's immediate family and society at large. This view is in agreement with that expressed by the religious/cultural leaders.

Within the framework of the Western/non-Western debate on politeness phenomena, the concept of face within the community under discussion is consistent with that found in several other non-Western cultures, for example, the Chinese, Japanese and Igbo societies. It differs from the conception of face as private as expressed by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Interviews with the religious/cultural leaders and the families have shown that since the collective image of the group overrides that of the individual, very few acts are seen as impositions. Therefore, speech acts that are seen by Brown and Levinson as face threatening acts are not experienced as such in the given community. This is in agreement with observations in other non-Western cultures, for example, Chinese, Japanese and the Igbo society in Nigeria. These findings are similar to that obtained by de Kadt in a study of the Zulu culture (1998).

An individual within the Hindu sector of the South African Indian (SAI) community is expected to conduct him/herself in a manner that will portray a good image of him/herself (individual face), will portray a good image of his/her family (group face), as well as receive the approval of society at large (public face). Here, the term "individual face" relates to the desires of the individual to have his/her behaviour, actions, etc. approved by others and is in contrast to Brown and Levinson's (1987) "private face" which implicitly elevates the individual above the group.

7.5.2 MODELS OF POLITENESS

Interviews with the religious/cultural leaders and families have revealed, as discussed earlier in this section, that the behaviour of an individual is largely determined by the social norms within the given community which prescribe expected behavioural patterns. If one subscribes to these norms then one is seen as exhibiting polite behaviour. This is in keeping with the basic principles of the social norm model (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1), which may therefore be considered useful in analysing aspects of politeness in the community under investigation.

On the other hand, the conversational-maxim model (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2) places emphasis on the speaker as a rational individual who is primarily concerned with conveying his/her message efficiently, i.e. with saying what has to be said, at the time it has to be said and in the manner in which it has to be said. However, for the community under investigation, the social behavioural hierarchy that exists dictates how an individual responds. Also, according to the conversational-maxim model a directive is considered as being inherently impolite. Since within the target community the concept of *Manavata* promotes serving humanity without the expectancy of reward/acknowledgement, this assertion will not necessarily apply. Therefore, it would appear that the conversational-maxim model is inappropriate for analysing politeness phenomena in the Hindu sector of the SAI community.

While the conversational-contract model (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3) speaks of socially required norms of behaviour, it is limiting in its application to the given community for the following reason. According to the conversational-contract model, participants in a conversation have the possibility of re-negotiating the initial contract. This does not apply in the community under investigation as the rights and obligations of parties in social relationships are non-negotiable, though they may be perceived by some as currently changing.

My research has shown that from a cultural perspective the concept of face exists within the target community. However, as discussed in the previous section, Brown and Levinson's definition of face is focused on the individual self in that it tends to privilege the individual in terms of his/her wants or desires. Within the given community the concepts of group/public face determine that the face of an individual is established by

the participation of others within the prescribed set of social norms. Therefore, Brown and Levinson's definition of face is not applicable to the Hindu sector of the SAI community. In addition, according to Brown and Levinson, requests are perceived as impositions and as face-threatening acts. Again, this does not hold for the community under study where requests are not seen as impositions, but rather where acceding to requests is perceived as one way of serving humanity. The understanding of the concept of face and the role of requests within the Hindu sector of the SAI community is remarkably similar to that found in other non-Western cultures. Detailed discussions on these are given in the literature review (Chapter 2). Therefore, one may conclude that Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is not applicable to the community under investigation. Instead, a model of politeness such as the social norm model, which has been considered applicable to other non-Western cultures, would seem to be most appropriate to the analysis of politeness in the Hindu sector of the SAI community.

7.5.3 SPECIFIC CLAIMS OF UNIVERSAL APPLICABILITY

Blum-Kulka (1989:59) found that most conventional requests are Hearer dominant in nature. This aspect was investigated in the interviews with the families as well as the DCTs. The families expressed the view that "Can I borrow..." was considered to be more polite than "Can you lend.....". In the opinion of the families the former gave the Hearer an option to deny the request. The latter gives "no choice". Thus, preference is shown for 'Speaker dominant" rather than "Hearer dominant" request strategies, which is different from the results of Blum-Kulka (1989:59).

My DCTs allow further elucidation of this point. The investigation of social distance revealed that requests may be Hearer or Speaker dominant in nature depending on the

particular situation. When investigating status, the requests were found to be Speaker dominant in nature. The situations corresponding to Speaker dominance for both social distance and status were ones in which respondents had to borrow an item. In such a case the Speaker dominant request perspective ("Can I borrow....") was presumably seen by the respondents as less of an imposition and gave the Hearer an option to deny the request, in comparison to the Hearer dominant approach ("Can you lend....."). This finding is the same as that expressed by the families in the interviews and is therefore different from that found by Blum-Kulka.

For both social distance and status the DCTs revealed most of the request strategies to be conventionally indirect in nature. In most instances the males were found to use a proportionally larger number of direct request strategies than the females. As pointed out earlier, for the study of status the request distribution pattern consists of 24.4% direct requests, 75.2% conventionally indirect requests and 0.4% non-conventionally indirect requests. This pattern has the same configuration as that found by Blum-Kulka's CCSARP study in Australian English (9.8% direct requests, 82.4% conventionally indirect requests and 7.8% non-conventionally indirect requests), in that most request strategies are indirect in nature. It must be noted that other researchers, e.g. de Kadt (1995), have obtained results that do not display such a distribution.

Next, I address Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim that "more indirect" means "more polite", as well as the validity of the CCSARP coding scale of directness/indirectness of request patterns for the SAIE speaking community. Interviews with the families did not reveal any clear relationship between the level of directness and the degree of politeness of a request strategy. While participants in the interviews gave a preference to direct

request strategies, they did not perceive an indirect request as being impolite and indeed considered such requests as more appropriate in certain circumstances.

The brief exploration of the relationship between the level of directness and the degree of politeness of a request strategy by means of a ranking scale showed no clear relationship. This is consistent with the outcomes from the interviews with the families.

Another point worthy of note is that, as discussed earlier, women in the target community are considered to be more polite than men. However, the data from the DCTs in the study of requests (social distance and status) reveal that in not all cases do the women use more indirect strategies than the males. From the above discussion one may conclude that the relationship between direct/indirect requests and the degree of politeness is not a simple one for the community under investigation. It therefore questions the validity of Brown and Levinson's claim that the more indirect a request the greater is the level of politeness.

With regard to the levels of directness of request strategies (i.e. from the most direct to the most indirect), the ranking of the participants is found to be in agreement with the CCSARP coding scheme only at the extreme ends of the spectrum, i.e. agreement was reached for the most direct and the most indirect situations. The intermediate area between these two extremes is the grey area with no well-defined pattern. Therefore, the CCSARP coding scheme of directness/indirectness of request patterns is not entirely applicable to the community under investigation.

7.5.4 DEFINITION OF POLITENESS

From the above discussions, I conclude this section with a definition of politeness that would best fit the Hindu sector of the SAI community. Although the working definition of Ide (1989:225) was initially adopted for the study in this dissertation the results from the two sets of interviews have shown that this does not adequately account for politeness in the target community. Apart from language usage, expected norms of non-verbal behaviour are essential to display overall politeness. For example, one may be linguistically very polite to a guest. However, if one does not offer the guest something to drink/eat, this would be interpreted as impolite behaviour. Also, greeting a person with the word "Namaste" would be considered incomplete and impolite if not accompanied by both hands placed together. Therefore, a possible definition of politeness that would be appropriate for the community under discussion is "behaviour which actively expresses positive concern for others through a manner of speaking and through non-verbal behaviours which conform to the expected norms of the community under investigation". The implication of this is that politeness is culture specific in the sense that while there may be some universal components that can be used to describe politeness, for example, maintaining good relations within society, showing positive concern for others, etc., the manner in which this is achieved will differ from culture to culture.

7.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study are initially discussed in terms of the tools used to collect the relevant data. These are the DCTs, interviews with cultural leaders and interviews with families within the community under investigation.

In Chapter 3, section 3.1, the advantages and disadvantages of DCTs were discussed. On the one hand, DCTs are advantageous in that they allow the researcher to collect a large quantity of data in a very short time, to control variables thereby giving coherence to the findings, and to obtain answers to specific questions. However, as Hartford and Bardovi-Harlig (1992) have pointed out, a DCT "cannot......show us the whole picture: it disallows certain common negotiation strategies, it eliminates certain semantic formulas, and it influences the politeness and status balancing profiles....."

Further limitations of DCTs were noted during my interviews with the families in the community. Many of the respondents pointed out the importance of non-verbal strategies such as gestures, posture and the tone of voice to explain politeness strategies. In addition, my data drawn from DCTs cannot be equated with naturally occurring data. Nevertheless, with careful triangulation my combined data have allowed considerable insights into the role and management of politeness in the families investigated.

Another possible limitation of my study relates to the chosen sample size. In particular, the investigation has been restricted to the greater Durban area and to a set of ten families with four participants from each family. As such this represents non-probability sampling. My sample size may not be representative of a larger population, for example, of the SAIE speaking community in KwaZulu Natal as a whole. For this reason I have been cautious when attempting to generalise my results.

7.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In this study I have focused on the speech acts of requests and apologies. Further extensions would be possible by considering additional speech acts such as compliments

and parting/greeting routines. Further, this study has focused on two generations. A more informative investigation on the evolution of politeness phenomena within the community under investigation may be possible by taking into consideration three generations viz. the grandparents, the parents and the children. It is recognized that such a study may be hampered by the grandparents' lack of command of the English language.

My study could be further supplemented by conducting the entire investigation in the Hindu vernacular languages i.e. Hindi, Tamil and Telegu, recognizing that the sample size of participants (who speak, read and write in their vernacular) could be restricted. Such studies would prevent any distortions or dilutions of meaning caused by communicating in English rather than in the vernacular. Appropriate translations could be used to compare with my findings. In addition, a contrastive Vernacular/English study within the Hindu sector of the SAI community, would enable one to pinpoint more closely possible influences of the vernacular on English.

Although a major finding of this study is that politeness phenomena have remained more or less constant from one generation to the next, it was noted by some of the participants that the children are becoming more assertive. This points to the need for a similar study to be undertaken in about 10 years time, when substantial changes may have taken place. Such change might also impact on the analytical framework which is found to be most appropriate. For example, in future years the growing assertiveness of the children may place them in a position to re-negotiate their rights and obligations within the social norms governing polite behaviour, at which point the conversational-contract model for the analysis of politeness could become important.

In the course of this study, both the religious/cultural leaders and the families pointed out the importance of non-verbal communication to politeness behaviour in the target community. This could be the subject of an independent future study, which would probably need to draw more strongly on naturally occurring data.

Another aspect that emerged during my investigation was the changing role of woman in the community. Therefore, an interesting topic for study could be: " Hindu Women: The Past and the Present". This could investigate changes in the role of the Hindu women and the possible impact this may have on their language usage.

The evolution of our country has been influenced by the restrictions/discriminations under Apartheid. For example, the Group Areas Act restricted the different race groups to residing in specific residential areas. A question that comes to mind for future study is: "How has the Group Areas Act contributed towards the South African Hindu Society retaining its religious/cultural practices?"

Finally, to the best of my knowledge, the study undertaken in this dissertation is the first attempt to document politeness phenomena within a sector of the South African Indian community. It is fascinating that despite a small sample size, the characteristics of the politeness phenomena within the community that was studied are found to have much in common with those of other non-Western cultures. I trust that the insights provided by my study will inform the Hindu sector of the SAIE speaking community on the current state of politeness phenomena in the community. Also, within our multi-cultural South African society, it will allow persons outside the target community to better appreciate politeness behaviour within the target community. As such, the findings of my study

will hopefully promote social interactions within the target community and enhance cross-cultural communication. It would be gratifying if the findings in this dissertation serve as a motivation for further research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS LEADERS

1. Is politeness important? Why?

2. When is it important to be polite?

3. What is your understanding of polite behaviour? Give an example.

4. When would you consider a person to be polite? Give an example.

5. Are there any factors (e.g. age, status, social distance) that will determine the politeness behaviour shown by Speaker to Hearer and vice versa?

6. Do you think people respond differently towards men and women? If yes, why?

7. Do apologies have a role to play in your understanding of politeness?

8. What factors will influence the degree of apology for a given misdeed committed by different persons?

9. What infringement would you find it necessary to apologise for? Examples of possible situations:

a. You took an important telephonic message for your husband/wife from a friend. You forgot to relay this message. Do you consider it necessary to apologise to your husband/wife?

What if the message was for your son/daughter?

b. You had agreed to pick up from the dry cleaner an item that was urgently required by your husband/wife. You forgot to do so. Do you consider it necessary to apologise?

10. Their understanding of directness/indirectness will be probed through their responses to specific situations. For example – neighbour wants a lift into town. You are not in a position to give the neighbour a lift. How would you reply? If an elaborate explanation is given, then I would ask why they just did not say no.

11. Do requests have a role to play in your understanding of politeness?

12. Their understanding of directness/indirectness relating to requests will be probed through their responses to specific situations. For example: You are having a function at home and you require your neighbours assistance in the preparation. How would you request their assistance?

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE: DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASKS

QUESTIONNAIRE: DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASKS : 1

NAME : (Optional) ....

GENDER:	Male		Female	
AGE GROUP:	15-25	26-39	40-60	60+

INSTRUCTIONS

Please read the following request and apology situations carefully. Kindly respond as naturally as possible in the space provided, writing down exactly what you would say (to the person) in each situation.

SECTION A

REQUESTS

1. **An acquaintance (female)** owes you some money which is long overdue. You bump into her at the shopping centre and decide to approach her for the money.

    YOU:...
    ....
    ....
    ....

2. You want to videotape a special function but you do not have a video camera. You decide to borrow one from a **close relative (female)**. How would you request for the camera if she is:

    a) much **older** than you...
    ....
    ....

    b) of the **same age** group as yourself..
    ....
    ....

    c) much **younger** than you...
    ....
    ....

3. You park illegally and rush into a supermarket to purchase an item. As you approach the cashier you see **a person (male)** in front of you. How would you ask him permission to cut the queue, if he is:

a) much **older** than you...

....

....

b) of the **same age** group as yourself...

....

....

c) much **younger** than you...

....

....

4. You have an account that needs to be paid urgently. Although you have the money, you do not have the time to make the payment. You know that **your brother** goes into town daily. You decide to approach him to pay the account on your behalf.

YOU:..

....

....

....

5. You need to go into town to conduct some urgent business. You approach your **colleague (male),** who lives a few blocks away from you, for a lift.

YOU:..

....

....

....

6 You are having a party at your house and want to borrow some music tapes and CDs from your **colleague (female).** How would you ask your colleague if she is:

a) much **older** than you..

....

....

b) of the **same age** group as yourself...

....

....

c) much **younger** than you...

....

....

SECTION B

APOLOGY

1. You have borrowed a video camera from a **close relative (female).** While the camera is in your possession, it is damaged. A few days later your relative pays you a visit to collect the camera. How would you apologise to her if she is:

a) much **older** than you..

....

....

b) of the **same age** group as yourself..

....

c) much **younger** than you...

....

2. While rushing in a crowded supermarket your trolley bumps into **a person (female).**
   How would you apologise if she is:

   a) much **older** than you..

   ....

   b) the **same age** group as yourself..

   ....

   c) much **younger** than you...

   ....

3. You had agreed to pay a long overdue account for **your brother**. He handed you
   the money but you failed to pay the account.

   BROTHER: Did you pay my account?

   YOU:..

   ....

   ....

   ....

4. You had arranged to meet **your colleague (female)** at the shopping mall but failed
   to do so. Later that evening your colleague comes home.

   COLLEAGUE: I waited for you for an entire hour!

   YOU:..

   ....

   ....

   ....

5. You are having a party at home. You borrow music tapes and CDs from a
   colleague. He lends them to you on condition they are returned the day after the
   party. After the party you discover that one of the CDs is missing. How would you
   apologise for the missing CD if your colleague is:

   a) much **older** than you..

   ....

   b) the **same age** group as yourself..

   ....

   d) much **younger** than you...

   ....

   ....

6. You owe **an acquaintance (male)** money for some work done. You meet him at the shopping centre. You apologise for non-payment.

YOU:..
....
....

SECTION C: TO BE FILLED IN BY CHILDREN ONLY

REQUESTS AND APOLOGIES

1. You wish to borrow a book. How would you request it from the following people:

    a) a **female** teacher...
    ....
    ....
    b) classmate (**female**)...
    ....
    ....
    d) a person who is **junior** to you **(female)**..
    ....
    ....

2. You accidentally spill curry on a book that you have borrowed from a person. Write down your response if the person from whom you borrowed the book is:

    a) a **male** teacher..
    ....
    ....
    b) your classmate (**male**)..
    ....
    ....
    c) a person who is **junior** to you (**male**)...
    ....
    ....

SECTION C: TO BE FILLED IN BY ADULTS ONLY

REQUESTS AND APOLOGIES

1. Situation: You are a senior administration officer in an organisation. How would you apologise if you spill coffee on the table of:

    a) your boss **(male)** ....
    ....
    ....
    b) another **senior** administration officer **(male)**...
    ....
    ....
    c) a **junior** administration officer **(male)**...
    ....
    ....

2. You wish to borrow a ream of paper that is urgently required . How would you request the paper from the following persons:

    a) your boss **(female)** ....
    ....
    ....
    b) another **senior** administration officer **(female)**...
    ....
    ....
    c) a **junior** administration office **(female)**...
    ....
    ....

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FAMILIES

1. What is your understanding of politeness?

2. Is politeness important? Why? When is it important to be polite?

3. Give an example of polite behaviour.

4. Do the following factors: age, sex, status, and social distance affect the level of politeness that a Speaker would show towards a Hearer and vice versa?

5. Do you think that politeness varies from culture to culture or is it the same in all cultures?

6. Do requests have a role to play in your understanding of politeness?

7. Do you prefer being spoken to directly or indirectly when someone requests something from you?

8. If someone asks something of you very indirectly (i.e. hints at something), would you consider this as being polite? If not, why?

9. When you make a request do you prefer doing so directly or indirectly?

10. Do you think asking a favour or asking someone to do something is imposing?

11. If so, what words would you use to lessen the imposition?

12. Do apologies have a role to play in your understanding of politeness?

13. Would factors such as the age, sex, status, and social distance of a person make a difference to you when you are making an apology?

14. When apologising, do you generally accept responsibility or do you try to pass blame?

APPENDIX 4: RANKING SCALES 1 AND 2

RANKING SCALE 1

NAME (Optional):...

GENDER   :   Male   Female

AGE GROUP   :   15-25   26-39   40-60   60+

INSTRUCTIONS

Each of the two situations below has nine responses. Rank each of the responses in order of the level of **directness**, from 1 to 9, with number 1 being the most direct and number 9 the least direct.

SITUATION 1: BORROWING A BOOK

	Ranking
1. Lend me that book.	
2. I'm asking you to lend me your book.	
3. I want to ask you to lend me your book.	
4. You'll have to lend me your book.	
5. I'd like to borrow your book.	
6. How about lending me your book?	
7. Can I borrow your book?	
8. This would be an interesting book to read.	
9. I do enjoy reading (intention: borrowing the book)	

SITUATION 2: REQUESTING A LIFT

	Ranking
1. Give me a lift.	
2. I am asking you to give me a lift.	
3. I would like to ask you for a lift.	
4. You'll have to take me with you into town.	
5. I'd like a lift into town.	
6. How about a lift into town?	
7. Can I get a lift into town?	
8. Is your car full? (intention: getting a lift)	
9. I have some important business in town. (intention: getting a lift)	

RANKING SCALE 2

NAME (Optional):..

GENDER   :   Male   Female

AGE GROUP :   15-25   26-39   40-60   60+

INSTRUCTIONS

Each of the two situations below has nine responses. Rank each of the responses in order of the degree of **politeness**, from 1 to 9, with number 1 being the most polite and number 9 the least polite.

SITUATION 1: BORROWING A BOOK

	Ranking
1. Lend me that book.	
2. I'm asking you to lend me your book.	
3. I want to ask you to lend me your book.	
4. You'll have to lend me your book.	
5. I'd like to borrow your book.	
6. How about lending me your book?	
7. Can I borrow your book?	
8. This would be an interesting book to read.	
9. I do enjoy reading (intention: borrowing the book)	

SITUATION 2: REQUESTING A LIFT

	Ranking
1. Give me a lift.	
2. I am asking you to give me a lift.	
3. I would like to ask you for a lift.	
4. You'll have to take me with you into town.	
5. I'd like a lift into town.	
6. How about a lift into town?	
7. Can I get a lift into town?	
8. Is your car full? (intention: getting a lift)	
9. I have some important business in town. (intention: getting a lift)	